



# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13



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I'm delighted to welcome you to the 2012/13 annual report on the operation of Overview and Scrutiny in Hammersmith & Fulham.

The report briefly sets out both the local and national context within which Scrutiny operates and reviews the main activities of each of the Council's Select Committees and Task Groups during the course of the last municipal year. The work of the scrutiny function has once again proved its importance to the local community through its positive contribution to the development of policies and services. The Select Committees have promoted accountability and provided a stable platform to engage with the public and other public agencies. It has enabled us to respond to the present financial challenges with ambitious and innovative proposals to transform the way in which services are provided to our borough's residents.

Over the last 12 months, we have continued to use new scrutiny methods designed to give elected Members the flexibility to examine issues in detail over an extended period of time outside the formal Committee meetings. In the process, we have been able to engage with relevant stakeholders including service providers, residents and service users. I would particularly like to draw your attention to the work undertaken by the Flooding Scrutiny Task Group which examined how the Council should discharge its new responsibilities under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 as a Local Lead Flood Authority. The Flood Inquiry considered the key strategic priorities for flood risk management in the borough and came up with some good recommendations on how to communicate with local residents on flood risk management. The Task Group's work demonstrated the benefits of in depth, evidence based scrutiny, conducted with reference to expert witnesses. It has produced a significant set of original recommendations which will make a real difference to people's lives.

I am also pleased to highlight the work of the Housing Repairs and Maintenance Task Group which was set up to review the proposals to re-procure the repairs and maintenance contracts across the borough and market test a range of services currently handled in-house. The Task Group was able to comment from a resident's perspective on the specifications of this important contract before it was let, influencing the documentation that was sent out and also the future level of service provided.

The Pupil Premium Scrutiny Task Group was established to identify how schools in Hammersmith & Fulham are using the Pupil Premium to raise achievement and improve outcomes for these pupils. It is anticipated that the Scrutiny Inquiry will report to the Overview and Scrutiny Board at the first meeting in the new municipal year. I am looking forward to receiving their report.

My personal thanks go to all the residents, Council Officers, representatives of partner organisations and Councillors themselves who have kindly given up their time to help to inform the scrutiny function throughout the year.

I hope that you find the report interesting and informative. Any suggestions for improvements for future annual reports are welcomed.

**Councillor Alex Karmel**  
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board



## CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

*Councillor Alex Karmel  
Chairman Overview and  
Scrutiny Board*



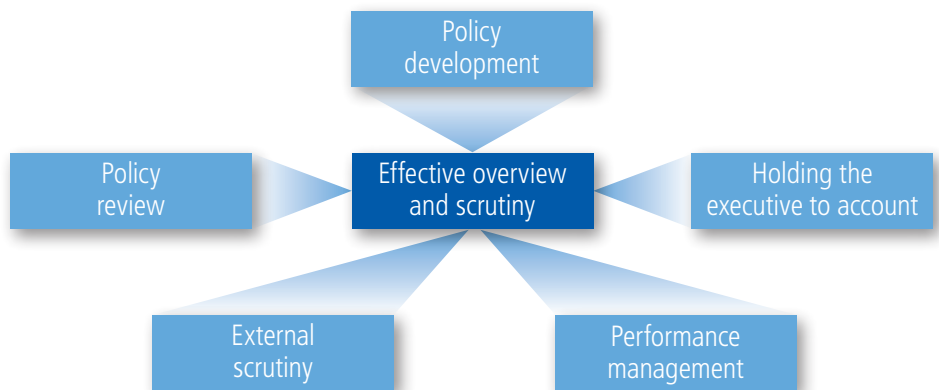


## THE ROLE OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The concept of Scrutiny in local authorities was formally introduced by the Local Government Act 2000 in order to balance the establishment of structures which placed executive power in the hands of either an elected Mayor or Leader and a small Cabinet authorised to make decisions both individually and collectively.

Scrutiny is, however, about much more than merely holding the Executive to account. It provides an opportunity for non executive Councillors to bring their own independent expertise to bear on strategy and policy issues, and to work constructively with the executive, local people, community organisations, partner agencies, service users and other customers to develop evidence based recommendations which improve policies and provide effective and responsive services. Increasingly Scrutiny is focusing not just on the work of the Council but all areas of public service which touch the lives of the local community.

Five core roles can be readily identified;



This is, however, far from exhaustive. Scrutiny has a wide ranging remit and can also have an important role to play in engaging the public with the decision making process, ensuring corporate priorities are met, providing satisfying and meaningful roles for non-executive Councillors and undertaking area based reviews.

The Centre for Public Scrutiny has identified four key principles that underpin effective scrutiny;

- Effective Scrutiny should be a 'critical friend' to executives, external authorities and agencies. It should challenge policy development and decision making in a robust, constructive and purposeful way while developing a partnership with external agencies and authorities.
- Effective Scrutiny should reflect the voice and concerns of the public and its communities. It should ensure an ongoing dialogue with the public and diverse communities where the public voice is heard and responded to. It should have open and transparent processes with public access to information.
- Effective Scrutiny should take the lead and own the Scrutiny process on behalf of the public. It should be independent from the executive, legitimated by the Council and should have adequate public representation and political balance that is representative of the current political groups involved.
- Effective Scrutiny should make an impact on the delivery of public services. It should promote community well-being and improve the quality of life, providing co-ordinated and strategic objectives.



At Hammersmith & Fulham, there are four main scrutiny committees:

- The Overview and Scrutiny Board
- The Education and Children's Services Select Committee
- The Housing, Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee and
- The Transport, Environment and Residents Services Select Committee

The Committees have cross cutting remits designed to reflect the Council's key priorities and objectives and are comprised of 9 elected non executive Members. Some also co-opt members who can bring a particular expertise or direct knowledge of the service user perspective to assist with their work. Co-optees are usually non voting although the parent governor and diocesan representatives on the Education and Children's Services Select Committee are entitled to vote on education matters. The Overview and Scrutiny Board, which is responsible for coordinating the scrutiny function, includes the Chairman of each select committee.

Meetings are held throughout the year. The Scrutiny Committees are empowered to hold inquiries and investigate the available options for policy development and may appoint advisers and expert witnesses to assist them in this process. They may interview council officers, representatives of external organisations, service users and other witnesses, undertake site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, commission research and do anything else that they reasonably consider necessary to inform their deliberations. The Leader, Cabinet Members and senior officers are under a duty to comply with any request to attend. Reports and recommendations on proposals may be submitted for consideration to the Cabinet or Council who are obliged to respond, normally within 8 weeks.

If a Committee wishes to examine a topic in particular detail, a special task group of between 3-5 Councillors can be established to examine evidence, consult with the public and service users and interview expert witnesses over a period of a few weeks or months. The Task Group then produces a report and recommendations which it will ask the Committee to adopt. All of these special task group reports are available on the Council's website.

## SCRUTINY IN HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM



The Committees are normally open to the press and public (although occasionally it may be necessary to meet in private session when dealing with certain confidential information). Members of the public may be invited to speak at meetings at the discretion of the Chairman. Deputations signed by at least 10 registered electors of the Borough may be presented directly to the Committees.

Performance review and monitoring of Council services and functions is at the heart of local Scrutiny activity; with particular emphasis on examination of the annual budget papers in accordance with the Council's emphasis on the delivery of high quality value for money services. Departmental business plans and key performance indicators are submitted to the relevant Scrutiny Committees for review, ensuring that Scrutiny is well placed to contribute to the strategic business planning and performance management processes.

Each Committee receives the list of Key Decisions (a rolling list of key decisions which the Cabinet is planning to take in the coming months) at every meeting, which assists in the development of work programmes and the identification of forthcoming key executive decisions deserving closer scrutiny and input. Scrutiny Committees have powers to call in executive decisions for review and if necessary, request the original decision maker to reconsider. Action to implement the decision is suspended during this process. Accountability is further enhanced by the attendance of the relevant Cabinet Member and senior Officers from the appropriate service department – often at Executive Director level - at most Scrutiny meetings to report on activity and answer questions as they arise. Scrutiny Committees also have a wider role in policy development, originating topics of interest and feeding views back to the Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members, Officers, external partners and service providers.

You can find out more about scrutiny in Hammersmith & Fulham at [www.lbhf.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/scrutiny)





## EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

*Councillor Donald Johnson  
Chairman*

I am pleased to present our annual update on the varied work programme we have considered during the year, focusing on the key areas of safeguarding and child protection, education and children's health.

We continued to invite children, experts, and other external contributors to help us understand the impact of local authority decisions, and to provide feedback to help inform future policy and services.

The April meeting was dedicated to reviewing the key area of safeguarding and looked after children, and annual reports on child protection and foster carers were discussed. We also received a report on looked after children and permanency. We were pleased to welcome a number of social workers to this meeting, giving the Committee a first hand experience of their role and providing an opportunity for members to ask questions about their roles in protecting children.

Our July and February meetings focused on the schools that had received an Ofsted Inspections visit. The headteachers and Chairs of Governors of the schools were present to discuss their school's report. Some of the schools had been visited under the new Ofsted inspection regime and it was interesting to hear the contrasting approaches. We were pleased to note that out of the schools considered, two were rated as outstanding and eight were rated as good by Ofsted.

The Committee looked at the new Troubled Families initiative, a government programme launched in December 2011 to assist families experiencing multiple problems and disadvantages such as unemployment, truancy, criminality and anti-social behaviour. The programme was to run over three years, funded by a combination of attachment fees and "payment by results" to incentivise local authorities and partners to prioritise this work.

We were very pleased to welcome to our November meeting the Member of Youth Parliament for Hammersmith & Fulham. We heard about the Borough Youth Forum's (BYF) priorities and feedback from the BIG SHOUT event - the first tri-borough youth conference held at Chelsea FC for 300 young people. We are pleased to have good links with the BYF and the Committee agreed to arrange a future workshop for members and the BYF to discuss various issues that concerned young people.



Youth interests also featured in our February meeting, when Members received a report on supporting young people's participation in Hammersmith & Fulham. After introducing the report, the Lead Commissioner for young people invited a senior youth and development worker from the Brunswick Youth Club to talk about the opportunities and facilities on offer at the club. Members welcomed the opportunity to visit youth clubs to see them in action.

During the year, the Committee established a new task group to look at the pupil premium – designed to narrow the gap between those pupils who were eligible for Free School Meals and those who were not and investigate how Hammersmith & Fulham schools were using it.

The Committee continued to receive regular reports on the implementation of the agreed Children's Oral Health Scrutiny Task Group recommendations, and a final progress report was received at the April meeting. The Committee noted the success of this Task Group and future updates on child oral health in the borough will be provided as part of the regular reports provided by the borough's Public Health Service.

We received a presentation from the Director of Public Health, who attended the January meeting, on the new health arrangements from 2013. During the year, we also looked at the revenue budget, the school organisation strategy, the remodelling of the school meals provision across Tri Borough, an update on the strategic plan for children and young people 2011-14, school performance 2012, the interim provision of children's centres and sure start services, a Tri Borough children's services progress briefing and an education policy update.

Through the Director's Oral Report agenda item, the Committee received regular updates on non-agenda items, such as progress updates on free schools, provisions in the new Children and Families Bill, information on the school capital programme, delivery of early education for two year olds and appointments to the leadership team.

Our membership (and also the Committee's name) changed during the year; we welcomed Councillor Charlie Dewhirst and Councillor Harry Phibbs onto the Committee in July and then welcomed the newly elected Councillor Andrew Brown who replaced Councillor Phibbs in October. The Westminster Diocesan Education Service Representative, Suzanne Weston-Peters, resigned in March and the Committee thanked her for her contribution and commitment. We were pleased to welcome the new representative, Philippa O'Driscoll, to the Committee in April. Elections were held for our parent governor representatives and we welcomed one new - Nadia Taylor - and one returning - Sue Fennimore – Parent Governor to the Committee. We thanked Fiona Cook, the outgoing parent governor representative, for all her work and were grateful for her contribution to the Committee over the years.

Looking forward to next year, we will continue with our key aim of monitoring and scrutinising the protection and welfare of children in the borough. We look forward to hearing the key findings of the Pupil Premium Task Group and its recommendations, and the traditional Ofsted themed meetings will continue to be held to monitor the achievement of the borough's schools.

### **Councillor Donald Johnson**

Chairman of the Education and Children's Services Select Committee



During 2012/2013 the Committee focused on a number of key items within our remit of housing, health and adult social care.

## HOUSING

We continued to scrutinise the local impact of the national changes in housing benefits and more recently the welfare benefit reforms which include: Local Housing Allowance Rates; Shared Accommodation Room Rate Changes; and Overall Benefits Cap. We were pleased to learn of the reduction in the number of households in the private rented sector affected by the Cap through the effective work of the HB Assist team, and the lack of evidence of a large number of families having to move out of the borough. We have concerns in respect of the housing benefit size criteria reduction for working age claimants in the social rented sector and we shall continue to monitor this and the overall impact of the Cap.

We periodically monitor the housing and regeneration department key performance indicators. The percentage of properties with a valid gas certificate remains a concern, with less than 100% (currently 99.6%/99.7%). We have requested that future reports include qualitative as well as quantitative information in respect of this indicator.

We are also concerned about the number of families living in bed and breakfast accommodation, although the number has decreased.

## HEALTH

'Shaping a Healthier Future', the North West London NHS service reconfiguration featured significantly on the Select Committee agenda. In addition, Councillor Vaughan and I represented the committee on the Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC).

Both the Council and the JHOSC formally responded to the consultation, which ended in October 2012, expressing serious concern at the proposals. Additional proposals for a significant enhancement following the original proposals for Charing Cross were put forward, which would upgrade Charing Cross from a local hospital to a specialist health and social care hospital. These proposals were accepted by the North West London Joint Committee of Primary Care Trusts as part of their overall decision made on 19 February, and presented to the Select Committee the following day. The Select Committee was attended by a large number of members of the public who were allocated time to put forward their views and questions.

A majority of committee members accepted the argument for the reconfiguration of services in North West London and that the specialist health and social care hospital at Charing Cross would be in the best interests of residents, given the current realities. We were pleased to note the £88 million investment planned for the new build specialist hospital. Both the select committee and the JHOSC will continue to monitor implementation of the proposals.

Senior Clinicians and Managers from Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust (ICHT) were again requested to attend meetings to update us on waiting list performance. In addition, some committee members joined me in a meeting



## HOUSING, HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SELECT COMMITTEE

*Councillor Lucy Ivimy  
Chairman*



with senior clinicians and managers at Charing Cross Hospital. We welcomed the action plan which had been put in place, resulting in an improvement in the cancer waiting list position and noted that the serious concerns in respect of cancer and other services and the administration system had been addressed. However, we remain concerned that further improvements are still required, and shall continue to monitor the trust's performance.

## ADULT SOCIAL CARE

We considered a general update in respect of the changes to day services which we had reviewed in the previous municipal year, namely; all age day services; reducing reliance on the use of building based day centres to deliver services; development of mental health services; the move away from block contracts to personal budgets; and day services for people with complex learning difficulties. We were particularly interested in the proposals for the former Ellerslie Day Service, which had been revised in line with our comments.

We have requested that a further report be provided including details of the transition from contract funding to direct payments, and that service users and providers be asked to attend as expert witnesses.

We requested a report in respect of the self directed support services procurement process, as there were specific concerns that the current provider, HAFAD, had misunderstood instructions relating to how to price the service, and what should be included in the hourly rate. An explanation was provided but we remained concerned that it had not been possible for officers to alert HAFAD at a stage at which the misunderstanding could have been rectified. We have requested that a report on the lessons learnt be brought back to the committee.

Other areas scrutinised by the committee during the year included:

- Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust: Application for Foundation Trust Status
- Housing & Regeneration Joint Venture Vehicle
- HRA Financial Strategy and Rent Increase Report
- Housing Strategy 2007-2014
- Public Health: Transfer to Councils
- Revenue Budget and Council Tax 2012/2013

### **Councillor Lucy Ivimy**

Chairman of the Housing, Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee



I am pleased to present our annual update on the Committee's work. During the year, we continued to monitor the work of the Environment, Leisure and Residents Services, and Transport and Technical Services Departments, and investigated a wide range of issues affecting the borough's residents.

The Committee has a keen interest in curbing crime and disorder, and looked at a number of areas relating to it during the year. At its June meeting, the Committee received the draft Hammersmith & Fulham Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment, an analytical document which draws on data from a wide variety of sources to provide the evidence base for determining Community Safety Partnership priorities for the three year period between 2012-15. The Committee will continue to monitor the outcomes of this work.

It also received a response to its previous recommendations on offender management, its annual update on the use of the Council's powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act and a briefing on the CCTV transformation review. It followed up on CCTV at its February meeting, with a visit to the control room and a further report. In addition, we also focused on other efforts to reduce disturbance to residents. We received reports on the way the Council dealt with complaints about noise nuisance and fly-tipping on private land, and identified ways in which the Council could better engage with residents to reduce those disturbances.

Following on from the Committee's input to the Get H & F Moving campaign the previous year, the Committee continued to investigate transport provision in the borough. At our September meeting, we were pleased to receive a presentation on provision for cyclists in the borough, from John Griffiths of hfcyclists. We identified the need to maintain good channels of communication between hfcyclists and the Council, and, in the light of upcoming developments such as the Mayor's Cycle Hire Scheme and the Cycle Super Highway, will receive an update at a future meeting. At our November meeting, we received an update on the first year anniversary of the campaign, and identified the need for early involvement of ward members in the development of proposals for integrated transport.

## TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND RESIDENTS SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

*Councillor Rachel Ford  
Chairman*





At our November meeting, we also welcomed BAA, together with a substantial public attendance. BAA came to explain the ongoing operational freedoms trial at Heathrow, and provided a presentation on the way in which the trial worked, and what it hoped to achieve. The meeting enabled the Committee, and the large number of local residents present, to articulate the detrimental impact the trial was having on borough residents. We asked that, in the event of any consultation on making the freedoms permanent, a further report would come to the Committee and that the Civil Aviation Authority be petitioned to site monitoring devices in the borough.

The year also saw the Flooding Task Group complete its work. The task group, which included Councillor Steve Hamilton and Councillor Lisa Homan, and was chaired by Councillor Matt Thorley, reported in July. The Cabinet subsequently agreed all 20 of its recommendations either in full or in principle, and a number have already been implemented.

We also investigated parks and leisure facilities in the borough. At our September meeting, we received a report on Parks Satisfaction Levels. From this, we identified the need to actively manage the availability of park space to different user groups, with particular attention to the use of sports pitches. We followed this up with a report on schools use of sports pitches at our February meeting, and identified a number of areas in which we would like more information.

We received a report at our April meeting on the reorganisation of the cemeteries function.

We also took a keen interest in the borough's libraries. At our September meeting, we had an update on the implementation of the Tri-Borough Libraries and Archives Service. Following on from this, at our February meeting, three members of the Borough Youth Forum presented a report on services for young people, which suggested a number of potential improvements, which officers agreed to consider.

Finally, we also looked at two town centres in the borough. Firstly, at our February meeting, we heard from officers from service areas including Parking, Transport, Environmental Health, Economic Development and Community Safety on the impact of Westfield on the borough. Westfield, represented by the general manager of the Centre, also attended and answered questions. We noted the work being undertaken ahead of the proposed extension of the centre, which was of particular importance with regards to employment. At our April meeting, we received a report from HammersmithLondon, on the situation in Hammersmith Town Centre. Their report suggested environmental improvements, and ways in which the Business Improvement District (BID) and the Council could undertake joint working. We identified the need for clear lines of communication between officers and the BID, in order to maximise the BID's impact.

It has been a successful year with a number of important outcomes. Looking forward to next year, we plan to consider a wide range of issues, including revisiting offender management, looking at the borough's maintenance of its roads and the refurbishment of Wormholt Park.

### **Councillor Rachel Ford**

Chairman of the Transport, Environment and Residents Services Select Committee



## THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

*Councillor Alex Karmel  
Chairman*

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is responsible for the coordination and development of the Council's overall Scrutiny function. It can review any aspect of the Council's strategic policy formulation, setting and monitoring of the corporate budget, oversight of finance and use of resources, performance management, human resources, central support services, organisational development and strategic partnerships.

This year the Board has taken an overview of the work of the three scrutiny Select Committees, receiving update reports at each meeting, as well as updates from the commissioned scrutiny Task Groups set up to inquire into particular issues and report back to the Board.

### PERFORMANCE AND BUDGET REVIEW

Throughout the year, the Board monitored and reviewed the Council's corporate budget and performance, including monitoring the high level revenue and capital budget quarterly and receiving performance reports for each quarter. The Board has also reviewed the Council's draft Revenue Budget and Council Tax for the 2013/14 municipal year and the Corporate sickness absence performance monitoring report. We also considered the Hammersmith & Fulham Bridge Partnership Annual Report, which set out the performance of the partnership in both service and financial terms.

In November 2012, the Board received an update on the Local Government Resource Review and the introduction of the locally retained business rates scheme and noted the likely financial implications for 2013/14 and future years.

### TRI-BOROUGH SERVICE PROVISION

The Board has continued to monitor the introduction of Tri-Borough managed services into its second year. We looked at the corporate joint services and received an overview of the implementation of the Tri-Borough programme to ensure that the project delivers against its objectives and provides additional transparency and accountability.

During the year, the Board has received regular updates on the Tri-Borough staff survey, developing and delivering Tri-Borough financial and non-financial benefits, Tri-Borough ICT strategy, the Tri-Borough community budget pilot and the Tri-borough managed services framework agreement for finance and HR.

### REFORMING PUBLIC SERVICES

The Board considered strategies for reforming customer access and public service delivery, with a particular focus on 'self-service' and 'e-services' delivery programmes, these were being developed to enable new ways of delivering Council services and enhancing customer access whilst facilitating multiple efficiency savings. The Board was also briefed on:

- The progress made in implementing the contract for face to face transactions with Post Office Limited;
- Transformation through cross-cutting portfolios of change, which were proposed to improve public service delivery at a reduced cost.



## H&F MEANS BUSINESS

In July 2012, the Board received the Executive Response to the H&F Means Business scrutiny report which had been agreed by Cabinet earlier in the month. The scrutiny report had put forward six recommendations to the Cabinet, including a recommendation for a Borough Business Champion. The Executive Response welcomed and agreed the recommendation for a Borough Business Champion and appointed Councillor Robert Iggulden to the role, requesting that he consider and report back on how best to take forward the remaining Scrutiny recommendations.

The other recommendations included: incorporation of the key discussion points and actions arising from the Board's engagement with the local business community into the department's 2012-2013 work programme, the establishment of a Business Support Network, an Annual Business Partnership meeting, a Council cross-departmental Business Strategy Group and the establishment of business networking consultation arrangements.

## THE LEADER: VISION AND OBJECTIVES - 2012-2015 CORPORATE PLAN

In November 2012, the Board reviewed and commented on the Administration's strategic vision and objectives for the three year period covered by the new Corporate Plan 2012-2015.

Hammersmith & Fulham was rated one of the best performing Councils in England and Wales and was a flagship local authority in London. Over the period of the previous Corporate Plan (2009-12) resident satisfaction rates increased from 53% to 62%. The principal achievements included a 15% reduction in Council Tax, reductions in Council debt and recorded crime, improvements in school attainment and street cleanliness, a drive towards affordable home ownership, progress towards the creation of thousands of new jobs and enhanced economic activity through three Opportunity Areas and the maintenance of a generous home care package to vulnerable residents. The Corporate Plan looked to consolidate those successes and take performance in other areas to the same level.



During the year, the Board also reviewed the Annual Residents Survey highlighting residents' concerns which were addressed by the Corporate Plan.

## H&F COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The Board received and noted details of the Council's Partnerships Register. It was noted that the Register, which was updated annually as part of the audit of corporate governance, set out a wide range of different partnerships that the Council engaged with in developing joint strategies and delivering public services.

Members discussed the most effective means of assessing the value of various partnerships. It was agreed that the Register should be presented to the first meeting of the new Municipal Year in order that the Board could consider selecting one or more partnerships for closer scrutiny in the context of its wider work programme.

## ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT

In January 2013 the Board received the Council's second Annual Complaints Report for 2011/12. It was noted that 1,793 complaints were received during the period across all three stages of the complaints procedure. Some 64% of these were in respect of the Housing and Regeneration Department. The proportion of complaints upheld or partially upheld was 56% (55% in 2010/11). Improvements had been recorded in the time taken to respond to complaints with 81% meeting the deadline at stage 1 (68% in 2010/11), 71% at stage 2 (38%) and 79% at stage 3 (73%).

The board was supportive of the progress to date and noted that there was still some further improvements to be made. A new two stage corporate complaints policy will be implemented from 1st April 2013. This will aim to deal with issues at the first stage, thereby preventing complaints escalating to stage two, and to develop lessons learnt.

## SCRUTINY TASK GROUPS

In 2012-2013 the Board commissioned two Scrutiny Task Group inquiries into particular issues of concern, following referrals from the Select Committees: the Pupil Premium Task Group and the Housing Repairs and Maintenance Re-procurement Task Group. Please see the separate section on Task Groups for further information.

In July 2012 the Board agreed the report of the Flooding Scrutiny Task Group, which considered the key strategic priorities for flood risk management in the borough and the appropriate communications with local residents for flood risk management. The Task Group put forward 20 recommendations to the Council's Cabinet which were all accepted or accepted in principle.

For more information and download copies of the scrutiny reports, visit [www.lbhf.gov.uk/Scrutiny](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/Scrutiny)

**Councillor Alex Karmel**

Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board



## THE FLOODING SCRUTINY TASK GROUP

The Flooding Scrutiny Task Group report was agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 24 July 2012, putting forward the context, findings and observations which were used to steer the Council's Flood Risk Management Strategy and inform the partnership working with its statutory partners, including other London boroughs, the regional Drain London partnership and the main water utility company - Thames Water. The scrutiny report put forward 20 recommendations which, if enacted, it felt would mitigate the risks of surface and groundwater flooding in the borough.

The Flooding Scrutiny Inquiry was commissioned by the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 7 December 2011. This came about as a result of a referral from the then Environment and Residents Services Select Committee to examine how the Council should discharge of its new responsibilities under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 as a Local Lead Flood Authority.

The members of the Task Group were Councillor Matt Thorley, Councillor Lisa Homan and Councillor Steven Hamilton. The Terms of Reference for the Inquiry were to consider the key strategic priorities for flood risk management in the borough and the communications with local residents on flood risk management.

The Scrutiny Inquiry recognised that the general public is a key stakeholder in flood risk management, including home owners, landlords, businesses and other local residents, who are responsible for managing their properties and who have a part to play in prevention and reporting of flooding problems. The Scrutiny Task Group co-ordinated a public consultation, which was promoted in the local media and Council publications and to which people were able to respond online with their views and experiences of local flooding problems. Through the public consultation and promotion exercise, the Scrutiny Inquiry itself played a part in promoting awareness and engagement with local residents on this issue, as well as helping to inform the evidence base for flood risk management strategy.

During the Inquiry, the Scrutiny Task Group interviewed a wide range of stakeholders and expert witnesses and considered the key documents and legislation, including the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Flood Risk Regulations 2009 and the Council's Surface Water Management Plan.

“Should a 1 in 30 year flooding event occur in Hammersmith & Fulham the impact on residents, businesses and the borough as a whole would be devastating. In order to mitigate the risk of substantial flood damage it is vital a collaborative approach is adopted; the Council, water companies, insurers, property developers, businesses and private residents all have a role to play. Sustainable urban drainage systems are critical to combating flooding risk but more needs to be done to implement these preventive measures in the borough as well as making people aware of the flooding risk.” Councillor Matt Thorley, Chairman of the Scrutiny Task Group

The Task Group interviewed representatives from the Environment Agency, the Association of British Insurers and Thames Water. Witnesses also included the Cabinet Member for Environment and Asset Management (then Councillor Nicholas Botterill), the Head of Policy and Spatial Planning, the Head of Highways and Construction, the Flood Risk Manager, the Highways Maintenance Manager, the Senior Environmental Policy and Projects Officer, the Environmental Quality Manager, and other Council officers, including officers from the Parks department.

The Task Group interviewed Simon Jones, Assistant Director of Communication, to discuss communications and engagement with local residents on flooding.

During the Inquiry, the Task Group also interviewed Josie Bateman, Project Manager (Flood and Water Management) from Northamptonshire County Council, to obtain a perspective and best practice from another Local Lead Flood Authority. She was able to provide some useful advice on relationships and information sharing protocols, as well as a case study of resident engagement of flooding awareness and data collection for flood risk mapping.

The Cabinet’s Response to the scrutiny report was agreed on 15 October 2012, which approved or endorsed all scrutiny recommendations subject to some minor amendments.

“Trying to engage people on flooding prevention in fine weather is rather like the task Noah had; no-one’s convinced unless it’s already pouring! But we need to make sure we make the right precautions, so that when the flood comes we will be ready.” Councillor Victoria Brocklebank-Fowler, Cabinet Member for Transport and Technical Services

The scrutiny report and the Cabinet’s Executive Response can be downloaded at [www.lbhf.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/scrutiny)







## HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES TASK GROUP

In April 2012, the Housing, Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee was briefed on the various re-procurement options that were available to the Housing and Regeneration Department (HRD) and the rationale for the chosen route. The report also outlined the benefits of including other contracts and services under one or two long term large contracts.

### **Residents often perceived these services as poor and expensive**

Members suggested that their insight could provide value, support and challenge in terms of: the customer journey, appropriate measures of success (Key Performance Indicators) and the evaluation criteria for the Invitation to Tender.

The Overview & Scrutiny Board endorsed the recommendation that a Task and Finish Group be set up comprising Councillor Lucy Ivimy (Chairman), Councillor Joe Carlebach and Councillor Stephen Cowan.

A series of briefing meetings were held between July and September 2012, to coincide with various stages of the shaping and development of the Invitation to Tender documents. In addition, because of the size of the documents and complexity of some of the issues, individual Members undertook much of the work outside meetings, with documents being sent by e-mail and Members providing feedback.

Information provided to the Task Group included:

- (i) the context and detail of the current service, the problems faced and intended solutions which would be delivered by the new contract(s),
- (ii) performance monitoring and specifically the inclusion in the contract(s) of a range of performance measures divided into Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Management Performance Indicators (MPIs), with separate KPIs applying to the planned maintenance section of the contract,
- (iii) the latest performance figures, current annual expenditure for Repairs and Maintenance and the pre-qualification questionnaire, and
- (iv) the service specifications, together with a draft of the evaluation questions.

Members raised a number of issues, in particular residents' experiences of the service. Officers were able to offer assurance about the following specific concerns:



### **Failure to get repairs done right first time**

- the Call Centre would be run by the new contractors, with the risk of correctly diagnosing repairs falling to the contractor rather than the Council, as is presently the case, and
- the price per property model places emphasis on getting repairs right first time.

### **Contracts being paid before residents had agreed that repairs were complete:**

- a partnering incentivisation model was being considered, which would both penalise the contractors when targets are missed and also provide incentives when targets are exceeded.

### **Pricing mechanisms did not allow for any penalties if a job was not done or carried out correctly:**

- Repair orders would remain open until satisfactorily completed.

In April 2013, Cabinet gave approval to delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Housing in conjunction with the Executive Director for Housing & Regeneration to award contracts to the winning bidders.

The Task and Finish Group, during its short life, was able to act in the best interests of residents by influencing the specifications of these large contracts. This important work will be followed up by the Select Committee.



## THE PUPIL PREMIUM TASK GROUP

The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011. In 2012–13 schools were allocated a total of £1.25 billion funding for: children from low-income families who were eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from families with parents in the Armed Forces. From the 2013-2014 academic year the Pupil Premium is rising to £1.875 billion: £900 per disadvantaged child.

The Government believes that the Pupil Premium grant, which is additional to main school funding, is the best way to address the current underlying inequalities between children eligible for free school meals and their peers. The aim of the Scrutiny Inquiry is to identify how schools in Hammersmith & Fulham are using this money to raise achievement and improve outcomes for these pupils.

A Scrutiny Inquiry into the Pupil Premium was established by the Overview and Scrutiny Board in 2012, following consideration of a proposal submitted by the Education and Children's Services Select Committee.

The Members of the Scrutiny Task Group are: Councillor Charlie Dewhirst (Chairman), Councillor Caroline Needham (Vice Chairman) and Councillor Tom Crofts.

**“We want to make sure that our schools and the local authority are equipped with the best guidance to focus the Pupil Premium as effectively as possible, to lift up the educational attainment and aspirations of children with some of the most challenges.”** Councillor Donald Johnson, Chairman of the Education and Children's Services Select Committee

The Task Group has interviewed a wide range of key stakeholders, considered documentary evidence and undertaken site visits into schools to look at Pupil Premium programmes in more detail. At the end of the Inquiry, the Task Group will publish its findings in a report and make recommendations to the Cabinet, the full Council, external statutory partners and any other relevant decision makers.



It is anticipated that the Task Group will report to the Overview and Scrutiny Board at the first meeting in the 2013-2014 municipal year, After which, the agreed Scrutiny report and recommendations will be submitted to the Education and Children's Services Select Committee for information and to the Cabinet and any other relevant executive decision makers for an Executive Response.

The Scrutiny Task Group has now completed its committee stages, where it has received evidence from witnesses and interviewed a range of local and national stakeholders and received evidence on best practice and local and national practice in the implementation of the Pupil Premium.

Witnesses to the Scrutiny Inquiry have included Councillor Helen Binmore – Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Councillor Donald Johnson – Chairman of the Education and Children's Services Select Committee; Andy Rennison - Director of Schools' Funding and Capital Programme; Helen Cross - Bi-Borough 14-19 Adviser; Tony Porter - Head of Interim School Standards, Ian Turner – Project Manager; Bernadette Alexander – Bi-Borough Head of Looked after Children; the Borough Youth Forum; Sylvia Howieson - Headteacher at Langford School; the Chairs of Governors Forum, the Head Teachers Liaison Group; Robbie Coleman – Research and Communications Manager - The Education Endowment Foundation; Professor Dylan Wiliams - The Institute of Education; University of London and Chris Wood; Her Majesty's Inspector Adviser; Challenge and Analysis; OFSTED.

The Task Group has received written submissions of evidence from the Borough Youth Forum and a selection of local schools in Hammersmith & Fulham, which provided some detailed responses from schools on their use of the Pupil Premium.

The Scrutiny Inquiry is now in its final stages, drawing evidence together and summing up its key conclusions into a report. The scrutiny report will include guidance and recommendations on the following key areas:

- Local and national contexts for the Pupil Premium
- Identification of Pupil Premium programmes
- Examples of Pupil Premium Programmes locally and nationally
- Governance
- Evaluation of Pupil Premium programmes.

The final scrutiny report should be agreed and published in July 2013.



# SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2012/13

## **Education and Children's Services Select Committee**

Councillors Donald Johnson (Chairman), Caroline Needham (Vice Chairman), Andrew Brown (replaced Harry Phibbs end of October), Elaine Churnery, Tom Crofts, Charlie Dewhirst, Belinda Donovan, Frances Stainton and Mercy Umeh

Co-opted members (voting):

Eleanor Allen - London Diocesan Board of Schools representative

Suzanne Weston-Peters - Westminster Diocese Education Service representative (to March)

Philippa O'Driscoll - Westminster Diocese Education Service representative (from April)

Sue Fennimore - parent governor representative

Fiona Cook - parent governor representative (to January)

Nadia Taylor - parent governor representative (from January)

Co-opted member (non-voting)

Michele Barrett - head teacher representative

## **Housing, Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee**

Councillors Lucy Ivimy (Chairman), Rory Vaughan (Vice-Chairman), Joe Carlebach, Iain Coleman, Stephen Cowan, Oliver Craig, Peter Graham, Steve Hamilton and Peter Tobias

Co-opted member (non-voting):

Maria Brenton - Hammersmith & Fulham Action on Disability (HAFAD)

## **Transport, Environment and Residents Services Select Committee**

Councillors Rachel Ford (Chairman), Wesley Harcourt (Vice Chairman), Jean Campbell (to November), Ali de Lisle, Gavin Donovan, Lisa Homan, Robert Iggulden, Jane Law, Max Schmid (from February) and Matt Thorley

## **Overview and Scrutiny Board**

Councillors Alex Karmel (Chairman), Andrew Jones (Vice-Chairman), Michael Adam, Georgie Cooney, Rachel Ford, Lucy Ivimy, Donald Johnson, PJ Murphy and Sally Powell

## **Flood Risk Management Task Group**

Councillors Matt Thorley (Chairman), Steve Hamilton and Lisa Homan

## **Housing Repairs and Maintenance Task Group**

Councillors Lucy Ivimy (Chairman), Joe Carlebach and Stephen Cowan

## **The Pupil Premium Task Group**

Councillors Charlie Dewhirst (Chairman), Tom Crofts and Caroline Needham (Vice Chairman)

We would welcome your comments on this report. We would also be pleased to answer any questions that you may have about the Scrutiny function at Hammersmith & Fulham or to receive suggestions for improvement in the way we work and ideas for service area reviews.

Please contact:

Kayode Adewumi, Head of Governance and Scrutiny

Tel: 020 8753 2499

Email: [kayode.adewumi@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:kayode.adewumi@lbhf.gov.uk)

Our postal address is:

Governance and Scrutiny

Room 133a

Hammersmith Town Hall

King Street

Hammersmith

W6 9JU

### **Specific contacts for each of the Committees are set out below:**

Overview & Scrutiny Board

Katia Richardson

Tel: 020 8753 2368

Email [katia.richardson@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:katia.richardson@lbhf.gov.uk)

Education and Children's Services

Select Committee

Laura Campbell

Tel: 020 8753 2062

Email: [laura.campbell@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:laura.campbell@lbhf.gov.uk)

Housing, Health & Adult Social Care

Select Committee

Sue Perrin

Tel: 020 8753 2094

Email: [sue.perrin@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:sue.perrin@lbhf.gov.uk)

Transport, Environment & Residents

Services Select Committee

Owen Rees

Tel: 020 8753 2088

Email: [owen.rees@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:owen.rees@lbhf.gov.uk)

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## MORE INFORMATION

More information about Overview and Scrutiny at Hammersmith & Fulham can be found at [www.lbhf.gov.uk/Directory/Council\\_and\\_Democracy](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/Directory/Council_and_Democracy)

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