

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2006/2007 REPORT NO.

MEETING TITLE AND DATE:

COUNCIL
- 28 June 2006

REPORT OF:

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda - Part: 1	Item:
Subject: ENFIELD'S SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2005/06 WARDS: None Specific	
Cabinet Members consulted: N/A	

Contact officer and telephone number:

John Austin & Mike Ahuja (Corporate Leads on Scrutiny)
Tel: 020 8379 4094/5044

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council Constitution requires the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to prepare and present an Annual Report to Council detailing the work undertaken by the Council's scrutiny function over the last Municipal Year.
- 1.2 A copy of the Scrutiny Annual Report 2005/06 has been attached for consideration and endorsement, prior to publication.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Council considers and endorses the Scrutiny Annual Report 2005/06 for publication;
- 2.2 That Council notes the areas identified as future challenges for Enfield's scrutiny function within the Annual Report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This is the seventh annual report on the scrutiny process in Enfield and the fourth produced by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.2 Production of the Annual Report is based on a belief that the scrutiny function needs (periodically) to turn the spotlight on itself, to identify what has worked well and what could work better. The Annual Report aims to fulfil that need by

offering a factual record of scrutiny activity over the previous year along with an evaluation of the work undertaken and its key outcomes.

- 3.4 The Annual Report covers the work of each of the Council's six Scrutiny Panels and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Reference has also been included to the work of the Joint Scrutiny Commission on Transporting People, which was completed during 2005/06. Its structure and content has been designed and approved by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and each Panel has provided details on
- (a) the key achievements/outcomes from the work they have undertaken during 2005/06 – focussed on the following areas (identified as the key objectives for scrutiny under Local Government 2000):
 - Monitoring and improving Service performance, Council Policies & Procedures;
 - Holding the Executive to account;
 - Engaging and involving the local community, partners and other stakeholders.
 - (b) review of scrutiny work process – an assessment of areas that have worked well and improvement opportunities;
 - (c) items to be rolled forward onto each Panel's future work programme.
- 3.5 As well as highlighting the varied work undertaken by individual Panels the Annual Report also has a key role to play in raising awareness and the profile of the Council's scrutiny function, not only within the Authority but also amongst its external partners/stakeholders and with the public.
- 3.6 The Annual Report concludes by looking forward and identifying a number of key challenges to be addressed by the Council's scrutiny function over the coming year.
- 3.7 Specific developments focussed upon during 2005/06 include:
- (a) the fact that the scrutiny function was again subject to external inspection during 2005/06, this time as part of the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) corporate inspection. As part of the Council's overall assessment the scrutiny function received broad praise for the manner in which it conducted its business, with the Audit Commission stating that scrutiny was "working well overall" and that the Council in general "has an open approach to learning and welcomes external scrutiny". In terms of areas for improvement, the Audit Commission commented upon a "lack of consistent dedicated support for scrutiny". This has been picked up as an issue within the Council's CPA Action Plan and also recognised by Overview & Scrutiny Committee, who were already looking at ways to improve the overall level of support available to the Scrutiny Panels. The results of the inspection are felt to provide the Council's scrutiny

function with a strong platform from which to build and develop over future years.

- (b) the Best Value Review of the Scrutiny function, commenced by the Council during 2005/06. The review is currently being completed with any recommendations made as a result forming one of the key areas for scrutiny to focus its development around over future years.

3.8 The Annual Report has been presented in draft form and, subject to endorsement by Council, will then be published in its final format.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

To comply with the requirements of the Council's Constitution.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

None

6. DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & CORPORATE RESOURCES COMMENTS

All costs associated with the production and publication of the Scrutiny Annual Report 2005/06 will be contained within the current budget allocated to the Council's scrutiny function.

7. PUTTING ENFIELD FIRST

The work undertaken by Enfield's Scrutiny Panels during 2005/06 and ongoing into future years can be seen to have an impact on all of the aims within Putting Enfield First:

- Aim 1 – A Cleaner Greener Enfield
- Aim 2 – High Quality Education and Lifelong Learning
- Aim 3 – A Safer Enfield to Live, Work, Study and do Business
- Aim 4 – Quality Health and Care Services for Vulnerable People in Enfield;
- Aim 5 – Supporting the Delivery of Excellent Services
- Aim 6 – Economically Successful and Socially Inclusive;

Background Papers:

None