

# **THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA**

**Meeting of the Council – 22 June 2005**

## **Item 8: Reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

### **REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY STEERING GROUP**

#### **ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2004/5**

#### **1. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON CABINET BUSINESS**

Chairman: Councillor Stephen Hoier

Vice-Chairman: Councillor John Corbet-Singleton

The Membership of the Committee during the year was Councillors Corbet-Singleton, Dalton, Donaldson, Edge, Gardner, S Hoier, Husband, Lightfoot and Shapro.

##### **1.1 Take up of benefits**

The Cabinet asked the Committee to lead a review of benefit take-up. This area goes beyond the normal activities of the Council, involves a wide range of external agencies and organisations (some of which the Council funds), bears on the work of a number of the Council's services and priorities and impacts on the well being of many of the most vulnerable Royal Borough residents. The Committee set up a Joint Working Group with the Health, Housing and Social Services OSC to undertake the review.

Having agreed its scope and terms of reference, and undertaken some background reading, the working group met key Council staff to gather useful information about the practicalities of the benefits systems and ways to improve take-up locally. This information proved valuable when the working group recently met representatives from Camden, Newham and Blackpool about the issues they face. A facilitated workshop session is being planned for July with local advice agencies before finally meeting with statutory agencies and partners, such the PCT, Jobcentre Plus and the Inland Revenue to discuss ideas from the earlier sessions. The working group hopes to produce its final report and recommendations for Cabinet in September 2005.

##### **1.2 Presentation of budgetary information**

The Committee set up a working group in May 2004 to examine improving the way in which the information is presented to members when making decisions about budget allocation to services.

The group's aim was to review existing financial planning documents and ensure that they were made more accessible to Councillors and the public, who need to be able to see how much is spent, on what, and where the money comes from. It was noted that the different financial planning documents currently produced do, of course, have different purposes.

Following several meetings, culminating in a final report to the full OSC, the working group's paper was presented to Cabinet in May 2005 and numerous recommendations were adopted.

A copy of the report is available on request.

### **1.3 Domestic violence**

Following a request by the Committee, a report was considered in May 2004 on domestic violence work within the Council and its partner agencies. Concerns were expressed that insufficient progress had been made on the Council's contribution to the Domestic Violence Steering Group and Incidents panel, convened by the Police, and a training programme in the use of appropriate curriculum resources in schools.

The Committee has kept a close watch over progress on this important issue. Officers now attend the Domestic Violence Steering Group on a regular basis and are now attending the Domestic Violence Incident Panel.

Revised Child Protection guidance was published by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in September 2004. A presentation was given at the time of publication to Headteachers on the main elements in the guidance. Since then there have been several training events. In addition, training events have taken place for designated teachers for child protection and learning mentors. Further training sessions are being held for designated school governors and for newly qualified teachers. All these sessions contain references to the important area of domestic violence in the context of safeguarding children and of the revised DfES guidance.

Chairmen of school governors have been briefed on the Council's work on domestic violence, on the new Child Protection guidance, and on their responsibilities within it.

The Committee receives regular update reports on this issue.

#### **1.4 Procurement Review**

The Committee was pleased to note the report to Cabinet on the Royal Borough Review of Procurement and the move to strengthen procurement expertise in the Council, which responded to an initial request from the OSC for this issue to be examined.

#### **1.5 Freedom of Information**

As a result of the Freedom of Information Act, from January 2005 the public has the right to all types of Council information. During the last year the Committee has considered regular reports on the Council's preparations for complying with the Act. The Committee received status reports in November 2004, January and April 2005 detailing the Council's current state of readiness along with planned future measures.

#### **1.6 Diversity and equality**

Under the Race Relations Act 1976, the Council has a general duty to promote race equality by working towards the elimination of unlawful racial discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good race relations. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 requires the Council to publish a Race Equality Scheme every three years which outlines how it will review its services and policies in order to meet the general duty.

The Council published its first Race Equality Scheme in May 2002 and outlined the services that would be subject to race equality reviews between 2002 and 2005. These reviews were subsequently broadened into equality impact assessments covering race, gender and disability, as well as age, faith and sexual orientation where relevant to do so

The draft Equality Scheme supports the Council's commitment to promote fair and equal access to services and equal opportunities in employment.

The Committee receives regular reports on this issue. iAt its meeting in May 2005 the Committee supported the proposed draft Equality Scheme.

#### **1.7 Recruitment and Retention of Staff**

The Committee has taken a keen interest in this matter over the past few years. Update reports are taken on a regular basis to enable the Committee to monitor vacancy rates, turnover, recruitment initiatives and advertising.

### **1.8 Former public library in Manresa Road**

The Committee recently scrutinised proposals concerning the letting of the former public library in Manresa Road. The Cabinet Member with responsibility for taking the decision, Councillor Fairhead, was questioned by members of the Committee and by a representative of the local residents. Having listened carefully to all contributions, the Committee decided that it would not ask the Cabinet Member to reconsider his proposed decision.

### **1.9 Other matters regularly considered by the Committee**

Under its terms of reference, the Committee has as a standing item at its meetings the agenda from the previous meeting of the Cabinet. All reports submitted to Cabinet are therefore scrutinised by the Committee.

The Committee scrutinises reports on internal audit matters on a quarterly basis. These reports set out the key findings from Internal Audit work and cover summaries of all reviews undertaken; detailed audit findings and recommendations in respect of each review undertaken; follow up reports issued; and details of current investigations. An annual audit plan is also considered once a year.

The Committee also considers quarterly budget monitoring reports from all business groups.

## **2. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND HOUSING**

Chairman: Councillor Ernest Tomlin

Vice-Chairman: Councillor Miss Barbara Campbell

The Membership of the Committee during the year was Councillors Atkinson, Buckmaster, Miss Campbell, Clamp, Dr Hanham, B Hoier, Lindsay, Redman and Tomlin.

### **2.1 The education of looked-after children**

The Council is keen to ensure it is doing all it can to encourage and support educational attainment for those children for which it is statutory parent. During 2003/04 the OSC engaged the Who Cares? Trust to undertake a detailed survey of all the Council's looked-after children. The Sub-Group established to drive this work then examined carefully the collated responses and, following a series of productive sessions with senior Social Services and Education staff, made a some clear and focused recommendations to the two relevant Cabinet Members as to how services and support for these children and young people might be improved.

These recommendations were accepted in full and at full Council on 22 September 2004 Cllr. Clamp was congratulated for his chairmanship of the Sub-Group.

Regrettably the Secretary of State for Education was unreceptive to my proposal, following the above review, that some duty be placed on schools in relation to the educational attainment of looked-after children.

## **2.2 Local NHS services**

In 2004/05 the OSC again wrestled with the volume of potential health scrutiny topics. Mindful, however, of the various public involvement forums operating locally – 7 or more Patient and Public Involvement Forums (PPIFs)\* and hospital-based Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALs) – the Committee has deliberately concentrated on overseeing health matters at a more strategic level.

*[\* The OSC invited PPIF members to its 8<sup>th</sup> September 2004 meeting and discussed with them ways the OSC and PPIFs might work better together. The Government has recently announced, however, that henceforth there will only be one PPIF for each PCT area.]*

In Autumn 2004, for example, we repeated our 2003/04 exercise of engaging a specialist health consultant to examine and report on the star-ratings awarded to our local trusts: this again proved a worthwhile exercise, albeit that it revealed as much about the vagaries of a changing performance regime (now under the aegis of the Healthcare Commission) as about the actual performance of local trusts. The OSC felt so strongly that the Central and North West London Mental Health Trust had been harshly treated (computer problems meant they narrowly missed a deadline and failed to gain three stars as a result) that I wrote to the Commission seeking a review: disappointingly the Commission were ultimately unprepared to budge from the two star rating they had awarded CNWLMHT.

The OSC's scrutiny of the local NHS came to a dramatic head in March 2005 following the revelation that Kensington and Chelsea Primary Care Trust (the PCT), which commissions local health services, was in deficit to the tune of some £8 million. The implications of this deficit and the emerging 'Recovery Plan' were so serious for local health services and local people that a special meeting of the OSC was called to hear from the PCT and other stakeholders. At a very well attended meeting in the Small Hall, the PCT forced to explain themselves and made to hear the forthright views of organisations and service users.

The OSC made a series of recommendations to both the PCT and the Strategic Health Authority and substantial changes were subsequently made to the Recovery Plan. Regrettably, by May, it had emerged that the PCT's deficit was almost twice as large as initial estimates, leading to the resignation of the PCT's Chief Executive and Chairman. I am sure my successor as Chairman will wish to continue to keep a close eye on the PCT as it seeks to restore good financial management and public confidence.

### **2.3 Health Inequalities**

Although overall the Borough is extremely healthy, the disparity in people's health across the Borough is vast with an estimated gap in life expectancy of ten years between the some parts of the Borough.

In June 2004 the Review Sub-Group submitted its final report on these matters and made various recommendations to the PCT and the Cabinet on tackling these inequalities. My thanks go to Cllr. Stephen Hoier for his enthusiastic chairmanship of this Sub-Group and the detailed final report.

Progress against the Sub-Group's recommendations is expected to be revisited Autumn 2005.

### **2.4 The Cheyne Centre**

At its 30<sup>th</sup> June meeting the OSC held a full hearing on the threatened closure of this facility, a daycare centre for children with profound disabilities. The hearing enabled professionals, service users and other interested parties to express their views forcefully in a public setting.

The outcome of OSC's intervention - and the formal report published following the hearing - was a renewed effort on the part of interested parties, including current and potential funders, to find a viable way forward, both in the short and medium term, for the

Centre. The OSC very much hopes that a stable financial arrangements can be put in place, so that the Centre's valued services are safeguarded at least for the medium term.

## **2.5 Hospital-acquired infection**

During Spring 2005 a small OSC Sub-Group appointed for the purpose and chaired by Cllr. Miss Barbara Campbell, finalised the methodology for a review of the incidence of hospital-acquired infection (including MRSA) at our local hospitals and what is being done to tackle it.

Responses to various carefully framed questions are now awaited from local health providers, after which - in late June - the trusts will attend the Town Hall to be questioned further at a public hearing.

## **2.6 The Royal Brompton and Harefield and the Royal Marsden NHS Trusts**

In January 2005 the OSC hosted public meetings in relation to the services of both these locally-based tertiary/specialist NHS trusts. Because these trusts provide a service across the home counties and beyond, elected representatives of other local authorities from whose areas patients are drawn were invited to participate.

These were two highly successful meetings, enabling elected representatives to question the senior managers of both trusts on their plans for the future.

## **2.7 Housing Allocations**

The OSC has not always been convinced that a points based housing allocations system is the best one and the Sub-Group that has been further exploring this during 2004/05, under the Chairmanship of Cllr. Christopher Buckmaster, has spent some time examining the points system and the principal alternative, a banding system.

The Sub-Group is expected to make a recommendation in July as to whether there is a convincing or overwhelming case for moving to some sort of banding system for housing allocations.

## **2.8 Performance in Social Services and Housing**

The OSC has been keen not to lose sight of the more 'bread and butter' work and receives ongoing reports on performance of those Council services within its remit. In September 2004 the OSC received detailed reports on the performance of both the Social Services Department (which retains its three star rating) and the

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation, which manages the Council housing stock and is making incremental improvements.

## **2.9 Elderly Nursing Home Care and Vicarage Gate**

In March 2005 the OSC again heard from Northacre plc., this time about their plans to develop a site in Warrick Road as an elderly residential facility with a nursing care element. Quite clearly residents still hope to see a new nursing home facility on the Vicarage Gate site and, as such, Northacre's latest proposal does not appear to attract public support.

My Committee's observations on the Northacre proposal were published as a formal report on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2005.

### **3. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND PLANNING POLICY**

Chairman: Councillor Tony Holt

Vice-Chairman: Councillor Ian Donaldson

The membership of the Committee during the year was Councillors Condon-Simmonds, Donaldson, Mrs Frazer, Harland, Holt, Horton, Lady Hanham, Lightfoot and Mason.

The main focus of the Committee's work in 2004/5 is reflected in the work of its working parties: Leisure Management Contract Procurement; Mobile Phone Masts; Parking Enforcement; Parks Strategy; Post Office Closures; Waste Management Contract Procurement.

#### **3.1 Leisure Management Contract Procurement**

The OSC is responsible for scrutinising a number of the Council's biggest commercial contracts. Joint meetings between the Cabinet Member's Leisure Management Procurement Board and the OSC Working Group, which started in July 2003, continued during 2004/05. The final meeting of the Working Group was held in December 2004 and gave the OSC the opportunity to discuss the matter before the Cabinet Member took the Key Decision to select a contractor.

#### **3.2 Mobile Phone Mast Meeting (20 October)**

The Committee decided to hold a special meeting to hear evidence from a range of experts on radio masts in the Royal Borough. This meeting provided an opportunity for committee members to hear the views of a member of the Stewart Inquiry, a representative from the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB), the Chief Executive of the Mobile Operators' Association (MOA) and the pressure group Mast Action. The meeting also gave residents a chance to hear the speakers outline their views.

In the run up to the meeting local press were invited to meet the Chairman to discuss his hopes for the meeting. Hundreds of letters were sent out to individual residents, as well as residents' and tenants' associations, to ask them what questions they would like members of the OSC to put to the expert speakers.

The Supplementary Planning Guidance on radio masts is awaited, as is the booklet aimed at interested members of the public. The Committee requested both to be written as a follow-up to the very well attended special meeting.

Scientific research into the health implications is on-going on a world-wide basis and the officer team continue to monitor this. There is particular interest in risks to children and the dangers of handsets but no definitive advice exists at present.

The Working Group (Councillors Condon-Simmonds, Holt – Chairman, Lightfoot and Mason) will continue its interest in this area.

### **3.3 Parking Enforcement**

Councillors Mrs. Frazer, Holt (Chairman), Lightfoot and Mason served on the working group established to work with officers in finalising the contract specification for the new on-street enforcement contract. Councillor Miss Weatherhead was an observer from the Executive. The working group met in March and April. In noting a report about the parking policy review, the OSC discussed a number of issues arising from the review including: the overall objectives, pricing policy, motorcycle parking and the effects on traffic flow of any relaxation of single yellow line controls on bank holidays. The Committee also asked for a note about blue badge arrangements in the European Union and the current position in the Royal Borough.

At the second meeting of the Group on 25 April, the outcome of the previous meeting was reviewed. The detailed criteria for clamping and removal were considered. The proposed Gateway outside review by peers was explained. At the time of writing a further meeting is to be held on 26 May if required.

### **3.4 Parks Strategy**

Councillors Donaldson, Mrs Frazer, Holt and Horton served on the working group established to assist the Cabinet Member in developing a ten-year parks strategy. The working group met in December, March and May.

In response to criticisms about the condition of Athlone Gardens, Emslie Hornimans Pleasance and Kensington Memorial Park/St Mark's Park, the Cabinet Member said that it was undoubtedly true

that in capital terms the parks were under funded. The strategy would have to address this problem. It was recognised that the contractor had not been performing well.

At the March meeting, the inventory of parks assets and their condition was reviewed. There were some gaps still unfilled and these were dealt with in May. Once the inventory is in place it will be possible to start advising on strategies and priorities for this long-term programme.

### **3.5 Post Office Closures Programme**

Councillors Donaldson (Chairman), Blakeman, Harland and Mason, with Councillors Edge, Moylan and Miss Weatherhead representing the Executive, formed a working group to assist the Council in preparing a response to the Post Office consultation on its proposal to close five Post Offices in the Borough. The working group met in April and July and helped to organise and facilitate three very well attended public meetings held in July.

### **3.6 Waste Management Contract Procurement**

Joint meetings between the Cabinet Member's Waste Management Procurement Board and the OSC Working Group were held in October and December when Councillors had an opportunity to discuss salient issues arising from the tenders and influence the way officers were to proceed.

### **3.7 New Designs for Streetlamps and Street Furniture**

A new design of street lighting and furniture for major roads in areas of the Borough where neither the Heritage nor Kensington High Street ranges were appropriate was proposed by the Cabinet Member for Planning Policy and Transportation. After much discussion in committee, followed by a separate meeting with the Cabinet Member, the Committee asked to see more designs to get an idea of what was available. It was agreed that having a coherent approach to street furniture was important, but the Committee wanted to be assured that as full a range of designs had been considered as possible. At the May meeting, the OSC considered 60 photographs of various designs and concluded that the design proposed by the Cabinet Member was indeed the most suitable.

### **3.8 Kensington Leisure Centre – Cleaning of Sports Hall and Closure of Small Pool**

Following reports from some Councillors that Kensington Leisure Centre was not being kept clean and that facilities were being closed

because of a lack of staff, the Committee asked for a report on how the Council monitored the contractor and on how many times during the summer there had been closures of the pools. Following this, the Committee considered further reports in September, November and January in an attempt to understand what the problems were and to satisfy itself that improvements were being made. It is hoped that the new contractor will perform better than the old.

### **3.9 Local Development Framework – Next Steps**

An extremely important part of the OSC's work in the coming year will be consideration of the Local Development Scheme – the replacement for the Unitary Development Plan. During the year the Committee considered a number of reports and agreed that a working group would be necessary to consider strategic direction, not detailed expert examination. There would be a need for speed and much of the work would be done through e-mail contact with Councillors. The OSC has already been consulted about how local consultation should work, including consideration of special events to be held.

### **3.10 Presentations**

During the year the Committee received the following presentations:

- Kensington High Street Study – by the Chief Executive of the Central London Partnership
- Partnerships in Parking – by the Director of Special Projects, City of Westminster

### **3.11 Proposed Key Decisions**

The Committee considered the following Proposed Key Decisions in committee:

- Local Development Scheme (LDS)
- LDS - initial draft Statement of Community Involvement
- New designs for streetlamps and street furniture

### **3.12 Other Matters Considered**

- Capital and revenue budgets for the services within the OSC's remit
- Community Strategy
- Draft Cabinet Business Plan 2005/06 – 2007/08
- Equality objectives and targets in accordance with level 3 equality standard – environmental and planning services
- Incontinent Laundry Service

- Newspaper Kiosks - design
- Notting Hill Carnival 2004 – environmental impacts
- The effects of the Council’s traffic management schemes implemented between April 1999 and March 2002 on accidents and casualties
- Road accident statistics – annual monitoring report 2003
- Strategy documents on environmental health, leisure and waste management; municipal waste management.

#### **4. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND ARTS**

Chairman: Councillor Robert J Freeman

Vice-Chairmen: Councillors Victoria Borwick and Professor Sir Anthony Coates

The membership of the Committee during the year was Councillors Blanchflower, Borwick, (Fiona) Buxton, Coates, Cox, Cunningham, Edge, Freeman, Halbritter, Lasharie and Levitt. The co-opted members were Ms Angela Curran (from 1.7.04), Ms Kathleen Gale (from 1.7.04), Mr Philip McWalter, Mrs Rachel Stone (from 1.11.04), Revd Hugh Rayment-Pickard (to 31.12.04), Mrs Adele Stirling (to 30.6.04), Revd William Taylor (from 1.1.05) and Mr Peter Wright (to 30.6.04).

In 2004/5 the Committee considered a range of topics and established two working parties to undertake in-depth reviews on (1) Partners in Learning/Youth Services and (2) the Schools Inspectorate.

##### **4.1 Partners in Learning/Youth Services**

In May 2005 the OSC received the report of the Partners in Learning/Youth Services Working Party. This was a major piece of work involving seven working party meetings during the year, visits to five voluntary bodies and interviews with six Council officers. The OSC welcomed the officers’ positive response to the recommendations and noted that the Cabinet Member considered that the report was very useful.

The report made a number of recommendations that were subsequently endorsed by the Cabinet. A copy of the report is available on the Council’s website ([www.rbkc.gov.uk](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk)) or from Mr Ivor Quinn, whose details appear at the end.

##### **4.2 Schools Inspectorate**

In May 2005 the OSC received the report of the Schools Inspectorate Working Party. Again, this was a major undertaking involving the selection and briefing of a consultant, and four meetings of the working party including a focus group with five headteachers. The OSC noted that a number of the report's recommendations had already been put into effect and welcomed the changes introduced in the School Improvement Strategy.

The report made a number of recommendations that were subsequently endorsed by the Cabinet. A copy of the report is available on the Council's website ([www.rbkc.gov.uk](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk)) or from Mr Ivor Quinn, whose details appear at the end.

### **4.3 Visits Programme**

An important part of the OSC's work is the visits made by Councillors to schools and organisations funded by the Education, Libraries and Arts Business Group. The visits allow Councillors to meet the people who run the organisations and often to discuss the service with users. The schools and other organisations concerned have welcomed these visits. During the year 20 visits were made, with Councillors reporting detailed findings to the OSC. In addition a number of members of the Committee visited Royal Borough schools as part of Democracy Week.

### **4.4 Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) Reports on Schools and Post-OfSTED Review Reports**

One of the Committee's most important sources of performance management information is the OfSTED and School Improvement Team reports on local schools. OSC Councillors have an opportunity to discuss the reports with headteachers and chairmen of governors. During the year a sub-committee of the OSC considered reports or reviews on the following 12 schools:

- Ainsworth Nursery
- Cardinal Vaughan Memorial
- Holland Park Secondary
- Holy Trinity CE Primary
- Marlborough Primary
- Oxford Gardens Primary
- Oratory RC Primary
- St Cuthbert with St Matthias CE Primary
- St Francis of Assisi RC Primary
- St Joseph's RC Primary
- Servite RC Primary
- St Mary's RC Primary

The OSC was pleased to see that the Royal Borough's schools continue to maintain and develop their excellence.

#### **4.5 Key Decision on The Children's Centre Implementation Plans**

A major concern of the Committee's during the year has been the Council's proposals for the development of Children's Centres. The OSC used its September meeting to facilitate a discussion of the proposals. Representatives of the four nurseries affected came and put their views to the OSC. A representative of the Government's Sure Start Unit also attended and spoke.

#### **4.6 Other Key Decisions considered in Committee**

The following Key Decisions were considered during committee meetings:

- Acceptance of DfES Transitional Support Grant
- Acceptance and allocation of funding from the Young People's Fund Extended Schools Programme
- New Instruments of Government for Community and Community Special Schools
- School Improvement Strategy
- Partners in Learning Grant Allocations 2005-06

#### **4.7 Library Strategy**

The Committee established a Library Reference Group during the year to work with officers to establish policy on the Library Strategy. Subsequently the Cabinet Member decided to set up a Cabinet Reference Group on the same subject. The OSC will be kept involved and will have an opportunity to contribute to the strategy's development.

#### **4.8 Audit Commission School Survey 2004 – Summary Results**

The OSC considered the Audit Commission School Survey 2004 – summary results. It was concerned to note a number of the results where the Council's score was worse than in 2003 and where the Council appeared in the bottom quartile. Accordingly, the matter was referred to the Cabinet with a recommendation that it note the report.

#### **4.9 Inspection of Adult and Community Learning**

The OSC considered a report on the Inspection of Adult and Community Learning. The result of the inspection was extremely

disappointing and the Committee was particularly concerned at the high level criticism of the Borough made in the inspection report.

The OSC has asked for a report back in November on the progress made in implementing the post-inspection action plan. The Committee referred the report to the Cabinet for its consideration.

#### **4.10 Presentations**

The Committee asked for and received presentations on the following topics:

- BOOST (Building on Our Skills Together) – a literacy and numeracy project
- School meals
- Strategy for Teacher Recruitment and Retention
- The work of the Business Group’s Research and Information Unit
- Information and Communication Technology in schools
- The Royal Borough’s Music Strategy
- Learning and Skills Council (LSC) London Central – Strategic Area Review – Consultation Paper
- Therapy services provided for pupils with statements of special educational needs
- Supplementary schools

#### **4.11 Other Matters Considered**

- West Chelsea Play Space
- Review of Information and Communications Technology in schools
- The results of national curriculum assessments at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 and GCSE and A/AS examinations in 2004
- Provisional outturn for 2003/2004 and budget monitoring
- Future funding for Boost
- Opera Holland Park – review of season
- Summer activities
- Holland Park School redevelopment
- Capital and revenue budgets for the services within the OSC’s remit
- Community Strategy – Learning and Culture and Arts
- Draft Cabinet Business Plan 2005/06 – 2007/08
- Equality objectives and targets in accordance with level 3 equality standard
- Use of the Westway Sports Centre by Royal Borough schools and community groups
- The achievement of black minority ethnic pupils

- Comprehensive Performance Assessment: 2004 Performance and Proposed New Arrangements
- Dealing with serious incidents in schools
- Audit Commission School Survey 2004: summary results (and referred to Cabinet)

## **5. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Chairman: Councillor Mrs Frances Taylor

Vice-Chairman: Councillor Terence Buxton

The membership of the Committee during the year was Councillors Mrs Taylor, Ahern, Alapini, Blakeman, Terence Buxton, Clamp, Mrs Kingsley, Lindsay, O'Neill and Miss Weatherhead.

In 2004/05 the Committee considered a range of topics and established two working parties to undertake in-depth reviews on (1) the Youth Offending Team and (2) Review of Jobcentre Plus Services for Residents of the Royal Borough.

### **5.1 Youth Offending Team**

An outside consultant, Mr Alan Berresford, was commissioned to carry out this review. At an initial meeting with Mr Berresford at the Committee's September meeting he discussed the scope of the review and was informed of key points that Committee Members wished to see addressed.

The Committee received Mr Berresford's full and very comprehensive report in November (a copy of the full report is available from Mr Gareth Ebenezer, whose details appear at the end). The Committee agreed with its conclusions and recommendations regarding the Youth Offending Team and a progress report on implementation of the report was received in March.

### **5.2 Review Of Jobcentre Plus Services For Residents Of The Royal Borough**

Events outside the Council have prevented this Working Party from fully completing its work. The Committee received a detailed information report on Jobcentre Plus, its programmes and activities at its meeting in February. The Committee undertook a visit to a Jobcentre Plus site in Westminster during January and was pleased that, in February, planning permission was granted for a planned Jobcentre Plus site at Kensal Road in the North of the Borough. No firm opening date has yet been announced.

### **5.3 Visits Programme**

The Committee has carried out four major outside visits in 2004/05:

- to the Youth Offending Team based at Oxford Gardens;
- a tour of the Borough's Parks with the Parks Police;
- Ladbroke Grove Fire Station; and
- a Jobcentre Plus site in Westminster.

#### **5.4 Community Safety**

A major interest of the Committee's throughout the year has been community safety and the deployment of the Borough's Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).

At the Committee's last meeting in May presentations were received from the Borough Commander, Chief Superintendent Dominic Clout on the latest crime statistics for the Borough and from other senior policemen on the Safer Neighbourhoods Programme, and Handling Domestic Violence Issues within the Police.

#### **5.5 Draft London Safety Plan**

Senior representatives of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority were present at the Committee's meeting in February for a discussion on the consultation proposals for major improvements to the capital's fire and rescue services.

As a result of the proposed reorganisation, second fire engines were to be moved away from a number of fire stations in the capital including both Kensington and Knightsbridge. The Committee received assurances from the Fire Brigade officers that Kensington and Chelsea would be giving away very little and that, overall, these proposals would lead to a great improvement in cover across London.

#### **5.6 Tabernacle Arts Centre**

In the private part of its agendas the Committee has examined serious financial problems at this particular Arts Centre in the North of the Borough. The Committee held a Special Meeting solely on this particular matter in July 2004. As at time of writing the Tabernacle is in liquidation and has closed down.

#### **5.7 Other Matters Considered**

- The Community Strategy;
- Introduction of New Grants Regime;
- Royal Borough Review of Economic Development and Regeneration;

- Current Developments in Lottery Funding;
- Street Drinking Order – Earl’s Court;
- Equality Targets;
- ALG Voluntary Sector Grants Review.

## **FOR INFORMATION**

**For further information, please contact Governance Services officers as follows:**

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