

**Report to:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** 14 January 2008

**Subject:** Select Committee Reviews – progress report

**Report of:** Assistant Chief Executive

**Contact officer:** Adrian Hardy 01942 827130

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**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	

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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**

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

**Yes**

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:	<b>x</b>
Discussion leading to a decision	
Monitoring	
Sharing for corporate understanding	

	<b>x</b>
Discussion	
Decision	
Information	

**Tracking/Process:**

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
	14/1/2008		

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 3/1/2008

**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 for those reviews which are continuing. The schedule has been divided into two parts, with a second section, starting on page 13, listing the completed reviews. This will act as a reminder for Committee, should members determine that they wish to re-open a particular topic for further investigation. The full reports are available on the web at <http://boston/pub/council/overview-scrutiny/reviews.htm>.

Updates on Health related matters will be included in a supplementary agenda item; the Christmas break has precluded these being incorporated in this first version of the report.

**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.

In view of discussion at the last committee meeting I would draw members attention specifically to the update on Teenage Pregnancy, on page 10, which does indicate that there has been some success in lowering the rates of teenage pregnancy over the last couple of years. The data available to the council, although the most recent, relates to early 2006 – it is to be hoped that when further information emerges in February 2008 the positive trend has continued. In the light of this information Committee may wish to reconsider the speed with which it would like this particular topic to be re-investigated.

**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 Dec 2007
<b>Continuing Scrutiny Reviews</b>			
<b>Specialist Housing Provision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing number of homeless.</li> <li>• Number of offenders returning to the borough.</li> <li>• Lack of accommodation for homeless.</li> </ul>	06-Sep-04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning permission obtained for Richmond Fellowship project – work on site to begin early 2008.</li> <li>• Short term projects been of positive impact, although unfortunately funding due to expire for several of these in March 2008; revenue funding is a problem:</li> <li>• Wigan Bond Scheme has issued 88 bonds since its inception and there are currently 54 bonds in operation. 23 landlords have been recruited onto the scheme.</li> <li>• OARS project have received 118 referrals from various prisons in the North West since it began. 56 offenders are currently receiving support by the project.</li> <li>• Rainer Intensive Mediation been of positive impact with 83% of service users not re-offending following on from support received.</li> <li>• Key Project have helped to re-house 167 homeless people since April 2005. Work now begun on Bricklayers Arms and to be complete mid 2008.</li> <li>• Learning Disability Housing Options Development Worker now in post.</li> <li>• Housemates scheme for people with learning disabilities now launched.</li> <li>• Cost of B&amp;B use continues to fall. Reduction in use of Temporary Accommodation toolkit being utilised to meet the 2010 target of halving its use.</li> <li>• WALH reconfigured their homelessness assessment service to focus on housing options in a planned way rather than reaching crisis point.</li> </ul>

Review Area	Key Findings/Issues	Reported to Panel/Committee	Update position at Dec 2007
<b>Specialist Housing Provision (continued)</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several bids been submitted to Housing Corporation in conjunction with various partners to address gaps in specialist housing.</li> </ul>
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	House prices in Wigan increased in recent years.	23-May-05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nominations from Registered Social Landlord's now over 50% and in cases of Arena and Riverside, 100% of lettings go through Council CBL scheme advertised through property shops.</li> <li>• Private Sector Leasing Scheme under development to house former asylum seekers in the borough.</li> <li>• Bond scheme supporting 54 people in private sector</li> <li>• Affordable Housing Guidance Note updated August '07 and model Section 106 agreement produced.</li> <li>• Five sites now have planning requirement for affordable housing, a total of 40 units due.</li> <li>• "Opening Doors" affordable housing allocations scheme launched July '07.</li> <li>• First 14 Affordable homes at Gin Pit Village available for occupation by December '07.</li> <li>• Partnering arrangement in place with Adactus for general needs housing and Arena for specialist older persons housing.</li> <li>• 10 RSL bids supported for Housing Corporation funding in the NAHP 2008-11. Allocation decisions due by March 08.</li> </ul>
<b>Adoption of Road and Open Spaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land ownership is a complex area.</li> <li>• We have powers to enforce land maintenance when there is a registered owner.</li> </ul>	March 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community leasing will be pursued where it is in the best interests of the Council following a detailed assessment of the individual circumstances of each case.</li> <li>• The Corporate Landlord approach to be adopted by the Council will ensure that in the future appropriate management arrangements are in place.</li> </ul>

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<b>Adoption of Road and Open Spaces (cont'd)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited powers when no registered owner.</li> <li>• Adoption of open spaces working well.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>		
Youth Nuisance and Substance Misuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and understand main causes of youth nuisance.</li> <li>• Access to recreational facilities where appropriate.</li> <li>• Working with other departments.</li> </ul>	08-Sep-03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASB Policy revised and supported by CP Panel November 2007</li> <li>• Development of a “Neighbourhood Teams” approach to tackling ASB and associated environmental issues rolling out in the New Year</li> <li>• WALH considering roll out of GNA’s “good neighbour agreements” to support ASB interventions</li> <li>• Positive activities identified as a priority for CYPS which will be proposed as an LAA priority for 2008-2011.</li> </ul>

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The Effect of CCTV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantifying cost of continuing service at current and increased levels.</li> <li>• Identifying good practise.</li> <li>• Identify beneficiaries of contributors to the service.</li> </ul>	15-Nov-04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The initial small scale trial of audio supported CCTV has had some success being directly responsible for the arrest of 2 offenders for Burglary in addition to other positive interventions. It is intended to extend the trial to cover Wigan Town Centre and fully evaluate prior to extending to other areas of the Borough.</li> <li>• We have taken advantage of technological advances and have successfully extended the range and scope of cameras which can transmit live pictures directly back to Central Watch using wireless technology.</li> <li>• Plans are underway to relocate Central Watch to the Town Hall as a consequence of the proposed JSC development.</li> </ul>
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	<p>Cabinet accepted the recommendations of the report and associated action plan and designated the Director of Environmental Services as the responsible officer.</p>

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Numeracy and Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising attainment in early years towards the Early Learning Goals.</li> <li>• Raising attainment at KS3 &amp; KS4.</li> <li>• Monitoring quality standards.</li> <li>• Narrowing attainment gap.</li> </ul>	14-Jul-03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Early Years</u> The well co-ordinated programme continues to support and develop early years provision including, the Sure Start Local Programmes, Early Excellence Centres, Children's Centres and the Early Years Quality and Inclusion Team.</li> </ul> <p>The 2007 Foundation Stage Profile data shows improvement in all six areas. The percentage of children achieving at least 6 on all PSED and CLL scales increased. The LA met its target for children achieving 78+ points and scoring at least 6 on all PSED and CLL scales.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Raising attainment in key stage 3</u> Results in 2007 showed achievement at Level 5 to be broadly in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science. However performance in English has declined over the last three years from 74% to 72%. Performance at Level 6 is below national average in the three core subjects. There are two schools where performance in a subject at Key Stage 3 is below the governments floor target of 50% of pupils achieving Level 5.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Raising attainment in key stage 4</u> Overall the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C at GCSE in 2007 showed continued, significant improvement. 61.4% of pupils achieved 5 or more A*-C in 2007. This has exceeded the LA target.</li> </ul> <p>The percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C GCSE including English and mathematics improved to 45%,</p>

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Numeracy and Literacy (continued)			<p>The GCSE “average points score”, which shows how well young people of all abilities have done across their subjects, has continued to improve to 382.</p> <p>The improved attainment at GCSE means that we have already achieved our 2008 LAA target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Narrowing the attainment gap.</u> 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. The attainment gap across all core subjects at all key stages is generally slightly wider in Wigan than the national average. Both nationally and in Wigan the biggest gaps are in English and especially writing. Raising boys’ attainment in English at Key Stage 2 is one of our LAA targets. There are positive indications of the impact of this work in the 2207 results. There has been an improvement in the percentage of boys achieving level 4 and above in English since 2005 from 74% to 76% in 2007. There has been a more significant improvement in level 5 performance where the percentage of boys at this higher level of achievement has risen from 20% to 26%. The performance statistics for Writing, as an element within the English, shows improvement from 56% level 4+ in 2005 to 60% in 2007.</li> <li>• <u>Monitoring standards.</u> All Wigan schools now have a School Improvement Partner. This initiative is helping the LA to provide support and challenge to all schools.</li> </ul>

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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	<p>Recently released ONS provisional second quarter 2006 conception data for Wigan shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rate of under-18 conceptions was <b>46.7</b> per 1000 girls aged 15-17, compared with <b>65.0</b> for the same quarter in 2005. This is Wigan's lowest second quarter rate since the start of the statistical series in 1998.</li> <li>In contrast all four of Wigan's statistical neighbours had an increase in rate from the first quarter</li> </ul> <p>Rates for the third and fourth quarter 2006 will be released in February 2008, along with provisional annual data for 2006, which we can now anticipate with cautious optimism.</p> <p>The ALWPCT has allocated substantial additional funding to young peoples sexual health services and a new integrated sexual health service has been commissioned, that will be able to offer continued expansion of venues, times and services in clinical, educational and community settings, including relocation to a more accessible, centrally located and highly visible premise.</p> <p>Wigan Teenage Pregnancy has recently been very proactive in 'drilling down' to identify the real local issues, which affect our young people and influence the decisions they take in relation to sexual health risk-taking behaviours.</p> <p>The Teenage Pregnancy Coordinator is currently consolidating all of the findings from 'Teenage Pregnancy: A Pilot of the Lived Experiences of Young People' research commissioned from Salford University, the Teenage Pregnancy Steering Group 'self-assessment' critical review of the local strategy and the Great Debate consultation with over 1700 local young people. Linking to local data, and national and regional guidance on the key factors of a successful strategy (what works) to bring all the pieces of the jigsaw together. From this scrutiny the local priorities for 2008-2011 will be identified and key actions will be agreed, implemented and</p>

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			monitored through the Teenage Pregnancy Steering Group.
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"> <li>• Hand held technology allowing driver transmission of data will minimise disruption.</li> <li>• Moving to area based working that will benefit uncollected bins</li> <li>• The above initiatives are a direct result of the Best Value Review.</li> </ul>
Generic Call handling	<p>In seeking to improve services for the public we should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the public can access to services from 8.00 am - 8.00 pm Monday-Friday and Saturday mornings.</li> <li>• Provide better information leaflets for the public about services which they can access in public buildings i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ access to a telephone</li> <li>○ Information Board about Council</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	March 2007	<p>The task of transforming the Streetcare Helpline into the Environmental Services Helpline so that it can take all the high volume calls for the former Engineers, Planning and Community Protection Departments is almost complete. The next task is to use this Helpline to develop the call handling requirements for the JSC. Work will be commencing in January to set up the new CRM using the Helpline.</p> <p>Environmental Services has also merged the call handling, reception and mail room staffing resources and created a generic customer services officer able to work in all three areas.</p> <p>We will also be looking to extend opening hours in the near future.</p>

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Generic Call handling (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Libraries</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To develop partnership working arrangements to provide information leaflets about Council services for the public i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Local supermarkets/ shopping malls</li> <li>○ Community and voluntary groups</li> <li>○ GP Surgeries</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Develop well trained personnel to provide the highest level of customer care to the public.</li> <li>• To have more flexible staffing arrangements to handle effective service delivery.</li> </ul>		
Loan Sharks	Access to affordable credit. Provide advice. Reduce levels of debt.	15-Jul-02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From July to November 2007 CAB have dealt with £7.16 million of Debt. The running total is therefore £54.1 million.</li> <li>• The total July – Nov of debt written off is £464000.</li> <li>• Re-scheduled debt for July – Nov was £6.7 million.</li> <li>• The total debt dealt with by the project located in financially</li> </ul>

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Loan Sharks (continued)			<p>excluded areas of the borough is £1.8 million; of which £1.6 million was rescheduled (these figures are included in the overall debt figures given above).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Court help, desk available to defendants at both Wigan &amp; Leigh County Courts, has assisted 162 clients between July and November 2007, most of whom have avoided the loss of their home.</li> <li>• The Bond Scheme has assisted 197 clients over the period; there are currently 54 clients who have a Bond and are still receiving support. A total of 88 households have been rehoused since the inception of the Bond Scheme.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The referral system with Wigan and Leigh Housing is currently under review.</li> <li>• The link with Unify C U is still strong, a member of CAB staff is on the board of WCUDDA (the development agency).The outreach session at Unify continues.</li> </ul> <p>CAB operates an outreach for debt advice at Wigan Town hall, specifically for Council staff.</p>

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<b>Completed Scrutiny Reviews</b>			
Asylum Seekers	The impact and integration of asylum seekers on the community	18-Feb-02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changed name of Asylum Seekers Providers Forum to Refugee &amp; Migrants Forum to reflect changing issues.</li> <li>• R&amp;MF in process of developing 'Welcome to Wigan' - strategy to support Refugees &amp; Migrants to Wigan</li> <li>• All Support for Asylum Seekers now provided through private sector - 3 providers in borough, all have good relationship with Council.</li> <li>• 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).</li> </ul>
Casual Swimming	Increase access, usage and profitability of the pools	18-Feb-02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This has been overtaken by the introduction of free swimming for the under-16's and over-60's</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• Calming Area Prioritisation Scheme now adopted</li> <li>• All other aspects of report have been acted upon.</li> </ul>

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Managing Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that young people with disabilities are given best possible opportunity to develop their full potential without discrimination.</li> <li>• Providing best service and working together with partners.</li> </ul>	08-Sep-03	Overtaken by the CYPP developments and will be monitored through JAR.
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"> <li>• All actions put in place and review closed.</li> </ul>
Re organisation of Children's Health Services across the footprint of Greater Manchester, East Cheshire, High Peak	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.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A decision has now been made. <b>Option A</b> 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:</li> <li>• Community services and health care in the home will be developed</li> <li>• Greater opportunity and support provided to manage conditions in the home</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More experienced consultants dealing with specialist areas.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• The committee will monitor progress of the changes through the Greater Manchester Health Committee.</li> </ul>