

INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR



**Councillor Gladys Sandiford
(Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
and the Performance Scrutiny Committee)**

I am now in my third year as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, as well as Chair of the Performance Scrutiny Committee and there have been lots of changes, especially during the twelve months since the last annual report.

In August two training sessions were held in-house with elected Members to look at how the scrutiny function could be strengthened and to define the Members' role in the scrutiny process. In September we commenced a 3 month pilot for a new way of working.

Members of Overview and Scrutiny received a questionnaire which asked for their views on the new arrangements and it was unanimously agreed that they should continue.

In May 2007 the Council formally agreed to the re-shaping of Overview and Scrutiny on a permanent basis.

We now have a Performance Scrutiny Committee, Audit Scrutiny Committee and a Policy Scrutiny Committee. These will be explained in more detail within this report.

The Scrutiny Support Officer shared our way of working with other authorities and was invited by a neighbouring authority to promote how scrutiny works in Rossendale. Members of that Council have attended a Task and Finish Group to observe our work, which shows that Rossendale are leading the way.

I am also appointed by the Council to serve on Lancashire County Council's Health Overview & Scrutiny and we meet on a regular basis at County Hall, Preston. Through this role, I am involved in numerous health consultations, and as explained in the last annual report the decision on the 'Making it Better', Public Consultation on changes to Healthcare Services for Children, Young People, Parents and Babies in Greater Manchester,

East Cheshire, High Peak and Rossendale was to remove maternity services from Fairfield.

I, along with Councillor Starkey attended a meeting to debate this decision, which was held at Bury. At that meeting the Committee made a decision to refer this to the Secretary of State for Health on the grounds of flaws in representation of statistics, inequality in access of services and removal of choice.

Rossendale Borough Council sent a letter of support to the Chief Executive of Bury Metropolitan Council.

An Independent Review Panel was set up to gather new evidence and the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee arrange a special meeting inviting members of the public to present their views which would be sent to the Independent Review Panel.

The Independent Review Panel is now in the final stages of putting together new evidence and a decision should be reached at the beginning of July.

Over the past year we have undertaken a number of reviews covering issues which are of importance to the local community.

Scrutiny has fulfilled its obligation to hold Cabinet to account through the active monitoring of performance, including Best Value Performance Indicators.

One of the long term priorities for Scrutiny continues to be the increased engagement and participation of the local community. This year has seen Scrutiny make

significant progress in this area, engaging with the public on car parking, improvements to bus shelters and highways.

Over the next twelve months we intend to engage with local stakeholders including the Police, the Health and the Local Strategic Partnership to name but a few.

Overview and Scrutiny Training

In February 2007, two sessions were facilitated by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) when Members explained the improvements that had been made to scrutiny. Paul Clarke, Programme Manager, IDeA stated "The Centre for Public Scrutiny were also at the meeting and were particularly impressed with the idea of setting up small working groups to look at individual consultations and they asked Democratic Services to write a piece to be included on their website which can be found on <http://www.cfps.org.uk/champions/bitem.php?itemid=142>

Below is a quote from Paul Clarke at the IDeA after an Overview and Scrutiny Training Session.

"I was impressed with how far things appear to have progressed with regards to scrutiny at Rossendale. Members were speaking very positively and enthusiastically about scrutiny, and able to readily identify examples of scrutiny work they had done – some of which had successfully engaged the community and influenced policy and decision-making."



Councillors at an IDeA Scrutiny Training session at Bacup Leisure Hall in February 2007

The White Paper

The local government White Paper will pose even greater challenges and give wider scope and importance to O&S during the forthcoming year and continual updates will be given in the Rossendale Alive Newsletter and on the Council's website.

Consultations

Overview and Scrutiny were asked to respond to numerous consultations over the last twelve months and our responses to these can be found on the Council's website www.rossendale.gov.uk. Some examples are included later in the report.

Thanks

I would like to thank all members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees for the contributions they have made, together with support from the co-opted members. I welcome the efforts being made by Members and Officers alike to further develop Overview and Scrutiny so that we can continue to build on the success we have achieved so far.

I would also like to give special thanks to the chairs of the Audit Scrutiny and the Policy Scrutiny Committees, Councillors Peter Starkey and Hazel Steen for their

active participation in the new format of these committees.

I would like to thank Pat Couch, Scrutiny Support Officer and Heather Moore, Committee and Member Services Manager who have provided tremendous support to all Members over the last 12 months.

My thanks are also extended to Portfolio Holders and the 'critical friend' relationship that has developed and will continue to do so over the next year.

Councillor Gladys Sandiford

Overview and Scrutiny in Rossendale

Overview and Scrutiny, often referred to as O & S, provides one of the most important ways in which Councillors can champion the interests of local people and communities in changing public services for the better. By probing and investigating the policies, performance and decisions of the Council, we not only challenge Cabinet Members and Officers to do better but give them firm, well-argued guidance as to how services can be improved.

What the Main Scrutiny Committees do!



Councillor Hazel Steen
(Chair of Policy Scrutiny Committee)

Membership of the Committee Councillors

Leonard Entwistle
Joyce Pawson
David Barnes
Joyce Thorne
David Hancock
Alyson Barnes
Mike Lee (co-opted member)
Mike Christie (co-opted member)

The **Policy Scrutiny Committee**, after looking at the Cabinet's Forward Plan on key decisions, selects Policies which they wish to scrutinise, as well as asking for existing policies to be reviewed to ensure that recommendations have been implemented.



Councillor Peter Starkey
(Chair of Audit Scrutiny Committee)

The **Audit Scrutiny Committee** receives reports from both the Internal Auditors and the Audit Commission, who undertake external scrutiny of the Council. This Committee now receives regular information from the Standards Committee detailing the nature of its work so that the two Committees work closer together

Membership of the Committee Councillors

Jeff Cheetham
Jimmy Eaton
Peter Steen
Graham Haworth
Ruth Alcroft
Bernadette O'Connor (co-opted)

The **Performance Scrutiny Committee** receives reports on the Council's Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs). Following the report, the Portfolio Holder together with the Head of Service for any underachieving service area are invited to meet with the Committee to provide an explanation for their under-achieving targets and to seek information on how they intended to improve their service.

Membership of the Committee Councillors

Gladys Sandiford (Chair)
Pat Dickinson
June Forshaw
Christine Lamb
Fred Lynskey
Granville Morris
Alan Neal

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee comprises every Member of the three Scrutiny Committees and meets bi-monthly to receive updates from the Policy, Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committees. This Committee also receives reports from the Task and Finish Groups.

At these meetings we also invite external organisations to come along to talk about their work. We have received a presentation from Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and the Rossendale Climate Change Group.

During the next 12 months we hope to invite representatives from the Police, Primary Care Trusts, Hospital Trust and other local partners.

Scrutiny is about listening to the concerns of local people and to monitor how the Council and other organisations are performing and where necessary seek improvement.

The most visible part of our work is the scrutiny reviews undertaken by Task and Finish Groups, who look at specific subjects. The outcome of these reviews would usually be recommendations for how things need to change.

The aim of a scrutiny review is to evaluate the effectiveness and practice of decisions of the Council with a greater degree of independence, as a 'critical friend'. Reviews will therefore often involve not only elected Members and Council Officers, but also people outside the Council – service users, experts in specific fields and members of partner organisations.

The whole point of these reviews is to lead a clear well-argued recommendation for improvement. Whilst we cannot give orders to the Cabinet, our aim is to influence what they do for the better.

Information on the work of the Task and Finish Groups are explained later in the report.

We feel that our ambitious Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for the last twelve months has been carried out effectively, producing relevant and realistic recommendations that will facilitate change and assist the Council in moving forward.

OUR WORK DURING THE YEAR

In June 2006 we agreed a challenging work programme for Overview and Scrutiny and as the rest of the report will demonstrate, we have delivered on almost all of it and we can categorically say that **“We have made a difference”**.

Policy Scrutiny Committee

As described earlier in the report after looking at the Cabinet's Forward Plan of key decisions, this Committee selects Policies which they wish to scrutinise and ask Portfolio Holders and Officers to attend to present their Policies. Some of these are listed below.

- Strategic Housing Self Assessment
- Strengthening Community Leadership
- Capacity Building Model: Partnership Working

- Affordable Housing Strategy
- Environment Strategy
- Revision of Corporate Priorities
- Asset Management Plan
- Public Conveniences – Alternative Forms of Provision
- Implementation of the Smokefree Legislation
- Neighbourhood Management
- Strategic Review of Leisure
- Play Strategy
- Update on Open Spaces Strategy
- Healthy Business Scheme
- Report on recent public consultation on the draft Environmental Strategy

Audit Scrutiny Committee

This Committee receives reports on a quarterly basis from the Internal Auditors of Lancashire Audit Service.

Members were given a brief overview of the role of both internal and external audit, explaining the different levels of audit and this was dependent on how the organisation was performing.

The external auditors, the Audit Commission appoints, regulates and advises auditors as well as undertaking Comprehensive Performance Assessment and other inspections. They also review internal auditors and every three years undertake a full review, which would be reported back to the Audit Scrutiny Committee.

The Head of Internal Audit presented the internal audit progress report for April-December 2006. Members noted within the report that

improvements were required on absence management reporting and as a result requested that a letter be sent to the Head of Human Resources asking for clarification on how the department intends to ensure that improvements were being made. The Committee received a response from the Head of Human Resources which detailed future improvements.

Another report that the Audit Scrutiny received was from the Head of Customer Services and e-Government on the 'Your Business at Risk' which was an essential tool to enable the Council to improve the security across the IT network and also make employees aware of security risks.

At the time of writing this report, the Head of Internal Audit, Head of Financial Services and the Interim Legal and Democratic Services Manager, together with the Scrutiny Support Officer are meeting to discuss the Committees Terms of Reference to develop the role of the Committee and closer links to the Standards Committee

Performance Scrutiny Committee

The Committee receives reports on a quarterly basis in relation to the Council's Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs). Once members have considered the report they look at the service areas that are not achieving their targets and as explained earlier the Portfolio Holder together with the Head of Service for any underachieving service area, are invited to meet with the Committee to provide an explanation for their under-achieving targets and to seek

information on how they intend to improve their service. Some examples of these are as follows:

Recycled Household Waste

The Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Liveability explained the changes to waste collection rounds and that the tracker systems were now in place which enabled the Council to identify where bins had been collected.

She explained that one of the major improvements to the service was the procurement of new vehicles.

Members commented on the need to include information for the public on the type of items which could be recycled and the need for up-to-date information to be made available for the public. A suggestion was made for this information to be included in the quarterly newspaper which was distributed to the public. This was actioned in the November edition of the Rossendale Alive bulletin.

Collection of Council Tax

The Head of Customer Services and e-Government explained to Members the reason for the underachieving BVPI, which included resource problems and computer systems which required replacing.

The Head of Customer Services and e-Government explained the improvements ongoing for the collection of Council Tax and the contract with Capita, who have taken over responsibility of Council Tax Collections, although the Council would still be accountable for the collection of BVPIs.

The contract Manager for Revenue and Benefits at Capita informed members that Capita were committed to putting in major improvements, including the recruitment of a Visiting Officer.

Other reports which the Members received on either a six monthly or yearly basis included:-

- **Equalities Update**
- **Management of Sickness Absence**
- **Housing Strategy Action Plan**
- **Green Vale Homes Contract**
- **Performance Review of Rossendale Leisure Trust**
- **Performance Review of the Local Strategic Partnership**
- **Health and Safety Annual Performance Review**

Although BVPIs are a vital way of monitoring the Council's broad performance, we would like to develop our role further next year. In particular we would like to strengthen the links with the Local Strategic Partnership.

We are also keen to ensure that Best Value Performance Indicators continue to improve over the next twelve months and we will closely monitor any service area that is under-achieving and recommend improvement plans where necessary.

TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

Task and Finish Groups are groups that undertake a specific piece of work for a short period of time, produce a report and then end.

All Members have been very busy taking part in various Task and

Finish Groups over the last twelve months, with some very positive outcomes.

The Task and Finish Groups were agreed in June 2006, by a Working Group set up specifically to prioritise what should be looked at to improve services for the local community.

Three Task and Finish Groups were brought forward from the 2005/06 work programme. Two of these were the Impact of the Local Strategic Partnership of Young People and the Impact of the Local Strategic Partnership on Older People and Members at the time asked for an update in March 2007. A third was a review of car parking in the Borough.

Young People's Services

The children and young people's block is a key part of the LSP delivering against the Local Area Agreement (LAA) agenda. Members were updated on the actions within the LAA which come into the Children and Young people's block as well as the current youth provision provided by Youth and Community Services in the Borough and the activities that the LSP have delivered over the past twelve months for young people. These include improved social participation by Lancashire's children and young people. The Council now has a Member Champion for Younger People, Councillor Brian Essex.

Older People's Services

The Council has agreed an Older People's Strategy and appointed a Member Champion for Older people.

The Council has been working closely with partners such as Age Concern and the Older People's advisory group to develop an older people's web site, supported by the Council's web infrastructure. This will be developed and managed by older people from within the Borough. With 38% of the Council's citizen's panel over 50, in comparison with 24.9% of the general Rossendale population, this suggests that our older people are very engaged with the Council.

Members agreed that some progress was being made by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) on delivering against the needs of older people, however the LSP should consider the need to explicitly identify the activities which the theme groups are delivering against which would assist older people.

Car Parking in the Borough

The final piece of work carried over from 2005/06 was the Management of Car Parks in the Borough, which completed its work at the end of October when the report was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. As expected this caused a great deal of public debate.

The Task and Finish Group recommended some paid parking on short stay car parks in order to effectively improve management and capacity.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee after listening to the views of the public made a recommendation to Cabinet not to introduce paid parking but to continue to look at disc parking throughout the Borough. At the

Cabinet meeting in November it was agreed that disc parking be extended throughout the Borough and not to charge for parking. They also asked that the Task and Finish Group continue to look at other aspects of car parking throughout the Borough, including additional disabled spaces. This Group will continue during the next twelve months.

Highways Task and Finish Group

The Highways Task and Finish Group began their piece of work in October. The Group's objective was to ensure that residents in Rossendale received a high standard of service in relation to highways and winter maintenance from the County Council who provide these services. Once they had gathered examples of work undertaken by groups such as Lancashire Local Rossendale, it was agreed that some work was already ongoing to improve Highways in the Borough.

The Group produced a press release asking for members of the public to write in or email the Council with their comments. This helped the Task and Finish Group in their work and Members went on site visits to see for themselves those individual concerns (see photo below).



Councillor Peter Gill and Councillor Joyce Thorne inspecting roadworks

So that the Group did not duplicate the work already undertaken, they agreed to look at the County Council's Condition Assessment Report for Rossendale which was undertaken in 2005 and highlighted areas for improvement. Roads identified within the report were checked to ensure that improvements had been made and questions were asked about outstanding items.

The Group also invited Officers from Lancashire County Council to update them on other issues within the report to ensure that changes had been implemented.

The final report was presented to Lancashire Local Rossendale in March 2007 when a commitment was made that account would be taken of the Task and Finish Group's recommendations in the preparation of future highways priority programmes. It was also agreed that a report be presented to a future meeting of the Lancashire Local on the current position with regard to unadopted roads in Rossendale.

Our Councillors now receive regular roadworks information so that they can keep the community informed about what is happening

Litter Bins Task and Finish Group

A concern was raised by an elected Member about litter bins in the Borough and it was agreed that this should be taken forward for review through a Task and Finish Group as a 'light touch' review.

The Group's objective was to look at the varying styles, sizes and number of bins within the Borough and the need to ensure that the approach

was consistent to improve the street scent within local communities.

At the first meeting the Group met with the Operations Manager for Street Scene and Liveability and the Neighbourhood Environment Action Team Manager, when it became known that a database existed within the Council which highlighted the location of litter bins. It was agreed that to commence this project we would use the information that already existed to examine the location and condition of bins.

All elected Members were given the opportunity to participate and were asked to go out into their particular ward with the list of identified litter bins and complete a questionnaire. Of the 14 wards within the Borough 11 were surveyed. Councillors looked at things like condition, type etc.

Rossendale Borough Council provides litter bins in all major towns and streets in the Borough as well as parks and open spaces. There are currently 467 litter bins in Rossendale (306 pole mounted and 161 floor mounted).

Maintenance costs for the servicing of pole mounted bins is double the cost of that of floor mounted bins in general, due to the requirements of the service. As such, a high proportion of litter bins in the Borough are pole mounted, the maintenance costs are disproportionately higher. The current budget allocation of £5,000 per annum for the replacement of bins has previously been utilised for the procurement of new bins, which primarily consisted of the post mounted variety.

A number of recommendations were made including the provision within the Capital Programme for a rolling schedule of replacement bins in the Borough. It was also agreed that consideration should be given to exploring the idea of sponsorship from local businesses to maximise opportunities within budget limitations. Elected Members would work alongside Council Officers and contact local businesses to encourage them to promote anti-littering messages and reduce packaging.

Another recommendation was that litter bins should be uniform in colour, size and type and that free standing bins be provided in most appropriate locations to minimise servicing costs with the use of plastic, post mounted bins be discontinued.

The Task and Finish Group also recommended that a Litter Bins Policy be developed which would include the criteria for the provision of litter bins.

The final report went to Cabinet in February when the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group were accepted and agreed. The Chair of this Group will be meeting soon with Managers from Street Scene and Liveability to discuss a way forward with these recommendations.

Polling Stations Task and Finish Group

Following the elections in 2006, Members raised a number of issues relating to polling stations, including signage, location and accessibility.

The Elections Officer circulated to the Group the statutory guidance in relation to the future review of polling stations which came into effect on 1st January 2007. She had not received any other information on what the review would entail but indicated that all Members, community groups, MPs etc would be involved in the review.

Members raised concern about a number of buildings being used for the elections in 2007 and the Elections Officer agreed to make enquiries on these and, where possible, provide alternative locations.

As signage of polling stations was an issue that needed addressing, the Elections Officer indicated that money was not available within the existing budget for additional signs and the Group agreed to write to the Returning Officer requesting additional funding. A letter was sent to the Returning Officer requesting additional funding for signage and this was actioned. The review will continue in the 2007/08 Work Programme.

Review of Ombudsman Complaints Task and Finish Group

Members were aware that the Council needed to improve its administration process relating to Ombudsman Complaints.

The Task and Finish Group met with Helen Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive, Bill Lawley, Interim Legal and Democratic Services Manager and Jenni Cook, Committee Officer who provided a report highlighting the improvements being made

The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that Ombudsman complaint figures for Rossendale were relatively low when compared to other authorities and she indicated that the situation had improved greatly over the past few months.

A database had been developed which allowed reports to be compiled on a regular basis whilst simultaneously reducing the Officer's time taken to compile the reports and produce figures.

Communication between the Link Officer and Heads of Service had improved with a regular summary of Open Cases and outstanding actions circulated via the Service Assurance Team. Once files had closed, the Link Officer circulated the Ombudsman correspondence to the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Interim Legal and Democratic Services Manager, relevant Head of Service and the Communications Officer, outlining any concerns raised. Future Improvements include:-

- Training for Heads of Service
- Monthly meetings to be established between the Link Officer, Interim Legal and Democratic Services Manager and where necessary, the Deputy Chief Executive.

In addition, the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive met with the Ombudsman and Assistant Ombudsman in order to foster a good working relationship with the Ombudsman's Office to ensure communication channels were effective.

The Performance Scrutiny Committee will continue to monitor

Ombudsman Complaints on a six monthly basis.

Community Cohesion Task and Finish Group

The Task and Finish Group considered a range of information about community cohesion and about the work taking place in Rossendale. National documents included information from the Home Office, Department for Communities and Local Government's Eight Guiding Principles and the Commission for Racial Equality. Local information was provided about the work of the LSP, the results of the Living in East Lancashire Survey, Rossendale's Statement of Intent and a draft response by East Lancs Together to a consultation by the Commission for Integration and Cohesion.

Members discussed the scope of community cohesion including age, ethnicity, and geographical considerations. Accessible meeting places for diverse groups, street scene issues and youth provision were seen as key to improving cohesion. Many of these issues would be addressed in the Children and Young People's Strategy, the Play Strategy and the Council's approach to neighbourhood management.

It was agreed to meet with representatives of the LSP and to undertake a site visit to Salford to view some street scene solutions.

Enforcement Task and Finish Group

The Task and Finish Group met with the Interim Environmental Health

Manager who presented the draft Enforcement Policy to the Group.

Having considered the Policy a number of amendments were agreed and the Cabinet were recommended to approve the Policy for consultation purposes.

A further meeting will be arranged in 3 months to review progress and the results of the consultation.

TASK AND FINISH GROUPS CARRIED FORWARD TO 2007/08

The following Task and Finish Groups will continue their work during the next year.

- Car Parking in the Borough
- Community Cohesion
- Enforcement
- Review of Public Conveniences in the Borough
- Review of Polling Stations

JOINT SCRUTINY REVIEW

Lancashire County Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee invited district councils in Lancashire to participate in a joint review of bus shelters in the Borough. This review looked at ownership and maintenance arrangements as well as their impact on promoting the use of public transport.

A questionnaire was produced and also published on the County Council's website. Elected Members were each given copies of the questionnaire to distribute within their ward.

The review is now complete and a draft report is being prepared.

There are many issues of common concern both across the County and within neighbouring authorities and there is scope to do more joint scrutiny working in the future.

RESPONSES TO CONSULTATIONS

Over the last 12 months the Chief Executive has asked Overview and Scrutiny to comment on a number of consultations on behalf of the Council.

At the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, a small working group made up of 3 or 4 Members would be established and they would meet to prepare a draft response for the Chief Executive to sign on behalf of the Council.

Working Groups looked at the following consultations:-

- Making it Better - reconfiguration of Healthcare Services for Children, Young People, Parents and Babies in Greater Manchester, East Cheshire, High Peak and Rossendale
- Meeting Patient Needs – Changes to the delivery of health services in East Lancashire
- Working Together to Improve Mental Health Services in Lancashire
- Lancashire County Council Youth Strategy
- Lancashire County Council - Children's Trust Arrangements
- POSTWATCH – future funding and structure arrangements of the post office network
- Clinical Assessment Treat and Support – which would impact on

the way health services are provided.

A SUMMARY OF HOW SCRUTINY HAS MADE A DIFFERENCE

- That disc parking be extended throughout the entire Borough and that we continue to look at other aspects of car parking throughout the Borough, including additional disabled spaces.
- That a commitment was made that the recommendations in our Highways Report be built into future highways programme.
- That the recommendations made in our Litter Bins Report be accepted and that there would be provision within the Capital Programme for a rolling schedule of replacement bins in the Borough.
- That money be provided within the Elections budget for additional signage for the Polling Stations.
- The Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service met with the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to present their views on the proposals to downgrade/close fire stations in the Borough. The Council sent a letter to the Lancashire Fire and Rescue service opposing the proposals. Following the consultation the Fire Authority rejected the options to close Haslingden Fire Station and downgrade Rawtenstall Fire Station. A letter of thanks was sent to the Council by the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service for their support during the consultation.

- The Policy Scrutiny Committee discussed the principles of the “Nottingham Declaration” which was a commitment to tackle climate change and a recommendation was forward to Full Council in November 2006 asking that the Council sign up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change which is likely to be one of the key drivers within our community and this was approved.
- There has been improvements in the Performance of the Council’s BVPIs eg invoices paid on time and also improved performance in the development of policies.

OUR FUTURE WORK

DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2007/08 (these could be subject to change) Please see the Council’s website.

Policy Scrutiny Committee

12 June 2007
7 August 2007
1 October 2007
26 November 2007
7 January 2008
4 March 2008

Performance Scrutiny Committee

13 June 2007
25 July 2007
28 August 2007
2 October 2007
21 November 2007
8 January 2008
13 February 2008

18 March 2008

Audit Scrutiny Committee

14 June 2007
6 September 2007
22 November 2007
7 February 2008

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

24 May 2007
25 September 2007
18 December 2007
5 February 2008 (budget)
25 March 2008

Our Work Programme for 2007/08 will be taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee in May. At this meeting we will agree the Task and Finish Group Work Schedule for the next 12 months and the appointments to Task and Finish Groups.

Through the Council’s newsletter – Rossendale Alive, which is distributed to all households in the Borough, Rossendale people were invited to have their say on any local services which affect them and which they feel are in need of improvement. These do not have to be Council-run services. They were asked to complete a form and return to the Council. All completed forms were looked at by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the following ideas were put forward for consideration.

- Road Safety in the Borough
- Ring and Ride Service
- Accrington and Rossendale College
- Review of Partnerships on the Council’s Register

Consideration will have to be taken for the provision in the White Paper for the Community Call for Action process, where individual Councilors are given the right to refer a matter affecting their area to scrutiny by the Council, unless it relates to a crime and disorder matter (covered by the Police and Justice Act 2006 provision).

There is no doubt that Overview and Scrutiny will have a very busy year ahead.

The Overview and Scrutiny function in Rossendale has developed and expanded over the last year and we look forward to the prospect of welcoming new Members to take Scrutiny forward.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED!

Overview and Scrutiny need the views and experiences of local people in order to help us make a difference and ensure that the council and its partners deliver quality services that meet the needs of the community.

Suggestions for Scrutiny

If there are particular services or issues which you think should be looked at, please let us know by completing our online Scrutiny form which can be found on the Council's website www.rossendale.gov.uk

If you prefer, you can put this in writing to the Scrutiny Support Officer, Room 213, Futures Park, Bacup, OL13 0BB. You should

explain what the issue is and why you think scrutiny should consider it.

All items received will be considered and shared with the relevant scrutiny committee to decide if it can be included on their work programme.

Have Your Say!

The Performance, Policy and Audit Scrutiny Committee meetings, together with the Overview and Management Committee meetings are held in public and you are welcome to attend.

At each meeting, there will be a public question time, where you are able to ask a question of the committee.

Scrutiny can't consider

- Individual complaints
- Individual issues about members of staff
- Planning or licensing matters

For further information or assistance, please contact Heather Moore, Committee and Member Services Manager on 01706 252423 or Pat Couch, Scrutiny Support Officer on 01706 252426 or email

democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk