

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

AGENDA

DATE: Tuesday 9 April 2013

TIME: 7.30 pm

VENUE: Committee Rooms 1&2
Harrow Civic Centre

MEMBERSHIP (Quorum 4)

Chairman: Councillor Jerry Miles

Councillors:

Sue Anderson
Ann Gate
Krishna James
Zarina Khalid

Kam Chana
Barry Macleod-Cullinane
Paul Osborn (VC)
Stephen Wright

Representatives of Voluntary Aided Sector: Mrs J Rammelt/Reverend P Reece

Representatives of Parent Governors: Mrs A Khan/1 Vacancy

Representative of Harrow Youth Parliament

(Note: Where there is a matter relating to the Council's education functions, the "church" and parent governor representatives have attendance, speaking and voting rights. They are entitled to speak but not vote on any other matter.)

Reserve Members:

1. Nana Asante
2. Ben Wealthy
3. Victoria Silver
4. Sasi Suresh
5. Krishna Suresh

1. Chris Mote
2. Tony Ferrari
3. Christine Bednell
4. Susan Hall

Contact: Alison Atherton, Senior Professional - Democratic Services
Tel: 020 8424 1266 E-mail: alison.atherton@harrow.gov.uk

AGENDA - PART I

1. ATTENDANCE BY RESERVE MEMBERS

To note the attendance at this meeting of any duly appointed Reserve Members.

Reserve Members may attend meetings:-

- (i) to take the place of an ordinary Member for whom they are a reserve;
- (ii) where the ordinary Member will be absent for the whole of the meeting; and
- (iii) the meeting notes at the start of the meeting at the item 'Reserves' that the Reserve Member is or will be attending as a reserve;
- (iv) if a Reserve Member whose intention to attend has been noted arrives after the commencement of the meeting, then that Reserve Member can only act as a Member from the start of the next item of business on the agenda after his/her arrival.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary or non pecuniary interests, arising from business to be transacted at this meeting, from:

- (a) all Members of the Committee;
- (b) all other Members present in any part of the room or chamber.

3. MINUTES (To Follow)

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2013 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To receive questions (if any) from local residents/organisations under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rule 17 (Part 4B of the Constitution).

5. PETITIONS

To receive petitions (if any) submitted by members of the public/Councillors under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4B of the Constitution).

6. REFERENCES FROM COUNCIL/CABINET

(if any).

7. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13 (Pages 1 - 40)

Report of the Divisional Director of Strategic Commissioning

8. SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBER REPORT (Pages 41 - 50)

Report of the Divisional Director of Strategic Commissioning

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Which the Chairman has decided is urgent and cannot otherwise be dealt with.

AGENDA - PART II

Nil

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**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date:	9 th April 2013
Subject:	Scrutiny Annual Report 2012-13
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director, Strategic Commissioning
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	All
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	<i>Scrutiny Annual Report 2012-13</i>

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

The scrutiny annual report, 2012-13 is attached to this report. The report summarises the activities of the scrutiny committees and the scrutiny lead councillors and outlines priorities for the next municipal year.

Recommendations:

Councillors are asked to:

- i. Agree the content of the annual report
- ii. Refer the annual report to Full Council

Section 2 – Report

The council's constitution requires that the activities of the Overview and scrutiny committee and associated sub committees are publicly reported each year. The constitution also requires that this annual report is received by Full Council.

This year's report includes reports from each of the scrutiny committees – the main Overview and Scrutiny committee, the Performance and Finance sub committee and the Health and Social Care sub committee – and from each pair of scrutiny leads – Adult Health and Social Care, Children and Families Community Health and Well Being, Environment and Enterprise and Resources.

The report highlights the issues which have been considered and the projects which have been undertaken. It also indicates potential priorities for the coming municipal year.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Performance Issues

There are no performance issues associated with this report.

Environmental Impact

There is no environmental impact associated with this report.

Risk Management Implications

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

Equalities implications

There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

Corporate Priorities

All

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Not required for this report.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background

Papers

Contact:

Lynne Margetts, Service Manager Scrutiny 020 8420 9387

Background Papers:

None

Scrutiny Annual Report 2012-2013

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Introduction from the Chair and Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny committee

It has been another challenging year for scrutiny. These are very difficult times for the council as the financial climate and resultant cuts in public sector spending mean that the council is forced to cut deeper and deeper into budgets. This is a time when, we must make our most effective contribution to support the authority's service reconfigurations and safeguard the wellbeing of our residents. This means we must target our investigations at the areas of most importance and apply scrutiny processes as effectively as we can in conducting these investigations. In this context, the scrutiny leadership group has continued to provide excellent strategic direction for the overall scrutiny function ensuring that key issues are identified and investigated in the most appropriate manner. We are really pleased with the commitment that our colleagues have made to this group and the positive, non - partisan and constructive way that discussions have taken place in the group. We were grateful for the vote of confidence given to the scrutiny leadership group through the nomination for a LGIU C'lr Awards 'Scrutineer of the Year' award, though we were disappointed not to have been shortlisted. Further information on the Scrutiny Leadership Group's deliberations is provided below.

Our investigations take one of three forms:

- discussions as lead members
- discussions at the committees
- detailed specific project investigations.

Through each of these processes our purpose is to make recommendations to the council's cabinet which can support the organisation to improve the services it offers to residents.

In addition to this, there is a more fundamental purpose to scrutiny and that is to ensure that those who are responsible for making decisions, providing services and spending money in our community are challenged with regard to how they are making these decisions, providing services and spending money. Scrutiny is a vital component of the council's democratic processes and the essential means by which decision-makers can be held to account. Thus in all of our deliberations, our purpose is clear – to make a valued contribution to the council's improvement and accountability processes.

We have continued to meet as the three scrutiny committees – Overview and Scrutiny committee, Performance and Finance sub committee and the Health and Social Care sub committee – and have met with a number of colleagues to discuss specific issues of concern. A report from each of the committees is included later in this annual report. We have been particularly heartened by the way that the Performance and Finance committee is evolving into the driving force behind scrutiny and the robust way in which the committee now considers performance information. We are grateful for the support which has been offered to the sub committee, particularly from the Corporate Director of Resources and the Corporate Performance Team.

The scrutiny leads have also continued to provide the first port of call for scrutiny issues and they are focussing on the key issues of the day for the council. As such, all leads have met with their respective senior manager and portfolio holder to discuss the services' priorities for the year. In this way, we hope that the limited resources which are available to us are really focussing in on the issues which matter most to residents and to the council and our partners.

There have been a number of circumstances this year when we have stepped outside of our normal ways of working to try to ensure more cross cutting consideration of particular issues. Members of the Overview and Scrutiny committee, Performance and Finance sub committee and relevant lead councillors have met to consider the attendance and achievement of Children Looked After, the delivery of the improvement plans following both the Youth Offending and Safeguarding and Looked After Children inspections and the development of a suite of indicators with regard to crime and community safety. It is gratifying to see that our scrutiny processes are sufficiently flexible to allow us to consider these difficult issues in the most appropriate way.

We continue to ensure that there are no surprises in terms of scrutiny activity. We meet on a quarterly basis with both the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to ensure that any problems can be discussed at the highest level in the organisation. These discussions have proved extremely helpful in clarifying the Executive and Scrutiny perspectives on a number of issues and in identifying appropriate solutions. A key issue for resolution this year has been scrutiny access to information and we'd like to thank the Leader, Chief Executive and the Director of Legal and Governance Services for helping to resolve these difficulties. Our scrutiny team also ensures that senior managers are updated on our current and planned activities, which has smoothed any potential wrinkles in our interactions.

The pages that follow provide more detail with regard to the specific activities of scrutiny during this municipal year. We hope you find the report interesting.



Cllr Jerry Miles
Chairman Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Cllr Paul Osborn
Vice Chairman Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Our Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny committee has continued to meet during 2012/13. At the beginning of the year we welcomed Cllr Krishna James, who became the policy lead member for health and social care, and chair of the Adult Health and Social Care sub committee and Cllr Zarina Khalid, who became the performance lead for children and families to the committee. Their reports on their specific areas are included in the relevant sections below. We'd like to thank both Cllr Victoria Silver, who is now a member of the Adult Health and Social Care Scrutiny sub committee and Cllr Sachin Shah, who is now Finance Portfolio Holder for the time and energy they gave to the committee.

We have met 13 times during the last municipal year and the paragraphs below outline some of the issues we have considered. We'd like to thank all of the portfolio holders and officers who have met with us during the year and answered our questions. The papers and details re the outcomes from all of these meetings can be found [here](#).

Our meetings

During the course of the year we have, as in previous years, met with the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive for a question and answer session to consider general council policy (in July) and budget proposals (in January), these sessions were also attended by the portfolio holder for finance and we are grateful for the information which was shared with us. We would like to offer our thanks and best wishes to Cllr Bill Stephenson, who resigned as Leader of the Council in October last year and also to wish Cllr Thayya Idaikkadar good luck as he steps into the role. We look forward to meeting with Cllr Idaikkadar next year to offer scrutiny's challenge to his policy and financial decisions.

The specific items which have been considered at the committee include:

- Harrow's Development Plan
- Safeguarding Looked After Children
- Provision of Leisure and Libraries services
- Children Looked After Attendance and Achievement
- Community Safety Plan and Strategic Assessment
- Community Right to Challenge
- Youth Offending Team post inspection improvement plan
- Youth Justice Plan
- Schools Expansion Programme
- Progress on School Conversion to Academies
- Post Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Children Looked After Service improvement plan
- Climate Change Strategy
- Developments in Public Realm Services
- Parking Policy and Income Optimisation
- Corporate Plan
- Monitoring Council Tax Collection Rate
- Update on the Council's Top Families Project
- Data Quality
- An Update on the Council's Troubled Families work

Meetings with the Portfolio Holders

We have welcomed a number of portfolio holders to the meetings of the committee over the last year:

- *Cllr Keith Ferry, Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder* attended in June to discuss the development plan and again in February to discuss the Harrow Card
- *Cllr Mitzi Green, Children, Schools and Families Portfolio Holder* attended in both October and November, in October to discuss the Youth Offending improvement plan, the Youth Justice Plan, the school expansion programme and progress with regard to the development of academies. In November, she attended to discuss the improvement plan which followed the council's Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children.
- *Cllr Graham Henson* attended in April to discuss Data Quality
- *Cllr Thayya Idaikkadar, in his capacity as Property and Major Contracts Portfolio Holder* attended to respond to the petition which had been received with regard to the development of Whitchurch playing fields.
- *Cllr Phil O'Dell, Environment and Community Safety Portfolio Holder* attended with the Borough Commander, Chief Superintendent Dal Babu, to discuss the borough's community safety strategy and strategic assessment – which analyses the level of crime in the borough. He also attended in April to discuss priorities in the Environment and Enterprise Directorate
- *Cllr Sachin Shah Finance Portfolio Holder* attended both the Q&A session with the Leader and Chief Executive in July and January and also the meeting in March with regard to monitoring council tax collection

Working with Residents

As in previous years, we are pleased to have received the support of a number of residents via their co-opted positions on the committees and would like to thank the following people for giving up their time to the committees:

- Mrs Aamirah Khan, parent governor representative who sits on the Overview and Scrutiny committee
- Mrs Julie Rammelt, representative of the voluntary aided sector who sits on the Overview and Scrutiny committee
- Mr Julian Maw, chair of Harrow Link who sits on the Health and Social Care sub committee

In May, we were delighted to welcome representatives from the Harrow Youth Parliament to the committee

- Hannah Nathanson, Chair of Harrow Youth Parliament,
- Ladan Dirie, Harrow's Member of UK Youth Parliament, and
- David Howes, Harrow Mencap



These colleagues presented the findings of the scrutiny review 'Redefining Youth Engagement' to the committee which they had led alongside Cllr Victoria Silver and other scrutiny councillors. Their attendance at our meeting in May was an exciting and innovative enhancement of the Overview and Scrutiny committee's processes which we hope we will develop further.

Members of Harrow Youth Parliament consider recommendations from the Redefining Youth Engagement Review at their summit in November

With this in mind, we have created an additional co-opted position on the Overview and Scrutiny committee for representatives of the Harrow Youth Parliament which they are free to take up when items of particular interest to them are included in the committee's agenda. We look forward to a long and constructive working relationship with them – we hope to setup regular meetings between the parliament and the scrutiny leadership group to ensure that our agendas are reflecting the concerns of young people.

The specific report from the Performance and Finance sub committee also includes detail of the special committee meeting held with young people in March to consider how effectively the recommendations of the Redefining Youth Engagement review have been delivered. Again, this marks a step change in how we want to do scrutiny by improving the engagement and involvement of local people.

This year Overview and Scrutiny committee received a number of public questions – with regard to Vaughan School, and petitions – with regard to Whitchurch Playing Fields and Shopmobility. We are pleased that local people are beginning to see some of our more formal processes as a means by which they are able to engage in the council's decision making. We welcome their involvement and the opportunity it offers to the Overview and Scrutiny committee to provide a bridge between the council and the community and hope to receive more direct contact from local people in the future.

We continue to encourage the involvement of local people in our deliberations, especially through their direct involvement in some of our more detailed investigations, we have been really pleased to welcome resident co-optees onto our review teams and would like to thank the following people for their commitment to our work:

- Seamus English
- Cliff Lichfield
- Elizabeth Hugo
- Julian Maw
- Linda Robinson
- Tony Wood

We would like to thank the very many other residents who have participated in our projects by responding to questionnaires, attending workshops or just talking to us about their experience of council services.

We've also continued to use Facebook and Twitter and we're pleased that there are now 180 people following us on Twitter! However, there is more that we could do to improve our use of social media. We will continue to explore options in this area.

We will continue to ensure that residents' views form the bedrock of our investigations and welcome any views on how we can engage more effectively with the residents of the borough.

Review Programme

In addition to our work on the committees and the deliberations of the scrutiny lead councillors, the Overview and Scrutiny committee has commissioned a number of projects this year. These projects reflect issues of concern for the council and have hopefully helped the council to improve services. The detailed report from each of these projects and all other projects undertaken by Harrow Scrutiny can be found on our [website](#)

Standing Review of the Budget

This project, chaired by Cllr Barry Macleod-Cullinane, the vice chairman of the Performance and Finance sub committee has continued to investigate local government financial policy and its impact on the council. This year the group has considered a number of issues:

- *Management of major contract renewal* – investigated how effectively the council was monitoring the contract renewal process and thus how far it was able to maximise contract savings for the authority. Amongst the recommendations made were suggestions that the council continues the development of the contracts register, that we develop a strategic approach to cross-council/agency procurement and that there is greater political oversight of the contract/procurement process. The Performance and Finance sub committee also continues to monitor this area of the council's work
- *Localisation of Council Tax* – considered the financial implications for the council of the localisation of Council Tax and concluded that given the council's decision, that the new scheme is self financing, the council must ensure that incentives and support are offered to residents to return to work and that the scheme should link to regeneration, employment and training policies and opportunities.
- *Self financing of the Housing Revenue Account* – explored the implications for the council of self financing the Housing Revenue Account and the associated £90m cost of the buy out which will be paid back over the next 50 years. The review sought reassurance on a number of concerns including the impact of a 50-year debt on the council's financial viability and the capacity of the council's housing stock to support the repayment of the debt. On receiving the review report at cabinet, the Portfolio Holder for Housing welcomed the review's positive consideration of how the HRA was managed, particularly suggestions with regard to how the Council might examine ways to bring about an increase in the supply of affordable housing.
- *Management and strategic use of the council's capital budget* – this component of the review's work programme considered the council's strategic approach to capital expenditure, how effectively the council is using its capital finances and the capital financing opportunities available to it in the context of the recession

Safeguarding

The Children and Families lead members were alerted by the Corporate Director for Children and Families during 2011 regarding progress on implementation of some of the recommendations that came out of the NHS London Safeguarding Children Improvement Team (SIT) visit to the Harrow health community in October 2010. In order to investigate this, the Overview and Scrutiny committee commissioned an investigation into why the implementation of recommendations had been delayed. Given that the main focus of the SIT team visit was on health provision in the borough relevant to children's safeguarding, this was the main focus of the review group. However, as Members began to consider evidence

relating to this area in greater detail it became evident that in order to fully assess the effectiveness of children's safeguarding arrangements in the borough it would also be necessary to consider the council's services. The review produced an interim report to support the organisation's preparations for the Ofsted inspection which took place in summer 2012 and also agreed to continue its investigation in the context of the result of this inspection. As such, no specific recommendations were made.

During late 2012/early 2013 the Children and Families lead members have begun discussions with regard to the Child's Journey Through Care project which is the vehicle through which this investigation of safeguarding services will be completed. Details of this review are provided below.

A Child's Journey Through Care

In summer 2012, the council's safeguarding and looked after children's services were inspected by Ofsted which concluded that they could only be considered 'adequate'. In order to support the service to respond to the criticisms it received and to improve services to vulnerable children in the borough, preparation for a project to consider how a child's journey through the care system might be improved has begun. This project will consider how well the council's services measure up to what is considered to be 'good' practice and how well services are able to respond to the very specific issues which may arise in individual cases, whilst ensuring that high standards of care are maintained. The review is likely to take place in the summer of 2013.

Private Rented Sector Housing

This project, chaired by Cllr Marilyn Ashton, considered ways in which the council might work in partnership with the Private Rented Housing Sector in future, in the context of the growth of the sector in providing housing for our residents and the increase in levels of homelessness. The investigation sought the views of tenants, non-tenants and landlords to derive its recommendations.

The review group concluded that the council should adopt a mix of both top-down and bottom-up approaches to working with the sector. By top-down, it meant that development policy should drive the provision of a good mix of high quality, reasonably priced accommodation. By bottom-up, it meant that the council should work in partnership with the sector, using a mix of both 'enabling' and 'enforcing' approaches. It is through these routes that problems of low standards and poor quality could be more effectively ameliorated. The findings of the review were welcomed by both cabinet and officers. At cabinet, the housing portfolio holder commented that the review was timely, as the Directorate was finalising its housing strategies and that all the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Group would be taken on board.

Customer Care

Councillors have been concerned for some time with regard to the consistency of the application of our customer care standards. This project, chaired by Cllr Paul Osborn, vice chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny committee, has investigated the effectiveness of the council's customer services, in particular the resident experience. The investigation has included visits to other boroughs, experience of front line customer interaction, and an analysis of how the council responds to complaints. The review will report its findings later this year.

Accessible Transport

For a number of years, the accessibility of public transport for people with disabilities or restricted mobility in Harrow has been a concern. There are no stations in the borough with completely step free access from street to train and our key station, Harrow on the Hill, a major transport hub which serves both the town centre – still one of the 11 metropolitan centres in London – and Northwick Park hospital – a regional specialist and local acute hospital – is completely inaccessible for people with mobility issues.

This project, chaired by Cllr Sue Anderson, is investigating the impact of poor access to public transport on people with disabilities and others with restricted mobility. The project will engage widely with people with disabilities and disability groups in order to assess how far the council and partners, such as Transport for London, are delivering their stated ambitions with regard to accessible transport

Members of the review plan their project



The review's conclusions are expected to be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee in the summer.

Our conclusions and next steps

Our next year will be the final one from under this administration. We have already determined the remaining projects we would like to consider during this time and our next annual report will detail the outcomes from these projects. The projects include:

- Changes in Public Realm services
- Performance of Mental health services
- Early intervention to deliver improved outcomes and resource savings
- Further projects for the Standing Review of the Budget



Cllr Jerry Miles

Chairman Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Cllr Paul Osborn

Vice Chairman Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Committee meetings	13
Attendance by Portfolio Holders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Keith Ferry, Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder x 2 • Cllr Mitzi Green, Children, Schools and Families Portfolio Holder. • Cllr Graham Henson, Performance, Customer Services and Corporate Services Portfolio Holder • Cllr Thayya Idaikkadar, once in his capacity as Property and Major Contracts Portfolio Holder and twice in his capacity as Leader • Cllr Phil O'Dell, Environment and Community Safety Portfolio Holder x 2 • Cllr Sachin Shah, Finance Portfolio Holder x 2

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Report from Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Our Sub-Committee

The Performance and Finance scrutiny sub-committee looks in detail at how the council's services are performing in-year.

We monitor service and financial performance by analysing data and then requesting briefings or details of action plans in place where necessary. The sub-committee can make recommendations for improvement and if necessary make referrals to the Overview and Scrutiny committee if further work is needed.

This work includes, for example, regular review of the Cabinet's Revenue and Capital Monitoring report and quarterly Corporate Scorecard.

We have slightly amended our terms of reference this year to reflect that we can consider and monitor the performance of the council's partners.

Our meetings

Our regular Chair and Vice-Chairman's briefings drive the work programme of the sub-committee. Our main areas of interest in 2012/13 have been:

- **Payment of invoices and application of contract procedure rules** – this is the third year in which we have been following progress in this area. We have monitored the implementation of the recommendations arising from the internal audit review on the application of contract procedure rules (CPRs), which focused on purchase orders raised after the date of invoice. Four of the recommendations made to procurement were postponed owing to delay to upgrades to the SAP system. We requested a briefing on current issues with SAP and planned future improvements and were told in November that a series of changes are being implemented that will be completed in time for the first quarter of 2012/13. These will include forecasts of process compliance & accuracy as well as new monthly budget forecasts and simplified 'front-end' for managers intended to make it easier to comply with the CPRs. We remain concerned at the length of time being taken for the organisation to address these issues and about how effective the SAP changes will be in tackling the serious problems repeatedly identified since 2006 (we have asked to see all the reports in that time). There needs to be clear accountability to Member level, and we will continue to monitor this area carefully.
- **Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Review of Financial Management** – having had a number of concerns over the past few years about some aspects of the council's financial management, we were keen to be briefed on the finding of CIPFA's review. The review identified some areas for improvement including financial management strategy, culture, financial management competence for finance and non-finance staff and financial information systems. The findings reflected some of our ongoing concerns (for example budget holder forecasting compliance), which have related to both systems and processes noted above.

- **Complaints** – this is the first year that we have received the annual complaints reports for children and families’ services and adults’ services rather than O&S. We were pleased to have the relevant portfolio holders in attendance for these items. We think that this is a sensible development in that it provides us with further intelligence in our consideration of the performance of services. There were no major issues for either area, other than the identification of safeguarding as a target area for improvement. We note that most of the complaints related to customer service issues such as delays in service provision or lack of adequate communication rather than more serious risks related to safeguarding decisions, for example. Given that scrutiny intends to follow up its interim report on safeguarding, complaints intelligence may be a line of enquiry worthy of further exploration.
- **Householder planning applications** – *Processing of householder planning applications within 6 weeks* – Having monitored this measure at our briefing for a number of quarters (from quarter 2 2011/12) and not having received the further information that we requested on underperformance, the matter was escalated to the sub-committee. A formal report from the Divisional Director for Planning was considered at the sub-committee in July 2012. We were advised that the statutory target for decision-making is eight weeks rather than six and that the six-week target had been introduced with the purpose of providing an improvement of service to residents. The target was stretching and served to highlight operational and capability issues that needed to be addressed within the service to achieve both improvements in service delivery as well as targets in the medium term financial strategy. The sub-committee also requested reports for January 2013 on the Planning and Access Harrow Lean review and for April 2013 on planning consultation.
- **Major contracts and procurement savings** – Given the increasing importance of delivering the council’s procurement savings and delivering services with even greater efficiency, this item has become a regular six-monthly report to the sub-committee. As the council moves towards greater levels of commissioning, we too will need to ensure scrutiny helps to provide proper oversight. In January 2013 we questioned progress on phase two of the Procurement Transformation Programme that had begun in November 2012, the scope for further savings beyond the £4.6m to date and for higher income generation rather than simply cost management. We are concerned about the risks to the council in any joint borough approach and the possible impact on service levels from substantial cost savings such as those reported in the CAMHS case study. We will also examine at our April 2013 meeting the governance & structures for the procurement process, further detail on Repairs & Cyclical Maintenance, Leisure, Highways & Adult Social Care and an update on the Leisure/Libraries contract negotiations.
- **Children looked after (CLA) – education and attendance**
This continues to be an area of concern for us, along with the children’s lead members. The Virtual Headteacher’s action plan was considered at O&S and a meeting to examine progress made since that meeting is to be scheduled in 2013/14.
- **Past reviews** – we have continued to monitor progress on past reviews, including:
 - Measuring up: council’s use of performance information – phase 2. We are pleased to note the majority of our recommendations have been implemented and look forward to progress on the remainder, including disseminating performance information to the public.

- Snow Clearance: we have requested an update on the pavement gritting policy when it is established.
- Debt Recovery: update planned for early in 2013/14
- Redefining Youth Engagement: we held a special meeting on 4 March 2013 at Cedars Youth and Community Centre on progress in implementing last year's scrutiny review recommendations. Twenty young people attended from Harrow Youth Parliament (HYP); Shaftesbury School; X16 (employment readiness and work experience scheme); Looked after children (CLA); Flex Girls Youth Club; No Limits (after school club); and National Citizenship Scheme (NCS) graduates. A common theme was the need for the council to do more to take its message directly to young people and, in particular, to use schools more in communicating with young people. Other suggestions included: youth versions of Neighbourhood Champions, involving young people in commissioning decisions and a better HYP website & social media.
- **Member development** – in October we trailed a session on *Finding out what you need to know: how to get the best out of performance information*. This session covered:
 - Key principles – stressing the power of the basic question and no need for specialist technical skills.
 - Background to the council's performance management cycle and P&F.
 - Some health warnings about data and some information on quartiles, value for money and data presentation.
 - Understanding scorecards – information on how to read a Harrow scorecard, explaining the columns and terms such as status, thresholds and polarity.
 - Understanding scorecards – an exercise where data was revealed quarter by quarter and Members discussed areas of concern.
 - Practical examples – some real examples of how P&F has used and challenged performance information.

The session was well received and we plan to offer it to new councillors after the next election.

Next steps

This year has been productive for the sub-committee. In 2013/14 we hope to build on our experience and expertise and to continue to provide both support and constructive challenge to the council's service and financial performance.



Councillor Sue Anderson
Chair, Performance and Finance
Scrutiny Sub-Committee



Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane
Vice-Chairman, Performance and Finance
Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Committee meetings	5 ordinary 1 special
Attendance by Portfolio Holders	<p>Cllr Brian Gate, Children, Schools and Families Portfolio Holder x 1</p> <p>Cllr Margaret Davine, Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder x 1</p> <p>Cllr Mitzi Green, Children, Schools and Families Portfolio Holder x 1</p> <p>Cllr Keith Ferry, Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder x 1</p> <p>Cllr Sachin Shah, Finance Portfolio Holder x 1</p>

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Report from the Adult Health and Social Care Lead Members and the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Our Sub-Committee

The Health and Social Care Sub-Committee considers health, social care and wellbeing issues key to Harrow residents on a local, London wide and national level. A number of changes are being put in place and will continue to be implemented in the health and social care environment following the introduction of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This has been much of the focus of the committee in 2011/12.

The role of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Lead Members is to consider, at both committee level and also outside of committee, a range of important health and social care issues that affect Harrow. As part of our role to champion health and social care issues for residents we work closely with the Director for Community Health and Wellbeing, colleagues at NHS Harrow, North West London Hospitals and with other key providers of health and social care services in the borough.

Some of the work we carry out as lead members is referred on to the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee for formal consideration of key issues. As ever, this year has been busy and there has been a great deal of crossover between our work as lead members and our work with fellow members on the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

Our key areas of focus throughout the year

Health and social care reforms

There have been many changes in health and social care policy in the past couple of years and it is our role as lead members to keep abreast of these policy developments. We have kept a close eye on national reforms and the progress and plans for implementation of these at a local level:

- Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) – this will become a statutory committee of the local authority in April 2013. In Harrow, a shadow HWBB has been established and has been progressing work in anticipation of April. One of the key outputs of the HWBB is the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Health and Sub-Committee considered a draft of this in the summer.
- Public Health transition – the responsibility for public health will be transferred to local authorities from April 2013. Harrow and Barnet Councils have agreed to share a service, to be hosted from Harrow, and we have kept abreast of progress on these plans.
- Establishment of HealthWatch – HealthWatch will take over from the Local Involvement Network (LINK) in April 2013. This will be the local patient and public champion across the health and social care sector. It will be important to forge strong relationships with Healthwatch and ensure that both the HealthWatch and scrutiny work programmes are complementary to local concerns. The Chairman of the outgoing LINK sat on our sub-committee in 2012/13 as an advisor to the committee.
- Clinical Commissioning Group – PCTs will cease to operate from 1 April 2013 with the responsibility for commissioning local primary care services passing to the Clinical Commissioning Group. We have had attendance from the Chair of the Harrow CCG to discuss key issues. Developing relationships with GPs as the future commissioners of services will be vital going forward.

'Shaping a Healthier Future' for NW London – consultation

Shaping a Healthier Future is a programme set up by NHS NW London to improve healthcare for the two million people living in NW London. The programme is being led by the eight clinical commissioning groups and other clinicians across NW London who have identified the case for change which highlights the inconsistencies and failings of the current system and sets out objectives for a better, healthier future for NW London.

The aim of the programme is to ensure that the right care is delivered in the right places and a number of detailed proposals for how services could be organised differently in the future have been developed. These proposals formed the basis of a full public consultation which ran from 2 July to 8 October 2012.

As this represents a substantial variation to service provision in boroughs across the NW London sector, a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) was set up to provide external scrutiny to the impact of the proposals and the consultation processes adopted by the programme. As lead members, we represented Harrow Council on this JHOSC, alongside councillors from 9 other boroughs - Brent, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea, Richmond, Wandsworth and Westminster.

Harrow Council also responded to the consultation from a local perspective. This work was led by scrutiny members and informed by evidence gathered through Harrow's participation on the JHOSC, consideration of the Shaping a Healthier Future pre-consultation business case and discussions held at a special meeting of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee. These discussions explored the impact of the Shaping a Healthier Future proposals in Harrow and the consultation process, and involved representatives from:

- NHS NW London's Shaping a Healthier Future programme
- North West London Hospitals Trust
- NHS Brent & Harrow
- Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group
- Harrow Local Involvement Network
- Harrow Council

The scrutiny response was also adopted by the Executive and therefore sent in response to the consultation on behalf of Harrow Council.

The outcomes of the consultation were published at the end of November 2012. 17,022 submissions in total were received on the proposed changes. Some of the concerns raised by respondents were around;

- the impact of proposals on accessing services (journey times and public transport accessibility);
- the capacity and ability of hospital and out of hospital services to meet demand and support change; and,
- the need for information on what the changes mean for people in practice and when/how to access particular services.

These concerns were echoed in our own response, considered at Committee on 11 December 2012, particularly regarding the impact on Northwick Park Hospital and its capacity to take on the growth in demand for its services and additional patient flow; the travel, transport and access issues for Northwick Park Hospital, and, the need for communication to residents regarding the rationale for changes.

The Joint Committee of the Primary Care Trusts made its decision on the future configuration of services at its meeting on 19 February 2013. For Harrow this means that Northwick Park will remain as one of five major hospitals in NW London to provide A&E and Urgent Care Centre services. From a local perspective we will continue to monitor the pressure on Northwick Park due to the loss of facilities for Ealing and Brent residents. How far the JHOSC will continue to review outcomes for NW London will be determined as plans progress. Full details to the report can be found [here](#).

Merger of Ealing Hospital Trust and North West London Hospitals

At committee level, we have considered progress on the plans to merge Ealing Hospital Trust (EHT) and North West London Hospitals Trust (NWLHT). We hope that the merger will realise savings by replacing the two trust boards with one, creating an opportunity to unify management, streamline work processes and simplify management structures and achieve Foundation Trust status. The merged organisation aims to provide the clinical vision to deliver an integrated healthcare service through the Integrated Care Organisation and increased partnership with GPs and social care sector.

We welcome that following consideration of the financial and clinical benefits, NHS London sought further assurances that future plans are financially sound and provide the best possible quality of services for residents. Additionally, the outcome of *Shaping a Healthier Future* in February 2013 will need to be reflected in the supporting strategies and commissioning plans. We look forward to consultation on the revised proposals at the end of April 2013.

Other areas of work

This year the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee also considered:

- Progress on the implementations of Harrow STARRS (Short Term Assessment Rehabilitation and Reablement Services).
- The outcomes and impacts of the Adult Services Consultation which sought residents' views as to how to achieve significant savings whilst ensuring that Council services could be run most efficiently for the benefit of residents.
- The Quality Account of key providers in Harrow including North West London Hospitals, Royal Orthopaedic Hospital and Central and North West London Foundation Trust were also scrutinised by the Committee.

Looking to the future

At a time of considerable change in the delivery and provision of health and social care services, keeping abreast of the emerging policies and service changes will be paramount. As detailed throughout the account of our work this year as lead members and also with the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee, there is a great deal of work that will need to be done over the coming year to monitor progress and consider service development and changes. Our key focus will be on:

- The implementation of the 'Shaping a Healthier Future' programme – the reconfiguration of acute services in NW London and the out of hospital strategy for Harrow
- The transfer of public health responsibilities to the local authority
- The merger of Ealing Hospital Trust and North West London Hospitals Trust
- Forging robust working relationships with new health and social care bodies – Harrow HealthWatch and Advocacy Service, Health and Wellbeing Board and Clinical Commissioning Group
- A project review group will look at Mental Health service provision in the borough.



Cllr Krishna James
 Chairman Health and Social Care Sub-Committee
 Policy Lead for Health and Social Care



Cllr Vina Mithani
 Vice-Chairman Health and Social Care Sub-Committee
 Performance Lead for Health and Social Care

Committee meetings	4
Attendance by Portfolio Holders	
Attendance by Partners	<p>David Cheesman, Director of Strategy, North West London Hospitals Trust (2)</p> <p>Dr William Lynn, Patientcare, North West London Hospitals Trust (2)</p> <p>Dr Andrew Howe, Director of Public Health (1)</p> <p>Carole Furlong, Public Health Consultant, NHS Harrow (1)</p> <p>Dr Amol Kelshiker, Chair, Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group (1)</p> <p>Javina Sehgal, Borough Director, NHS Harrow (2)</p> <p>Dr Mike Anderson, Medical Director, Chelsea & Westminster Hospital (on behalf of the SaHF programme) (1)</p> <p>Tina Benson, Director of Operations, North West London Hospitals Trust (1)</p> <p>David McVittie, Chief Executive, North West London Hospitals Trust (1)</p> <p>Marcel Berenblut, Head of Communications, NHS Brent & Harrow (1)</p> <p>Rebecca Wellburn, Deputy Harrow Borough Director (1)</p> <p>Simon Crawford, Senior Responsible Officer Ealing and North West London Organisational Futures Programme (1)</p>

Reports from the Lead Members and the Scrutiny Leadership Group

Leadership Group

This informal monthly meeting of committee chairs and vice chairmen and scrutiny lead councillors considers the strategic direction of scrutiny, schedules items for the committee agendas, proposes items for more in-depth investigation and facilitates co-ordination between committees and lead councillors.

In addition to the standing items, the leadership group has considered a number of specific issues.

Spans of responsibility

During the year, it has become clear that each lead councillor's span of responsibility has created considerable pressure. The leads are expected to become a champion in their respective 'portfolios' and to have a considerable breadth of knowledge of the services within this area. This is becoming an unreasonable expectation and as a result, the leadership group has agreed to align, as far as possible, the leads roles to the Corporate Directorates. This has resulted in the following leads' responsibilities:

- Children and Families
- Community Health and Well Being – excluding the adult social care component
- Environment and Enterprise
- Health and Social Care – including adult social care
- Resources

We have also agreed to work with Corporate Directors and portfolio holders to identify the priorities for each service and from this to identify priorities for scrutiny consideration. As part of this, each pair of leads has also considered the commissioning panel papers for their respective area. As in previous years, each pair of leads continues to meet with their Corporate Director on a quarterly basis. Whilst the scrutiny team will continue to provide the leads with policy updates across their respective area for information, they will focus their investigative activities on the priorities which their discussions with portfolio holders and officers have identified.

Working with Harrow Youth Parliament

The Redefining Youth Engagement review was a groundbreaking scrutiny investigation in the way in which it involved young people in leading the project. As mentioned in the report from the Overview and Scrutiny committee, this project has resulted in the committee creating a co-opted position to enable representatives of Harrow Youth Parliament to attend the committee where there are items of particular interest to them on the agenda. We hope to go further than this and towards the end of 2012, representatives of the Leadership Group met with Harrow Youth Parliament to discuss how the committee's agendas might be developed with the parliament in order that we are picking up issues which are of importance to young people. We will continue these discussions in 2013/14.

Questions at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

As the chair and vice chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny committee have reported, residents have begun to recognise the potential offered by the committee to engage with the council with regard to decisions which are being made. Our process for this prescribes that questions raised by residents are responded to via the chair of the committee. We have asked our officers if there is scope to change this process to enable the committee to broker a

discussion between residents and relevant portfolio holder(s) and officer(s), either via a substantive discussion at the committee or, if the issue seems to warrant it, via a special meeting of the committee. We hope to be able to agree a protocol for improving our process in this area during the lifetime of this administration.

DRAFT

Report from the Children and Families' Leads

Our areas of focus

This has been a challenging year for the Children and Families directorate. During the year they have consolidated their New Operating Model, which has involved a number of changes of personnel and the introduction of new ways of working and they have also undergone a major Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children's services. Such a huge level of change in services for some of our most vulnerable residents has rightly attracted significant interest, not only from us as the Children and Families scrutiny lead councillors but also from other scrutiny councillors, particularly those involved in the Performance and Finance committee. We are working together to support the directorate and we welcome the support for our deliberations from our colleagues.

We continue to meet with the Corporate Director and her team and would like to place on record, our gratitude for her and her management team's openness and accessibility, it is gratifying that the scrutiny challenge is received so positively and that recognition is given at such a senior level of the organisation of the positive support that scrutiny challenge can bring to services.

During the year we and our scrutiny colleagues have considered the following issues:

- **Children Looked After attendance and achievement** – as corporate parents we were concerned about performance in this area and have sought several briefings to explain the issues in particular the role of the Virtual Head Teacher. We are grateful for the information provided to us by officers and we are particularly pleased that we will now receive regular and up-to-date performance information in the form of the Children and Families performance scorecard which will be sent to us after each quarterly Improvement Board
- **Net schools capacity and schools place planning** – early in the year, we raised concerns with regard to the availability of school places in the borough. We have received a number of briefings on this issue to clarify how the council assesses both the likely number of children needing school places and the capacity of schools to accommodate these numbers. We are grateful for the support of the Resources lead councillors who will continue to monitor this.
- **Youth Offending Team inspection improvement plan** – we were very concerned to learn at the October meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny committee of the very poor outcome of the Youth Offending Team inspection. We have discussed proposals to improve this poor performance with the Corporate Director at our subsequent briefings and we appreciate the candour with which these discussions have been approached. We will continue to monitor the performance of this service.
- **Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children's Services improvement plan** – this was a major inspection for the service and the results show there is clearly room to improve our services. We have continued to discuss this with the Corporate Director and her management team. During these discussions, we have been advised of the significant tightening of the inspection regime which means that simply just addressing the issues identified in the inspection report will not be enough to really improve services in this area, we were also advised that in future, all inspections will be

unannounced which means that our pursuit of high quality services can no longer be simply linked to the delivery of a successful inspection.

We have decided to support the service by working with them to define a robust definition of 'good' for Harrow and to identify any gaps in our service provision. This is our 'Child's Journey Through Care' project and further information on this project is included below

- **Data quality in Children's Services** – we were concerned during our discussions with officers with regard to the outcome of the Ofsted inspection that there seemed to be issues regarding the quality of management information being produced in Children's Services. We considered a report from the service which addressed our concerns at the March meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny committee.

In order to facilitate monitoring of some of these issues and to minimise the need for officers to meet with different scrutiny bodies, we established specific meetings of the Children's Lead Councillors, the Chair and Vice Chairman of the Performance and Finance sub committee and the Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny committee. This group met on a monthly basis from February to April with the Corporate Director Children and Families to consider performance in three specific areas:

- Attendance and achievement of Children Looked After
- Delivery of the post Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children improvement plan
- Delivery of the post Youth Offending Team inspection improvement plan

In June last year we published our interim report of the review undertaken of '**Safeguarding**' services. This review used as its starting point the report from the NHS London Safeguarding Improvement Team visit and considered a number of issues:

- Roles and responsibilities across agencies
- Staff training
- The specific location of health visitors in children's centres
- Working relationships across agencies
- The structure of the Integrated Care Organisation
- Engagement with private providers

The review concluded that:

'there is a clear commitment by all the organisations and officers the review group met with to safeguard children at risk in Harrow. One thing that is clear from what the review group has considered thus far is that children's safeguarding is not just the responsibility of one agency alone but for everyone, from Councillors as Corporate Parents to officers working in seemingly unrelated roles throughout the council'

The review recommended that further work be undertaken in this area once the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children was known. This will be picked up in our **Child's Journey Through Care** review. We have been joined in this project by Cllrs Gate, Ashton and Macleod Cullinane and our ambition is to help the council to improve the services to our very vulnerable children.



In order to assess performance in this area, we will discuss the definition of 'good' practice and compare our own performance against this. We will also consider some practical case studies of performance by the council and challenge how robustly the service is able to respond to unforeseen circumstances. For example, how do social workers and other officers respond if a child refuses to engage with services or if a social worker moves on or if there is disagreement between professionals as to how a child should be looked-after. In this way we hope to identify any gaps in service provision and help all of the agencies to improve their services for our vulnerable children. Our detailed investigation will commence later in the year and full details of our conclusions will be included in next year's annual report.

Looking to the future

We will continue to monitor the performance of Children and Families Directorate in those areas which appear to have struggled – Youth Offending Team, Children Looked After and schools capacity. We also hope to be able to support the Directorate in any Ofsted inspection which may occur during the year by ensuring that we continue to provide constructive challenge to the Corporate Director and her team.



Councillor Christine Bednell
Policy Lead
Children and Young people



Councillor Zarina Khalid
Performance Lead
Children and young people

Report from the Community Health and Well Being Leads

Our areas of focus

As part of the reorganisation of leads responsibilities, this new portfolio has been created. Whilst it covers the majority of the area for which we previously had responsibility, we have passed consideration of crime and community safety over to our colleagues looking at Environment and Enterprise and we have taken over responsibility for housing issues.

During the year we have considered a number of issues and we summarise these below.

Community consultation and engagement

We have considered two aspects of this:

- *The impact on residents of transfer of care between providers*
Although this is not specifically an issue for the Community Health and Well Being leads, we would like to monitor how effectively health bodies are communicating the changes in health provision to residents, particularly those associated with 'Shaping a Healthier Future' proposals, and what engagement activity is underpinning the changes, in particular with regard to 'emergency' access. We have asked for further information on this.
- *Neighbourhood Incentive Scheme (NIS)*
We are concerned that councillors do not appear to be given sufficient support to deliver effective consultation/engagement when decisions are being made with regard to use of NIS funds. We are thus anxious that this lack of support could mean that we run the risk of creating unnecessary community tensions as we do not discuss proposals effectively with residents. We intend to investigate this further.

Well Being

- *Mental health*
Having considered information provided to us via the corporate scorecard, we have some concerns with regard to services to people in receipt of secondary mental health care. The Overview and Scrutiny committee has identified mental health as an issue which will be further investigated and we have therefore volunteered to participate in this project and to continue to monitor the performance of the specific indicator.
- *Housing*
As we have already explained, our changed brief now includes housing and as such we would like to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the scrutiny review which was undertaken last year into the provision of private rented sector housing. We are particularly concerned about increasing homelessness in the borough and would like to see more creative approaches to the provision of housing in both the private and social sector.
- *Parks*
We would like to investigate how the borough's parks can be utilised more effectively as health and well being resources. Whilst the parks generally come under the jurisdiction of our colleagues who have responsibility for Environment and Enterprise, we would like to work with them to consider how these valuable community resources can become a focal point for health and well being activities. This is something we will return to next year.

Neighbourhood Champions

We will continue to monitor the implementation of the Neighbourhood Champions scheme. This year we have sought reassurance with regard to how the register of champions is maintained and in particular, what happens when a resident who is a Neighbourhood Champion moves house

Looking to the Future

Next year, Cllr Asante will become the borough's mayor. As such it is possible that our responsibilities may change. However, we will continue to monitor the areas we have highlighted and, in particular we look forward to our involvement in the investigation of mental health provision in the borough.



Cllr Chris Mote
Policy Lead
Community Health and Well Being



Cllr Nana Asante
Performance Lead
Community Health and Well Being

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Report from the Environment and Enterprise Leads

This year has seen our policy area altered slightly, in order to better align scrutiny with the new directorate structure of the council. As a result we have gained community safety but passed housing to our Community, Health and Well-being colleagues.

We met with the Corporate Director Place Shaping and the Director of Environmental Services in the first half of the year in order to review the annual service plans and to consider which areas should be our focus. These meetings were followed by a briefing with the new Corporate Director for Environment and Enterprise and we look forward to working with her in the future.

Our areas of focus

Given our broad brief, over the last twelve months we have recognised the need to keep ourselves well informed about our policy area. Our activities have included:

- **Police and crime** – we visited the consultation meeting for Harrow on the Police and Crime Plan 2013-2017 organised by the Mayor's Office for Police And Crime (MOPAC), where we were informed about the MOPAC's goals of a 20% reduction in 7 priority crimes, a 20% boost in public confidence and 20% reduction in spending. Another point of discussion is the planned closure of certain local police station front desks in Pinner and Wealdstone, although the front desk in Pinner is staffed by volunteers. We're currently awaiting a visit to the new war room-style 'Grip and Pace' police coordination centre.
- **Visits to local emergency accommodation (bed and breakfast) as part of the private rented sector review** – visited three bed and breakfasts in the borough where we viewed the accommodation and talked to a number of clients about the size and cleanliness of the accommodation provided. The evidence we gathered fed into the final report of the scrutiny review into Private rented sector housing in Harrow more information is included below and in the Chair and Vice Chairman's report from the Overview and Scrutiny committee.
- **Public Realm/Access Harrow** – this project was delivered in 2011/12. Savings made during 2011 had not impacted materially on service delivery and some of the previous issues around recording had been addressed as a result. We received a presentation in October on the new street based services system with a real-time demonstration on how complaints received by Access Harrow were passed directly to street based Public Realm teams via handheld data devices. This briefing has informed the customer care review, which is still ongoing.
- **Affordable warmth and fuel poverty** – having followed progress on the RE:FIT project and the council's Carbon Reduction Strategy, we have also looked at the new Climate Change Action Plan and Delivering Warmer Homes (HECA) Strategy. We provided detailed comments on the strategy for the Overview & Scrutiny committee in February, where our comments were well received and were referred on to Cabinet for consideration. We were asked by the committee to do further work on the performance indicators included in the strategy and this work is ongoing.

- **Neighbourhood planning and planning consultation** – We were briefed about changes resulting from the introduction of Neighbourhood Planning, which gives neighbourhood groups the opportunity to prepare planning documents. Government subsidy is available to councils to support the costs of neighbourhood planning. The Stanmore Society was the one group that has expressed an interest and after having met with officers, the society will need to decide if it wishes to apply. While no specific efforts had been made to encourage other groups to apply, the council had many pre-existing links with established local groups. In effect, neighbourhood planning was aimed outside London where groups such as parish councils could take on the role. We are keen to look at planning consultation more widely, as we have a number of concerns about how consultation has been conducted on a number of different developments. In order to investigate these concerns further we have asked officers to provide the Performance and Finance committee meeting in April with a report which will consider planning applications, the handover from the planning application to the enforcement stage, the subsequent enforcement and also the relations between the planning department and major developers. After this time we will consider whether we wish to undertake any more formal investigation of performance in this area.
- **Harrow residents' card** – we were briefed on the plans to consider introducing a residents' card, which could be used for a range of purposes by residents such as parking, leisure and retail discounts. We were pleased that the Harrow Card scheme was also discussed in the Overview & Scrutiny committee meeting in February in the context of a larger discussion about parking policy in Harrow. A feasibility study for the card has recently been completed, which will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March. We will continue to monitor the introduction of the card with particular reference to our concerns re potential costs and benefits, implementation and the method of card allocations which we have already highlighted with the Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder.
- **Private Rented Sector Review** – we were pleased to participate in this review, which was in part initiated as a result of a request received by us last year from the Divisional Director to consider ways in which the council might work in partnership with the Private Rented Sector (PRS) in future, in the context of the growth of the sector in providing housing for our residents. In particular we were keen that the forthcoming Private Sector Housing Strategy should make links to other major policy areas such as economic development and climate change. The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny committee highlighted earlier in this report that the Private Rented Sector review was welcomed by both cabinet and officers and all of our recommendations were accepted.
- **Accessible Transport Review**– we are currently participating in this review with three other councillors. As highlighted in the Chair and Vice Chairman's introduction, we have been concerned for some time with regard to the very poor access to public transport available to residents of Harrow who have disabilities. We have considered this as Environment and Enterprise leads during the course of the administration but as we have remained unhappy with performance, we decided to dedicate time to a more detailed investigation. As a part of the review, we will meet with residents of Harrow who have different disabilities and hear their experiences of using public transport as well as meet with officers to discuss how priorities for future developments are determined. We hope that this thorough investigation of the impact of poor accessibility to public transport on our residents' life experiences can help the council to improve provision.

Looking to the future

The Public Realm Integrated Services Model (PRISM) is currently being implemented in the Environment and Enterprise Directorate. PRISM aims to deliver a new organisational approach to providing services, new ways of carrying out current services and a new technology package. Later in the year, we're planning to have a closer look at the impacts PRISM has.

In 2012/13 we have worked to build closer working relationships with the directorate. We would like to build on this by establishing more regular briefings with the Corporate Director, including regular review of the directorate scorecard and progress against the service plan.



Councillor Stephen Wright
Policy Lead
Environment and Enterprise



Councillor Sue Anderson
Performance Lead
Environment and Enterprise

DRAFT

Report from the Resources Leads

Our areas of focus

We have continued to meet with the Corporate Director of Resources and the Assistant Chief Executive to monitor issues of importance within the Resources Directorate. In particular, we are pleased to have been appraised of the merger of the Chief Executive's office, Legal and Democratic Services and the Corporate Finance function which has brought about very significant changes and resulted in the establishment of the Resources Directorate. We are grateful for the support we have received from officers and we wish the Corporate Director of Resources well as she leaves the authority in the summer.

In December, we were briefed on issues arising from the Resources Directorate commissioning panel priorities. These included:

- Channel migration in Access Harrow
- Changes in the IT systems
- Reduction in committee services support
- Additional growth pressures

We have agreed that we will continue to monitor these issues, particularly the impact of channel migration in Access Harrow.

Our primary focus this year has been in two specific areas:

- Debt Recovery
- School Place Planning

Debt Recovery

With regard to Debt Recovery, we note that the council intends to incorporate the findings from our review into the wider project currently underway to consider implications of the Government's welfare reform proposals. We are extremely concerned about the potential impact of these reforms on our residents' capacity to pay their bills and as such, we are even more determined to press the council to adopt the primary recommendation from the Debt Recovery review which we undertook in 2011. This recommendation urged the council to implement some form of 'check' in the debt recovery process which can institute a 'pause' in the process before bankruptcy proceedings are instigated. In this way we would hope that the devastating impact of bankruptcy is only applied to those of our residents who 'won't pay' rather than to those who 'can't pay'.

Our concerns about the likely numbers of people seeing themselves at the wrong end of the council's debt recovery process have also been exacerbated by the assumptions which have been made in the budget with regard the numbers of people the council is assuming will be able to pay all or part of the Council Tax for the first time. We are very concerned that the high assumption will mean that we will see increased numbers of people going through the debt recovery process in order to safeguard the council's finances. We are also concerned that the sums pursued via this process will be comparatively small, especially when set against the cost of pursuing the debt. Again, whilst we have no issue with the processes being applied to those of our residents who are refusing to pay, we hope that the mitigations we proposed in our review can safeguard the more vulnerable of our residents who are unable to pay these new bills.

We will continue to monitor both the impact of the welfare reforms on the council and the implementation of the Council Tax support scheme and we look forward to being briefed on the outcome of the council's welfare reform work and how the recommendations we made in our review have been able to influence this.

School Place Planning

During the year, we continued to investigate the capacity of our schools. We have received a number of briefings which explain the process by which our schools' capacity is determined but we remain concerned that the borough does not have sufficient space in future to support our young people. This is particularly exacerbated by the development of academies which will be more difficult to influence in terms of short term expansions or 'bulge classes'.

Whilst on the face of it this issue appears to be of greater relevance to our Children and Family colleagues, we feel that the availability of place for education is a resource issue for the council and as such we will continue to seek reassurance that we are able to provide sufficient places to education our children. We will continue to discuss this with officers.

Looking to the future

Next year will be the final year of the current administration and we hope to conclude the projects which we started during our time as the Resources leads, particularly to influence the council's approach to debt management. We would also like to explore the council's capital debt and pension liabilities. Our final report, next year, will outline our findings in this area.



Cllr Jerry Miles
Policy Lead
Resources



Cllr Tony Ferrari
Performance Lead
Resources

Scrutiny Member Development Activities

Member development activities for scrutiny members that focus on generic skills and knowledge, useful to members in their roles as effective councillors, are incorporated and delivered through the corporate member development programme. Member development activities specific to scrutiny members are detailed further below.

Skills training on performance and finance scrutiny

In October we trialled a session on *Finding out what you need to know: how to get the best out of performance information*. This session covered:

- Key principles – stressing the power of the basic question and no need for specialist technical skills
- Background to the council's performance management cycle and P&F
- Some health warnings about data and some information on quartiles, value for money and data presentation
- Understanding scorecards – information on how to read a Harrow scorecard, explaining the columns and terms such as status, thresholds and polarity
- Understanding scorecards – an exercise where data was revealed quarter by quarter and Members discussed areas of concern
- Practical examples – some real examples of how P&F has used and challenged performance information.

The session was well received and we plan to offer it to new councillors after the next election.

Centre for Public Scrutiny Regional Scrutiny Support Programme

Harrow scrutiny contributes to, and is a participating authority, in the CfPS Regional Scrutiny Support Programme. As part of this, Harrow scrutiny members have attended member development events on the following subjects:

Effective Scrutiny in a Brave New World (October 2012)

This event aimed to:

- Support and encourage networking and joint/cross-borough activity across London;
- Enable members to share experiences, identify innovative approaches and good practice, and explore how scrutiny can be most effective; and
- Promote and defend the role of scrutiny and support members at a time of change and limited resources

Getting Maximum Value from Scrutiny (March 2012)

This event was a practical session, giving more time for participants to engage in group work, share views and experiences, identify challenges and examples of good practice, and learn about ways of making scrutiny more effective.

Participants attended one of two workshops:

- choosing what to scrutinise;
- getting the most from questioning in the scrutiny session.

Looking Ahead

Next year is the final year of the 2010/14 administration and whilst there may not be a significant amount of member development planned for current members, the scrutiny team will be working to devise a programme of events which will support new councillors following the elections in 2014. Current scrutiny members will play a vital role in devising this programme

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Report from the Call-In Sub-Committee

On **1st October 2012** the Call-In sub committee met to consider the decision made by cabinet with regard to the Public Realm Integrated Services Model taken on 13th September that:

'(1) the implementation of the Transformation Project for the Public Realm Integrated Services Model, as set out in the Full Business Case, be agreed;

(2) the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise, in liaison with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety, take the necessary actions to implement the Project.'

The decision had been called-in by nine Members of the Council and 150 members of the public

The call in was made on the grounds that:

- Inadequate consultation took place with stakeholders prior to the decision
- There was an absence of adequate evidence on which to base a decision
- There had been insufficient consideration of legal and financial advice

The sub committee resolved unanimously that:

- 1) The call in on the grounds that inadequate consultation took place with stakeholders prior to the decision not be upheld
- 2) The call in on the grounds that there was an absence of adequate evidence on which to base a decision not be upheld
- 3) The call in on the grounds that there had been insufficient consideration of legal and financial advice be upheld, as there was no evidence of legal advice having been provided or considered in the body of the Part One report.
- 4) That cabinet give consideration to the inclusion of a paragraph on 'Legal Implications in the Cabinet report template

On **6th December** the Call-In sub committee met to consider the decision made by Cabinet on 22nd November that:

'(1) having considered the proposed terms which have been negotiated, provisionally agreed and recommended by officers, Option 1¹, set out in the report, be agreed;

(2) the Corporate Director of Place Shaping, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Property and Major Contracts, be authorised to conclude contractual arrangements on the basis of Option 1 and the heads of terms set out in the report.'

The decision had been called in by 9 Members of the Council.

The call in was made on the grounds that:

- Inadequate consultation took place with stakeholders prior to the decision
- There was an absence of adequate evidence on which to base a decision
- There had been insufficient consideration of legal and financial advice

¹ Option one -

The sub committee resolved by a majority decision that

- 1) The call in on the grounds that inadequate consultation took place with stakeholders prior to the decision not be upheld
- 2) The call in on the grounds that there was an absence of adequate evidence on which to base a decision not be upheld

And unanimously that:

- 3) The call in on the grounds that there had been insufficient consideration of legal and financial advice not be upheld



Cllr Jerry Miles
Chairman Call-In Sub-Committee



Cllr Paul Osborn
Vice Chairman Call-In Sub-Committee

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Conclusion

Our purpose and the challenges which we face in delivering this remain the same: The significant reductions in public sector spending and the associated reductions in service delivery mean that the effectiveness of scrutiny in ensuring that the right decisions are being made is paramount. We will continue to rise to this challenge and to support the organisation to make the right decisions in these very difficult times.

Contact us

There's lots of ways of getting in touch with Harrow's scrutiny function:

- Our web pages can be found at www.harrow.gov.uk/scrutiny
- Our Facebook page can be found here <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Scrutiny-in-Harrow/205146626189923>
- Our Twitter page can be found here <https://mobile.twitter.com/account>
- You can email us at scrutiny@harrow.gov.uk
- You can phone us on **020 8420 9387**
- Our address is:
Scrutiny
3rd Floor Civic Centre 1
Station Road
Harrow
HA1 2XF

Appendix One: Satisfaction Survey – Results and Responses

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**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date:	9 th April 2013
Subject:	Scrutiny Lead Member Report
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director, Strategic Commissioning
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr Zarina Khalid, Performance Lead, Children and Families• Cllr Christine Bednell, Policy Lead, Children and Families• Cllr Chris Mote, Policy Lead, Community Health and Well Being• Cllr Nana Asante, Performance Lead, Community Health and Well Being• Cllr Krishna James, Policy Lead, Health and Social Care• Cllr Vina Mithani, Performance Lead, Health and Social Care
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Reports from the Scrutiny Lead Members

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

The report accompanies the reports from the Scrutiny Lead Members.

Recommendations:

The Committee is requested to consider the reports from the Scrutiny Lead Members and agree the actions proposed therein.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

This report outlines details of the work of the Scrutiny Lead Members.

The report from the Children and Families leads is the report of the extended group which has been set up to consider a number of key performance issues.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report

Performance Issues

There are no performance issues associated with this report.

Environmental Impact

There is no environmental impact associated with this report

Risk Management Implications

There are no risks associated with this report.

Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No

This report outlines the activities of the scrutiny lead councillors; it makes no proposals to change service delivery.

Corporate Priorities

The Scrutiny Lead Members' responsibilities cover all areas of the council's activity.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Not required for this report.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Lynne Margetts, Service Manager Scrutiny, 020 8420 9387, lynne.margetts@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY LEADS BRIEFING

Wednesday 27 February 2013

Attendees

Councillor Krishna James, Policy Lead for Health and Social Care
Councillor Vina Mithani, Performance Lead for Health and Social Care
Paul Najsarek, Corporate Director Community Health and Wellbeing
Bernie Flaherty, Director Adult Social Services
Felicity Page, Senior Professional Scrutiny

Developments in Adults Services - directorate update

Performance and finance

- Ambitious performance targets continue to be a challenge however hard work persists across the directorate to ensure that best possible results are achieved.
- Forecasts for the current period reflect a £38k underspend on the directorate's budget for 2012/13, which is over £80m gross.

Key areas of activity

- A consultation on the Strategic Review of Learning Disability Accommodation will report to Cabinet in March 2013. It was advised that the consultation seeks to improve outcomes, present a more modernised offer, and, ensure better value for money.
- Work continues with the PCT to provide integrated care pathways for older people. This requires a multi-disciplinary approach with partnerships working together towards better outcomes and value for money.
- It was advised that Central and North West London (CNWL) Mental Health Trust are monitored very closely at a senior level, as part of the imposed Section 75, and held to account on the performance information they produce. There was an appreciation however that CNWL can only report in terms of user complaints on the information they receive from homecare agencies. The leads were pleased to hear that the Council have regular contact with Home Care Agencies in order to monitor and improve outcomes for service users. Furthermore, the Council are undertaking their own checks with service users through; questionnaires, monitoring complaints, independent voluntary sector services and mystery shopping. It was agreed this was a very positive step forward which ultimately aims to improve care for Harrow's residents.

Personal budgets

- Shop4Support, an online social care portal which assists users in receipt of a personal budget choose the care most appropriate to them, was reported to be progressing well and receiving positive feedback.
- Harrow's Resource Allocation System (RAS) for personal budgets is based on the national RAS which defines how much a person is entitled too. Harrow uses a 'social work moderated' extra functionality process to ensure assessed needs can *actually* be purchased using the allocation.
- Feedback received from service users has led to a 'personal budgets for carers' programme.

Corporate Scorecard – Quarter 3 2012/13

There are 10 indicators linked to the performance of health and social care presented on the *Supporting and protecting people who are most in need* corporate scorecard. Leads were advised that:

- The original target of 10% for adults with mental health in paid employment was very ambitious and although it had currently only reached 6.5% it was anticipated to increase before year end.

- 78.8% of people with learning disabilities are now living in their own home or with their families. This was a good outcome and places Harrow comparatively against other Council's nationally.

Policy horizon scanning - relevant policy issues/implications at national and local level

The leads were advised on the latest developments:

- Public Health will be the responsibility of the Local Authority after 1 April 2013.
- The Health and Wellbeing Board will be held in a public forum after 1 May 2013.
- In response to the Dilnot Review, the government recently outlined its plans to reform adult social care funding. There were two central proposals noted - 1) to cap an individual's contribution to the costs of adult social care to £75,000 and 2) to raise the value of assets a person could hold before having to pay the full cost of their care to £123,000. These proposals will take effect from April 2017.
- Impacts of the Health and Social Care Bill on Local Authorities were discussed, particularly with regard to the range of initiatives that would likely affect the Adult Social Care budget. For example all carers will have the right to an assessment whether the person they care for has substantial needs or not.
- FACS criteria will be removed as we know it to avoid a post code lottery.
- The Francis Report recently published its findings and recommendations following the failings of care at Mid Staffordshire Foundation Trust. It was highlighted that one of the recommendations was around 'duty of candour' which, if agreed, would make it a criminal offence for an employee not to report a sighting of wrongdoing.

Integrated Care Organisation

The leads requested that a regular item on Shaping a Healthier Future (SaHF) come to future meetings of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee. This is to include updates on the merger between Ealing Hospital NHS Trust and the NW London Hospitals Trust, and, report on progress of the Integrated Care Organisation.

For action: For the report authors to be made aware of leads request.

Scrutiny - items coming up at Committee and review work

Mental Health

The leads had previously agreed that an overview of mental health service provision in the borough be reported to the next meeting of the Committee in April. Following this a scrutiny project group will begin scoping the review. The leads were advised that the PCT are currently developing a strategy which they will be discussing with both the Local Authority and CNWL. This will subsequently be brought to the Health & Wellbeing board for discussion.

All other items for the next meeting were agreed.

Any other business

The policy lead requested updates on the following issues:

Update on progress for the Bids for the Bridge Day Centre

It was noted that the tender process was underway at the Bridge and completing evaluation. A decision on the provider would be made next week with a planned start date of 2 April, although this may shift by 1 month subject to receiving assurances that the most efficient processes were in place.

Update on progress regarding Marlborough Hill Day Centre

Negotiations were underway and no final decision had been taken as yet -although it was important to note that the building is not in a very good condition.

For action:

Cllr James asked if the number of Mental Health service users had been decreasing over the last year. Director Adult Social Services did not think in terms of social care that this was the case but agreed to follow up the query with particular regard to the health numbers.

- Thom Wilson to follow up.

CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE BRIEFING 26TH FEBRUARY

PRESENT

- Cllr Sue Anderson, Chair, Performance and Finance sub committee;
- Cllr Christine Bednell, Policy Lead Children and Families;
- Cllr Zarina Khalid, Performance Lead Children and Families

- Catherine Doran, Corporate Director, Children and Families;
- Nick Crick, Service Manager, Children Looked After;
- Leora Crudass, Divisional Director, Quality Assurance, Commissioning and Schools;
- Catherine Halsall, Virtual Head Teacher;
- David Harrington, Service Manager, Performance Management;
- Parmjit Chahal, Service Manager, Targeted Services;
- Peter Tolley, Service Manager, Targeted Services;
- Jonathan Williams, Service Manager, Quality Assurance and Service Improvement

- Lynne Margetts, Service Manager Scrutiny

DETAIL

This meeting had been established to enable more detailed consideration of a number of performance issues in Children's Services: Attendance and Achievement of Children Looked After, delivery of the Youth Offending Team inspection improvement plan, delivery of the SLAC Ofsted inspection improvement plan (service improvement plan). In the main, the performance issues relate to social care and not to education/schools. The only area where there has been some concern with education performance is with regard to school exclusions. The Divisional Director, Quality Assurance, Commissioning and Schools advised that this is likely to be addressed by the development of the Jubilee Free School. It is possible that the secondary schools take on the function of the Pupil Referral Unit if the free school works well.

Scorecard

It was advised that the council is moving towards the single assessment with 35-day time limit – this will result in a single set of papers for each child. The problem for the council in this regard has been with the 'front door' to children's services. There have been a number of management and staffing issues which the service is attempting to resolve. In particular the service is predominantly staffed with agency workers, despite a number of attempts to fill posts with permanent staff. The council is investing in the new service structure and staffing levels have been increased from 7 – 13 but there are still only 2 permanent members of the team. The staffing difficulties have also been compounded by the fact that thresholds for service have been too high, lowering these has resulted in higher numbers of referrals through the front door. The Corporate Director commented that she continues to address the permanency of appointments and that a local supplement may be required to attract staff. She also felt that some of the council's processes make it difficult for the services to make the speedy decisions required in these circumstances.

Another area of difficulty historically for the service has been the number of children with a child protection plan for more than 2 years. It was however noted that specific consideration of each child's case in these circumstances has resulted in a reduction from 28 to 6. Tight performance management has turned this around.

With regard to the health of children looked after, there appear to be difficulties with regard to the process for undertaking health checks. It seems that health colleagues

are requiring significant amounts of work, which would normally only be required if a child is subject of adoption. Further work to negotiate a more appropriate system is being undertaken. Problems are compounded by the fact that 2 sets of records are being kept, because the separate systems being used by health and the council cannot interface with each other – lack of recording had been identified as an issue for health by the Care Quality Commission.

With regard to placement stability (3 or more placements per year) it was clarified that in future any change in placement must be agreed by 2 managers, unless the placements are emergency or assessment placements. In terms of long term stability (%in same placement for more than 2 years) the aim is to identify permanent placements, there is only a small number of young people for whom permanency is difficult. Performance in both of these areas is improving.

The council is working with West London Alliance to develop in-house care options across the west London boroughs.

With regard to legal planning of care proceedings, the Family Justice Review has resulted in new guidance which will require cases to be dealt with within 26 weeks from beginning to end – the council's current performance is 40 weeks. The council is involved in a joint project with Ealing and Brent to improve performance in this area.

It is the service's opinion that there will be an increase in the number of looked after children – welfare reforms will create pressures on families and the council's own thresholds have been too low

Children Local After Attendance and Attainment

The Virtual Headteacher tabled her paper outlining performance in this area

With regard to attendance, she commented that there are 9 young people with specifically difficult situations and in one specific circumstance, the police had advised that the young person should not attend school. However, there have been no permanent exclusions and the number of fixed term exclusions is also improving – a total of 6 days, one young person for 5 days and one for one day.

With regard to attainment, the VHT advised that the cohort changes on a yearly basis. At year 6, 4/8 young people have behavioural problems but 6/8 expect to achieve at the average performance, 2 have requested private tuition

At year 11 there are 18 students. 3 have special needs, 4 are unaccompanied asylum seekers, though these young people may achieve some success, and 4 have behavioural problems. 7 have the potential to succeed, 5 out of these 7 are in Harrow secondary schools. The numbers involved are very small and any changes in achievement levels will appear significant.

The VHT commented that further tracking is being undertaken with 16 – 21 year-olds to monitor what happens to them once they have completed school attendance – this will identify what happens to young people who don't succeed at this stage in their lives and who perhaps have retaken their examinations.

Youth Offending Team

The Corporate Director explained the staffing/personnel issues which have been experienced by the team. Whilst there are still some challenges, these are now being dealt with and there is an improved professionalism in the team. The Corporate Director commented on the need for leaner corporate HR processes which would allow the service to deal with these issues more effectively. She commented that a significant amount of resource has been targeted at the service in order to resolve the HR issues. The Corporate Director commented on the need for an improved system to monitor performance – the YOIS system is not effective.

Improvement Plan

The Divisional Director, Quality Assurance, Commissioning and Schools explained the changes to the Ofsted inspection regime which has significantly toughened the previous regime. As such, it is unlikely that the council will be successful in delivering an improved inspection rating if the focus is simply on delivery of the improvement plan which was devised following the Ofsted inspection in 2012. The future focus will be on how the council intends to improve the child's journey through care and what 'good' might look like in this context.

In order to support councillors to understand the context for the improvements they are considering, the Corporate Director suggested that opportunities for councillors to 'shadow' social workers could be arranged. The councillors agreed that this would be helpful and the Service Manager Scrutiny will liaise with the councillors and officers.

For action

- Monitoring of the specific areas to continue
- Service Manager Scrutiny to set up shadowing opportunities

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELL BEING SCRUTINY LEADS BRIEFING 25th **FEBRUARY 2013**

Present

Cllr Chris Mote

Paul Najsarek, Corporate Director Community Health and Well Being, Lynne Margetts

Community and Culture

The Corporate Director summarized the service's performance in this area. Performance across this area is good:

- library usage is up – one of the highest in London,
- bookings at Harrow Arts Centre are increasing,
- the Active People survey shows Harrow as having the best figures in West London,
- visits to the museum are generally increasing – at least until the last quarter of 2012 when problems with the heating meant that the building needed to close;

The service's biggest challenge is the improvement of IT in libraries. As the council has experienced considerable IT pressures, the IT support available to introduce the People's Network and WiFi in libraries have been reduced. Nonetheless, the introduction of self service in the libraries has gone well, borrowing and usage is still higher than other boroughs.

The community and culture budget is performing well. However, in awarding the leisure contract to Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL), the council had set a challenging income generation target of £400k. Although GLL has generated £200k surplus for the council, the overall target has not been reached.

In order to deliver further £250k savings, a management restructure is taking place

The voluntary sector grants process has been completed, subject to final agreement of awards at Full Council. Awards have been made to cover a 3-year period.

The voluntary sector is developing its own 3rd sector strategy which is expected to be reported to cabinet in March. The Corporate Director commented that the development of the strategy by the sector itself may mean that the sector will determine its own future development and address some of the sustainability issues which need to be considered.

The Directorate is reaching the end of a tendering process for the Libraries and Leisure service. It is anticipated that the contract will be considered at Cabinet in March or April.

Additional capital investment has been agreed for the Tithe Barn at the museum. This will be used as match funding for a bid to the London region of the Heritage Lottery Fund. Community Health and Well Being directorate has been asked to reduce the subsidy to the museum and arts centre by 50% over the next two years, whilst this will be challenging to deliver for the Arts Centre although tickets sales have risen to their highest level, it is a more difficult task for the museum. It is possible that the additional capital investment will help by reducing some of the revenue costs.

Funding has been included in the budget for Under One Sky, the London Youth Games and for work with the voluntary sector with regard to welfare reform. Funding has also been agreed for Harrow Young Musicians – reducing over a two year period.

Cllr Mote asked how the council is now performing with regard to the indicator which measured how well people from different backgrounds get on with each other. The Corporate Director advised that the survey which had measured this had been abolished but that the council is still able to monitor community cohesion via the 'reputation tracker' which is undertaken by the communications team. This is showing that cohesion is holding steady/improving.

Housing

The Corporate Director advised that Housing Services are now acknowledged to be performing well.

In terms of homelessness, whilst the figures remain low in comparison with other boroughs and below projections, there has been an increase. One of the reasons seems to be that the private rented sector is not flourishing at the moment. In order to try to alleviate pressure, the council has undertaken a number of policy reviews and is consulting on a number of options

- Life time tenancies for local authority housing will no longer be available. All new tenancies will be reviewed after one year and thereafter every five years
- Private landlords are being offered incentives to bring their properties into use e.g. through the award of renovation grants
- Allocations policy is being reviewed to include possible options:
 - A Harrow stronger residency qualification
 - Rewarding positive community activity – working with Harrow voluntary sector to investigate the feasibility of this
 - Recognising employment status in allocation policy
 - Investigating the possibility of discharging housing duty by moving people out of borough. In practice members have already agreed to apply this approach during 2012/13.

Cllr Mote asked if private sector rents are reducing in the context of benefit changes. The Corporate Director advised there is little evidence of reductions and not sufficient to make the rents affordable. Cllr Mote commented that the borough needs an increased number of larger properties

For action

The Community Health and Well Being scrutiny leads may consider:

- Work with the voluntary sector – in particular the development of the 3rd sector strategy
- Emerging policy changes in housing
- Changes in Library contract