

Scrutiny

in Richmond upon Thames 2008 - 2009



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Introduction

Welcome to the annual report for 2008-09. The aim of this report is to reflect on the work that has been done this year and to outline the priorities for the next twelve months.

Following the independent review, carried out by Professor Leach in 2007/08, overview and scrutiny now enjoys a higher profile and is firmly established as a force for change and improvements. However, scrutiny has to continually adapt and respond to meet the many challenges ahead. Professor Leach returned to Richmond upon Thames in March (2009) and his “Review of Progress” has helped us to identify areas where further change is still needed – section 6 summarises his assessment.

2009-10 looks set to be another challenging year, which will see involvement with the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), continuing involvement with budget related issues and using new legislative powers, such as those relating to crime and disorder, the Councillor Call for Action and the scrutiny of partnerships.

I look forward to updating you on our progress and if you would like to contribute to the scrutiny process, or have ideas for areas which you think should be scrutinised, we welcome your suggestions. You will find a suggestion form on the website www.richmond.gov.uk/scrutiny or you can contact the Scrutiny Team directly via phone **020 8891 7158** or email scrutiny@richmond.gov.uk

Cllr Sue Jones

Chair of the Co-ordination, Finance and Performance Commission



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Comment from the Chief Executive

Within the last year scrutiny has further developed and improved. From the early days of being concerned only with the Council's own functions, scrutiny is evolving into a process which concerns itself with the actions of a whole variety of organisations which can have an impact on the lives of people in the borough.

This process has been encouraged by legislation which has introduced greater accountability across a range of service providers. Health services, the police, voluntary sector organisations and a range of bodies appointed by the government now work closely with the council to provide many of the services that matter to residents. It is right that all partners in this process remain accountable and that the quality of services delivered are tested to ensure continuous improvement.

Like last year, I am pleased to report that the Council worked with local partners on a variety of scrutiny issues. This is amply demonstrated by the Task Group report on Small Business. The timing of this review allowed scrutiny to contribute to a Recession Action Plan for the short to medium term, and to proposals for developing a longer term economic strategy.

Looking to the future, I believe that one of the most important of Professor Leach's recommendations was that relating to developing a policy for scrutinising the performance of partners in achieving agreed LAA and Community Plan targets.

The Co-ordination, Finance and Performance Commission have started to look at possible approaches to increase scrutiny's involvement in partnership activity and I am keen to see this adding value to the new Comprehensive Area Assessment.

Gillian Norton
Chief Executive

Overview and Scrutiny in Richmond upon Thames

The most common definition of Overview and Scrutiny is that of the decision-maker's 'critical friend'. There are two parts to this. The first is the 'Overview' part: shaping of future policy in conjunction with the Executive. The second is the 'Scrutiny' part: holding decision-makers to account for decisions already taken.

The purpose of Scrutiny in Richmond upon Thames is defined on our website as the four roles set out in each of the statements below. Beneath them, we have added further detail to describe the ways in which these roles can be carried out.

Provide "Critical Friend" Challenge

- Challenge via scrutiny should be constructive, robust and purposeful
- Scrutiny should work effectively with the Cabinet and senior management
- Scrutiny should provide an effective mechanism for the executive to demonstrate public accountability

Reflect the voice and concerns of the public and its communities

- Scrutiny should take a community leadership role by focusing on issues of public concern
- Scrutiny should have a constructive relationship with the press and media

- Scrutiny should create the conditions for plural views and concerns to be taken into account, particularly those of minority groups

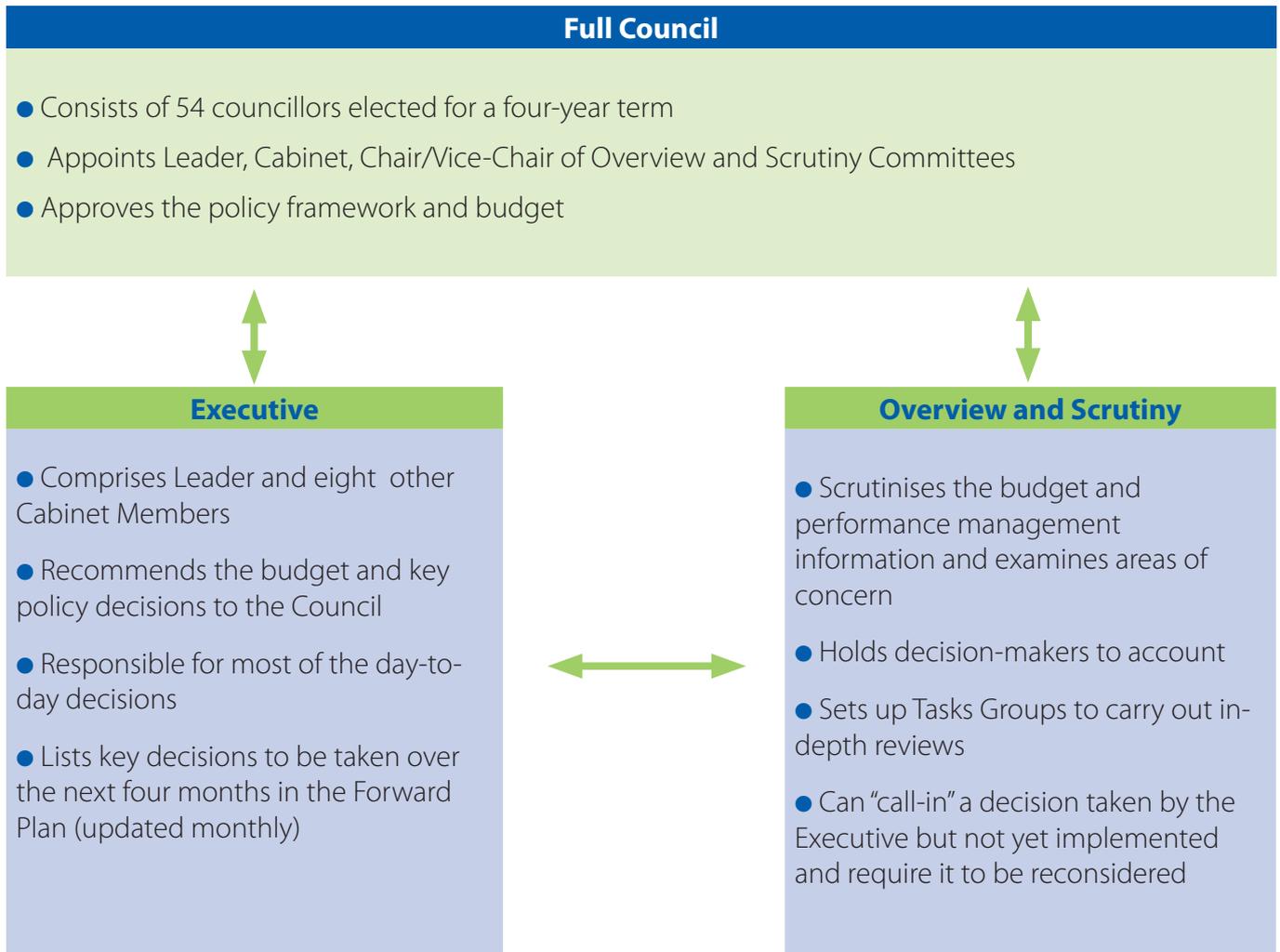
Take the lead and own the scrutiny process

- Scrutiny should operate with political impartiality
- Scrutiny should have ownership of its own work programme
- Scrutiny members should have a worthwhile and fulfilling role

Makes an impact on service delivery

- Scrutiny should have access to timely and accurate performance information
- The scrutiny work-programme should be balanced, well co-ordinated and integrated into corporate processes
- Scrutiny work should be carried out with strategic objectives in mind
- Scrutiny should contribute to improvement in local public services

Overview and Scrutiny is one of the three distinct but interconnected parts of the political structure in the Authority. The different roles and responsibilities are shown in the flow chart on page 6.



N.B. There are also non-Executive decision-making Committees (e.g. Planning, Regulatory)
As of July 2009

Main Overview and Scrutiny Committees

In 2007/08 there were five Overview and Scrutiny Committees. There was also an Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group which acted as a forum for Chairs and Vice-Chairs to look at the operation and effectiveness of scrutiny.

However, in May 2008, following an independent review of the Council's scrutiny function, Council agreed to change its committee structure for the 2008/09 municipal year.

The number of committees has been reduced to four:

- The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group (re-titled the Co-ordination, Finance and Performance Commission) has been strengthened to:
 - ◆ encompass the functions of the Finance and Strategy OSC;
 - ◆ have lead responsibility for performance review (including the performance of partnership working, such as the Local Area Agreement);
 - ◆ have responsibility for the scrutiny of partnerships and the voluntary sector;
 - ◆ have a more explicit link with the Council's Cabinet;
 - ◆ have a strengthened capacity to commission external scrutiny reviews;
 - ◆ have a more explicit responsibility to ensure overview and scrutiny in Richmond upon Thames operates consistently and effectively.
 - **The Co-ordination, Finance and Performance Commission** works with three committees who have specific briefs detailed below:
 - **Children's Services OSC** has the same remit as the Education and Children's Services OSC and now has responsibility for children's health as well.
 - **Environment and Sustainability OSC** has similar responsibilities to its predecessor of the same name.
 - **Health, Housing and Social Care OSC** has in effect merged the roles of the Health OSC and the Adult Social Care and Housing OSC. This merger is congruent with the increasing trend towards a joint approach to Health and Adult Social Care Services.
- However, in view of the workload of this amalgamated Committee, it was agreed that it would retain responsibility for adult health only with children's health being transferred to Children's Services (as stated above).

Co-ordination, Finance & Performance Commission

Much of the work of this Committee has been devoted to monitoring the authority's budget, performance and strategic direction. In doing this it has discussed and commented on a number of performance monitoring and budgetary reports as set out below:

- Revenue Budget Variances on catering, printing and corporate property maintenance
- Update on 2007 staff survey
- Corporate Plan 2009-2010
- Revenue Budget Strategy and Council Tax 2009/10
- Finance and Corporate Services and Central Items Budget 2009/10
- Treasury Management Strategy and Policy 2009/10

The Committee has also considered and commented on a number of important issues during the past year. In September the Commission received a report summarising the process followed for the Teddington School re-build project. This project has been developed under the Government's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) 15-year programme, which enables every local authority (LA) to transform their secondary school estate. It aims to change the educational experience

for pupils and teachers and to increase opportunities for life-long learning for the wider community. The Commission recommended, amongst other things, that the Chair of Governors of Teddington School and the Head Teacher of Teddington School continue working with the Council, both during and after the project, to share best practice with other schools in the borough.

Also in September the Commission considered ways of improving Area Consultation

Meetings (ACMs) in the light of recent legislation, the Empowerment White Paper, and changing public expectations. The findings of the working group will be reported back to the Commission in September 2009.

The Commission has carefully monitored and reviewed the Twickenham Riverside Scheme on a number of occasions. In particular, the meeting on 10 March was dedicated to reviewing the draft River Centre Business Plan. The Committee also heard representations from members of the public. The Commission will be reviewing the full business plan in September/October 2009. The Committee also agreed to a number of task groups to look in more detail at performance management and secondly at business and employment support to small businesses. Both task groups have reported back to the Commission.

The Committee Chair, Councillor Sue Jones, says:

"The work done by the Commission is varied and needs to be seen in context with the vast amount of work done by the Council. The Commission can look at anything where we the members believe we can add value and maybe achieve more cost effective and efficient outcomes for our residents. It is an opportunity for backbench Councillors and Co-optees to look at proposals brought forward by the Administration either prior to those proposals being brought to fruition or already in progress.

The meetings we hold, the task groups set up, all help to look more closely and critically at proposals or specific areas where we have concerns or interest. We call witnesses and look in depth to see if improvements can be made or things done more effectively which will benefit our residents."

Children's Services OSC

Some very high profile issues have been scrutinised by the committee during the period.

- In response to the circumstances surrounding the death of baby P in Haringey, the committee held a special meeting in March to scrutinise Richmond's policy on safeguarding children. Although Richmond's overall effectiveness in children's services was assessed as outstanding by Ofsted in 2008, the committee required assurances from officers that all the necessary mechanisms were in place and working effectively. Although members were reminded that no firm guarantees could be made that

such an incident would never happen at Richmond, they recommended the good work being done by the directorate.

- The Academies programme planned for three of the borough's secondary schools also generated much response, including a special meeting in September, where speakers and participants included representatives of the two selected sponsors (as at that time), the Director of Education, and members of the public.

In regular meetings, the committee has scrutinised a wide range of policies and practice, for example the degree of consultation used in



the development of the new Children and Young People's Plan; how the modernisation of the Youth Service has increased participation; and how the new anti-bullying strategy might be evaluated over time in order to demonstrate its effectiveness.

Environment and Sustainability OSC

The committee has dedicated a lot of time this year to looking at 'green' issues. This included energy options for the Twickenham civic campus and CO2 based parking charges for Council-run car parks.

There have also been a number of

call-ins put before the committee which included Cabinet Member Decisions relating to traffic calming measures in Fairfax Road, Teddington; a Car Club bay in Albert Road, Teddington and the St Margarets Controlled Parking Zone.



The committee reviewed the existing arrangements for CO2 based charges for Controlled Parking Zones. It made a number of recommendations, some of which were adopted by the Cabinet Member. One of these was to make parking permits free to users of vehicles whose emissions fit into 'Band A'.

The Surface Water Flooding Task Group reported to the Committee this year and there were a number of recommendations which have been taken up and are currently being implemented. The Committee also set up a Task Group to look at the provision of allotments and how they should be managed as part of the ten-year Allotments Strategy.

Health, Housing and Social Care OSC

The Committee continued its work on reviewing local mental health services and overseeing progress on implementation. Changes and modernisation to community mental health services were agreed but given the continuing concern of users and carers they would be monitoring their implementation and reporting back.

The Primary Care Trust's 4 month consultation on proposals to decommission continuing care beds at St John's Hospital and to re-provision the service with Caring Homes took place. The O&S committee agreed to their proposals going ahead within the wider context of their commissioning strategy for more investment in services for earlier diagnosis and intervention.

The Chair joined Councillors from across London and West Essex to scrutinise the plans for the implementation of Healthcare for London's changes to stroke & major trauma services. The proposals for stroke services

envisage 8 networks of hyper-acute stroke units each linked to a number of stroke units. For major trauma services there are likely to be 4 major trauma centres each linked to a number of trauma centres. The Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) held 6 meetings between February & May to listen to the views of a wide range of expert witnesses. The JHOSC considered the proposals fundamentally sound and broadly supported what they saw as potentially the way forward in ending the postcode lottery that currently exists for these services. They delivered a joint response for what they considered was best for London, working together to benefit all residents and neighbouring areas.

The Committee participated in the Healthcare Commission's Annual Healthcheck for Richmond & Twickenham the PCT and the South West London & St George's Mental Health Trust. They were pleased to note that the PCT was compliant with all its targets and that there had been an improvement in the performance of SWL & StG MHT.

A presentation on the personalisation agenda, including self directed support, and its local implementation was held to give more insight into the implications for delivery of social services and the potential for people to tailor care to their individual needs. This sits within a wider context of the personalisation of public services and pilots are starting



soon, including one in Richmond, for personal health budgets. The O&S committee will watch with interest to see how successful these changes are and if there is any de-stabilisation of local services.

Significant changes in the organisation of health services in London took place during the year, including the collaboration of PCTs in SW London to strengthen commissioning for acute care and the proposals for separating the provider services of PCTs from their commissioning function. This is all intended to help drive forward the proposals for Healthcare for London. The O&S Committee is concerned that these changes do not detract from the development of integrated borough based services and will be keeping this under review.

The other areas scrutinised during the year included: the role and activities of Richmond LINK; the PCT Commissioning Strategy Plan; Medicine Prescribing across the Primary and Secondary Care interface; the Alcohol Strategy action plan; Older People's day care & support services; Adult & community services fees & charges; Adult Social Care rating; Choice based lettings.



Scrutiny Task Groups

Task groups are smaller than Committees and are set up to examine specific issues in detail, which means they tend to work more flexibly and informally. They are made up of between 3-6 members and have the support of a dedicated Scrutiny Officer.

Each task group sets itself clear terms of reference. The group refers to these throughout the review, particularly when it is deciding what information to gather and what witnesses to hear from. A task group can obtain information through many different media, including face-to-face interviews; questionnaires; focus groups; site visits; reports; and written submissions. The most common witnesses are Council Officers, representatives from partner agencies and service users.

When a task group has finished gathering evidence, it reports its findings to the relevant Overview and

Scrutiny Committee and recommends achievable improvements or developments. The group's report is discussed by the Committee, and if approved, is sent to the Council's Cabinet. Cabinet has a duty to respond to the recommendations and will decide whether to fully accept, partially accept or reject them. Sometimes the task group will also make recommendations to partner organisations, such as the NHS Primary Care Trust.

Six months later, the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives an update report which outlines the progress made in implementing the accepted recommendations. This allows the Committee to ensure that the improvements identified in the report are delivered.

Over the last twelve months, the following issues have been reviewed via a task group:

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services

Last summer the task group considered the new joint commissioning strategy to Promote & Develop Services for the Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health of Young People. They were ably assisted by members of the Borough Youth Forum who met with task group members to discuss their views. The young people expressed concern about accessibility of services, opening times, confidentiality and the stigma attached to using services, they would prefer services that would cover a range of issues not just mental health. The task group fed their comments back to the PCT and the PCT has reported on the progress of their action

plan, which was mixed. Disappointingly, there has not yet been a Joint Children's Commissioner appointed and progress has been slow on the establishment of Primary Mental Health Workers. However the commitment to establishing additional counselling services was welcomed.

The task group recommended that the progress on services for mental health and well being for young people was followed up by the Children's Services O&SC and they arranged to meet again with representatives of the borough's Youth Forum.

Public consultation

The Council is committed to undertaking a significant and wide-ranging amount of public consultations in the course of a year, and the conduct of these is generally well regarded across the borough.

However, it became evident to the Co-ordination, Finance and Performance Commission that some residents and local amenity groups were questioning the openness of the consultation process, and it was decided that an in-depth scrutiny task group was an ideal way to investigate these concerns.

One of the main functions of a task group is to take evidence from carefully selected witnesses, and in this case submissions were provided by an academic expert in local government, officers

from two of our own directorates carrying out a substantial number of public consultations, a RuT partner (Richmond Housing Partnership), a local learning disability voluntary organisation (CORLD), and a number of members of the public who presented their views under the banner of the Richmond United Group.

A recurring theme that emerged from the evidence was the need for clarity over when the Council was informing residents of decisions that had already been taken and when it was inviting opinions from the public in order to help determine the way forward.

The group reported back to the Commission in April 2009 and Cabinet approved the majority of the recommendations in early June.

Parental engagement in children's education

A task group has been set up by the Children's Services O&S Committee to look at how parents can help their children to reach higher levels of educational attainment at secondary school, and the strategies Richmond schools employ to encourage such involvement.

Published research shows that young people improve their academic results when their parents or carers are involved, particularly if this support extends into the home. Although secondary results in the borough have been steadily improving, the task group is keen to identify any initiatives that might help further.

The group comprises three Councillors and one co-opted member, all of whom have children who have been or are currently going through secondary education.

To date, members have:

- asked our eight secondary schools about the parental engagement methods they use and the degree of success of each;
- visited a school in north London, which is a well-known example of good practice in parental engagement;
- met with a group of parents from one of our own secondary schools, to learn if and how they continue to be involved in their children's education;
- talked to small groups of teachers and of students at another school.

Early in the autumn, the group will analyse findings and develop recommendations

Dementia

The remit of the task group was to review existing services in Richmond and establish how they relate to the National Dementia Strategy (NDS), identify gaps in current services and set out a view for future services. Task group members responded individually to the national consultation and contributed to Richmond's response.



The task group consulted with a wide range of witnesses from the statutory & voluntary sector and individual sufferers and carers, including:

- Richmond & Twickenham PCT to discuss their work on a commissioning strategy for dementia services and joint working
- A representative of the Alzheimer's Society to discuss the role of the voluntary sector in dementia care and support.
- Representatives of the task group visited the Croydon Memory Service to hear more about their integrated approach to the mental health of older adults, which provides a seamless service for health and social care needs.
- Adult Social Care to discuss their views on service provision, the role of self-directed support, joint commissioning and integration of services
- Carers met with individual members of the task group at the Caring Cafe
- Homelink a voluntary sector daycare respite service gave their views on how effective respite services can be offered to carers
- A Consultant Psychiatrist from the Mental Health Trust briefed the task group on a range of issues and set out the MHT's views on how services can develop to respond to the national strategy and place more emphasis on prevention, early detection and intervention
- A leading telecare company gave a presentation on the role technology can play to enable sufferers to maintain independence.

The task group did not specifically investigate the provision of continuing care services for advanced dementia sufferers but considered that a good provision of high quality care needs to be maintained and kept under close scrutiny.

Meeting the challenges of dementia requires all stakeholders to work together to jointly commission and provide a seamless, integrated service that is easily accessible to users. The importance of early diagnosis and intervention was an overwhelming theme during the witness sessions. The task group were keen to highlight the importance of

'Care before Crisis' to improve the quality of life for sufferers and carers alike.

The Task Group was pleased to see that there is so much work developing within the Borough, which must be encouraged and sustained. The work of the voluntary sector and their importance to carers and cared for was noted and the need for their work to be underpinned by stable funding arrangements highlighted.

The task group was due to report to the O&S Committee in June.

Performance Management

The Audit Commission's Corporate Assessment, published in December 2007, raised a number of issues around the Council's arrangements for performance management.

Given these concerns, the Co-ordination, Finance and Performance Commission established a task group to investigate the Council's performance management framework.

The task group received information from a variety of witnesses including an academic, an Audit Commission officer, the Leader, Cabinet Member for Performance, Chief Executive, the Directors, the police and the Primary Care Trust.

Members also interviewed members and officers from four Councils highly-rated for their work on performance management.

Chairman of the Group, Councillor Geoffrey Samuel, says: "The remit of the group was to investigate the Audit Commission's findings and to consider ways of making improvements. We readily agreed that the principal difference between Richmond upon Thames and the four "excellent" Councils was one of culture."

The task group's final report was presented to Cabinet in January 2009, where all six of the task group's recommendations were accepted.

Small Business

The Small Business Task Group was set up, on 15 January 2009, in response to the economic downturn and worked closely with Cabinet and other stakeholders while carrying out its investigation.

The timing of the review allowed scrutiny to contribute to a Recession Action Plan for the short to medium term, and to proposals for developing a longer term strategy for how the Council and partners can assist local businesses during these difficult times.

As well as contributing to the work being carried out by Cabinet and the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) the task group made a number of other suggestions relating to issues such as: car parking, skills and workforce support, communication and sign-posting, small business rate relief, change of use, credit unions, strategic priorities, and the home based business sector.

The group's final report was presented to the Co-ordination, Finance and Performance



Commission on the 23 June where it was agreed that an Executive Response should be prepared for September Cabinet.

Cllr Brian Miller, chair of the task group says: "The task group has been an active partner working with the Council to create new initiatives in both support for the small business sector and in formulating parking policies. Cllr Acton's contributions as the Cabinet's Business Champion have been welcomed. We see this as a good example of how Overview and Scrutiny should operate by working alongside decision makers in the borough."

Allotments

In December an Allotments Task Group was set up to:

- look at the current management of allotments
- hear evidence from interested and relevant parties
- consider how the Council can respond to the current high level of demand, which has led to most sites closing their waiting lists to new applicants.



The task group visited nine of the borough's allotment sites and held a public meeting in February, when over 150 people came to give their views. Cllr Jonathan Cardy, chair of the task group, presented the group's findings to the Environment and Sustainability Committee in June.

The group's suggestions include measures to meet the demand for allotments such as: Bringing disused allotment land back into use as allotments, where appropriate subdividing larger allotments when their holders retire, and a probation period for new allotment holders. As well as other recommendations including reducing the impact of bonfires by measures such as making composting compulsory, and opening the waiting lists (which at some sites had been closed due to excess demand).

These recommendations, together with feedback from members of the public at the June Committee meeting, have provided officers with clear direction for drafting a strategy for the future management of allotments in the borough. This ten year strategy will be presented to the Environment and Sustainability OSC in draft form in September.

Cllr Jerry Elloy, chairman of Environment and Sustainability said:

"There are hundreds of people who want to get closer to nature by growing their own food, and we as a Council need to think of new ways to help them. Ideas like these from the task group will certainly help."



The Leach Report – “Review of Progress”

It's now 18 months since Professor Leach's review of overview and scrutiny in Richmond upon Thames. The majority of his recommendations were approved at the start of the 2008/09 Council year. In January he was invited to facilitate a seminar (held in March) to review the progress that had been made, and to identify areas where further change was needed.

Overall, Professor Leach's findings were positive. He noted that a good deal of progress had been made since his 2008 report. He was particularly impressed by the following developments, all of which were endorsed in positive terms at the seminar (though not necessarily unanimously)

- the initiation of meetings between the Cabinet and Co-ordination, Finance and Performance Commission
- the overview and scrutiny chairs meetings which have been introduced
- the increased emphasis on training and development for overview and scrutiny members, including the visits to Hounslow and Merton

- improvements in the operation of overview and scrutiny meetings, including the use of briefing papers and the limitation in the number of items to be considered at each committee meeting to 3 or 4
- the increasing awareness of the use of task groups, and the move to introduce shorter “spotlight” reviews where appropriate, such as the mini review on the scheduling of road works by utility companies
- the use of external expert witnesses to add value to the work of the task groups and committees

All of these developments can be viewed in positive terms and are in line with good practice elsewhere. However, valuable though they are, they are essentially means rather than ends in themselves. The discussion at the seminar suggested that there remained obstacles in the extent to which these changes could maximise their potential for delivering an effective and influential overview and scrutiny function.

In his “Review of Progress” Professor Leach states:

“The best way of characterising the situation is to say there are still issues in the way in which Overview and Scrutiny operates in Richmond which need further attention. The two most difficult issues to deal with relate to the role of party politics in Richmond upon Thames (as manifested in particular in the operation of the Commission and the way in which the call-in system is being used). There also remains concern (despite undoubted improvements) about agenda planning and the identification of appropriate topics for task-and-finish groups. The effectiveness with which the Cabinet members are scrutinised is still uneven. And finally the challenge of clarifying the role of Overview and Scrutiny in partnership working (LAA, LSP etc) requires further thought, in light of the 2007 Local Government Act.”

Professor Leach's “Review of Progress” can be viewed in full via www.richmond.gov.uk/scrutiny. Introducing the requisite changes will be a priority for scrutiny in 2009/10.

Update on the work of our co-opted members

Richmond upon Thames O&S committees have 15 co-opted members, four of whom are statutory (parent governor and church representatives on Children's Services) and the remainder of whom are members of the public representing a special interest in particular and / or their local community in general.

Councillors hold the contribution made by these co-opted members in high regard but wanted

to know how the co-optees themselves view the experience, and if it could be improved in any respect.

So, in addition to hosting an evening reception to thank them for their input, we asked them to provide some structured feedback, by way of a questionnaire. The level of co-optee commitment was confirmed by the fact that all responded to the questionnaire.

- Overall, co-optees feel they have an important part to play and that they are valued by elected members. They bring a specialised and independent viewpoint which complements the in-depth and historic knowledge of local issues demonstrated by elected members.
- RuT's model requires co-optees to serve a four year term and on balance our co-optees feel that this is realistic. It provides continuity, and the opportunity to build up familiarity with the O&S process and, for some, the space to build personal confidence.
- One of the things we learned from the research is that, in the past, we have not offered as much early support to co-optees as we should. Some attend their first meeting without any real familiarity with the structure of the Council or with the workings of O&S; we are now preparing a more formal induction process and exploring other ways in which we might help.
- However, the training opportunities throughout tenure are considered to be plentiful, and an additional attraction for those considering becoming a co-optee in the future.
- The research revealed that co-optees derive considerable job satisfaction from the experience, and nowhere more so than in task groups, as these provide the experience to work in a small cross-party group and conduct highly focused research on topics that have real significance to the community.

The current group of cohorts will reach the end of their term in May 2010 and we will then be looking to advertise once again.

Our research has confirmed that co-opting is an effective way of participating in local democracy, and contributing to one's own community.

Moreover there is the chance to increase skills and experience, take advantage of training and, not least, develop a personal network of councillors, officers, local residents and business people, council partners and external contacts.

Get involved in Scrutiny

One of the key roles for scrutiny is to work on behalf of residents to address the issues that are causing concern to people who live and work in the Borough. We are using this report to tell you what we have done and we want you to tell us what you think we should be doing next. Please use the contact details below if you would like us to focus on a particular issue in the future.

All agendas and minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Committees as well as reports from Scrutiny Task Groups are available by following the links on the website. Hard copies of agendas and reports are also available from public libraries and on request from the Council's scrutiny team.

Last year a wide range of individuals and organisations assisted us in our work, including:

- The Audit Commission
- The Institute of Local Government Studies
- Local Schools
- NHS Richmond (formerly known as Richmond & Twickenham PCT)
- Richmond upon Thames Borough Police
- The Voluntary Sector
- Other Local Authorities
- The Centre for Public Scrutiny
- Richmond Chamber of Commerce
- Richmond Housing Partnership
- Current and prospective allotment holders

But we are not content to leave it there, and have identified several opportunities for increasing public participation in scrutiny. In 2009 / 10, the scrutiny team will be looking closely at the following options:

- making more use of focus groups, in order to gain greater exposure to public opinion in informal settings
- taking some meetings out of council offices and closer to the community or issue in question
- making meetings that take place in council offices more accessible through use of technology
- ensuring that all publicity material is inclusive

and accessible by ethnic, faith, community and voluntary groups, and people with disabilities

- providing brief and easy to understand scrutiny guides for those who may be involved
- improving the scrutiny section of the public website
- raising the profile of co-opting (as described in section 7).

Members involved in scrutiny would like to thank everyone, including Cabinet Members and senior officers, for their support in 2008 / 09. We look forward to working together in 2009 / 10 to ensure scrutiny in Richmond upon Thames makes a positive difference to all.

What Scrutiny doesn't do:

Please remember that Overview and Scrutiny is not an individual complaints system. The role of Overview and Scrutiny is not to look at individual complaints but at general policy areas and major decisions taken by the Cabinet. If you have a complaint about how your case has been treated

by the Council please call the main Council switchboard on 020 8891 1411 or visit Richmond Council's Complaints page on the website: www.richmond.gov.uk/complaints_procedure

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Dates for 2009/10

Co-ordination, Finance & Performance Commission	Children's Services OSC	Environment & Sustainability OSC	Health, Housing & Social Care OSC
8 Oct 2009	7 July 2009	23 Sept 2009	16 Sept 2009
11 Nov 2009	30 Sept 2009	10 Nov 2009	18 Nov 2009
27 Jan 2010	5 Nov 2009	19 Jan 2010	13 Jan 2010
17 Feb 2010	24 Nov 2009	9 March 2010	16 March 2010
23 March 2010	28 Jan 2010		
	24 March 2010		

Please note: O&S Committee meetings will be held at 7.00pm in York House. Members of the public are welcome to attend. Dates can sometimes change so please check the website: www.richmond.gov.uk/scrutiny or contact the Scrutiny Team via telephone 020 8891 7158.

Appendix A – Committee Chairs and Officer Support

CO-ORDINATION, FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE COMMISSION	
Chair	Cllr Jones
Vice-Chair	Cllr Jones
No. of Councillors	10
No. of Co-opted Members	1
Committee Manager	Thayyiba Shaah t: 020 8891 7191 or e: thayyiba.shaah@richmond.gov.uk
Scrutiny support	Christian Scade t: 020 8891 7158 or e: christian.scade@richmond.gov.uk

CHILDREN'S SERVICES O&S COMMITTEE	
Chair	Cllr Nicholson
Vice-Chair	Cllr Marlow
No. of Councillors	9
No. of Co-opted Members	4
Committee Manager	Gary Lelliott t: 020 8891 7275 or e: gary.elliott@richmond.gov.uk
Scrutiny support	Glenna McCulloch t: 020 8891 7760 or e: glenna.mcculloch@richmond.gov.uk

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY O&S COMMITTEE	
Chair	Cllr Elloy
Vice-Chair	Cllr Seymour
No. of Councillors	9
No. of Co-opted Members	4
Committee Manager	Gary Lelliott t: 020 8891 7275 or e: gary.elliott@richmond.gov.uk
Scrutiny support	Christian Scade t: 020 8891 7158 or e: christian.scade@richmond.gov.uk

HEALTH, HOUSING AND SOCIAL CARE O&S COMMITTEE	
Chair	Cllr Urquhart
Vice-Chair	Cllr Stratton
No. of Councillors	9
No. of Co-opted Members	6
Committee Manager	Gary Lelliott t: 020 8891 7275 or e: gary.elliott@richmond.gov.uk
Scrutiny support	Bernadette Lee t: 020 8891 7761 or e: Bernadette.Lee@richmond.gov.uk

The Scrutiny team can be contacted on t: 020 8891 7158 or email: scrutiny@richmond.gov.uk

Appendix B – Facts and Figures

Budget spends on Scrutiny (excluding staffing costs):

Municipal Year 2008 - 2009	£10,106
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No. of call-ins:

Committee	Municipal Year 2008 – 2009
Children's Services OSC	0
Co-ordination, Finance and Performance Commission	0
Environment and Sustainability OSC	4
Health, Housing and Social Care OSC	0

No. of meetings:

Committee	Municipal Year 2008 – 2009
Children's Services OSC	7
Co-ordination, Finance and Performance Commission	7
Environment and Sustainability OSC	8
Health, Housing and Social Care OSC	6

Scrutiny in Richmond upon Thames

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London Borough of Richmond upon Thames,
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Richmond Road,
Twickenham TW1 3AA

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E-mail: **scrutiny@richmond.gov.uk**

Website: **http://www.richmond.gov.uk/scrutiny**

Albanian

Nese keni veshtersi per te kuptuar kete botim, ju lutemi ejani ne recepcionin ne adresen e shenuar me poshte ku ne mund te organizojme perkthime nepermjet telefonit.

Arabic

إذا كانت لديك صعوبة في فهم هذا المنشور، فنرجو زيارة الإستقبال في العنوان المعطى أدناه حيث بإمكاننا أن نرتب لخدمة ترجمة شفوية هاتفية.

Bengali

এই প্রকাশনার অর্থ বুঝতে পারায় যদি আপনার কোন সমস্যা হয়, নিচে দেওয়া ঠিকানায় রিসেপশন-এ চলে আসুন যেখানে আমরা আপনাকে টেলিফোনে দোভাষীর সেবা প্রদানের ব্যবস্থা করতে পারবো।

Farsi

اگر در فهمیدن این نشریه مشکل دارید، لطفاً به میز پذیرش در آدرس قید شده در زیر رجوع فرمایید تا سرویس ترجمه تلفنی برایتان فراهم آورده شود.

Gujarati

જો તમને આ પુસ્તિકાની વિગતો સમજવામાં મુશ્કેલી પડતી હોય તો, કૃપયા નીચે જણાવેલ સ્થળના રિસેપ્શન પર આવો, જ્યાં અમે ટેલિફોન પર ગુજરાતીમાં ઇન્ટરપ્રિટીંગ સેવાની ગોઠવણ કરી આપીશું.

Punjabi

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਪਰਚੇ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਪੇਸ਼ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਪਤੇ ਉੱਪਰ ਰਿਸੈਪਸ਼ਨ 'ਤੇ ਆਓ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਤੇ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰਿਟਰ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

Urdu

اگر آپ کو اس اشاعت کو سمجھنے میں کوئی مشکل ہے تو، براہ کرم نیچے دیئے ہوئے ایڈریس کے استقبال پر جا کر ملیئے، جہاں ہم آپ کیلئے ٹیلیفون انٹرپرائیٹنگ سروس (ٹیلیفون پر ترجمانی کی سروس) کا انتظام کر سکتے ہیں۔