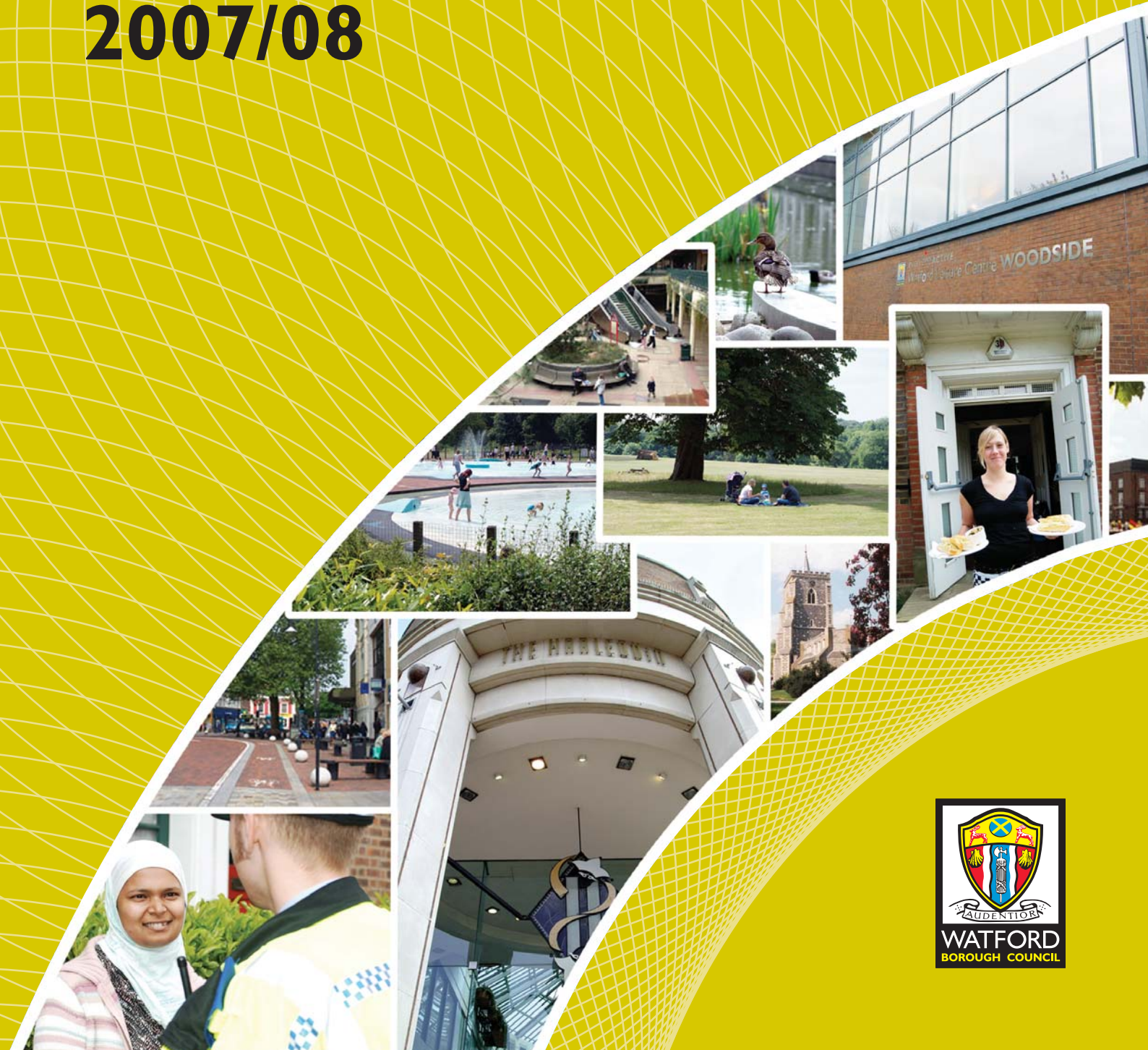
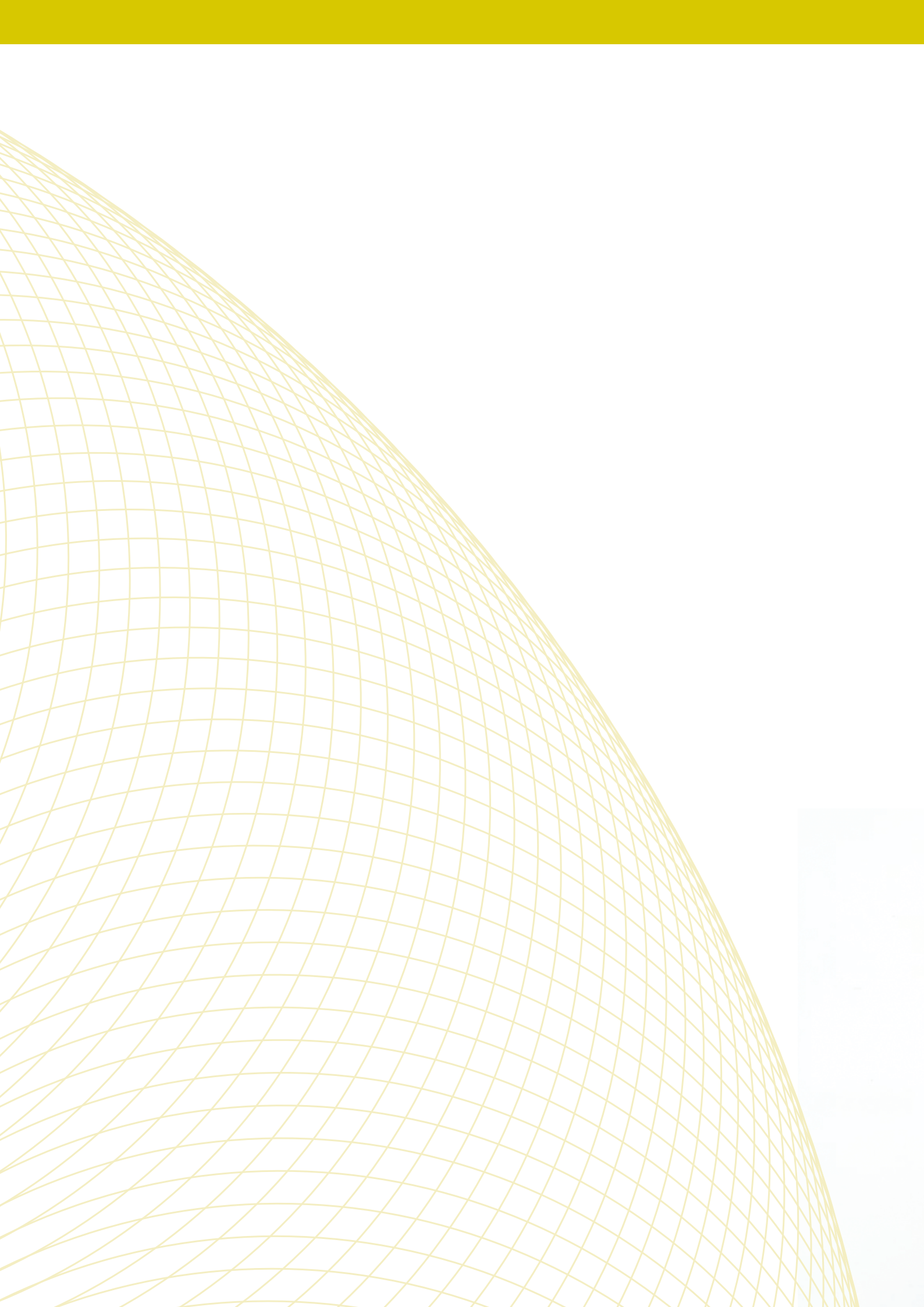


# The Annual Report of Overview & Scrutiny in Watford Borough Council 2007/08







# OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT – 2007/08

## Introduction & Overview

Both of the committees and the Budget Panel have successfully completed their work programmes and achieved results which have contributed to the work of the Council. Scrutiny development has continued although some of the items in the plan for the year have not progressed as far as expected; these are discussed later in this report.

Overall, indications show that scrutiny has continued to improve and progress in 2007/08. A measure of improvement has been assessed in the annual scrutiny survey the results of which are summarised in section 5(i) of this report.

Discussion among scrutiny members, other interested members and officers indicates that the current two committee structure is in need of revision to accommodate the neighbourhood working agenda and provisions of the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (The Act). The new structure needs to retain certain provisions of the current structure, namely, allow adequate examination of all aspects of the Council's operations and provide a sensible separation of forward thinking (policy) and reflection (performance) whilst recognising the reality of finite support resources. Additionally, members recognise the changing nature of scrutiny in its increasing focus on people and organisations outside the Council. Scrutiny and Cabinet members have considered a different model but wider consultation has determined that any changes will wait pending guidance from the Government expected in 2008 or 2009.

The Budget Panel is considered to have worked well by all people concerned with its operation and it is proposed that it continue as part of Scrutiny in 2008/09. It is also proposed that the Budget Panel meet throughout the year with an extended remit. The remit will depend upon discussions with the Call-in & Performance Committee but options include value for money/inter authority service cost comparisons and budget monitoring.

/...continued/



The use of time limited sub-groups of main committees (task groups) has continued in 2007/08 following the previous year's successful experiment. Three task groups have operated (one for Policy and two for Call-in) and all three were deemed successful by the members who participated. It is proposed that the use of task groups will continue next year.

An important part of scrutiny development is to work continually on improving process and communications. For the last three years Chairs and Vice Chairs group have met tri-annually to discuss matters of common interest, consider reports and agree procedural changes (or makes recommendations to others for change). A proposal arising from the structural review discussions was that the Chairs and Vice Chairs group cease and its work be transferred to Policy Committee, thus bringing it into the democratic process. However, as changes have been postponed the Chairs and Vice Chairs group will continue unchanged for 2008/09.

Scrutiny chairs and vice chairs have met three times with the Mayor and members of the Cabinet in 2007/08. At the meetings members discussed scrutiny plans and the relationship between scrutiny and the executive. Three further meetings have been diarised for 2008/09.

Some further progress has been made to build on the I&DeA review conducted in January 2006. Recommendations in the I&DeA report will be incorporated into the 2008/09 work programme and development sessions are planned for new members early in the new municipal year.

## 2. Policy Development Scrutiny Committee

### Membership:

Councillors Derbyshire (Chair)

Councillor Ajab (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Forest, Greenslade, Laventure, Mahmood, Mann, McLeod and McQuire.

### 2.1 The committee's work programme for 2007/08

The Policy Development Scrutiny Committee typically looks at two to three topics a year in depth. The topics are selected by the Committee at an early meeting from a shortlist of topics nominated by committee members, the executive and through consultation with others inside and outside the Council.

The Committee met on eleven occasions between June 2007 and April 2008. At its first meeting in June the Committee considered a shortlist of review topics developed through the consultation process. After discussion the following topics were chosen in order of preference:

- (i) Community & neighbourhood engagement (Area Committees)
- (ii) The Watford town centre night time economy
- (iii) Art and sports development

The Committee also concluded its 2006/07 review of sustainable development by agreeing a final draft report and referring it to Cabinet for consideration.

At the mid point of the year it became apparent that Committee's time would only allow two topics to be completed. Consequently, it was agreed to establish a time limited task group to look at the third topic.

### 2.2 Sustainable development

The Committee set out to determine the factors influencing future building development in Watford, particularly those having a bearing on the long-term sustainability of the living environment of the town's residents. It looked at policies for the use of previously developed land (brownfield sites) and for new building as well as policies for the protection from development of land designated as greenbelt. The capacity of Watford to absorb more house building and the environmental issues of creating more houses were addressed. The Committee looked how the surrounding ecology is affected by development, whether there are any short-term or long-term effects and if so what can be done to reduce or eliminate these threats.

The Committee made six recommendations to Cabinet the majority of which referred to the Local Development Framework (LDF). At the time of writing this report a formal response from Cabinet is still awaited.





### 2.3 Community and neighbourhood engagement

This review was centred on the future of Area Committees and the implications of the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

The Committee set out to review the effectiveness of the current Area Committee system, to determine how far it meets the Government's agenda for strong and prosperous communities and to consider options for change. The Committee recognised that the Council overall engages with the people of Watford in a number of ways and on a number of levels. It therefore determined that the review would be primarily about the role of ward councillors in this engagement. Varying arrangements for the election of councillors are discussed in the White Paper. However, the Committee decided not to include this issue within the scope of its review because it would have made the review too large. It agreed that the election arrangements might merit a review in due course focused solely on that topic.

The Committee made three composite recommendations to Cabinet relating to:

- (i) Replacing Area Committees with Neighbourhood Forums based on electoral wards having new and revised duties and responsibilities.
- (ii) Reviewing the scrutiny structure to determine the best way of accommodating new duties and powers afforded under the 2007 Act.
- (iii) Ward Councillors' role in the new system and their support needs.

The Cabinet accepted the recommendations and referred them on for consideration of the constitutional implications.

### 2.4 The night time economy

This review was designed to build upon the Council's work undertaken earlier in the year which looked at the future of the town centre. Members were keen to examine problems associated with night time activity in the town centre and the perception that community safety is a major issue.

In deciding its focus the Committee agreed to concentrate on the "top" of the town (the flyover to the Rickmansworth Road). Specific issues were community safety, current and future plans for town centre development and the impact of the new licensing policy.

The Committee made seven recommendations which will be considered by Cabinet in June. The Committee will review Cabinet's response in the new municipal year.



## 2.5 Art and sport development

This review was carried by a task group appointed by the main committee, membership included one councillor not on the main committee.

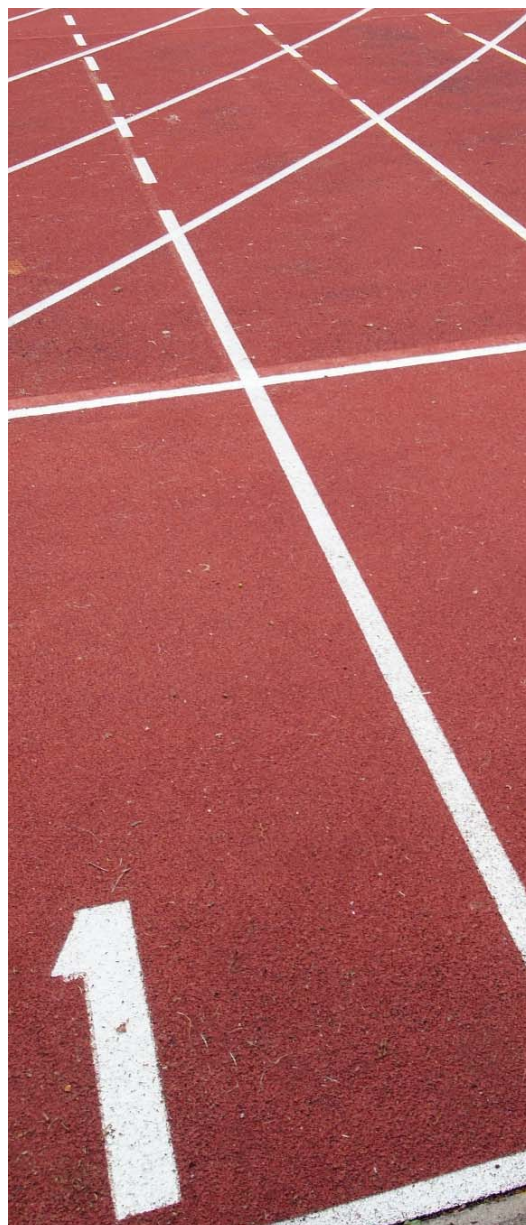
Members' interest stems from a growing recognition that participation in sport and art activities has the potential to improve individual quality of life and to deliver on a wide range of issues beneficial to local communities. Advocates claim that participation in quality art and sport activities can help to deliver on matters such as improved health, economic regeneration, social inclusion and community safety.

The task group's approach was one of determining how the Council currently works with arts and sports development, how this fits into the national, regional and local agendas and the local context with a view to providing a strategic direction.

Members noted that there are numerous organisations, clubs and charities in Watford providing opportunities for residents to participate in sport and art. The task group decided to focus on what the Council provides either directly or indirectly, examine how the Council links with and coordinates voluntary providers, charities and other organisations and examine the community use of school facilities. It was decided not to include commercial providers.

The review concluded that there is strong evidence that both art and sport can contribute to and deliver upon several Council priority objectives. The review recognised that the Council is a major provider of sports facilities, particularly the new leisure centres for swimming and indoor sports and fitness at Woodside and Crentral Watford. The task group recommended that the Council should be facilitator, enabler and expert rather than provider and focus on becoming a central source of information/expertise and advice. As such, it is important to develop partnerships and links with clubs and organisations as well as assisting with developing links between the groups themselves. The task group also found that the Council should look at its internal procedures and work to develop more joined up thinking and cross-departmental co-operation/opportunities. There is a need to break down barriers between departments and between members/officers, voluntary sector/council etc. A set of recommendations were made including specific targets for art and sport development respectively.

The review was initiated at the specific request of the portfolio holder who has taken an interest in the work during the review process and has been involved in shaping the recommendations. A final report is expected to be considered by Cabinet at its June meeting.





## **2.6 Comment on process**

The work on art and sport development was the first piece of task group work undertaken by this committee. Members and officers who participated in the review deemed the task group format to be successful and recognised the following advantages over committee working: ability to draw in interested members of the Council not sitting on the Committee, a more flexible format, ie, able to arrange meetings as required not constrained by the legal requirements of constituted committees, the size and informality of meetings is more conducive to a candid discussion with witnesses.

Members of the new committee will be asked to consider extending task group working in 2008/09.

## **2.7 Chair's Perspective**

Under the model of local government management voted for by the people of Watford – that is an elected mayor and a cabinet of elected members chosen by the Mayor – the activity of scrutiny of Council policy by a committee comprising and restricted to back-bench members is a vital part of the local government process. It gives back-bench members the opportunity to review policies being pursued by the Executive and also to look at areas where there may be a need to develop new policies. This process can involve both healthy and constructive challenge of the Executive, as well opportunity for back-benchers to contribute new thinking and ideas. The Policy Development Committee is also committed to seeking to include the community generally in its deliberations so that all opinions are taken into account when formulating its conclusions and recommendation on the topics under review.

This work is both challenging and rewarding for the elected members involved.

My thanks are due to the support I have received throughout the year from fellow committee members and supporting council officers.

Councillor George Derbyshire  
Chairman, Policy Development Scrutiny Committee



### 3. Call-in & Performance Scrutiny Committee

#### Membership:

Councillor Dhindsa (Chair)

Councillor Rackett (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Ajab, Baddeley, Grimston, Leslie, McLeod, L Scudder and Watkin.

#### 3.1 The committee's work programme for 2007/08

The Call-In & Performance Scrutiny Committee has met on seven occasions, its work programme was set out to look at one service theme per meeting with each theme covered by two or three topics. The services included in the programme were selected by the Committee at its first meeting from a shortlist of topics nominated by members following consultation.

One meeting this year was devoted to the examination the external issue of substance misuse. This is in recognition of the increasing importance of partnerships and the Council's involvement with external organisations which provide public services. It is expected that the scrutiny of external organisations will increase in future years.

The Committee has managed its work programme over the year, reviewing it periodically and adding issues as appropriate.

#### 3.2 Work summary

##### 3.2.1 Committee Meetings

Work over the year can be summarised as follows.

(i) The Committee examined in depth the performance of seven service areas or themes:

- CPA - results, implications and matters arising

The Committee examined areas for improvement, including the performance management of partners and the timing of Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) reviews. The Committee agreed to look at the performance of the Council's partnerships with other organisations as an ongoing feature of its work programme. Other areas of concern are high service costs and value for money, the Committee will continue into 2008/09 with the cost comparison work started in 2006/07.

- Substance misuse

This was a major event organised by the Committee which looked how organisations work together, or could work together more effectively, to deal with substance misuse and the social and medical problems which arise from it.

It followed up the work done in 2006/07 when the Committee considered the general issues of community safety. People invited included representatives from the PCT, the County Council, the Police and Community Safety.

The main areas of the Committees attention were alcohol and drugs (both legal and illegal) and their effect on crime, health and society. The focus was on performance measures, targets, achievements and projections/trends of any collected data which address issues of substance misuse.

A particular issue noted by members arising from the discussion is the need to provide support to families, such as counselling services to children. The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership will be asked to consider drawing up an action plan to provide this support.

The County Council keeps some performance measures covering drug use, the Committee will look at these in 2008/09 and review progress.

- Accommodation strategy

The Committee set out to determine problems with accommodation and to explore solutions. Discussions, based upon a position statement prepared by the Managing Director, highlighted the poor condition of the Town Hall and it being less than ideal for use as modern office accommodation. The Committee identified that staff sickness can be related to poor accommodation and suggested that levels of sickness at the Town Hall could be usefully compared to those of organisations occupying more modern offices.

- Environmental Services – refuse and recycling cost comparisons

During its work in 2006/07 the Committee highlighted the issue of waste and recycling collection costs and asked to see cost comparisons with other Hertfordshire District council. Disappointingly, the consultant's report has been further delayed and the Committee has agreed to postpone again its review into 2008/09.

- The Community Plan and action plan progress

The Committee requested the opportunity to comment on the progress of the Community Plan. It also expressed an interest in assessing how the One Watford partnership is developing and its effectiveness in the light of the Council's CPA report published in July 2007.

Members have concerns about the size and scope of the four LAA blocks and the capacity of scrutiny to adequately scrutinise them. The key topic for the time being is safer and stronger communities, being the most relevant to Watford, however, a longer term solution will be required as the partnerships agenda grows.

There are also issues around LAA work extending beyond the current remit of scrutiny, co-working with other district councils is a possibility and this could be explored in 2008/09.

Further examination of partnerships and their performance will be included in next year's work programme with the focus moving from the Council to its LSP partners.





- Watford Museum

This review was undertaken because of a view from some quarters that the museum is not achieving its potential. Areas examined by the Committee included opening hours, the use of the building and opportunities for expansion, the location of the building and the merits of relocation, staffing and the role of Friends, whether it caters for a diverse range of residents' needs and charging policy.

The Committee agreed that the Museum copes well with limited resources available, members would like to see more done but accept that activities are necessarily constrained by finances. The Committee also agreed that the staff and Friends of the Museum do an excellent job. The Cultural Strategy will be the next major piece of work to be carried out by Leisure & Community Services and once in place the position of the Museum may be resolved.



- The issue and regulation of Blue Badges

The Committee reviewed parking enforcement and the related issue of Blue Badges as part of its 2006/07 work programme. The Blue Badge problem was not satisfactorily resolved, particularly that related to enforcement, and members requested a more in depth review this year.

The Committee's main area of attention was fraudulent applications for and fraudulent use of Blue Badges, it particularly looked at:

- policy issues around the Blue Badge scheme that the County works within,
- the application vetting process and how suspected fraudulent applications are dealt with,
- how successful applications are policed,
- how the County works with district councils in detecting and managing fraud on an ongoing basis.

The scheme is administered according to government guidance last published in January 2008. This document specifies the forms that should be used, eligibility for the scheme, grounds for refusal, the appeals process and enforcement arrangements.

The Committee was content with administrative and enforcement procedures and accepted that these were properly applied according to guidance. The County Council relies on information from the police and parking attendants and intelligence is shared between the County Council, the Police and the district councils.

- (ii) Task groups

The Committee established two task groups during the year to examine in depth licensing performance and the Green Spaces Action Plan.



- Licensing performance

The Committee set out to look at licensed premises (which includes off licenses and the sale of hot foods after 11pm), management and inspection of hackney & private hire licenses and delivery of service to the public, Street trading and charity collections.

The Committee made eight recommendations relating to:

the operation of the Licensing Sub Committee, hackney carriages, under-age drinking, performance of the licensing section, staffing and resources, licensing bulletins, police numbers and joint working.

- Green Spaces Action Plan



The Committee set out to understand the Council's objectives of the action plan, the extent of open spaces in the borough, how the action plan matches and follows the strategy and its progress.

From evidence heard by the group, progress of the action plan will be limited according to the availability of funds and may be further disrupted by staff and organisational changes.

The plan is in need of a review and target dates need to be revised in line with realistic expectations. Members would like to be assured that the plan is being effectively managed and see it updated regularly.

Six recommendations were made to the Portfolio Holder.

(iii) Other Work

- BVPI and Performance Plan quarterly reports

This year's work was preceded by a look at public views and priorities identified in the latest IPSOS/Mori survey of Hertfordshire residents. To save committee time, in line with practice in 2006/07, the Committee looked at the quarterly reports in its pre-meetings and identified under performing areas which were brought to committee for formal review at members' request.

A number of service areas are likely to fail to meet targets set for 2007/08 and these will require review in 2008/09.

A further consideration for the new year will be the Committee's approach to the new national performance management framework due to be fully implemented in spring 2009.

- Members performance

In 2006/07 at the request of Cabinet the Committee established a task group to examine the matter of members' performance. The task group produced a set of recommendations, endorsed by Cabinet and forwarded to the Members' Charter Group for further consideration.



Cabinet sent the conclusions of the Charter Group's work back to the Committee for its comment.

The Call-in and Performance Scrutiny Committee recommended that the members' performance scheme be approved as a voluntary scheme to be used as an aid to self assessment. Details of self assessment should not be published on the website but the self-assessment forms should be made available to the Independent Members Remuneration Panel.

(iv) Call-in

The Committee considered one called-in item during 2007/08 – review of young people's services. After a debate about the merits of the reasons for the call-in the Committee ratified the Cabinet's decision.

### **3.2 Comment on process**

i) Pre-meetings

The Committee's work management process in 2007/08 has included a meeting of committee members approximately one week before the formal Committee meeting.

The purpose of these pre-meetings is to:

- to review outcomes of the previous meeting.
- to discuss development issues.
- to consider the agenda for the forthcoming meetings, agree how each item will be managed and agree what an appropriate outcome would be.

Members' views on the value of pre-meetings are mixed but there is sufficient support to propose continuation in 2008/09. The focus of attention in pre-meetings next year should be on understanding why a particular subject is being scrutinised and what an appropriate outcome will be.

ii) Selection of work programme items

Two issues are in need of attention in 2008/09:

- keeping the number of items to a manageable level – in 2008/09 some meetings ran on resulting in items at the back of the agenda not getting proper consideration
- selecting items where all members have a clear understanding of the reason for inclusion and the expected outcome.

### **3.3 Chair's perspective**

As can be seen from the above summary the Committee has examined a great deal of work during the year covering a wide range of issues. However, there is still much more to be done which I hope the members of the Call-In & Performance Committee will continue with after the current elections.

My thanks go out to members of the Committee and sub-groups who have contributed to our work during 2007/08, I personally felt that we all worked well as a team. My special thanks go to Steve Racket (Vice-Chair) for his on-going support and commitment and to Mike Thomas for his hard work on the administration aspect of the Committee's work. Thanks must also go to Cabinet members for their attendance and for answering difficult and thought provoking questions. Finally, I would like to thank officers, external agencies and members of the community for attending meetings at the Committee's request.

Some of the work within this report remains incomplete. This will be discussed at our first meeting in the new business year and included in the work plan for 2008/09. I am a strong believer in the value of inclusiveness and obtaining the views and ideas of all members of the Committee. I will work with my Committee colleagues in the year ahead to make our work plan realistic and achievable.



## 4. The Budget Panel

### Membership:

Councillor Mortimer (Chair)

Councillor Bell (Vice-Chair)

Councillors E Burtenshaw, Derbyshire, Greenslade, Mahmood and Poole

### 4.1 The panel's work programme for 2008/09

The panel met on five occasions during 2007/08, apart from the Council's budget proposals for 2008/09 the panel also looked at value for money and cost comparisons of certain services with other Hertfordshire districts.

At its five meetings the panel:

- looked at the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)
- considered the views of residents on council services as determined by the IPSOS/Mori survey
- reviewed high and low spending priorities for the 2008/09 budget process
- considered the level of tax and service profile of Watford compared with other Hertfordshire district councils
- passed comment on the 2008/09 budget - savings and growth proposals
- considered the outcome of public consultation on the 2008/09 budget
- scrutinised the final budget proposals.

### 4.2 Review meeting

At the end of the 2007/08 process the panel and officers concerned with the work reviewed how the panel had operated and the value of its output.

The review concluded that:

- Budget scrutiny around the MTFP combining examination of policy, strategy and links to savings and growth is the right approach for Watford – this confirmed last year's conclusion.
- The Panel's core work is considering budget proposals, concentrating on savings and growth items, the approach is efficient and produces a useful output.
- A secondary task is to monitor the control mechanism, ie, to assess whether we spend according to the plan – the outturn. This task is nominally within the remit of Call-in & Performance Committee but because it has chosen to do other work the Committee has not looked at spending in recent years.
- Budget monitoring needs more attention, the borough usually produces an underspend despite officers having forecast overspends during the year.
- The value for money work produced limited results due mainly to difficulties in getting good information from other authorities for comparison purposes. However, consensus is that the VFM exercise is something worth pursuing next year.

### 4.3 Chair's/Vice Chair's perspective

#### Chair

Sitting on and, indeed, chairing the Budget Panel for the first time was a daunting experience, facing, with the exception of my Opposition colleague, Nigel Bell, a pool, if not sea, of Liberal-Democrats.

In the event, we had a useful year, aided by the committee, the portfolio holder who maintained an active and regular presence at the meetings, Mike Thomas, with his immaculately detailed preparation and the expertise of the Financial Director, Janice Maule, with her apparently home-spun but needle-sharp and crystal-clear overview of all aspects of the Borough's finances.

The IPSOS/MORI observations were interesting, pointing out several areas where Watford is not top-of-the-pops. Such polls must not be ignored because they indicate disquiet which otherwise may be missed.

I appreciated the effort of the Finance Director to compare costs for like operations between other authorities and am astonished that it is so difficult to do so. One would expect a similar template of working and monitoring practices between what are, after all, mainly similar organisations delivering similar products. I hope that this process can be continued this year.

I would like to think that this next year will include an exercise to have an influence towards keeping the 2008/9 CT at a zero+ inflationary rise at the highest.

#### Vice Chair

The Panel worked together well under Andrew Mortimer as Chair.

We only had 5-meetings and no topic or sub-Groups, but we were able to look at the IPSOS/Mori Survey investigating residents' views on Council Services. It may be useful to be more closely involved in looking at the public consultations on the budget next Year.

While the Finance Director worked admirably to compare the cost of Watford's services and council tax with other councils in Hertfordshire, re-cost of services, it was apparent that she didn't have enough time and resources. It would be useful if we can follow up this year with a better outcome and a clearer comparison.

I agree that budget monitoring needs careful attention, the queries about officer predictions and subsequent under spends needs investigating.

Linked to this is the agreement by all panel members for finance training to help us all understand any difficulties.



## 5. Initiatives and development work

In 2007/08 the following development work was undertaken or started.

(i) Scrutiny survey

The Better Performance Unit annually undertakes a survey of the people and organisations that have had business with scrutiny during the preceding year. This is the fourth year the survey has been undertaken.

The purpose of the survey is:

- to explore views generally on how scrutiny works in Watford Council
- to ask all members – those in cabinet, scrutiny and other non-executives – their views on the performance and operation of scrutiny
- to ask senior officers and witnesses their views on the performance and operation of scrutiny
- to seek views on opportunities for improvement
- to inform the scrutiny development plan and programme for the forthcoming year
- to inform the member development plan for the forthcoming year
- to set down a benchmark to assess progress and improvement over time.

The response rate to the survey continues to be below the desired level although we have sufficient feedback to get a good snapshot of people's views. 82 forms were sent out and 30 received back. The response from scrutiny committee members is better than last year and both cabinet and officers have provided their usual good responses. Disappointingly again this year there is a nil response from the 12 councillors who do not fall into either the executive or the scrutiny category.

Across all groups the survey produced the following results:

### 1. Performance

Poor	Adequate	Good
0%	57%	43%

### 2. Operation

Poor	Adequate	Good
0%	54%	46%

### Asked whether performance had improved since 2007

Yes	No	About the same
81%	5%	14%

No one thought that either the performance or operation of scrutiny was poor and using averages of the figures above, 55.5% of respondents described scrutiny as being adequate and 44.5% described it as good. This compares favourably with figures for good of 38% in 2007, 32% in 2006 and 25% in 2005. Most encouragingly, from all respondents, only one person thought that scrutiny had not improved compared with 2006/07.

Reasons given for views that scrutiny is only adequate were wide ranging but common themes across groups are:

- not challenging enough – challenge needs to be strengthened
- performance is variable – some good work and some not so good
- committees need to understand and work within their remits
- need to “tighten up” the scope of scrutiny subjects
- need to work on producing clear results and outcomes
- communication between scrutiny and the executive and officers still needs improving.

Suggestions for improvement mirror reasons why scrutiny is only adequate:

- member training to improve challenge and questioning skills
- have better selection of scrutiny topics
- improve scoping of scrutiny subjects
- improve performance and outputs
- introduce systems to improve communications.

A set of actions aimed at effecting improvements has been proposed for Cabinet, scrutiny committees and scrutiny officers. These are set out in the full report on the survey to be considered by members and officers at meetings early in the new municipal year.

(ii) Hertfordshire Scrutiny Officers Group

The Group meets approximately four-five times a year. Members discuss matters of mutual interest, share information, work on development and how member councils can work together.

This year, for the first time, the group organised a Hertfordshire scrutiny network conference which was attended by four Councillors from Watford. The conference was on scrutiny in the Pathfinder context and covered

- What the Department of Communities & Local Government expects from Pathfinders
- Emerging guidance on the Police & Justice Act and the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Bill:
- Effective scrutiny and enhanced two- tier working:
- Successful joint scrutiny
- CCfA in two tier councils
- Work programming.

Another joint event is planned in 2008.

(iii) Chairs' Group

The aim of the group is to co-ordinate the work of the three committees, to share responsibility for common areas of interest (for example the annual report) and to provide a forum for joint decision making.

The group met twice during 2007/08. At the first meeting members discussed the scrutiny implications arising from:

- the Government white paper on Strong & Prosperous Communities,
- the Police & Criminal Justice Act 2006,



- the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Bill (latterly Act)

At the second meeting members considered how scrutiny might be reorganised to meet the requirements of the Act. The results of this second meeting were discussed with Cabinet and then taken forward to be considered by the party groups. The process was concluded by agreement that any changes would await Government guidance expected within the next 12 months.

(iv) Cabinet/scrutiny meetings

The aim of this group is to improve communications and provide a forum for ongoing dialogue between scrutiny and the executive.

This group met three times in 2007/08 the items discussed were:

- the relationship between the two groups
- scrutiny work plans and programmes (in June)
- the results of the scrutiny survey and scrutiny performance
- scrutiny training for all members
- scrutiny work progress
- proposals for reorganising scrutiny

Three meetings are to be programmed in 2008/09.

## **6. Work plan and programme for 2008/09**

It is considered to be good practice to consult widely on scrutiny forward plans and work programmes. Although response to consultation last year was poor it is proposed to consult again this year.

Each committee will be asked to agree its work programme at the first meeting of the new year and report its intentions to the first available meeting of Council.

### **2007/008 Committee Chairs & Vice Chairs**

Councillors George Derbyshire & Mohammed Ajab  
Chair & Vice Chair of Policy Development Committee

Councillors Jagtar Singh Dhindsa & Steve Rackett  
Chair & Vice Chair of Call-in & Performance Committee

Councillors Andrew Mortimer & Nigel Bell  
Chair & Vice Chair of Budget Panel



If English is not your first language we can arrange for an interpreter. Please indicate which language you require.

**Urdu**

اگر انگریزی آپ کی بول چال کی زبان نہیں ہے،  
تو ہم آپ کے لیے ایک انٹرپرائٹر (زبانی ترجمہ کار)  
کا اہتمام کر سکتے ہیں۔ براہ کرم ہماری ہمیں یہ  
بتائیں کہ آپ کی مطلوبہ زبان کون سی ہے۔

**Hindi**

यदि इंग्लिश आपकी मुख्य भाषा  
नहीं है तो हम एक इंटरप्रीटर  
(दुभाषिए) का प्रबंध कर सकते  
हैं। कृपया अपनी जरूरत की  
भाषा बताएँ।

**Gujarati**

જો ઈંગ્લિશ તમારી માતૃભાષા ન હોય  
તો અમે તમારા માટે દુભાષિયાની  
વ્યવસ્થા કરી શકીશું. તમે કઈ ભાષામાં  
વાત કરવા માંગશો તે ભાષાનું નામ  
દર્શાવવા વિનંતી.

**Bengali**

ইংরেজি আপনার মাতৃভাষা না হলে,  
আমরা আপনার জন্য একজন  
দোভাষী (ইন্টারপ্রিটার) এর ব্যবস্থা  
করতে পারবো। দয়া করে বলে  
দিন, কোন্ ভাষার দোভাষী বা  
ইন্টারপ্রিটার আপনার দরকার।

Polish: Watford Borough Council ch tnie dostarczy uszne tłumaczenie dla Ciebie