

REPORT OF SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR

It has been a busy year for Members on the Council's six Scrutiny Committees. There have been 37 full PPB meetings during the last Municipal Year with around 13 individual topic groups established examining, in some detail, a range of important issues for us as a Council and the community of Halton. Each of the Annual Reports attached reflect on the work of each of the PPBs. It is clear to me that the focus scrutiny brings to these issues makes a significant contribution to the Council achieving its priorities.

The Chairs, as a Group, have met on four occasions when we have tried to

- ensure that cross-PPB issues are picked up.
- highlight the resources available to PPB Members to help them in their role.
- keep abreast of changes taking place in the legislative framework around scrutiny.
- ensure that the Council's Performance Management Framework meets PPB Members' requirements.
- ensure that there is effective PPB involvement in the budget process.
- produce a "Scrutiny News" letter after each of those meetings to keep all Members informed of developments in Scrutiny.

If I were to pick out a couple of significant themes for the year they would be managing our difficult financial circumstances and, trying to keep on top of the many structural changes that are taking place with our public sector partners. The latter has probably been at its most challenging in the Health arena. It is important that whilst all those changes are taking place that we keep a close eye on how they are impacting on our communities. The PPBs have played an important role in protecting, as far as they can, Halton's interests during those many changes.

Those key themes will continue to dominate our affairs during the current Municipal Year as well.

I want to thank Ian Leivesley for his support throughout the year and I would like to thank the Chairs for the positive approach they have adopted throughout the year, despite the challenges we face, and I look forward to working with you all over the coming months.

Councillor Tony McDermott
Scrutiny Co-ordinator
July 2012