

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 18th June 2007

Subject: Select Committee Reviews – progress report

Report of: Assistant Chief Executive

Contact officer: Adrian Hardy 01942 827130

Purpose/summary: To update committee on progress made in respect of previous reviews undertaken by the Select Committees.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: Not to report this to committee. This report is being submitted so that committee can be assured that progress continues to be made against previous recommendations.

Recommendation/decision: To note the content of the report and welcome the continuing progress on implementing recommendations.

Implications:

Financial: No additional implications outside already approved budgets

Staffing: No additional staffing implications

Policy:
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted? Not in relation to this report; individual select committee reports will have contained recommendations in respect of disability where they were appropriate

Wards affected: All
Special Interest Members – Which have been consulted

Has the Director of Legal and Property Services confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council's Constitution?

Yes / No *

Has the Director of Finance and IT confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council's budget?

Yes / No *

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council?

/ No *

* delete which applicable

For Cabinet reports only :

Categorisation of the report:	x		x
Discussion leading to a decision		Discussion	
Monitoring		Decision	
Sharing for corporate understanding		Information	

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
	18/6/2007		11/7/2007

List of Background Papers in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:

Document	Date	File Reference	Place of Inspection

Proper Officer Adrian Hardy

Date 13/6/2007

Background:

On an irregular basis Committee has received updates on the reviews previously carried out by its Select Committees. This report sets out the current position, and adds the three most recently completed reports to the list for future reference.

Proposals:

That Committee welcome the indication of progress that has been made in many areas, and asks officers to continue to progress those that are outstanding.

Where all the recommendations in reviews have been completed I propose to remove the detail from the list. The full report will still be available on the web at <http://boston/pub/council/overview-scrutiny/reviews.htm>. This will save paper and also concentrate committee's attention where it is most needed.

Alternative options considered and reason for the recommended option:

The only alternative is not to report this to committee. The recommended route which is being taken is to enable committee to be positive in pursuing recommendations that it initially felt had real value in addressing local issues.

Conclusions:

Committee are asked to note the contents of the report and the indications of progress that has been made in the review areas.

Review Area	Key Findings/Issues	Reported to Panel/ Committee	Update position at June 2007
Scrutiny Reviews			
Missed Bins	The collection of domestic refuse with particular emphasis on missed collections and their rectification. The Help List facility for the elderly and physically frail. All aspects of customer liaison	19-Nov-01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations now complete. Updated report to Overview and Scrutiny/Environment Panel submitted 7th February 2005/23rd March 2005. • Currently undertaking full review of service following a Best Value review in 2006. Reporting back to Cabinet in September 2007
Asylum Seekers	The impact and integration of asylum seekers on the community	18-Feb-02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed name of Asylum Seekers Providers Forum to Refugee & Migrants Forum to reflect changing issues. • R&MF in process of developing 'Welcome to Wigan' - strategy to support Refugees & Migrants to Wigan • All Support for Asylum Seekers now provided through private sector - 3 providers in borough, all have good relationship with Council. • Partnership Policy Framework for the Dispersal and Integration of Asylum Seekers in Wigan Borough regularly updated and continues to be implemented (NASS recently updated their guidance to all LA's / Private Sector Providers using a variation on Wigan's model).
Casual Swimming	Increase access, usage and profitability of the pools	18-Feb-02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This has been overtaken by the introduction of free swimming for the under-16's and over-60's
Linc Cards	Increase usage and profitability of card. Fulfill an effective role in meeting its social exclusion aim. Increase number of young people using card.	10-Jun-02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This has been overtaken by the changed procedures within the Trust intended to identify their customers more effectively and allow targeting into areas of most deprivation.
Loan Sharks	Access to affordable credit. Provide advice. Reduce levels of debt.	15-Jul-02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2002 CAB have dealt with a total of £42.8 million of debt. • A total of £7.2 million has been written off for

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Loan Sharks (continued)			<p>clients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total of £35.6 million has been re-scheduled so that clients can make affordable repayments. • Currently a Debt adviser works in targeted areas of the Borough including from Family Resource Centres and community facilities. The funding ends in March 2008. • CAB continues to provide an adviser at County Courts at Wigan and Leigh on mortgage and rent possessions days and 900 clients have kept their homes as a result. • A Bond Scheme is in place to provide a deposit for the potentially homeless who do not qualify for Local authority housing and prospective tenants have to attend sessions including financial literacy before being accepted on the scheme. • Partnership protocol developed with CAB and Wigan and Leigh Housing. Tenants with rent arrears or other debt or benefit problems are referred to CAB for advice and intervention. • In 2005 links between CAB and Unify Credit Union were established. • CAB operate an outreach session and Unify's office in Ince
Traffic Calming	Consider 'points based' and other types of methods of prioritising schemes. Detailed comparisons to be made with other authorities. Review budgets for scheme.	24-Feb-03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calming Area Prioritisation Scheme now adopted • All other aspects of report have been acted upon.
Health: Dentistry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and Leadership • Poor attitudes to dental health locally 	14-Jul-03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dental Action Plan produced • Working with local profession to shape out of hours emergency dental access.

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Health Dentistry (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of water fluoridation • Registration rates • Lack of performance management • Identification of areas having difficulty accessing NHS dentists • The need for future services to meet local need. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to review during the course of the current year.
Numeracy and Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising attainment in early years towards the Early Learning Goals. • Raising attainment at KS3 & KS4. • Monitoring quality standards. • Narrowing attainment gap. 	14-Jul-03	<p>To raise attainment in the early years .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Foundation Stage Profile, has been introduced to record achievement for pupils under 5 years old. • There is a well co-ordinated programme to support and develop early years provision including, the Sure Start Local Programme, Early Excellence Centres, Children's Centres and Quality Assurance advisers and consultants. • This support programme also includes voluntary and private settings offering early years provision. <p>Raising attainment in key stages 3 and 4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of pupils achieving level 5+ in the KS3 tests in 2006 for mathematics and science were the highest LEA results so far, at 79% and 73% respectively. Performance in English declined slightly to 72%, but this is in the context of continued reservations nationally about the reliability of the assessments in this subject. • Overall performance at Key Stage 3 improved slightly, with the aggregate of test percentages at 224 across the 3 subjects, compared with 221 in 2005 • Overall the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C at GCSE in 2006 showed significant

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Numeracy and Literacy (continued)			<p>improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 56.9% of pupils achieved 5 or more A*-C at GCSE in 2006 compared to 51.7% in 2005, and 51.3% in 2004. • The GCSE “average points score”, which shows how well young people of all abilities have done across their subjects, improved dramatically to 366.5 from 338.7 in 2005 – taking Wigan ahead of the national average. • A new national indicator for 2006 was 5 or more A*-C GCSE including English and mathematics. Our 2006 figure for this indicator was 41.7%, which is below the national average of 45.8%, and work is in progress through the secondary strategy to close this gap • Raising attainment at GCSE is one of our LAA targets and is a key target in the Children's and Young People's Plan. <p>Narrowing the attainment gap.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of results at all Key Stages shows improved engagement of boys. However, overall there has not been a narrowing of the attainment gap between boys and girls. Raising boys attainment is one of our LAA targets and is a key task in the Children's and Young People's Plan. <p>Monitoring standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a well-structured programme of supported school self-evaluation built into the Link Adviser visits that is providing a robust support and challenge to all schools.

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Numeracy and Literacy (continued)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good practice is identified and shared, for example through the Leading Aspect Awards. Schools of Concern are identified and appropriate intervention and support is agreed and provided
Managing Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that young people with disabilities are given best possible opportunity to develop their full potential without discrimination. • Providing best service and working together with partners. 	08-Sep-03	Overtaken by the CYPP developments and will be monitored through JAR.
Youth Nuisance and Substance Misuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and understand main causes of youth nuisance. • Access to recreational facilities where appropriate. • Working with other departments. 	08-Sep-03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi agency Respect Group created under the auspices of the Community safety Partnership comprising a range of external partners and relevant Council Departments which has ownership of this agenda through a Respect Action Plan and the Anti Social Behaviour Action Plan. • Delivery of first year anti social behaviour action plan incorporating youth nuisance issues completed and reported to CP Panel March 2007 • 2007/08 action plan created and endorsed by CP Panel June 2007 • CYPS in the process of developing a Places to go, Things to do Strategy
Utilities Review	Possibility of opening the Connections market up to competition. Performance against targets of utility connection. System to track progress of jobs. Lack of communication between UUNC and their sub-contractors.	13-Oct-03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All actions put in place and review closed.

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Inequalities in Health in Wigan Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A need for a holistic approach to planning for health equalities across the borough from all agencies involved. • The need to encourage healthy lifestyles in children and young people. • There is little information on the attitude and behaviors of local people and why they do not adopt health improvement messages. • Improved monitoring and evaluation of current schemes so that evidence of delivering health improvement is available. 	23-Aug-04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to new review in light of updated survey material that is now available and comparison with other adjoining authorities..
Specialist Housing Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing number of homeless. • Number of offenders returning to the borough. • Lack of accommodation for homeless. 	06-Sep-04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital funding / site obtained / planning application lodged for reconfiguration of Richmond Fellowship supported housing project (for people recovering from Mental Health problems) • Short term funded projects coming to fruition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bond Scheme now supporting 44 people • Housing Options Worker delivered 38 workshops to 263 individuals during 06/07 • Rainer Intensive Mediation Project currently supporting 12 of the borough most chaotic young people. • Key Project rehoused 61 clients in 06/07 / Former Bricklayers Arms purchased to be used as a base for Key Project and the Bridge Group (building in need of refurbishment) • OARS: 19 people supported for a 12 week period 'through the prison gate'

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Specialist Housing Provision (continued)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 yr funding secured for Learning Disability Housing Options Development Worker • Funding secured to establish Housemates scheme for people with LD • Costs of B&B reduced significantly in 2006/07 (continue to use furnished temporary tenancies) • Prevention becoming main focus of homelessness services • Homelessness Strategy being revised during 2007/8 • Developing 'Partnering Arrangement' with RSL's to attract investment into specialist housing provision •
Teenage Pregnancy	Reduce under 18 conception rates by 50% by 2010. Get more teenage parents into education, training and employment. Establish downward trend in rate of under 16 conception by 2010.	20-Sep-04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst a wide range of initiatives has been undertaken the teenage pregnancy rate has shown an increase in recent years. The overall Family Planning and Teenage Sexual Health service in the borough is being reviewed and tendered at present. The Committee may wish to call for a brief updating review late in the year.
The Effect of CCTV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantifying cost of continuing service at current and increased levels. • Identifying good practise. • Identify beneficiaries of contributors to the service. 	15-Nov-04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the original review two other internal reviews have been undertaken. The result of one of these was to outsource some of our CCTV work, making a large revenue saving. • We now use of proactive monitoring of time-related hot spots across the borough, identifying incidents before they escalate and liaising with partners to effectively deploy resources. • We have also developed alarm activated CCTV to assist schools, the technology enables confirmation of intruders before they enter a building, preventing vandalism and gathering evidence for investigation

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The Effect of CCTV (continued)			<p>purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently seven town centres with full static CCTV systems deployed, the costs of extending the network are prohibitive, however we are currently exploring the effectiveness of IIP cameras which can be transmitted back to Central Watch through the internet. This significantly reduces the capital and revenue costs of installing static CCTV and would enable areas suffering crime and anti-social behaviour to benefit from targeting limited Partnership resources, in addition we will also be trialling audio CCTV in a town centre to improve communication. • The service will continue to develop as technology becomes available to create a safer and secure environment for all members of the public who live, work and visit the borough.
Affordable Housing	House prices in Wigan increased in recent years.	23-May-05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Housing Strategy Implemented: • Change way council properties allocated – ensure goes to those in greatest need. • Negotiated nomination agreement with RSL's over 50% their properties let through council waiting list - accredited private landlords able to advertise through Property Shop • Bond scheme supporting 44 people in private sector • Pulled out of asylum seekers contract releasing 146 properties to help address need for more social rented housing • Affordable Housing Planning Policy implemented July 2006... likely to see first affordable provision November 2007

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing 'Partnering Arrangement' with RSL's to attract investment into affordable housing provision
<p>Re organisation of Children's Health Services across the footprint of Greater Manchester, East Cheshire, High Peak</p>	<p>To inform members of the possible impact on local health services for children and young people to enable them to respond to the consultation exercise planned for 2006.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A decision has now been made. Option A will see the creation of eight centres of excellence for maternity and children's services with neonatal care provided at three large, specialist Neonatal Intensive Care Units. Wigan will be one of the eight. In addition, the changes will mean: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community services and health care in the home will be developed • Greater opportunity and support provided to manage conditions in the home • More experienced consultants dealing with specialist areas. • It is anticipated that changes will be established over the next 3 – 5 years. Wigan will not be affected by the location changes; however, we will have to ensure that we have effective health and social care provision available in the community to support the proposed changes. • The committee will monitor progress of the changes through the Greater Manchester Health Committee.

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Audiology	<p>We suggest that the following improvements should be made and a fundamental review of pathway design should take place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That initial assessment, the testing of hearing frequency and altitude ranges and the results and suitability for hearing aid should be undertaken on the same day. • That the new style of digital aid be introduced as soon as possible • That the above step be merged and undertaken on the same day as the appointment with Audiology to have the moulding made of inside of the ear. • We would like to see evidence from the trust to demonstrate the 11 week waiting target has been met by May 2007. <p>Improvements to facilities and patient experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We recommend that the report from the PPI Forum sent to the trust at the end of November 2006 is considered and further action put in place to improve accommodation at the Leigh site. • Opening hours should be considered and adapted to suit patient need where possible. 	March 2007	Further report back needed during 2007 to indicate the level of progress made.

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Invasive Weeds	<p>Japanese knotweed presents a significant risk to the council in future years in terms of potential litigation, impact on land value and right to buy values as well as environmental impact of unchecked spread if proactive management is not commenced. There is potential to pool existing resources which are currently used disparately to treat the weed, to create a joined up approach to tackling the problem which will have increased benefits.</p>	March 2007	Action Plan developed highlighting key recommendations to go to Cabinet in June 2007.
Adoption of Road and Open Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land ownership is a complex area. • We have powers to enforce land maintenance when there is a registered owner. • Limited powers when no registered owner. • Adoption of open spaces working well. • Adoption of highways – signing of agreement for adoption is critical phase in process. Lack of incentive for larger developers to complete work to adoption standard. • Our own management arrangements for the land we own do not follow the concept of ‘one council’. This can cause delays and confusion for members of the public and elected members. 	March 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to contracts for Section 38 agreements to ensure agreements are signed as quickly as possible without delays caused by need for agreements between United Utilities and developers regarding sewers and pumping stations. • Raised awareness of our powers under Section 215 to ensure the condition of land does not adversely affect the amenity of an area. • Raised awareness of the concept of community leasing of land as a viable alternative to land disposal. • Identified further recommendations to strengthen our approaches in the areas concerned by the review.

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Generic Call handling	<p>In seeking to improve services for the public we should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the public can access to services from 8.00 am - 8.00 pm Monday-Friday and Saturday mornings. • Provide better information leaflets for the public about services which they can access in public buildings i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ access to a telephone ○ Information Board about Council services ○ Libraries • To develop partnership working arrangements to provide information leaflets about Council services for the public i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local supermarkets/shopping malls ○ Community and voluntary groups ○ GP Surgeries • Develop well trained personnel to provide the highest level of customer care to the public. • To have more flexible staffing arrangements to handle effective service delivery. 	March 2007	These aspects will be included in the specification of services to be provided from the Joint Service Centre that opens in 2010. In the interim steps will be taken to implement specific recommendations in whole or in part within the council and also with its partners in the borough.