

# Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

9 February 2009



## Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme: Progress to date and forward planning 2009- 2010

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### Report of Lorraine O'Donnell Assistant Chief Executive

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#### Purpose

- 1 To update overview and scrutiny members on delivery of the overview and scrutiny work programme for the period May 2008 to March 2009; to suggest development of the overview and scrutiny work programme for the new Durham County Council for the next 12 months and beyond.

#### Information

##### Current Work Programme

- 2 Overview and Scrutiny members confirmed a work programme in June 2008 for the transitional period up to unitary local government this year.
- 3 The work programme was directly informed by County Council priorities within the context of the Sustainable Communities Strategy and Local Area Agreement priorities.

An update on the work programme is included in this report.

##### Future Work Programme

- 4 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 - extends the role of Overview and Scrutiny in relation to the following:
  - Scrutinising local targets (Local Area Agreement targets) and the performance of LAA Partners in relation to specific targets
  - Requiring information from partner organisations signed up to Local Area Agreement targets
  - Requiring partners to 'have regard to' scrutiny recommendations which relate to a relevant Local Area Agreement target
- 5 The proposed constitution for the new organisation (yet to be agreed by Council) recommends Overview and Scrutiny arrangements in line with LAA thematic blocks.

The Overview and Scrutiny work programme for the new County Council will need to be informed by the Local Area Agreement including the Sustainable Communities Strategy, Council Plan ,NHS plans and developments within local areas.

### **Delivery of the Work Programme 2008/09**

- 6 The following represents specific projects that have been worked on. It does not reflect the information members have received as part of the Overview element of Overview and Scrutiny for example progress with BSF; information on Highways Maintenance and so on.

#### **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC)**

- 7 The OSMC focussed its work on

- Contributing to the Blueprint ;
- Keeping abreast of LGR/Implementation of Unitary Local Government;
- Responding to the consultation on the Sustainable Communities Strategy ;
- Responding to the development of Area Action Partnerships;
- Contributing to the Local Area Agreement Review ;
- Contributing to the County Council's Constitution;

#### **Corporate OSC**

- 8 The above OSC focussed its work on :

- The Budget for 2009/10.

#### **Promote Strong, Healthy and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee**

- 9 The above OSC focussed its work on:

- A working group response to the issues of Community Libraries (community hub).

#### **Looking after the Environment Scrutiny Committee**

- 10 The above OSC focussed its work on:

- Progress toward delivery of a Waste Strategy and Waste procurement process.

#### **Building a Strong Economy Scrutiny Committee**

- 11 The above OSC focussed its work on:

- County Durham Economic Partnership Strategy and Action Plan.

#### **Development of Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee**

- 12 The above OSC focussed its work on:

- A Cross cutting working group looking into "Investment in Youth Services/Youth Provision"(places to go things to do).

## Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC)

- 13 The above OSC focussed its work on:
- Responding to an NHS consultation on hospital reconfiguration (Seizing The Future).
  - Participated in the sub regional review (Teesside) on health services (Momentum Pathways to Health).
  - Responding to consultation on challenging behaviour service reconfigurations by Tees, Esk and Wear Valley's Foundation Trust.

### Supporting Effective Overview and Scrutiny - Member Development Sessions

- 14 Overall four successful events were held to support members and partners gain a better understanding of the overview and scrutiny function namely:
- Two events on understanding local government finance and performance management issues (with support from the Centre for Public Scrutiny);
  - Scrutiny for non scrutineers with a focus on LAA partners;
  - Scrutiny café for co-opted representatives and Chairs and Vice Chairs of OSC's.

### Contributing to effective Regional Overview and Scrutiny:

- 15 The Chair of OS and Principle OS officer have contributed to shaping regional overview and scrutiny arrangements within the context of the SNR. They have worked closely with ANEC and other local authorities in the region.
- 16 The Health Scrutiny Liaison Manager has contributed to consolidating regional health scrutiny arrangements by leading on a regional health scrutiny seminar.

OS Committee	Work Programme Focus 2008/09	Outcome/Progress	Comment
OSMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Blueprint</li> <li>▪ LGR</li> <li>▪ SCS</li> <li>▪ Constitution</li> <li>▪ AAPs</li> <li>▪ LAA Review</li> </ul>	The OSMC has submitted detailed responses to each programme area in order to inform and influence the final outcome.	Work Programme Delivered. Chairman's remarks : <i>Members can see that this has been a very busy and productive year.</i>
Corporate OSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Budget</li> </ul>	A detailed response to the budget proposals has been submitted to Cabinet.	Work Programme Delivered. Chairman's remarks : <i>The focus of the work programme was</i>

			<i>on the budget. We needed more time and more information. We must ensure that we make an early start in next year's budget process.</i>
PSH + SC OSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Libraries/Hubs</li> </ul>	The working group is nearing completion.	Work Programme Delivered. Chairman's remarks : <i>This has been a very interesting project and will assist to improve our Library provision in the area.</i>
Economy OSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CDEP Strategy and Action Plan</li> </ul>	The OSC has shared comments on both the CDEP strategy and associated Action Plan.	Work Programme Delivered. Chairman's remarks : <i>In the present economic climate I think we should revisit the scrutiny review on worklessness; and the importance of Tourism in the County.</i>
Environment OSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Waste</li> </ul>	A project group has met to keep abreast of progress with the Waste Strategy and procurement process.	Work Programme Delivered. Chairman's remarks : <i>We are reasonably happy with the progress being made by the Scrutiny Committee on waste strategy</i>

			<p><i>and waste procurement issues. We are particularly vigilant in making sure there is no time slippage with the actual programme.</i></p> <p><i>We are also looking forward to examining the problems associated with the winter salting programme that has been referred to the committee.</i></p>
LLL OSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Investing in Youth Services/ Provision</li> </ul>	A cross cutting working group (with PSH + SC) is nearing completion.	<p>Work Programme Delivered.</p> <p>Chairman's remarks : <i>Working with young people has been a productive and positive experience. We have an informative dialogue with young people. We must listen to their views.</i></p>
Health OSC JHOSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NHS Consultation - Seizing the Future</li> <li>▪ Momentum Pathways To Health</li> <li>▪ Challenging behaviour (TEWV)</li> </ul>	A working group met to respond to both the consultations. Reports done and submitted to the NHS.	<p>Work Programme Delivered.</p> <p>Chairman's remarks : <i>An important part of our work was to go out and see first hand our hospitals in the area. This has</i></p>

			<i>proved an invaluable part of scrutiny.</i>
Member Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Finance Seminar</li> <li>▪ Performance Seminar</li>   <li>▪ Scrutiny for non scrutineers seminar</li>   <li>▪ Co-optee seminar</li> </ul>	<p>A better understanding of finance and performance issues, processes and information.</p> <p>Raised awareness of the scrutiny function amongst partner organisations with a view to scrutiny of LAA.</p> <p>Co-opted members better informed about their role and contribution in the scrutiny process</p>	Work Programme Delivered.
Regional OS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chairing the member and officer regional overview and scrutiny network</li> </ul>	Providing leadership for effective regional scrutiny arrangements.	<p>Work Programme Delivered.</p> <p>Chairman's remarks :  <i>Progress in this area continues. Our relationship with ANEC and the Regional OS Members Network is an important one.</i></p>

## Recommendation

- 17 That overview and scrutiny members note delivery of the work programme for 2008/09 and comment accordingly. Members should also have cognisance of work that has taken place in our District councils and build on that as examples of best practice for any future scrutiny work in the new Council.
  
- 18 That work to agree the next phase of the work programme (2009/10) begin with discussions with the County Council's leadership and the County Durham Partnership and the leadership of each LAA thematic board to gain a better understanding of their priorities with a view to assisting overview and scrutiny agree its work programme within the context of the Sustainable Communities Strategy, LAA and Council Plan and statutory requirements for health scrutiny.

- 19 Members are asked to note that an important consideration for the overview and scrutiny work programme must be to include:
- i) the effectiveness of AAPs once they begin to embed.
  - ii) Responding to local issues either via Councillor call for Action, managing the petitions process and /or undertaking a light touch review on a community concern not captured by AAPs,CCAs or the petitions process.

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