

Scrutiny at Leeds City Council



Annual Report 2007/08

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Foreword



Cllr Pauleen Grahame, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Welcome to the Annual report of the Council's Scrutiny Boards. This report details the work undertaken by the Council's seven Scrutiny Boards in 2007/08.

I am delighted that the Council has been awarded four stars following this year's Corporate Assessment and I would like to acknowledge the contribution Scrutiny Members have made in achieving this score. This is a fantastic result, however we must continue to improve therefore I look forward to working with our external Auditors, KPMG in the coming year in their review of Scrutiny.

Areas I am sure that will be of interest to the Auditors will be the relationship Scrutiny has with the Executive and the added value our work programmes give to the running of the City.

Meaningful involvement of the Scrutiny Function in the business of the Council requires effective engagement with Executive Members and service areas. It also requires the development of scrutiny work programs that take account of the Council's priorities. The recently agreed Memorandum of Agreement between Scrutiny Boards and the Executive will, I hope, go a long way to addressing these issues. However success will largely depend on the willingness of the Executive to engage with Scrutiny and for Scrutiny Boards to ensure that their work is timely and adds value.

This coming year will also see elements of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act come into force which will have a direct affect on how Scrutiny Works. I believe a key challenge for Scrutiny will be how well we engage with our partners and scrutinise performance against the targets set in the Local Area Agreement. In many respects how we undertake this Scrutiny will have a significant impact on the Council's reputation. It is important that we create positive expectations about Scrutiny with our partners. I am pleased therefore that Overview and Scrutiny Committee was able to agree with our partners the 'Protocol between Scrutiny and Statutory Public Sector Partners in Leeds'.

Such challenges will require us to review the training needs of Scrutiny Members. Therefore we look forward to working with the Member Development Working Group in drawing up a programme of training opportunities.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow Chairs for their hard work and commitment this year.

Cllr Pauleen Grahame Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Work of the Boards

In 2007/08 there were 7 Scrutiny Boards:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)
- Scrutiny Board (City Development)
- Scrutiny Board (Environments and Neighbourhoods)
- Scrutiny Board (Health and Social Care)
- Scrutiny Board (Culture and Leisure)
- Scrutiny Board (Resources)

Each individual Board has reported its work in more detail in this report.

Call In

There have been two Call Ins this year;

- the review of parking facilities including adjustments to prices.
(decision released for implementation)
- Grant aid to Radio Asian Fever
(resolved that the decision of the Area Committee be reconsidered)

Summary of Scrutiny Work in 2007 -08

Each Scrutiny Board identifies the type of work it does. This allows scrutiny Members to see at a glance the balance of the items on their work programme and support them in deciding what types of work they would like to focus on.

The bar chart below represents the types of work that the Scrutiny Boards have done this year.

