

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Council **DATE:** 27th April 2010

CONTACT OFFICER: Sunita Sharma – Scrutiny Support Officer
(For all enquiries) (01753) 875480

WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR CONSIDERATION**

ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2009/10

1 Purpose of Report

To present to the Council the Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2009/10.

2 Recommendation(s) / Proposed Action

The Council is recommended to receive the Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2009/10.

3 Key Priorities

Community Strategy Priorities

Overview and Scrutiny is a process by which decision-makers are accountable to local people, via their elected representatives for improving outcomes relating to all priorities for the Borough and its residents. Scrutiny seeks to influence those who make decisions by considering the major issues affecting the Borough and making recommendations about how services can be improved. The Annual Scrutiny Report supports the Scrutiny process by providing a record of the work carried out during the year and plans for the future year.

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial – None

(b) Risk Management – None

5 Supporting Information

5.1 Annual reports are an opportunity to review the scrutiny work programme for the last year and help us to understand the nature of the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny and to assess its effectiveness. It also gives an opportunity to reflect on any lessons learned during the year to help guide future work.

- 5.2 The production of an Annual Report is a statutory requirement of the Constitution.
- 5.3 The report provides details of the work of the individual panels and highlights the different approaches that have been used to scrutinise topics:
- 5.3.1 Regular and continuous scrutiny of performance indicators and inspection findings has helped members to develop a joined up more strategic perspective rather than concentrate on issues in isolation;
 - 5.3.2 Special meetings such as those on Safeguarding Children have allowed for more detailed scrutiny of an issue and partner performance; similarly special meetings on Stoke Road Cemetery allowed community involvement in developing a solution.
 - 5.3.3 The scrutiny of Traveller Incursions within Slough has encouraged this to be looked at in the wider context of social inclusion and developing appropriate policies for our Traveller community.
 - 5.3.4 Finally Health Scrutiny has continuously used its statutory powers to hold the PCT and Hospital Trusts to account and intervene early particularly over the recent changes proposed for Mental Care Services.
 - 5.3.5 There is scope to build on and develop different approaches to scrutiny next year; continued attention needs to be given to forward planning and appropriate selection of items within the work programme, fewer routine reports for noting and challenging the status quo by making evidence based recommendations.
- 5.4 The report includes the member attendance record for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a summary of the work plans for each of the panels in 09/10.

6. **Conclusion**

The local authority through its Overview and Scrutiny function has an influential as well as a statutory role in scrutinising the activities and performance of the Cabinet and external bodies. The Annual Scrutiny Report 09/10 provides an opportunity to communicate the work the Committee and its Panels have undertaken, challenges faced and opportunities for the future.

A copy of the Annual Overview & Scrutiny Report for 2008/09 will be separately forwarded to Members.