

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

AGENDA

DATE: Tuesday 8 April 2014

TIME: 7.30 pm

VENUE: Committee Rooms 1&2
Harrow Civic Centre

MEMBERSHIP (Quorum 4)

Chairman: Councillor Jerry Miles

Councillors:

Marilyn Ashton
Chris Mote (VC)
Anthony Seymour
Yogesh Teli

Sue Anderson
Phillip O'Dell
Bill Phillips

Mano Dharmarajah

Representatives of Voluntary Aided Sector: Mrs J Rammelt/Reverend P Reece
Representatives of Parent Governors: Mrs A Khan/1 Vacancy

(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.)

Representative of Harrow Youth Parliament

Reserve Members:

1. Amir Moshenson
2. Lynda Seymour
3. Ramji Chauhan
4. Jean Lammiman

1. Vacancy
2. Victoria Silver
3. Sachin Shah
4. Ben Wealthy

1. Zarina Khalid

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.

3. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2014 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS *

To receive any public questions received in accordance with Committee Procedure Rule 17 (Part 4B of the Constitution).

Questions will be asked in the order notice of them was received and there be a time limit of 15 minutes.

[The deadline for receipt of public questions is 3.00 pm, Thursday 3 April 2014. Questions should be sent to publicquestions@harrow.gov.uk

No person may submit more than one question].

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. PROGRAMME MINERVA (Pages 7 - 16)

Report of the Corporate Director of Resources

8. FAMILIES FIRST - TROUBLED FAMILIES (Pages 17 - 30)

Report of the Divisional Director of Early Intervention Services

9. SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14 (Pages 31 - 68)

Report of the Divisional Director of Strategic Commissioning

10. SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBER REPORT (Pages 69 - 88)

Report of the Divisional Director of Strategic Commissioning

11. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME - CLOSING REPORT (Pages 89 - 94)

Report of the Divisional Director of Strategic Commissioning

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

AGENDA - PART II

13. FAMILIES FIRST - TROUBLED FAMILIES (Pages 95 - 130)

Enclosures to the report of the Divisional Director of Early Intervention Services

NIL

*** DATA PROTECTION ACT NOTICE**

The Council will audio record item 4 (Public Questions) and will place the audio recording on the Council's website, which will be accessible to all.

[**Note:** The questions and answers will not be reproduced in the minutes.]

Deadline for questions	3.00 pm on Thursday 3 April 2014
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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES

18 MARCH 2014

Chairman: * Councillor Jerry Miles

Councillors:

* Sue Anderson	* Phillip O'Dell
† Marilyn Ashton	* Anthony Seymour
Mano Dharmarajah	* Lynda Seymour (2)
* Chris Mote	* Ben Wealthy (3)

Voting (Voluntary Aided) (Parent Governors)

Co-opted:

† Mrs J Rammelt	† Mrs A Khan
Reverend P Reece	

Non-voting † Harrow Youth Parliament Representative
Co-opted:

* Denotes Member present
 (2), (3) Denote category of Reserve Members
 † Denotes apologies received

486. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note the attendance of the following duly constituted Reserve Members:

Ordinary Member

Councillor Bill Phillips
 Councillor Yogesh Teli

Reserve Member

Councillor Ben Wealthy
 Councillor Lynda Seymour

487. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members.

488. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2014, be taken as read and signed as a correct record subject to noting that Mrs Rammelt had submitted her apologies.

489. Public Questions

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were received.

490. Petitions

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions had been received.

RESOLVED ITEMS

491. Reference from Cabinet - Customer Services - Scrutiny Review Group Report and Recommendations

RESOLVED: That the reference be noted.

492. Petition referred from Council - Period of Free Parking in District Centres

Members agreed to consider a reference from Council, as a matter of urgency, for the reasons set out on the supplemental agenda.

RESOLVED: That the reference be noted.

493. Climate Change Strategy and Delivering Warmer Homes strategies

Members received a report of the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise which reviewed the progress of the existing climate change strategy and set out proposals to improve delivery. The officer outlined the content of the report and then responded to a series of questions and comments as follows:-

- It appeared that there had been a reduction in the Affordable Homes Programme. The officer confirmed that whilst the programme had overrun he expected it to be completed by the end of April.
- A Member questioned how many properties would be affected by the changes in the ECO (Energy Company Obligation) scheme. The officer advised that under the previous ECO arrangements, the support of the energy companies was £120 per tonne and this had now reduced to

£40 per tonne which meant that support to residents would be substantially less. In addition, the officer advised that the Council had submitted a bid to Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) under Green Deal Communities Fund which (if granted) would mean that the subsidy previously supplied by the energy companies would be provided directly by the government. The Council was awaiting a decision.

- Clarification was sought on the number of houses in Harrow that had solid walls, when the last survey had been done and how the Council could tackle this issue. The officer advised that a survey had not been carried out recently and the data had been taken from the Energy Saving Trust. They estimated that 58% of homes in the borough (approximately 49,000 properties) had solid walls. The vast majority of these had not been insulated. If the bid for funding to the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) was successful he estimated that approximately 300 homes would be completed by April 2015 on a street by street basis
- In response to a question about the amount of energy used by academies, the officer advised that the figure was distorted because of the ongoing transfer of schools to academy status. However, it was clear that the combined increase of emissions from schools and academies was significant. One of the reasons for this may be due to the increase in the number of pupils.
- The officer confirmed that the use of LEDs for street- lighting would reduce the carbon footprint as well as energy bills, as long as the unit price of energy did not increase.
- A Member questioned whether residents were required to ensure that any replacement driveway that was installed was third water porous in order to aid the prevention of flooding. The officer undertook to look into this.
- In terms of the capital programme, a Member questioned the extent to which the effects of carbon emissions had been embedded and was advised that there was still work to be done. The officer cited the example of the school expansion and carbon reduction programmes working together. A suggestion was that Cabinet/ Committee reports should state what the carbon impact of proposals were.
- The officer confirmed that the individual projects that were funded under the carbon reduction programme were determined on the basis of a business case with a maximum pay-back period of eight to ten years.
- In terms of communication, a Member asked how residents would know that they may be entitled to support from the carbon reduction budget. The officer advised that if the Council received DECC funding,

a number of areas would be targeted and, in particular, those areas with levels of fuel poverty.

- A Member commented that from the report it appeared that the number of schools with travel plans had halved and he questioned whether schools had provided reasons for this. The officer stated that he understood that the criteria for accreditation were now more strict so this reduction might be due to a technical change. He would seek clarification
- In response to a Member's question as to the purpose of the essential car users' allowance and the number of officers in receipt, the officer advised that those officers that were required to use their personal vehicle in order to perform their duties received an allowance. In terms of the current position in relation to the green travel plan, he would seek clarification.
- A Member raised the issue of flooding and noted that there had been some good work in the past which had alleviated some of the boroughs worst flooding areas. The officer agreed and pointed out that this work continued with more schemes coming forward in the capital programme.
- A Member suggested that it may be possible, as a Council, to reduce fuel costs by using wood waste from the tree maintenance service as a biomass fuel. The officer advised that he had spoken to the Leisure Centre contractor about the installation of biomass boilers and there were also opportunities at Harrow Museum. He thought it more likely that wood pellets would be used as these had a lower moisture content than wood chip from the Council's tree maintenance service.
- The officer's view was sought on the use of more gas efficient boilers by the Council. The officer advised that there had been discussions with Harrow Museum on the use of biomass waste and he suggested that, going forward, the carbon reduction programme would wish to consider the installation of biomass boilers wherever possible to ensure that the large reductions in carbon emissions were achieved.
- A Member suggested that the water usage at the depot could be reduced through the use of water meters. The officer confirmed that the water was metered. The high demand may be due to the vehicle washing facility and dust suppression at the civic amenity site. All the water currently used at the depot was drinking water quality and therefore had a high carbon footprint. It may be possible to use rainwater for washing vehicles – thereby reducing use of high quality water.
- A Member expressed concern that the 2 electric charging points outside the Civic Centre were no longer publicly accessible due to the change in car park layout. The officer undertook to seek clarification.

- A Member expressed concern in relation to the implementation of a Local Freight Operational Strategy and was advised that a response would be circulated to Members of the Committee.
- The lack of an Affordable Warmth Budget needed to be addressed as approximately 100 residents were affected by this annually.
- A Member suggested that an annual walk to school and work day would be an effective way of publicising the issues of climate change and travel impacts.

Members thanked the officer for his work, noting that he was due to retire shortly. The general view was that there should be a corporate ownership of the carbon reduction scheme and a concern about the number of school travel plans. It was felt that there should be further education in terms of saving energy, for example, switching off lights when a room was vacated. Members expressed support for an annual walk to school and work day, a green travel plan and Cabinet/ Committee reports including the carbon impact of proposals. It was also suggested that the Council actively participate in the European Mobility week in September.

In response to a Member's suggestion that there be a scrutiny review of school travel plans, the officer suggested that this be referenced in the work programme report due for submission to the April meeting.

Having reviewed the proposals for the Delivering Warmer Homes strategy, future consideration of an Affordable Warmth budget, and proposals to reduce carbon emissions it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the current performance on delivering the current Climate Change Action Plan be noted;
- (2) the potential projects to reduce emissions set out in Paragraph 2.3.4. of the Corporate Director's report be noted.
- (3) the change to reporting arrangements set out in Paragraph 2.3.5. of the Corporate Director's report be noted;
- (4) the Committee's comments and suggestions be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration.

494. Any Other Business - Accessible Transport Review

A Member sought the support of the Committee, as a matter of urgency due to deadlines, to the submission of the Accessible Transport Review to the

Centre of Public Scrutiny for a forthcoming award process. The Committee endorsed this proposal.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.51 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR JERRY MILES
Chairman

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting:	8 th April 2014
Subject:	Programme Minerva
Responsible Officer:	Tom Whiting Corporate Director of Resources
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	Cllr Jerry Miles, Resources Policy Lead Councillor Cllr Amir Moshenson, Resources Performance Lead Councillor
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out progress to date on Programme Minerva since it was last presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in December 2013. The programme is overseeing a number of work streams which include:

- The project to tender for a new ICT contract;
- The project to review and transform the HRD department;
- A number of work streams focussed on identifying and delivering savings in a number of Council departments post 2015 (Access Harrow, Revenues & Benefits, Payroll & Shared Services, Legal and Governance, Strategic Commissioning, Finance & Assurance);
- Monitoring the progress on identification of savings opportunities across the Resources Directorate; and
- The further investigation of potential shared service opportunities, including the potential to develop relationships with other councils.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- I. Note progress on Programme Minerva to date;
- II. Offer comment on the project activities completed to date; and
- iii. Advise on future involvement of Overview and Scrutiny Members in relation to Programme Minerva.

Section 2 – Report

Introduction

The Council launched Project Minerva during 2013 in response to three key challenges that the Council is expecting to face and needs to plan for, namely:

1. Future pressures for cost reductions anticipated from 2015/16 and beyond.
2. The break clause provisions within the Council's existing IT Service contract with Capita that may be exercised subject to one year's prior written notice.
3. The future requirement and use of the existing SAP IT system.

At the Cabinet meeting on the 15th January 2014 it was agreed:

1. To exercise the early break clause within the Incremental Partnership Agreement variation for the provision of IT Services to permit cessation from 24th November 2015.
2. That the Council does not extend the initial period of the Incremental Partnership Agreement currently scheduled to expire on 3rd October 2015.
3. To approve the re-tender of the IT Service contract under EU Procurement rules and in accordance with contract standing orders and delegate authority to proceed with the procurement to the Corporate Director of Resources in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communications, Performance and Resources and the Portfolio Holder for Finance and to bring a contract award recommendation to Cabinet for commencement of the IT Service contract. Delivery of the IT Service will require the delivery of major projects from time to time and this will need to be accommodated within the service scope of the re-tender.
4. To give approval to run the process to appoint a Legal and Commercial provider for the re-tender of the IT Service, subject to approval of point 3 above.
5. To authorise the Corporate Director of Resources to continue exploring the potential for a shared service arrangement with suitable partners.
6. To approve the launch of a two-year cost reduction programme aimed at achieving a savings target of 17% (i.e. £2.0m per annum) identified from the options analysis in Sub-Section 2.2.1 of this report.

Current Situation

Cost Reduction

The Council budget that was agreed in February 2014 projects a funding gap of £24.75m in 2015/16 and £20.765m in 2016/17.

It is evident that the delivery of savings on this scale may only be achieved through significant changes to service delivery models for Council services and as such forward planning is very much required.

IT Service and Business Transformation Contract

The Council entered into a Business Transformation contract with Capita in October 2005. The initial project undertaken through this contract was the implementation of SAP systems to deliver the Council's Finance, HR, and Customer Services as well as to deliver savings in procurement

Further Business Cases were subsequently delivered through the Capita Contract including Libraries, Special Needs Transport, Refuse and Street Services. The current Mobile and Flexible Working and Towards Excellence projects are also being delivered under this contract.

The contract term was for an initial period of 10 years with an opportunity to extend for up to a further 5 years. In November 2010 the Council outsourced its IT Services to Capita under a variation to this contract for a period of 10 years with a break point after 5 years.

The existing contract (incorporating the variation) therefore permits potential cessation dates of October 2015 for the initial partnership agreement and November 2015 for the variation added for the IT Service.

Other Stakeholders

There are a range of stakeholders that could potentially be affected by project outcomes including residents, Council employees and Trade Unions. Contextually, the Council also provides a range of support functions to Schools who receive services through a range of Service Level Agreements (SLAs).

The outcomes from the January Cabinet have been shared with Schools through the HSIP Board. Additionally the HSIP Board have been actively engaged in the HR Review currently being undertaken.

Services in Scope

The services in scope for this programme are:

- Finance & Assurance
- Shared Services & Payroll
- Revenues & Benefits
- Access Harrow
- Procurement
- Legal & Governance
- Strategic Commissioning

In addition 2 major projects are being undertaken:

- ICT Service Tender
- HRD Review and Transformation.

Approach Taken

Following on from the Cabinet decision in January, Programme Minerva was formed. It consists of 9 projects focussing on cost savings, transformation and possible shared services as detailed below.

1. ICT Procurement

Following on from the Cabinet decision in January 2014 it was agreed not to extend the current IT Outsource (with capita). In order to do this a number of strands of activity have been started:

- Project Governance

A project board has been convened and the terms of reference have been agreed. In addition a Project Initiation Document has been drafted.

- Legal Advisor Procurement

In advance of starting the procurement exercise Harrow Council are in the process of securing the services of a legal adviser for the duration of the procurement.

- Market Engagement

In advance of going out to procurement it was agreed to perform a market engagement exercise in order to test the appetite of the market for the proposed solution and to understand the latest thinking in the IT market.

2. HRD Review and Transformation

As was identified in the work performed last year in Project Minerva, a review of the HRD service was recommended, in advance of a transformation project.

The first stage of this project is to perform a review of the current function and to recommend a target operating model. To do this the Council has engaged the Chartered Institute of Personnel Directors (CIPD) and the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) to undertake the review and recommend a design for the future. This review is in progress and is due to report in early April 2014. The main features of the review are to:

- Perform a desktop review – to include Council structure and workforce, HRD service design and structure, baseline cost information, key service and performance metrics;
- To review key procedures and processes;
- To hold structured interviews with service commissioners and key stakeholders including Schools;
- To facilitate workshops with service users;
- To hold facilitated workshops with HRD staff; and
- To undertake a User Survey.

Once the council has digested the recommendations it will set up a project team to implement them, which is likely to include changes in the way the organisation uses the HR service.

3. Revenues & Benefits, Finance & Assurance, Procurement and Shared Services & Payroll

These three services formed part of Project Minerva in 2013. As such they had identified saving opportunities and the next stage of the project is to implement them. Each opportunity is being tracked at both work stream level and programme level and directors have defined plans to deliver the savings prior to March 2015.

Upon realisation a Benefit Realisation form will be completed for the Programme Board to approve and for Finance to adjust the relevant budgets with effect from 2015/16.
4. Strategic Commissioning, Access Harrow and Legal & Governance

These work streams were not part of Project Minerva in 2013 and as such had not identified specific projects or savings opportunities. In January 2014 they were incorporated under Programme Minerva and work was commenced in identifying savings opportunities.

The current plan is for these areas to identify potential savings initiatives and to implement savings in order for a full year impact in 2015/16. As initiatives are identified they are recorded on the Programme Benefit Tracker.
5. External Shared Services and Other Areas

The Cabinet Report recommended that the Council continue its work in looking at potential shared service opportunities. This included further initial discussions with Hampshire County Council.

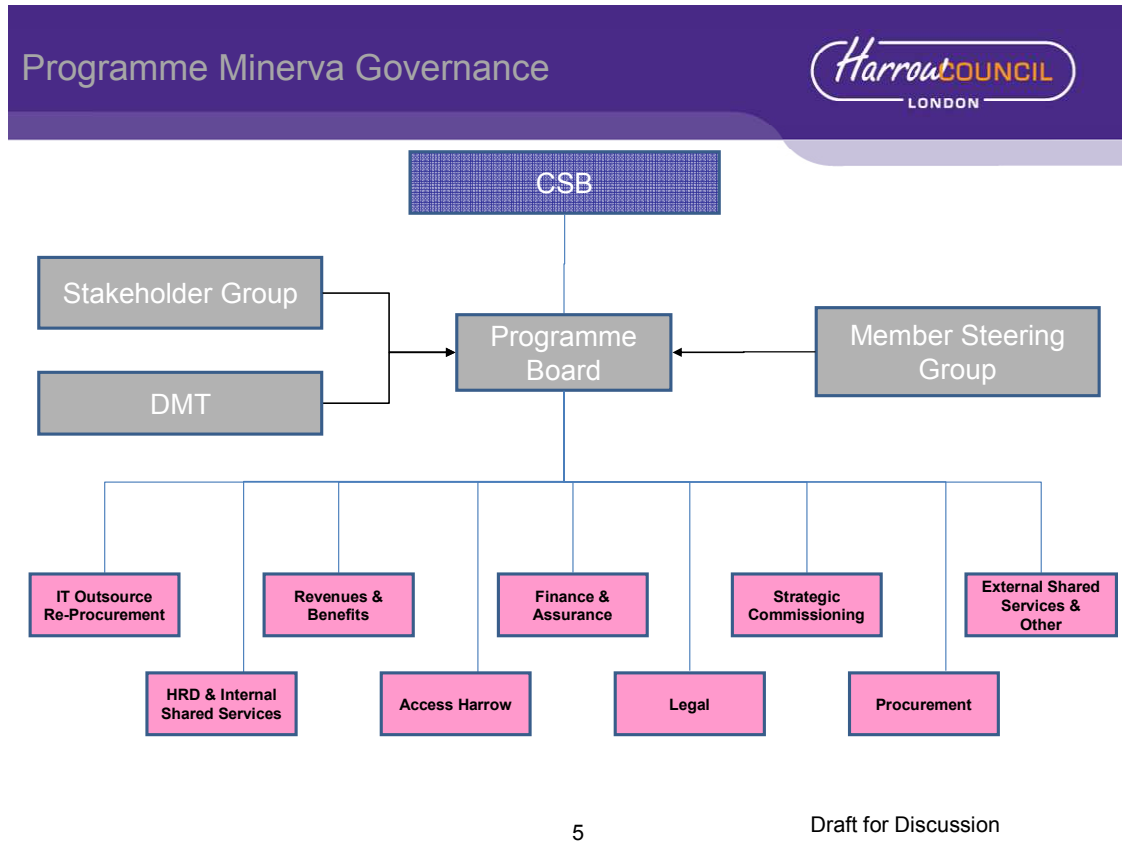
Programme Minerva is also assisting in identifying savings opportunities across the entire Resources Directorate. As they now fall under the Programme, the progress will be tracked in line with the other opportunities.
6. Programme Governance

A number of Programme Governance arrangements have been put in place. These include the creation of a small Programme Board with the Corporate Director of Resources as Chair, the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise (Client Representative) and the Director of Finance and Assurance (Section 151 Officer). This board will meet to discuss progress, review risks and issues at the programme level and agree on communications.

Member communications will be at Programme level and use the Member Steering Group where cross-party agreement is required. In addition Portfolio Holders will be briefed on progress by Tom Whiting on a regular basis.

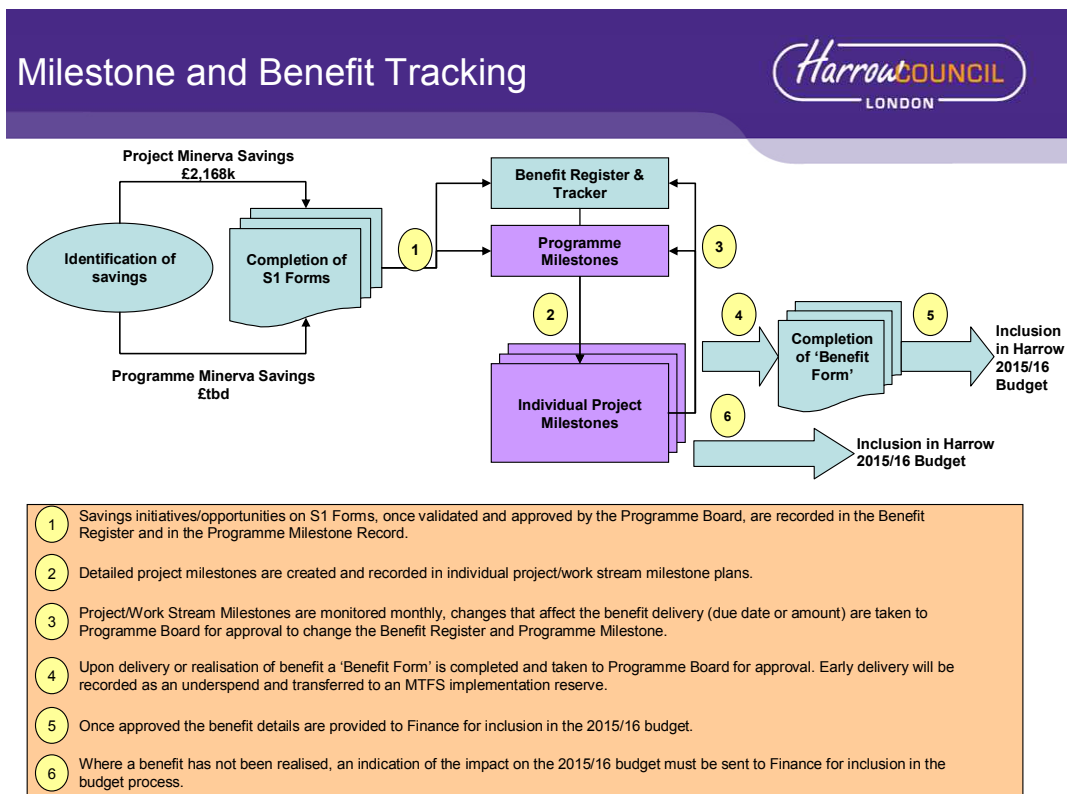
The Stakeholder Group that was created for the project in 2013 will continue with the proposed same membership, with each Directorate represented.

Figure 1 Programme Governance



The diagram below illustrates the Milestone and Benefit Tracking process that will be implemented by the Programme.

Figure 2 Milestone and Benefit Tracking



7. Approach & Timescales

The intention is for the projects that deliver savings to have been implemented in order for full year savings to be realised in 2015/16. It is possible that a number of savings opportunities will be realised in advance.

Key dates¹:

March 2014	Completion of the ICT Soft Market Test exercise and appointment of a legal advisor
April 2014	The completion of the HRD review and presentation of recommendations
March 2015	The implementation of savings projects where they are required for full year impact in 2015/16
April 2015	The award of a new ICT Outsource Contract
October 2015	The handover from the incumbent ICT provider to the new provider

Financial Implications

The Council budget that was agreed in February 2014 projects a funding gap of £24.75M in 2015/16 and £20.765M in 2016/17.

¹ The dates around the ICT procurement are provisional

The annual value of the services in scope is approximately £20M². The savings identified under the internal option from Project Minerva totalled £2.0M.

Programme Minerva has been set up to assist in planning and evaluating how services could meet these challenges and deliver the required savings identified. It is also investigating possible opportunities for cross-Resources Directorate savings.

Performance Issues

There are no firm proposals for the services in scope at this stage and that is not the purpose of this report.

The models that may be proposed for the delivery of services are likely to see services delivered in a different way. There is likely to be a greater reliance on self service, particularly in HRD, and in some areas the levels of support may be less than at present. The right balance between quality and cost will be developed during any procurement process should the Council proceed to market and will be taken ahead internally if services are retained in house.

Environmental Impact

There are no direct environmental impacts anticipated from this report.

Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate risk register in place? Yes. There is a Programme Risk Register and the major projects (ICT and HRD) will also have their own project risk registers.

Risks associated with the project are documented on the project risk register and proactively managed through the Project Reporting arrangements.

Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? Yes

Decision makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties. They are not duties to secure a particular outcome. The equalities impact will be revisited for each of the proposals as they are developed. Consideration of the duties should precede the decision. It is important that the Council has regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material such as consultation responses. The statutory grounds of the public sector equality duty are found at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and are as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

² This includes ICT and areas that were previously out of scope, such as Access Harrow and Legal and Governance

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- (a) Tackle prejudice, and
- (b) Promote understanding.

Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act. The relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race,
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil partnership

It is important that robust equalities impact assessments are completed and that consultation is undertaken whilst the project is in a formative stage.

An overview Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the project and this has been considered by the Equalities Impact Assessment Quality Assurance Group at their meeting of 16th December 2013.

Moving forward EqIA's will be developed for individual projects or areas as and when required.

Section 3 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Tom Whiting, Corporate Director of Resources 020 8420 9484

Background Papers: None

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting:

8 April 2014

Subject:

Families First - Troubled Families

Responsible Officer:

Wendy Beeton, Divisional Director – Early Intervention Services

Scrutiny Lead

Councillor Lynda Seymour – Children and Families Policy Lead

Member area:

Councillor Victoria Silver Children and Families Performance Lead

Exempt:

Part 1 with exempt Enclosures 1, 2 & 3 by virtue of paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) in that they contain information in relation to an individual

Enclosures:

1. IPC Evaluation Report
2. IPC Interviews with families
3. IPC Case Studies
4. Family Identification Criteria
5. Payment by Results

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

The government's Troubled Families initiative is designed to turn around families who have a range of complex difficulties.

The government has calculated that nationally there are 120,000 such families who because of their complex needs, are of high cost to the public purse. The government has indicated that Harrow has 395 families who are defined as 'troubled'.

The government has announced the Troubled Families project will continue after May 2015.

Families First

Families First is Harrow's approach to the government's Troubled Families initiative. Families First is delivered by the Early Intervention Service and its work is overseen by an operational group and a strategy board.

Families First aims to change the way we work with families:

- Move from individual to a whole family approach
- Ensure families have suitably experienced and trained Key Worker
- Offer personalised support package

Families First in Harrow must identify and work with 395 families over a 3 year period. Families are identified against 2 out of 3 criteria: school attendance; crime & anti social behaviour; worklessness

Current Situation

- Project commenced September 2012
- Early Intervention Service is the main delivery arm of the project
- 80% of families identified and allocated a Key Worker
- Payment by Result claims for 135 families so far
- Independent evaluation outlines the quality of Early Intervention approach

Recommendations:

The Committee is invited to note progress and comment on the report.

Section 2 – Report

1. Progress and next steps

1.1 Families First, delivered by the Early Intervention Service, made continued progress in 2013/14 and the project has now worked with 320 families since September 2012.

1.2 The project has made significant impact on 135 families for which the project made claims for Payment by Results from the Department of Communities and Local Government. Payment by Results are claimed for families who demonstrate improvements in: school attendance above 85%, youth crime reduced by more than 33% and / or the family is off benefits and back into work, or on a progress to work scheme.

1.3 A further claim for Payment by Results will be completed during May 2014. Results claims will occur quarterly throughout the life of the project.

1.4 The project appointed the Institute for Public Care (IPC) – Oxford Brookes University as an external evaluation partner. Their evaluation has identified a range of good practice including excellent initial contact and engagement with families. (Please see the annexe 1 for the report's findings)

1.5 In addition to working closely with families the project works to ensure early intervention and preventive services are as effective and cost efficient as possible. In April 2014 IPC – Oxford Brookes University will publish a comprehensive cost benefit analysis of the Early Intervention Services and the Families First project.

1.6 The evaluation will help lay the foundations for future commissioning of services in Harrow and widen the scope of early intervention services and Families First from the government target of 395 families to 1,000+ families for the second phase of the government's Troubled Families programme.

1.7 A selection of case studies from the IPC report in the appendix provide details of the effective work completed by Early Intervention and the positive impact on outcomes for children and families. (Please see Annexe 2)

1.8 The government have agreed to extend the Troubled Families project extended and the 2nd phase will commence in 2015/16. The government have yet to publish the criteria for the second phase but they will include a much greater focus on Early Intervention and the early help offer.

The scope of the project includes:

- £200m investment for 2015/16 (1st of 5 years subject to next spending review) to work with additional 400,000 families.
- Aims to target families before they reach crisis point
- Average £1,800 available per family on Payment by Results

- Local services must provide plans setting out how they will join up, reform services and save the taxpayer money

While this draws on Total Place, Community Budgets etc. there are some key differences:

- First national public service transformation initiative and must secure actual reforms from all local agencies, not just those whole 'volunteer' to be involved
- Costs and areas of reform will cut across multiple public service areas – requiring an even greater level of buy-in from across the local public sector.
- Stronger focus on demonstrating savings to the tax payer

2. Background

2.1 Following the London riots the Prime Minister identified 120,000 families most at risk (the top 2% most vulnerable) and set up the Troubled Families Unit in the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). All project work in this area was moved across from Department for Education and merged into the Troubled Families Programme that will run until 2015. Six government departments contributed funding to create a budget for the Prime Minister's new policy initiative.

2.2 The Top Families project, which started in Harrow October 2011, was incorporated fully into Harrow's delivery of the Troubled Families Programme. The Top Families project aimed to analyse in detail a cohort of families and develop a considered and research based approach to developing a new model of delivery. It grew from the Community Budget and Total Place principles which are embedded in the Troubled Families initiative: principally to coordinate and integrate service delivery around complex families; to pool resources and make savings; to identify families at risk earlier.

2.3 The aim of the Troubled Families programme is, as defined by Government, to 'turn round' 120,000 families nationally. Harrow's share is 395 families.

2.4 A troubled family is a household where there is evidence of:

- youth crime and / or anti social behaviour (ASB);
- unauthorised absence from school of more than 15% and / or exclusion from school;
- A family member on benefits. (Please see Annexe 3 for full details)

3. Government expectations

3.1. The government expects us to identify 395 families during the life of the project (2012-15). We are expected to help these families change some of their behaviours in order to make life better for their children. Specifically, we are expected to help families:

- Get their children back into school and reduce school exclusions;
- Reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Put the adults in the household on a path back to work.

3.2 The Government's approach is driven by the need to reduce costs to the public purse. Local authorities are invited to try innovative approaches to join up local services and deal with each family's problems as a whole rather than individually.

4. Identifying families

4.1 The Council has committed to work with 395 families during the life of the Families First project up until May 2015.

4.2 The Government has invited each local authority to choose a fourth, discretionary criteria to identify families. We have focussed on those which enable us to develop a set of local outcomes that address family preservation and place particular emphasis on households where there is evidence of domestic violence.

4.3 335 families were identified (as of 31 March 2014). This figure represents 85% of our total family cohort.

4.4 Additional families who meet the criteria will be identified as the project progresses, and there is continued confidence that 395 families will have been supported by this project by the end date of May 2015.

5. Families First

5.1 Families First is Harrow's approach to the Government's Troubled Families initiative. The initiative is being used as an opportunity to change the way families are worked with. The establishment of the Early Intervention Services means that evidence-based and innovative approaches to improve outcomes for vulnerable families can be tried and implemented.

5.2 In addition to focussing on the key criteria of the Troubled Families initiative, Families First are introducing a step change in service delivery from focussing on individual children to working with the whole family. The project assigns a budget holding key worker to each family, who works intensively with them and has the power to purchase interventions to help turn their lives around.

5.4 There are four key building blocks to the approach:

Personalisation

- Each family has a Key Worker to get to grips with their problems and identify their issues
- Each family has access to an individual budget as part of the Families First support package
- The support package addresses the personal needs of each family and the budget will support long term change and sustainable outcomes

Participation

- Links with Parent Groups are being developed and further explored as part of the work of the evaluation partner. This work will advise us throughout the project
- Resources have been allocated from central funding to work with the evaluation partner, to ensure the project is responding to the needs of families and making a difference to their lives

Partnership

- The model of delivery is an invitational consent based model. This model increases the likelihood of success with families who co-construct the solutions to their problems.
- strong partnerships with Police, Health and the third sector are being further developed to secure collaborative work with families

People

- The workforce are trained and skilled in working differently with families

5.5 The underlying principle of the project is a family partnership model. Staff are committed to working with families to find solutions in a respectful way that builds family preservation and resilience. Families are initially invited to join the project, not coerced.

5.6 Evidence shows that appointing a single key worker to get to grips with each family's problems and work intensively with them helps families change for the long term. The key worker fulfils a family support worker role. A key worker is identified for every family in the project. Their role is to work intensively with families to get underneath the core issues that families have, and work in partnership with the family to resolve the issues.

5.7 Elements of personalisation supported by budget-holding key workers who work with each family to commission a programme of costed interventions have been trialled with good success.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 The project is funded by Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Troubled Families grant allocation and some LAA (Local Area Agreement??)Reward funding.

The following table shows a summary of the funding over the 3 year programme

Families First DCLG Programme Budget

	Y1 2012-13	Y2 2013-14	Y3 2014-15
Number of families eligible for programme	150	198	47

Number of families eligible for attachment fees (5/6ths of total)	125	165	40
Attachment fee per family	£3,200	£2,400	£1,600
Total attachment fees for eligible families	£400,000	£396,000	£64,000
DCLG funding for Co-ordinator	£75,000	£75,000	£75,000
LAA Reward Funding		£135,000	
Total Families First funding (excluding Payment by Results)	£475,000	£606,000	£139,000

6.2 DCLG will make available up to £4,000 for each eligible family as a combination of up-front attachment fees and Payment by Results (PBR). The ratio of PBR increases in each year of the project:

2012/13 - £3,200 per family; maximum PBR £800 per family
2013/14 - £2,400 per family; maximum PBR £1600 per family
2014/15 - £1,600 per family; maximum PBR £2400 per family

(Please see Annexe 4 for description of PBR in 2012/13)

6.3 DCLG assumes we are making full use of the European Social Fund provision in Harrow. They consider around one-sixth of our 395 families will access this provision and consequently only fund five-sixths of our family cohort (329 families)

6.4 In addition, DCLG pay a further £75,000 which funds the salary of the Troubled Families coordinator.

6.5 The funding received from DCLG is used to support the teams in Early Intervention Services.

Payment by Results

6.6 Payment by Results is awarded where we can demonstrate the following in identified families:

- The attendance of all children in the family is above 85% in the last 3 terms
- Fewer than 3 fixed term exclusions in the last 3 terms
- 60% reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour in the last 6 months
- Offending by all young people in the family reduced by 33% in the last 6 months
- An adult in the family has volunteered for the work programme or European Social provision (currently provided by Reed in Harrow).

OR

- At least one adult in the family is off benefits and back in work

6.7 Payment by Results is claimed quarterly and approved by Internal Audit.

7. Performance Issues

7.1 Harrow Council has committed to work with 395 families before the end of the Troubled Families initiative in May 2015.

7.2 DCLG expects local authorities to have commenced work with 85% (335) of the total family cohort by April 2014.

8. Environmental Impact

There is no specific environmental impact associated with this report.

9. Risk Management Implications

The Troubled Families initiative has a number of inherent risks which are summarised below.

Reputational

9.1 Reputational risk to the council if the project is not delivered with sufficient impact. There is significant pressure from DCLG to deliver the project and to provide evidence of the impact on the lives of 'troubled families'.

Financial

9.2 The project must demonstrate sufficient impact on families to claim payment by results. Many of the families who meet the criteria will have complex multiple needs and prove difficult to turn around.

9.3 The 'worklessness' element of the project, where families are expected to use existing provision as a pathway to work, is already raised as a significant risk due to the current poor delivery of the European Social Fund provision.

Operational

9.4 The project may fail to identify sufficient numbers of families who meet the government criteria.

9.5 Harrow must identify and work with 395 families who meet the government criteria. The number of families identified falls short of the indicative total but reflects the general pattern of family identification across local authorities in London.

10. Equalities Implications

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is complete but a further update report is due in 2014.

Section 3 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Kevin Bartholomew 020 8424 2547

Background Papers: Financial framework for the Troubled Families programme's payment-by-results scheme for local authorities, *Department of Communities & Local Government, March 2012*

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Criteria for identifying Troubled Families

To identify troubled families, the Department for Communities & Local Government has asked councils to look for the following:

1. **Crime/anti-social behaviour**

Identify young people involved in crime and families involved in anti-social behaviour, defined as ‘households with one or more under 18-year-old with a proven offence in the last 12 months’

AND/ OR

“Households where one or more member has an anti-social behaviour order, anti-social behaviour injunction, anti-social behaviour contract, or where the family has been subject to a housing-related anti-social behaviour intervention in the last 12 months (such as a notice of seeking possession on anti-social behaviour grounds, a housing-related injunction, a demotion order, eviction from social housing on anti-social behaviour grounds)”

2. **Education**

Identify households affected by truancy or exclusion from school, where a child “has been subject to permanent exclusion; three or more fixed school exclusions across the last three consecutive terms”

OR

“Is in a pupil referral unit or alternative provision because they have previously been excluded; OR is not on a school roll”

AND/OR

“A child has had 15% unauthorised absences or more from school across the last three consecutive terms”

3. **Work**

Once every family that meets criteria one and two has been identified, households which also have an adult on Department for Work and Pensions out of work benefits (Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Carer’s Allowance, Income Support and/or Jobseekers Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance) are identified

4. **Local discretion**

To make sure the government’s target is met, councils can then use their discretion to identify other ‘high cost’ families as long as two of the measures above. Such local criteria could include:

- Families containing a child who is on a Child Protection Plan or where the local authority is considering accommodating them as a looked after child
- Families subject to frequent police call-outs or arrests or containing adults with proven offences in the last 12 months, such as those who have been in prison, prolific and priority offenders, or families involved in gang-related crime
- Families with health problems such as emotional and mental health problems, drug and alcohol misuse, long-term health conditions, health problems caused by domestic abuse, under-18 conceptions

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Payment by Result – Payment schedule for Year 1

Result	Attachment fee	Results payment	Total
<p>They achieve all 3 of the education and crime/ASB measures set out below where relevant:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each child in the family has had fewer than 3 fixed exclusions and less than 15% of unauthorised absences in the last 3 school terms; and 2. A 60% reduction in anti-social behaviour across the family in the last 6 months; and 3. Offending rate by all minors in the family reduced by at least a 33% in the last 6 months. 	£3,200 per family	£700 per family	£4,000 per family
<p>If they do not enter work, but achieve the 'progress to work' (one adult in the family has either volunteered for the Work Programme or attached to the ESF provision in the last 6 months).</p>		£100 per family	
OR			
<p>At least one adult in the family has moved off out-of-work benefits into continuous employment in the last 6 months (and is not on the ESF Provision or Work Programme to avoid double-payment).</p>	£3,200 per family	£800 per family	£4,000 per family

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**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting:	8 th April 2014
Subject:	Scrutiny Annual Report 2013-14
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director, Strategic Commissioning
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	All
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Scrutiny Annual Report, 2013-14

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report accompanies the scrutiny annual report 2013-14.

Recommendations:

Councillors are recommended to:

- I. consider and agree the scrutiny annual report 2013-14
- II. submit the annual report to Full Council for endorsement

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

The council's constitution requires the Overview and Scrutiny committee to report annually on its activities to Full Council. The attached report is the draft final report.

This report outlines the activities of the Overview and Scrutiny committee, the scrutiny sub committees and the scrutiny lead councillors during the 2013-14 municipal year. The report also makes recommendations to the next scrutiny administration with regard to issues which it might wish to include in its overall work programme.

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

An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been undertaken for this report as it summarises the activities of the Performance and Finance sub committee and does not propose any changes to service delivery.

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
lynne.margetts@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

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Scrutiny Annual Report 2013-2014



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

This is the final report from scrutiny for the 2010 – 2014 administration. The pages below outline our activity during this year, summarise some of our most important achievements and outline our legacy for the next administration.

This has been a tumultuous year. In May, the leadership of the organisation, until that point Labour, was replaced by an administration led by the Independent Labour Party. This saw a number of changes in the scrutiny function including the chairing of the committees, the membership of the committees and the lead members.

In September, the leadership of the council changed again, this time to be led by the Conservative group and again, this has resulted in significant changes to the scrutiny membership.

The changes mean that a number of councillors have moved on from scrutiny and we would like to place on record our appreciation for the scrutiny councillors who have served the committees during the last four years, and who left to take on roles in the administration following the changes during the year:

- Cllr Christine Bednell
- Cllr Kam Chana
- Cllr Tony Ferrari
- Cllr Zarina Khalid
- Cllr Barry Macleod-Cullinane
- Cllr Janet Mote
- Cllr Paul Osborn
- Cllr Stephen Wright

We would also like to thank Cllr Ann Gate for the contribution she made, particularly to health scrutiny. Cllr Gate resigned from the council in 2013 and we wish her well.

This year also saw the departure of the Chief Executive of the Council as the Conservative-led administration changed the structure of the council's senior management team. We would like to put on record our thanks to Michael Lockwood for all of the support he gave to our deliberations and we wish him well for the future. This change in structure also precipitated a scrutiny investigation, which we discuss further in the report from the Overview and Scrutiny committee below.

The council continues to grapple with serious financial difficulties and has been required to deliver a significant level of savings over the last few years and, as the impact of these reductions begins to bite, the role of scrutiny in championing the needs of our most vulnerable residents has increased. In these difficult times, as in previous years, it has been crucial that our activities have been targeted on the most important issues and that we use the most effective means of undertaking our investigations. As in previous years, the Scrutiny Leadership Group has continued to provide excellent strategic direction to the function and is helping to ensure we maintain an effective focus for our work. We are extremely grateful to all of the councillors who have contributed to the Leadership Group during the last year.

The two scrutiny sub-committees have also continued to play a key role in our deliberations:

- [The Performance and Finance sub-committee's](#) relentless focus on the performance and finances of the organisation has provided an excellent steer to our deliberations ensuring our limited resources focus on the most important issues.
- [The Health and Social Care sub-committee](#) has maintained a determined oversight of the activities of our health partners as they undergo similar significant change and budget challenge. Members of the committee have also played an active role on the Shaping a Healthier Future joint overview and scrutiny committee, which continues to meet to monitor the changes being proposed to hospital configuration in West London.

Reports from both of the sub committees are included below.

Similarly, the report includes a summary of the work undertaken by each of the lead councillor pairs.

As we approach the end of this administration, we have taken the opportunity to look back at some of our most memorable achievements over the last four years: this we feel, is our legacy to the next generation of scrutineers, we wish them well!



Cllr Jerry Miles
Chair Overview and Scrutiny committee



Cllr Chris Mote
Vice Chairman Overview and Scrutiny committee

Report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Our Committee

The committee has continued to meet on a virtually monthly basis and we have met 11 times this year. The papers and details of the outcomes from all of these meetings can be found [here](#)

There have been a number of changes to the membership of the committee this year; we'd like to thank Cllr Chana, Cllr Macleod-Cullinane, Cllr Osborn and Cllr Wright for their contribution to our deliberations over the last few years; we'd also like to thank Cllr Ashton, Cllr Dharmarajah, Cllr Henson, Cllr O'Dell, Cllr Phillips, Cllr Seymour and Cllr Teli for their contribution after joining the committee this year.

Our remit continued to be consideration of the council's and our partners' strategic direction and we are grateful for the support we have received in doing this from portfolio holders, council officers and representatives from partner agencies. A full list of the portfolio holders, who have supported our committee's discussions, is given at the end of this section of the annual report.

We are especially pleased that this year, following the recommendations of our review 'Redefining Youth Engagement', we have been joined at several of our meetings by representatives of Harrow Youth Parliament. We have really appreciated their engagement in our deliberations and look forward to their continuing involvement with scrutiny in Harrow.

We were also pleased to welcome representatives of Parent Governor and the Voluntary Aided Sector to the committee, we are grateful for their continuing input to the committee's deliberations.

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). The July session was attended by Cllr Thaya Idaikkadar, then Leader of the Council and Michael Lockwood, then Chief Executive. The January session was attended by Cllr Susan Hall, Leader of the Council, Cllr Barry Macleod-Cullinane, Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllr Tony Ferrari, Finance Portfolio Holder, Paul Najsarek, Acting Head of Paid Service and Simon George, Director of Finance and Assurance. We are grateful for the information which they shared with us.

We also held a special meeting in January to consider the findings of our challenge panel which investigated the implications of the deletion of the Chief Executive post. This enabled us to present our views on the Leader's proposals to the Cabinet meeting which was making the formal decision on the deletion of the post.

The specific items which have been considered at ordinary meetings of our committee include:

- Preparation and provision of financial management reports
- Debt Collection Policy
- Site allocations, Harrow and Wealdstone area action plan and Development Management Policy Development Planning Documents
- Community Safety Plan and Strategic Assessment
- Business Continuity
- Youth Justice Plan
- Families First – Troubled Families
- Joint working to support the long-term unemployed
- Regeneration in North Harrow
- Welfare reform and channel migration impact on Access Harrow
- The Minerva Project
- The Corporate Plan
- The Climate Change Strategy

Review Programme

As in previous years, we have continued to deliver our programme of more detailed scrutiny investigations, undertaken via standing review, in-depth review or challenge panel. The content of the review programme, generally identified through the Performance and Finance sub-committee's deliberations or via our scrutiny leads, is discussed at the Scrutiny Leadership Group and then agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny committee.

This year, the programme is slightly shorter than in previous years as we agreed that all projects would be completed and reported through to the Overview and Scrutiny committee in January. This means that all of our projects were reported to Cabinet and responded to prior to the period of purdah which started in advance of the local council elections in May.

As in previous years, we have been helped in our work by members of the public. We would like to thank all of those residents who either attended seminars or completed surveys as part of our investigations and we would particularly like to thank the following residents who gave up their time to join our review teams:

- Cliff Lichfield
- Julian Maw
- Tony Wood

The paragraphs below outline work which has been undertaken by scrutiny councillors on our projects during this year

Customer Care

The council has made significant strides in recent years to improve our residents' experience of contacting the council.

So much so that we now receive visits from a number of other authorities eager to learn from us how we have made the improvements we have. This project recognised the council's achievements but also recognised that there was still room for improvement, particularly on the evidence of councillors' case work. The report can be accessed [here](#)



The project report was discussed with Cabinet at their meeting on 13th February 2014.

Councillors Asante and Bath fact finding for the review

Accessible Transport

For a number of years, councillors have been concerned about the accessibility of public transport which serves the borough and the impact that poor accessibility has on the social and employment opportunities of our less mobile residents. This year, we completed a scrutiny project which investigated the accessibility of our public transport networks but not just the high profile concerns such as the lack of accessibility of Harrow on the Hill station, which has received much public and political attention over the years.

Our investigation looked at what day-to-day travelling around the borough is like for residents with disabilities, from access to trains and platforms, to signage and information and road surfaces. The report can be accessed [here](#).

This report was discussed with Cabinet on 21st November and has been submitted to Disability Rights UK as evidence for their work on inclusive communities

Deletion of the Post of Chief Executive

In November last year, the Leader of the council announced her intention to delete the post of Chief Executive of the Council. This marked a significant change in the senior management structure of the council and one which we felt warranted scrutiny's attention. As a result we held a challenge panel to discuss her proposals with the Leader and were able to contribute to the consultation she had launched. The report can be accessed [here](#)

Standing Review of the Budget

This project has been ongoing for a number of years and it has given councillors an opportunity to consider how the changing financial policy environment has impacted on the council. It was chaired by Cllr Macleod-Cullinane until May 2013 and subsequently by Cllr Ferrari.

Since 2010, scrutiny councillors have considered the contract renewal process, implications of the localisation of Council Tax Benefit, the self financing of the Housing Revenue Account and the use of capital. A final report outlining the work of the group was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee in April 2013.

The group's comments were generally well received and the Housing Service responded positively to the challenge they received from the review group with regard to the self-financing of the Housing Revenue Account. The work of the review was also able to support the Overview and Scrutiny committee's meeting with the Leader and Acting Head of Paid Service which considered the 2014-15 budget by suggesting specific areas for questioning.

The significant changes to membership of this project, which have resulted from the changes in the leadership of the council, have meant that no more substantive work has taken place this year. However, this is an important area for scrutiny to consider and we would suggest that our successors consider how to continue to explore the policy context within which the council makes its financial decisions.

Safeguarding/A Child's Journey Through Care

Last year's annual report outlined the work which members had undertaken with regard to Safeguarding Children Services. We had hoped to commission further work this year to continue this project on the conclusion of the Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children's services. We prepared the work as 'The Child's Journey Through Care' review and hoped that the project would support Children's Services to respond to the Ofsted findings and also to identify any additional challenges to the service and the associated improvements.

Unfortunately, because of the significant pressures being experienced by Children's Services, this project has not been taken forward, though the potential benefits of undertaking the piece of work have been acknowledged by officers in the Service.

This may also be a piece of work which our successors wish to carry forward.

Our conclusions and next steps

As we have already pointed out, this is our final year in office. The last four years have been extremely productive and we hope that we have been able to support the council through some very difficult times.

There have been a number of highlights in our work over the last four years which we would like to flag-up in this our final annual report:

- [Redefining Youth Engagement](#) – This project helped the council to improve the ways in which we engage with our younger residents and involve them in our deliberations. The project represented a new and innovative approach to undertaking a scrutiny review – a collaborative project with young people.



HYP and scrutiny discuss the review

We were extremely grateful to the Harrow Youth Parliament for agreeing to lead the review and steer its direction, and for co-owning the review's final report and recommendations. We were pleased, as a result of this review, to have been able to welcome co-optees from Harrow Youth Parliament onto the Overview and Scrutiny committee and we would like to thank them for bringing their perspective to the committee's work;

- [Debt Recovery](#) – This has been an extremely influential piece of work. Councillors were becoming increasingly concerned about the number of cases coming to their attention from residents falling foul of the council's debt recovery policy. Whilst none of the councillors wished to condone the behaviour of a minority of residents deliberately not paying their council bills, the casework seemed to suggest that our approach to debt recovery was not making any distinction between those who wouldn't pay and those who couldn't. We were able to consider a number of individual cases and worked with colleagues from Harrow Law Centre to recommend that the council take a more proportionate approach to debt recovery. We are delighted that these recommendations have been taken on board by the council and have been able to influence the council's policy;
- [Pinner Village](#) – One of the very earliest pieces of work which we undertook in this administration was the consideration of proposals to close the Pinner Village Surgery. This project saw Scrutiny respond to local people's very real concerns about NHS Harrow's proposals to close the surgery and enabled us to exercise our responsibilities to hold service providers, even those outside of the Council, to account on behalf of local people.

Through our investigation, we were able to develop links with local residents' associations, the Local Medical Committee and Harrow Link.

Although the surgery did eventually close, the intervention of Scrutiny meant that residents' concerns and potential implications of the closure were properly aired and that NHS Harrow was required to fully and publicly address these concerns;



- [Private Rented Sector Housing](#) – This review took place at a time when homelessness and the provision of affordable housing in the borough was becoming problematic. The project recognised that the provision of private sector housing is something which the council can seek to influence, but cannot control. In this context, by engaging with residents and landlords, the review was able to support the Housing Service to develop its strategic approach to working with private sector providers;
- [Use of Performance Information 1&2](#) – Performance information must be at the heart of the council's processes: it enables us to monitor how well we are meeting our stated objectives and helps us to identify areas which most need improvement. Phase One of this review ran alongside a corporate process which required directorates to review their performance information in the context of the abolition of the Comprehensive Area Assessment and the National Indicator Set. It thus enabled Scrutiny to offer constructive challenge to this important process. In its second phase, the review took a broader look at the future development of a local performance framework for the authority, in the context of the loosening Government requirements for performance reporting, and considered how a resident perspective might be incorporated in this reporting process. The review was able to support the redefinition of the council's performance management framework.

What the future holds for scrutiny in Harrow is not clear; we will continue to apply our processes to support the improvement of services across the borough and to work with the council to identify opportunities to improve. We clearly cannot be sure who will take the reins or how they will wish to deliver effective scrutiny. We can only commend to them the processes we have developed and the successful projects we have delivered as evidence of the effectiveness of these processes.

In identifying some of the projects they might wish to consider during their time in office, we would offer the following suggestions of projects which we have identified for consideration, but have not had time/resource to deliver:

- Continuing consideration of the impact of changing financial policy including the consideration of the use of capital
- A child's journey through the 'care' system and the inspection of our children's services
- The council's regeneration plans
- West London Waste plans
- Review of travel plans – their coverage and enforcement.
- Tree Strategy

We would like to thank all of the councillors, officers, partners and residents who have given their time and their expertise to help us, without their involvement, we would not be able to contribute to the council's improvement journey in the way that we have.

If re-elected, we look forward to continuing to contribute to the improvement of services; if not, we wish our successors well.



Cllr Jerry Miles
Chair Overview and Scrutiny committee



Cllr Chris Mote
Vice Chairman Overview and Scrutiny committee

MEETING STATISTICS

Committee meetings	11
Attendance by Portfolio Holders	Cllr Susan Hall, Leader of the Council x 2 Cllr Thaya Idaikkadar, Leader of the Council x 2 Cllr William Stoodley, Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder x 3 Cllr Asad Omar, Community, Cultural Services and Housing Portfolio Holder Cllr Kamaljit Chana, Business and Enterprise Portfolio Holder Cllr Janet Mote, Children and Families Portfolio Holder Cllr Barry Macleod-Cullinane, Adults and Housing Portfolio Holder Cllr Tony Ferrari, Finance Portfolio Holder Cllr Paul Osborn, Communications, Performance and Resources Portfolio Holder

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. In addition, we can decide to review and monitor the performance of the council's partners.

This is the last report from the Performance and Finance sub committee in this administration and we would like to thank the councillors – both scrutiny and executive – and officers who have supported the work of the sub committee during this time. We would like to thank Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane for his work as the vice-chairman for the majority of the administration, before his appointment as Deputy Leader. We would also like to thank Councillor Tony Ferrari, who chaired the sub-committee from May to September this year before joining Cabinet as Finance Portfolio Holder.

Our meetings

Our regular Chair and Vice-Chairman's briefings and co-ordination of items with the Overview and Scrutiny committee together drive the work programme of the sub-committee. Our main areas of interest in 2013-14 have been:

- **Revenue and Capital Monitoring** – we have been briefed on a regular basis by the Director of Finance and Assurance on the revenue and capital position of the authority and have been able to seek assurance with regard to the council's likely outturn position and to question the Director on any particular areas of concern.
- **Complaints** – this is the second year that we have received the annual complaints reports for children's and families' services and adults' services rather than the Overview and Scrutiny committee. We were pleased with the detail provided in both reports. We noted that in Children's Services an increased number of complaints were received with regard to communications, policy decisions and staff attitudes. More reassuringly, complaints with regard to service reduction/withdrawal remain low. With regard to Adults' Services it was satisfying to note the small number of escalations between stages in the complaints process.
- **Residual waste and its impact on the budget** – we have been interested in the collection of waste in the borough, particularly the percentage of waste that is recycled. The council's target is 50% but this had not been met in quarter 1. During our briefing meetings, we have been informed that the total kilograms of waste per household have been going down so overall less waste has been sent to refuse. We recommend that briefings on the performance in this area continue.

- **Children’s Services’ Performance** – During the previous municipal year, scrutiny councillors, including ourselves, became concerned about a number of areas of Children’s Services’ performance. We have continued to monitor this and a report on performance in the Children and Families Directorate was presented to the P&F sub-committee in July and a further report was presented in February. The report covered a number of areas around which we have raised concerns including Children Looked After education and achievement, Youth Offending Team performance and schools place planning. Officers also gave our committee an overall analysis of achievements and challenges in the Children’s Services Directorate. We are particularly concerned about performance challenges faced by the Youth Offending Team (YOT) following problems arising from recent IT upgrades. We recommend that scrutiny continue to monitor this area of service delivery.
- **Equalities** – we now receive, on an annual basis, a report on the council’s performance in terms of progress against our corporate equality objectives. We were able to hear from officers from across the council who have responsibility for delivering these objectives. We look forward to continuing to receive these reports and to support the council in the delivery of equality objectives, both within the council and for our residents. We note that performance in this area is also recorded in the quarterly in the Corporate Scorecard.
- **Business Continuity and IT Disaster Recovery** – following consideration of these areas at both the Governance, Audit and Risk Management committee and the Overview and Scrutiny committee we received a report to our February sub-committee. Given difficulties associated with recent IT upgrades, we recommend that scrutiny continue to monitor this area.
- **Towards Excellence** – there has been significant change in the Council’s Environment and Enterprise Directorate with changes to structures and staffing, ways of working and technology. We were pleased to receive an update from the Corporate Director on how the reorganisation of this important directorate is progressing.
- **Staff sickness** – during our consideration of performance, we raised questions regarding the continuing deterioration in terms of staff sickness levels. On further investigation we were advised of the significant number of ‘blank’ returns made with regard to reasons for sickness and we have asked for further information on this. We would recommend that this is investigated further by our successors in the next administration.
- **Third Sector Strategy** – we were pleased to receive an update on the Third Sector Strategy which has been developed by the sector itself, and we look forward to continuing to work with the council and the third sector to improve service delivery for our residents.

*Third Sector Strategy:
All Together Now by dphock*



- **Inspection of Food Premises** – we noted poor performance in this area and were therefore pleased to be briefed by the Service Manager Environmental Services Delivery about how the indicator is derived and the action being taken to improve the number of food premises in the area that are compliant with food hygiene law. We will propose to our successors that they monitor performance against this indicator as the new team in Environmental Health is established and beds in.

- **Repeat Incidents of Domestic Violence (NI 32)** – during our consideration of the Corporate Scorecard we have been concerned about the level of performance against this indicator. We have been briefed by the Violence Against Women and Girls Co-ordinator on what this complex indicator is showing. We recommend that this area continue to be monitored to determine whether actions put in place to improve performance are taking effect.
- **Past reviews** – we have continued to monitor progress on past reviews, including:
 - Private Rented Sector Housing: a report was presented to the July P&F meeting which outlined the progress of the implementation of the recommendations of the scrutiny review into Private Rented Sector Housing. The January meeting also received a report on the development of the Private Rented Sector Strategy, which was referenced during this review as our consideration of performance information had identified concerns.
 - Housing Revenue Account - Standing review of the Budget: a report was presented to P&F in January outlining progress on implementation of the Standing Review's comments.

During discussions with regard to the private rented sector and the self-financing of the Housing Revenue Account, concerns were raised with regard to the extent to which Harrow residents are using payday loans. This is something which we recommend is followed up by our successors.

- **Member development** – in October, the Director of Finance and Assurance provided a session on the process of setting the Council's annual budget. This session took councillors through the content of the regularly produced revenue and capital monitoring report, explaining the content and the implications. The session was well received and we plan to offer training on considering performance and financial information to new councillors after this election.

Our Conclusions and Next Steps

This is the end of our time as scrutiny councillors. The Performance and Finance sub-committee has grown in strength and authority during this administration and is now ensuring that the scrutiny structures truly have performance at their core – by focussing on those areas that are performing less strongly, we have ensured that precious scrutiny resources are targeted at areas which most need our oversight.

But the improvement journey does not stop because the administration ends and we believe that there are issues which scrutiny should continue to monitor.

With this in mind we would recommend that our successors continue to use performance and financial information to drive their deliberations and that in particular, the following areas are considered by the next scrutiny administration:

- Children’s Services Performance – including inspection outcomes, safeguarding by health partners, IT problems affecting the Youth Offending Team (YOT), Children Looked After (CLA) health and dental checks
- Implementation of the Libraries and Leisure contract
- Use of payday loans
- Staff sickness absence
- Number of food premises compliant with food hygiene legislation
- Implementation of IT systems, and business continuity with a particular focus on IT disaster recovery
- Repeat incidents of domestic violence (NI 32)



Councillor Sue Anderson
Chair, Performance and Finance
Scrutiny sub-committee



Councillor Anthony Seymour
Vice-Chairman, Performance and Finance
Scrutiny sub-committee

MEETING STATISTICS

Committee meetings	5 ordinary
Attendance by Portfolio Holders	Cllr Macleod-Cullinane , Adults and Housing Portfolio Holder

Report from the 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. Much of the scrutiny activity undertaken in 2013/14 was focused on a number of local changes which are being progressed and implemented, alongside broader changes to the NHS landscape as an outcome of the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

As Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee and Health and Social Care Scrutiny Lead Members we consider a range of important health and social care issues that affect Harrow at both committee level and also outside of committee. As part of our role to champion health and social care issues for residents we work closely with the Corporate Director of Community, Health and Wellbeing, the Director of Adult Social Services and the Director of Public Health, colleagues at Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), North West London Hospitals NHS Trust and with other key providers of health and social care services in the borough.

Our key areas of focus throughout the year

Shaping a Healthier Future for North West London

Shaping a Healthier Future (SaHF) is a programme set up by NHS NW London with an aim to improve healthcare for the two million people living in NW London. The Joint Committee of the Primary Care Trust 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 it is vital that we continue to monitor the pressure on Northwick Park due to the loss of emergency facilities for Ealing and Brent residents.

The Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) was set up at the beginning of the SaHF consultation to provide external scrutiny on the impact of the proposals. The JHOSC consists of eight London Boroughs, including Harrow, and will continue monitoring SaHF until it is fully implemented.

Accident & Emergency Waiting Times

The committee is monitoring how North West London Hospitals NHS Trust (NWLHT) is improving the emergency care at Northwick Park Hospital and Central Middlesex Hospital. We are concerned that the current performance level at Northwick Park Hospital is unacceptable and whilst there are signs of improvement, the system has not been operating or delivering outcomes as it should. We hope that the £21m investment in a new emergency department will bring expansion and improvement. However, until the committee is satisfied we will continue to monitor performance. We are also very concerned with ensuring that the downgrading of A&E at Central Middlesex Hospital does not coincide with the renovations at Northwick Park Hospital. We will be keen to ensure that capacity is available for our residents.

Merger of Ealing Hospital Trust and North West London Hospitals

Throughout the year, the sub-committee has been regularly updated on progress on plans to merge Ealing Hospital Trust (EHT) and North West London Hospitals Trust (NWLHT). The merger proposes to realise savings by replacing the two trust boards with one, and sets out a vision for a clinically-led and patient-centred organisation for residents in Brent, Ealing and Harrow. Due to the outcome of *Shaping a Healthier Future* and other financial challenges the merger has incurred delays. Approval for the revised business case will be sought in April 2014; consideration of the business case will be something that the committee should look at in future.

Mental Health

In April 2013 the sub-committee considered performance of mental health service providers. Particular concern around Payment by Results and the outcomes for residents was a key issue we all felt we needed further information on.

The committee therefore requested that Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL), Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group and council officers (as providers and commissioners) return to the committee. In view of this, an informal briefing meeting with the Chief Operating Officer – CNWL, the Psychological Medicine Borough Director for Harrow - CNWL and ourselves was held in early 2014 to go through some of our concerns.



As a result of this, at the committee meeting on 11 February 2014, CNWL provided a detailed presentation on:

- The work they do across the eight North West London Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and the challenge of managing fewer resources while improving joint working with partners and other relevant stakeholders
- The move from Payment by Results (PbR) and the evolution towards tariff based funding to be implemented over the next two years
- The new emphasis on moving from in-patient services to a community-based model of recovery, which would allow service users greater involvement in their care plans
- The reconfiguration of Day Services and a review of rehabilitation services
- The Recovery College initiative which offered a wide range of courses and workshops which were co-designed and co-delivered by peer recovery trainers (people with lived experience of mental health issues) and mental health practitioners

The presentation was very well received by the committee as it provided a full insight into the work of CNWL and some of the key developments and challenges they are presently faced with. We recommend that our successors follow up on some of the issues and challenges CNWL have informed us of in 2014/15.

Harrow Community Nursing Service

District nursing provision in Harrow has been an area of concern for the committee. In October 2013, partners advised the committee on the changes to the delivery model aimed at improving efficiency and reported an increase in patient satisfaction. We do however continue to have concerns about the skill mix of staff in front line services and whilst we understand that savings are required, members agree this is a key service for residents and therefore we recommend our successors continue to monitor performance in 2014/15.

Carers

During the summer we also met with the Head of Commissioning, Mental Health Learning Disabilities and Carers from NHS Harrow CCG who provided an update on work streams involving carers. We were happy to hear of the work being done to help identify hidden carers but raised concerns over the lack of a Carer Strategy or borough-wide coordination with social care and health in relation to support of carers. We also queried the CCG's commissioning intentions for 2014/2015.

The importance of the Carers Hub providing an opportunity for carers to have their say was also stressed and the Head of Commissioning, Mental Health Learning Disabilities and Carers agreed and provided some assurance that further consultation and events were planned for the future. We recommend our successors continue to monitor the progress being made in respect of supporting carers in the borough.

Projects

NHS Health Checks

In April 2013, the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) launched a programme to support local authority scrutiny functions to review their local approach to NHS Health Check and improve take up. NHS Health Checks are a mandatory service which local authority public health functions have been required to deliver since 1 April 2013. A bid for support was made by the London Boroughs of Barnet and Harrow (who have a shared Public Health function) and the bid was successful.



Using a range of methodologies, this scrutiny review enabled us to identify ways in which NHS Health Checks can be promoted within each borough under the leadership of the Joint Director of Public Health. This included exploring the extent to which NHS services promote the NHS Health Check to eligible residents and considering the capacity of GPs, local pharmacies or other suitable settings to undertake Health Checks. Broadly, our recommendations include measures to improve these issues and focus on service promotion, targeting specific groups who statistically have a higher prevalence of certain diseases, and better understand barriers to take-up.

Other areas of work

This year the Health and Social Care Scrutiny sub-committee were consulted on;

- Proposals for redistribution of resources from day assessment unit to memory services in Harrow.
- Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust application for Foundation Trust status.
- The Harrow Local Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2012/13
- Director of Public Health Annual Report
- The Quality Account of key providers in Harrow including North West London Hospitals, Royal Orthopaedic Hospital and Central and North West London Foundation Trust.

Looking to the future

Working closely with health partners locally and across London, we would suggest that our successors continue to keep engaged with emerging policies and monitor service development changes. Areas of focus might include:

- Continuing Harrow's contribution to the JHOSC - Shaping a Healthier Future programme
- Tracking progress of the public health transition
- The merger of Ealing Hospital Trust and North West London Hospitals Trust
- Mental Health service provision.
- CQC's inspection of local care homes.
- CQC inspection results in respect of Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital and North West London Hospitals NHS Trusts



Cllr Vina Mithani

Chair, Health and Social Care sub-committee



Cllr Victoria Silver

Vice-Chair, Health and Social Care sub-committee



Cllr Ben Wealthy

Policy Lead for Health and Social Care



Cllr Sachin Shah

Performance Lead for Health and Social Care

MEETING STATISTICS

Committee meetings	5
Attendance by Portfolio Holders	None
Attendance by Partners	Medical Director, Shaping a Healthier Future
	Chief Operating Officer, North West London Hospitals NHS Trust
	Senior Responsible Officer, North West London Hospitals NHS Trust
	Head of Commissioning for Mental Health and Learning Disability, Harrow CCG
	Deputy Chair, Harrow CCG
	Chief Operations Officer, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust
	Service Director, Central and North West London NHS

	Foundation Trust
	Deputy Service Director, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust
	Head Clinicians, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (2)
	Consultant Psychologist, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust
	Care Pathway Project Manager, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust
	Senior Responsible Officer, Ealing Hospital NHS Trust
	General Manager, Harrow Community Services Ealing Hospital NHS Trust
	Deputy Director Nursing and Clinical Practice Ealing Integrated Care Organisation
	Head of Public Affairs, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust
	Head of Compliance, Care Quality Commission

Report from the Children and Families Lead Members

The role of the Children and Families lead members is to consider issues which impact on the well-being of children, young people and families in the borough. Throughout this year we have had a great deal of engagement with the Children and Families Service Directorate in both formal Overview and Scrutiny meetings, Performance and Finance Scrutiny sub-committee meetings and informal lead members' briefings.

Performance and Data Quality

The Ofsted inspection undertaken in May 2012 highlighted issues around performance and data quality in Children's Services and had also been a concern of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Performance and Finance sub-committee for a while.



As a result of these concerns, monthly performance monitoring meetings were held between December 2012 and July 2013 in order to facilitate the consideration of performance information. The meetings involved us, the Corporate Director for Children and Families and her management team, the Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny committee and the Chair and Vice-Chairman of the Performance and Finance sub-committee. The areas that we looked into included:

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

Children Looked After education, attendance and achievement

At the monthly performance briefings as mentioned above we monitored both attendance and exclusion for CLA. We are aware that the education of CLA is a priority for improvement in the directorate and that the factor with the greatest impact on attendance is the stability of the care placement and having a Personal Education Plan in place. We recommend our successors continue to liaise closely with the Corporate Parenting Panel and review their quarterly reports on the progress of CLA to ensure performance in this area continues to improve.

The Youth Offending Team

The progress of the Youth Offending Team (YOT) has been another area which we have paid close attention to due to the fact that the service has experienced significant difficulties in recent years. We discussed the performance challenges with the Corporate Director at the performance briefings. We also took a keen interest in the development of the YOT inspection improvement plan. We recommend our successors follow up on how the YOT team is doing in the new municipal year.

Recruitment and Retention Issues

Recruitment and retention of children's Social Workers in the Children and Families Directorate has been one of the main challenges faced by the directorate. This is also something that we have been monitoring throughout the year. As leads, we are aware that there is a nationwide issue with social worker recruitment and retention and we have sought reassurance about establishing some stability with regard to this.

Throughout our discussions with colleagues we have been mindful of the need to ensure that the directorate maintains morale at a good level amongst existing staff. Positive measures such as the 'outcomes on the wall' posters put up throughout the division have gone some way in reassuring us in terms of the changing approach to service commissioning and provision and hence the culture. We will suggest a close eye is kept on how to ensure that this remains the focus.

Child's Journey through Care Scrutiny Review

The Overview and Scrutiny committee agreed to carry out a review of *The Child's Journey through Care* as part of their work programme. It was decided that this would be considered following the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children and also as a follow on from the '*Scrutiny Review of Children's Safeguarding*' carried out in June 2012. This project was due to be delivered in the summer/ autumn 2013.



The aim of the '*Child's Journey through Care*' scrutiny review was to understand the definition of 'good' practice (in terms of what good means for each child) and compare our own performance and services against this definition. In this way we hoped to identify potential gaps in service and thus possible solutions to help improve the services for vulnerable children.

The project was not undertaken as there were insufficient resources in the Children and Families Directorate to support the investigation. A number of political changes in leadership in the council and consequent changes in our scrutiny membership also meant that this piece of work did not get underway. We recommend our successors follow upon this work in some way in future.

Support for Young Carers

The work being done with young carers in the borough has been another area that we have spent some time considering. We were happy to hear that the induction for new staff now includes a section on working with young carers and the voluntary sector. Part of the challenge with young carers is that many of them are not known to the directorate. Some proactive work is now taking place with schools and youth centres in highlighting those adults receiving a service who have children, to gain a better idea of unidentified young carers.

Special Educational Needs Changes

A special briefing seminar for all members was organised on our advice in December 2013 detailing the Government's reforms to special educational needs (SEN) provision. The changes extended the SEN system to apply from birth to 25. The seminar also provided an outline on the changes the council is making to meet the requirements. We found the seminar extremely helpful, as did other councillors, and it will be important to follow up on progress with regards to implementation next year.

We have also taken some time to consider the prevalence of autism in the borough, exploring how diagnosis is made and where children, young people, their families and carers go for advice, support and advocacy. The amount of support available in the borough is something we have concerns with and hope this can be followed up in future.

Looking Ahead

We have considered a wide range of issues in the Children and Families Directorate and have been well supported in doing this by the Corporate Director and her management team. Although it has not been possible to complete all of the work we would have liked to have undertaken during this administration, in future we hope our successors can continue to provide constructive challenge to the Children and Families Directorate in those areas which appear to struggle.



Councillor Lynda Seymour
Policy Lead
Children and Young people



Councillor Victoria Silver
Performance Lead
Children and young people

Report from the Community, Health and Wellbeing Leads

Our areas of focus

This has been a busy year for us. In addition to her role as performance lead for Community Health and Wellbeing, Cllr Asante, has also taken on the keynote role as the borough's first citizen and Mayor, and we are grateful that she has also been able to continue as a scrutiny lead.

Our remit for Community Health and Wellbeing is extremely broad, including adult social care, housing and now public health. In this, our final year, we decided to focus on areas which had been priorities for us previously. The key areas which we considered are outlined below.

Community use of the borough's parks

Part of our remit is the 'well being' of residents and we were pleased to hear from the Service Manager Public Realm Maintenance about how developments in the parks are encouraging our citizens to lead more active lives through the introduction of 'Green Gyms'. We were also pleased to hear that use of the gyms is also encouraging more social interaction between residents who would otherwise be unlikely to engage with each other.

The use of our urban green space is critical to the future healthy and inclusive development of our borough and we were really pleased to hear about how work is progressing in this important area, we look forward to further developments in the borough's parks.

Impact of the Libraries and Leisure contract

Our interest in this area is not with regard to the performance of the new contracts for the provision of these services as this, we feel, is more within the remit of the Performance and Finance sub-committee.



We are more interested in the impact of the contract in terms of usage of facilities and the contribution they make to the health and wellbeing of our community. We were very grateful to the Divisional Director Community and Culture who provided us with detailed information with regard to the services being provided by the contractors providing the Leisure and the Library services and how these are contributing to the health and wellbeing of our residents.

We were particularly pleased to hear about the detailed performance information which will be required from the contractors to demonstrate:

- The provision of high quality activities and access to opportunities for sport and leisure, particularly for children and under-represented groups
- The contribution to achieving a healthier and active lifestyle
- The broader community service provision – including libraries as community hubs

The performance of the contract will be recommended to be considered by the Performance and Finance sub-committee in the next administration but as the scrutiny leads for community health and wellbeing we welcome the effort which is clearly being made by the organisation to ensure that our Leisure and Library services are able to contribute to the continuing health and wellbeing of residents.

Impact of Changing Housing Policy

There have been significant changes to housing policy during the lifetime of this administration, some of which may have a beneficial impact on our residents and some which may not. In the light of these changes we were delighted to have been invited to the Housing Management Team to discuss the changes and the council's response to them. We recommend that scrutiny continue to monitor the level of housing need in the borough as well as the council's response. In addition we recommend that scrutiny keep an eye on longer term action including the council's future investment strategy.

Looking ahead

This is our final report and we may or may not return as scrutiny Community Health and Wellbeing leads after the election. We have considered some interesting aspects of council service during our time in office and we would propose to our successors that they continue to monitor these areas, in particular as highlighted above, the council's longer term housing strategies, the ongoing impact of the libraries and leisure service contract and the effective use of our parks.



Cllr Chris Mote
Policy Lead
Community Health and Wellbeing



Cllr Nana Asante
Performance Lead
Community Health and Wellbeing

Report from the Environment and Enterprise Leads

Our areas of focus

The policy areas we focus on as leads for Environment and Enterprise cover planning services, community safety, support for businesses and environmental services ranging from waste collection to street cleaning services and maintenance of parks.

We have met with the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise and her officers regularly during the last year and we would like to thank her for the information and advice she has been able to give us. We have considered the service planning undertaken by the directorate as well as service and financial performance by discussing the finance monitoring report and the directorate performance scorecard. We have also kept an eye on the capital programme and disposals.

We would like to thank Councillor Stephen Wright for his work as a scrutiny lead up until his appointment as a portfolio holder earlier this year. We would also like to thank Councillor Sue Anderson for her work in this area for three years of this administration. Scrutiny has benefited from their tireless work during the course of the administration in pursuit of a number of the issues we have highlighted in our annual report this year. Their persistence has enabled these issues to remain on the scrutiny radar.

Given our broad brief, over the last twelve months we have considered the following issues:

- **Towards Excellence Programme** (successor to the PRISM project) – The *Towards Excellence* programme covers all the change projects within the Environment and Enterprise Directorate. It includes an organisational restructure, developing new ways of working and improving the technology the directorate uses. Two projects on service review and operational improvement are also included. Throughout the year, we have discussed the new structure within the directorate and the process of implementing these changes. This included staff forums, the pause in the PRISM project, and the projected savings as a result of the project. In January 2014, a report on the implementation of the programme was presented to the P&F sub-committee. Given that full implementation will stretch into the next administration we recommend that the programme continue to be monitored by our successors.
- **Regeneration Strategy** – The new strategy contains three broad themes headed Business, Places and People and will form a basis for the council's work with local businesses, employment projects and major planning decisions. We look forward to the strategy being formally considered by scrutiny in the next administration and hope that our observations thus far have been helpful.
- **Xcite employment scheme** - We have discussed the Xcite Scheme, a council project that supports unemployed residents back into work, in our meetings with the Corporate Director. The scheme appeared very successful at supporting a significant number of people into employment. As a result, a report on the scheme was presented to the October O&S committee, which allowed Members to assess in more detail the type of residents supported through this scheme, the resources involved and the long-term result of the work. Our discussions around the theme of employment at the Scrutiny Leadership Group have also led to a report on regeneration in North Harrow being presented to O&S in September.

- **Residual Waste** - We have followed the council's performance regarding the amount of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting. We have been briefed on the absolute amount of residual waste, the absolute amount of 'recycled' waste and how the two relate to each other. Performance in this area is being monitored by the Chair and Vice-Chairman of the P&F sub-committee
- **Energy Company Obligation** – We were briefed on progress in this area and how the scheme can help us to support our residents to reduce fuel bills and increase warmth – we were particularly concerned in this context to hear that one in eight of our households are impacted by fuel poverty.
- **Accessible Transport Review** – We have been concerned for some time with 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, on our advice, the Scrutiny Leadership Group and the Overview and Scrutiny committee decided to dedicate time to a more detailed investigation

More information on this project is included in the report from the Chair and Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny committee.



The review group travelling around the borough

- **Tree Strategy** – In March we were briefed on the new draft strategy which will clarify the council's role as well as setting out a programme of cyclical tree maintenance. We recommend that the strategy be considered by scrutiny in the next administration.

Areas we recommend for follow up by our successors:

- Towards Excellence project
- Regeneration Strategy
- Tree Strategy



Councillor Yogesh Teli
Policy Lead
Environment and Enterprise



Councillor Phillip O'Dell
Performance Lead
Environment and Enterprise

Report from the Resources Leads

Our areas of focus

The services which fall within our remit include the corporate support services and the customer access points of Access Harrow and the Revenue and Benefits services.

We have continued to meet with the Corporate Director and his team throughout this municipal year. This year we have experimented with combined briefings between ourselves and the Chair and Vice-Chairman of Performance and Finance sub-committee to see if these meetings could make the best use of everyone's time. We recommend that our successors consider similar arrangements.

The following are the key issues which we have considered during the year:

- **Debt Recovery**

During the early part of this municipal year, Cllr Ferrari, who chaired the scrutiny project, championed by the Resources leads, into the council's debt recovery policy, pressed officers for further information as to progress on the implementation of a revised corporate debt policy. This issue was also picked up by the Overview and Scrutiny committee. We are delighted to see that this revised policy has now been implemented and we commend the involvement of scrutiny in this process, we believe that this demonstrates the significant contribution good scrutiny can make to improving the council's process and services.

- **Consolidation of the new Resources Directorate**

During the course of this year, the Resources Directorate has been consolidated, and now includes within its responsibilities the finance functions. We are aware of the significant amount of work which the Corporate Director Resources has undertaken to ensure the smooth transition from the two previously separate directorates to the new one and to support the staff within the Directorate through the process of change. In this context, we would like to welcome the new Corporate Director of Finance and Assurance who has also participated in our briefings and enabled us to understand the impact of the changing financial situation on the council.

- **Capital Debt Structure**

We raised our concerns with the Corporate Director with regard to the council's Capital Debt Structure, and were happy to have had the opportunity to discuss this with both the Corporate Director and the Director of Finance and Assurance. However, our concerns were such that we requested that a more detailed investigation into the capital debt be included in the scrutiny review programme. Unfortunately, there has been insufficient time or resource for this project to take place during the final year of this administration.

- **School Place Planning**

This has been an issue which the Resources Leads have followed for a number of years. We continued to monitor the analysis of the number of schoolchildren and the availability of school places to meet their educational needs for the first months of our tenure this year, until relatively satisfied that officers had addressed our concerns.

- **Performance of the Resources Directorate**

The Directorate incorporates a number of the key services upon which the service departments rely: from Access Harrow to Human Resources and Development. We have been regularly briefed by the Corporate Director on the performance of all of these services. We would like to thank him for the frankness of his interaction with us. Key issues which he has highlighted for us include:

- Access Harrow and in particular the move towards channel migration and the impact on Access Harrow's performance
- Revenue and Benefits and in particular the impact of the localisation of Council Tax Benefit both on Council revenue and on residents' ability to pay.
- IT and in particular difficulties which the council has experienced during the last year in a number of aspects of the council's IT service
- Human Resources, which has reported an increase in sickness absences across the authority
- Increase in the level of parking revenue and the increase in the level of complaints about the service
- Completion of the restructure in both Finance and Procurement divisions
- Success of the shared legal practice with Barnet Council

- **Project Minerva**

We have begun to monitor the work of Project Minerva which is a significant project designed to support the Resources Directorate to identify the significant savings which are required in the coming years. The project has investigated the feasibility of three options for the delivery of our core support services:

- Externalisation
- Sharing delivery with other authority
- Continuing in-house delivery.

Detailed work on each of these options has been undertaken and further services have also been included in the scope of the project. We are grateful for the briefings the Corporate Director has provided on the project and we recommend that monitoring this project is something taken up as a priority by our successors.

We have both taken over responsibilities as Scrutiny Resources leads during the course of this municipal year. We cannot complete our annual report without acknowledging the significant commitment made by our predecessors, Cllr Jerry Miles and Cllr Tony Ferrari, who have maintained close oversight of the activities of the Resources Directorate since the election in 2010 until very recently. We would also like to thank Cllr Kam Chana for the contribution he made as a Scrutiny Resources Lead during the year. We would like to place on record our gratitude for their commitment to this role.



Cllr Varsha Parmar
Policy Lead
Resources



Cllr Amir Moshenson
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 in and delivered through the corporate member development programme. Member development activities specific to scrutiny members are detailed further below.

As this is the final year of the administration, there has only been a limited amount of training organised specifically for scrutiny councillors. Our major activity was the seminar '*How to Analyse Financial Information*'. This training session took place in October at the request of the chair of the Performance and Finance sub-committee. She was keen that in particular, scrutiny councillors felt confident in analysing and challenging the detailed financial information they are presented with. In response, the Director of Finance and Assurance undertook a session in which he dissected a typical Revenue and Capital Monitoring Cabinet report, detailing the following:

- Areas of particular interest and importance
- Areas where members may want to ask particular questions
- Areas that it was important to follow over time, to ensure the long term financial viability of the council was being appropriately scrutinised by members

This session was well received by the members who attended.

Looking Ahead

Next year is the start of a completely new administration and a comprehensive member induction process will be designed to meet the needs of new councillors and to reinforce the skills of returning councillors. Detail on the role of scrutiny councillors and how they fit into the Council's overall decision making process will be central to this programme as will training with regard to some of the very specific skills required of scrutiny councillors, especially with regard to understanding and analysing performance and financial information.

Report from the Call-In Sub-Committee

The Call-In sub-committee met four times during the 2013/14 municipal year:

- 5 August 2013
- 1 October 2013
- 5 November 2013 and
- 25 February 2014

There were no meetings of the Call-In Education sub committee

On [5 August 2103](#), the Call-In sub-committee met to consider the decision made by Cabinet on 18 July with regard to the Transformation of Day Opportunities.

The decision had been called in by 150 members of the public.

Official notice was received from the lead signatory that the call-in notice should be withdrawn: this request was noted and the call-in did not proceed.

On [5 August 2013](#), the call in sub-committee also met to consider the decision made by Cabinet on 18 July 2013 with regard to Concessionary Travel - Changes to the Taxicard Scheme that:

- (1) the scheme changes as recommended by officers in the body of the report, namely the adoption of Option (2), a maximum of 40 trips per annum for all users with effect from 1 October 2013 be agreed;
- (2) the scheduled review of all existing members during 2013/14 be noted;
- (3) it be noted that officers would be liaising with London Councils regarding the issues raised by users and HAD regarding the operation of the Taxicard Scheme;
- (4) the implementation of additional trips on top of the new scheme allowance for the period 1 October 2013 to 31 March 2014 to support phasing from current scheme into new scheme be agreed; however:
 - (i) for those users who were previously allocated 104 trips, an additional allocation of 20 trips for the year 2013/14 only for the period 1 October 2013 until 31 March 2014, be agreed so long as no more than 52 trips had been used by 30 September 2014, otherwise scheme holders would be given the balance of 72 trips minus their trip usage to 30 September 2013;
 - (ii) for those users who were previously allocated 52 trips, an additional allocation of 20 trips for the year 2013/14 only for the period 1 October 2013 until 31 March 2014, so long as no more than 26 trips had been used by 30 September 2013, otherwise scheme holders would be given the balance of 46 trips minus their trip usage to 30 September 2013.
- (5) resolution (4) above would provide transitional arrangements and would ensure that all scheme members had at least some trips for the rest of the year and specifically to use during the winter months when bad weather and lack of transport facilities could lead to unnecessary isolation

The call-in was made on the grounds that:

- d) The action is not proportionate to the desired outcome.

The sub committee resolved unanimously that:

'The call in on the grounds that the action is not proportionate to the desired outcome not be upheld'

It was resolved that the following statement by the Chairman on behalf of the sub-committee be submitted to Cabinet for noting:

"The sub-committee notes the transitional arrangements put in place for high end users; the sub-committee further notes that the changes to the scheme are due to be implemented on 1 October 2013, and requests that the changes are not implemented until the scheme users are made aware of alternative arrangements with other transport providers, particularly in respect of transport for doctor and hospital appointments."

On [1 October 2013](#), the Call-In sub-committee met to consider the decision of the portfolio holder for Property and Major Contracts on 16 September 2013 with regard to granting of a lease to Flash Musicals that

- (1) The Corporate Directors Community Health & Wellbeing and Environment & Enterprise be authorised to approve the leasing of the premises at Methuen Road, Edgware Middlesex, HA8 6EZ to Flash Musicals on the terms outlined in 2.2.2 of the report together with any other terms considered appropriate.
- (2) The Director of Finance & Assurance be authorised to make payment from the Council's General Fund in respect of previous services delivered to the Council, subject to final verification of the services delivered by Flash Musicals to Harrow Council by Flash Musicals, to settle monies outstanding to the Housing Revenue Account on the rent of the above premises as outlined in paragraph 2.2.2 of the report.
- (3) The Corporate Director Community, Health & Wellbeing be instructed to enter into Service Level Agreements with Flash Musicals for the delivery of services as outlined in paragraph 2.2.2 of the report.

The call in was made by six members of council on the grounds that:

- a) Inadequate consultation with stakeholders had taken place prior to the decision
- b) Absence of adequate evidence on which to base a decision
- c) The decision was contrary to the policy framework or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the budget framework
- d) The action was not proportionate to the desired outcome
- e) A potential human rights challenge
- f) Insufficient consideration of legal and financial advice

The sub committee resolved that:

- the call-in on ground (a) – inadequate consultation with stakeholders prior to the decision – be upheld as the stakeholders were the voluntary sector and should have been consulted;
- the call-in on ground (b) – the absence of adequate evidence on which to base a decision – be upheld due to issues with the invoice and the need to get it substantiated;

- the call-in on ground (c) – the decision was contrary to the policy framework, or contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with the budget framework – not be upheld;
- the call-in on ground (d) – the action was not proportionate to the desired outcome – be upheld in the context of the current financial climate;
- the call-in on ground (e) – a potential human rights challenge – not be upheld
- the call-in on ground (f) – insufficient consideration of legal and financial advice – be upheld in terms of financial advice in that it must be noted that:
 - the decision committed the Council to expenditure through a five year Service Level Agreement that was not available to other providers, was outside of the current commissioning process and was not open and transparent;
 - it undermined the Outcome Based Grants Process; and
 - before the Council had made the decision it should have consulted the voluntary sector

On [5 November 2013](#), the Call-In sub committee met to consider the call in submitted by six Members of Council in relation to the decision made by Cabinet on the Parking Review: 20 Minutes' Free Parking Initiative that:

- (1) the review of the Rayners Lane free parking trial, as set out in the report, be noted;
- (2) having considered the implications of on-street free parking borough-wide and reviewed the options available, the following preferred option be agreed: Do not implement 20 minutes free parking in the borough and remove the Rayners Lane trial of 20 minutes free parking.

The decision was called-in on the grounds that:

- a) Inadequate consultation with stakeholders had taken place prior to the decision
- b) Absence of adequate evidence on which to base a decision
- c) The action was not proportionate to the desired outcome
- d) Insufficient consideration of legal and financial advice

The sub committee resolved that:

- the call-in on ground (a) – inadequate consultation with stakeholders prior to the decision – be upheld as the business community and ward councillors had not been consulted;
- the following grounds for call-in:
 - ground (b) – the absence of adequate evidence on which to base a decision;
 - ground (d) – the action was not proportionate to the desired outcome;
 - ground (f) – insufficient consideration of legal and financial advice;

all be upheld for the following reasons:

- detailed financial information was provided in the report;
- financial viability was a main driver in determining the decision;
- it was not appropriate to consider money received from penalty charge notices as parking income and this money should not have been taken into account in reaching the decision.

On [25 February 2014](#) the Call-In sub-committee met to consider the call-in submitted by six Members of the Council in relation to the decision made by the Community Safety and Environment Portfolio Holder on 12 February that:

- (1) the current policy to allow three free tips per annum at the civic amenity site in Forward Drive by residents using vans, be suspended;
- (2) all deposits of waste by vans be chargeable as trade waste;
- (3) this suspension to be reviewed in June 2014 to determine if any further action is required.

The decision was called-in on the grounds that:

- a) Inadequate consultation with stakeholders prior to the decision
- b) The absence of adequate evidence on which to base a decision
- c) The decision is contrary to the policy framework, or contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with the budget framework
- d) The action is not proportionate to the desired outcomes
- e) A potential human rights challenge

The sub committee resolved that call-in on the grounds below was not valid:

- b) the decision is contrary to the policy framework, or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the budget framework
- c) that the action is not proportionate to the desired outcomes

The sub committee further resolved, unanimously, that call in on the following grounds not be upheld:

- a) Inadequate consultation with stakeholders prior to the decision
- b) The absence of adequate evidence on which to base a decision
- e) A potential human rights challenge



Cllr Jerry Miles
Chair Call-In sub-committee
5 August 2013
25 February 2014



Cllr Chris Mote
Chairman Call-In sub-committee
1 October 2013
5 November 2013

Conclusion

This is the end of another administration. Scrutiny councillors have worked hard for the last four years to ensure that we deliver challenge to the decisions of the executive, that we contribute to improving the services and that we support the council to make the right decisions in what continue to be very challenging times.

We may or may not return as scrutiny councillors for the next administration; if we do, we will continue in this important role, if we don't, then we urge our successors to continue to work independently, across party political boundaries, to improve and protect the services which the council and our partners provide for local people.

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

- Date:** 8 April 2014
- Subject:** Scrutiny Lead Member Report
- Responsible Officer:** Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director,
Strategic Commissioning
- Scrutiny Lead
Member area:**
- Children and Families
 - Community Health and Well Being
 - Environment and Enterprise
 - Performance and Finance scrutiny sub-committee
 - Resources
- 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. It is the final report from Scrutiny Lead Members for this administration.

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

SCRUTINY CHILDREN AND FAMILY LEAD MEMBERS **Briefing – 24 February 2014**

PRESENT

- § Cllr Lynda Seymour, Policy Lead Children and Families
- § Catherine Doran, Corporate Director Children and Families Services
- § Roger Rickman, Divisional Director, Special Needs Services
- § Fola Irikefe, Scrutiny Officer

SEN Briefing

Councillor Seymour enquired over what the difference was between a SEN statement and the Education Health and Care Plans which will replace SEN statements and what was the basis for the change. The Divisional Director, Special Needs Service explained that a single plan will replace SEN statements as they only covered educational needs. The new plans would cover education, health and social care. The plans would allow for services for children with SEN to be developed in a holistic way and in so doing hopefully provide more parental choice.

Councillor Seymour enquired over what happened to children who were on the autistic spectrum of having special educational needs and asserted that she felt professionals were very quick to label and diagnose children from an early age. This was because over the past few decades there have been more children labelled as having SEN owing to autism. The Divisional Director, Special Needs Service said that is it not clear whether the increased number of children described to have SEN owing to autism was due to increased diagnosis or increased awareness.

Autism Briefing

Councillor Seymour enquired over whether targets were set for making diagnosis. It was confirmed that there wasn't a target in relation to diagnosing children. However, there was a target in place once children have been diagnosed in relation to their assessments. The Divisional Director, Special Needs Service explained that diagnosis was at least in part usually made on the basis of what parents themselves had observed in their children and not any specific test as such. Professional observation is also then applied more so than any specific test.

Public Health

It was reported that Public Health would be taking over the Health Visiting Service. Health Visitors are available in Children's Centres for under 5's and GP's are keen to have Health Visitors in the GP service. There is also work currently taking place to see where school nursing will sit. On query over how many were currently operating, it was heard that there are currently 7/8 school nurses in the borough working between a number of schools. There will be a substantial investment in the service post April 2014 as they are presently only involved in safeguarding work.

Families First Project

An update on the Families First project was provided. The Families First project is Harrow's approach to the Government's Troubled Families initiative.

The early intervention team are involved in triaging and are working with the families. An overall improvement of 70% in families was reported. Families are supported for example to ensure that children are going to school, parents are getting off benefits and going back into work and youth crime is falling. This is how improvement is measured.

The family action group had developed a parent mentoring scheme for complex families through home start successfully.

There has also been a recent bid to Cabinet to develop volunteering with early intervention.

Ofsted Thematic Inspection

The Corporate Director Children and Families Services reported that the Ofsted inspection looked at universal services and early intervention thresholds. Councillor Seymour was informed that in the main the Children and Families Directorate know themselves well in terms of where their weaknesses and strengths lie and this placed the service in a good position to make improvements.

Areas for improvement included:

- § Variation in practice both very good and not so good
- § The model of early help assessment and planning delivery relationship with universal services
- § The culture in the directorate in respect of both front line and strategic aspects.

AOB

A general discussion took place on the speech and language therapy service. Councillor Seymour enquired over what was happening with the speech and language therapy service as she has been advised that there is no funding available and children are being given a limited amount of sessions and then are put back onto waiting lists.

The Divisional Director, Special Needs Services explained that the service is jointly commissioned with the CCG and the new model of delivery is working well with schools and he is unaware of any complaints from parents.

It was explained that a review would soon be carried out on Early Years services. On enquiry over where early years funding come from, Councillor Seymour was informed that services are funded from both the council's Children and Families Service and also Health.

**SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBERS COMMUNITY HEALTH AND
WELL BEING
Wednesday 5th February 2014**

PRESENT

§ Cllr Nana Asante, Performance Lead Children and Families

§ Marianne Locke, Divisional Director, Community and Culture

§ Lynne Margetts, Service Manager Scrutiny

This briefing had been arranged in order for the Community Health and Being scrutiny leads to be advised as to how the borough's leisure and library services are being utilised to contribute to residents' well being, particularly in the context of the new contracts in place to deliver these services.

The Divisional Director outlined for Cllr Asante, how the Leisure and Library Services will contribute to the community health and well being of the borough.

Leisure.

The contract for provision of the leisure service specifies a number of requirements against which the provider's performance will be measured:

- Provision of high quality activities and access to opportunities for sport and leisure, particularly for children and under represented groups
- Contribution to achieving a healthier and active lifestyle – this is linked to the achievement of public health outcomes for the borough – in particular addressing issues of obesity, cardio-vascular disease and diabetes, which are high in the borough
- Continuous improvement in service and levels of user satisfaction
- Environmental outcomes
- Socio-Economic outcomes – including training and apprenticeship opportunities.

Libraries

The contract for the provision of the Library Service similarly specifies a number of requirements against which the provider's performance will be measured:

- Increased usage of library services
- Broader community service provision – including libraries as community hubs
- Improved customer satisfaction
- Positive improvements in social and economic sustainability
- Positive impact on health – there are no specific indicators for this.

Joint partnership meetings with providers and the 2/3 boroughs, which monitor the provider's performance take place on a monthly basis – to reduce to ¼ ly.

The most recently reported results of this monitoring were provided as follows:

Leisure

Despite a dip in participation rates in September/October, results for November/December show an increase in numbers visits over the previous twelve months of 1000. The number of visits over the twelve months to the end of December 2014 was 3000

With regard to the participation of under represented groups, the contractor is appointing a community development officer and has invested in a targeted gym for the use of particular groups e.g. GP referrals (the provider is working with GPs to provide health checks at the gym) women only sessions.

The provider is expected to provide a demographic break down of service users. This will be done via the collection of information as residents register for the Everyone Active Card. Some information, which could be used as a baseline, was being collected by the previous contractor but this only related to the social identity of users completing the satisfaction survey. Cllr Asante is concerned that the opportunity to gather demographic information about service users is not lost. The Divisional Director will pass the information currently available to Cllr Asante.

Squash courts have been renovated to such a high standard that England Squash and Racquet Ball have expressed an interest in the centre becoming a centre of excellence. They will provide a coach to work with schools to encourage young people's involvement in squash.

An open day for schools was held in December and a general open day held in January attended by 4000 residents has resulted in an additional 100 members.

The climbing wall will be reinstated in a more prominent position in the centre, and this has resulted in interest in the establishment of a bouldering wall for the centre, again offering services at national standards.

£30k funding has been received to provide equipment for disabled children's sports activities. The Divisional Director emphasised that, whilst integration is the general approach to the provision of sports facilities to people with disabilities, sometimes specific equipment is required to facilitate this integration.

The service is working towards the Inclusive and Active standard as specified by Sport England

The provider has also applied to Sport England for funding for cricket nets but has been unsuccessful in this application

With the Sports Development Team, 3-year funding from Sport England (Sportivate) has been awarded to support the creation of sports clubs which can provide progression routes from schools sports. This has been used to establish:

- Harrow Blackhawks – basketball club
- Judo Club
- Women Back into Netball

The provider had been asked to provide the 'net promoter' score in order to identify whether customers would promote the leisure service. The provider is also expected to meet national standards, specifically QUEST accreditation, and to report on their progress in this area every two years.

The Divisional Director also advised that all vending machines are providing Fairtrade products, as specified in the contract. Recycling facilities have also been introduced on the site.

The provider is expected to pursue and report on:

- Inclusive Fitness Initiative
- Equality Standard for Sport
- Investor in People
- Staff profile analysis
- Number of local suppliers
- Attrition rate
- Complaints

The provider is expected to offer a minimum of 10 apprenticeships – so far there are 7 offered in Brent and 5 in Ealing. To improve performance in Harrow, the provider is working with the Harrow XCite project

Libraries

There was an increase in the number of complaints picked up by the libraries as the contract was taken over, but the numbers are small and do not represent any significant issues.

There has been a 2% increase in visits which is likely due to the improved ICT facilities. However, there has been a marked reduction in the number of book loans for the last quarter (Sept – Dec). This is under investigation as although nationally book loans are overall reducing (due to factors such as a shift towards the use of E Readers) this is a larger than anticipated reduction. This may be caused by the installation of a new libraries management system which may mean the issues are being counted differently by the two systems and we may have to establish a new baseline figure.

The council already has baseline information on the participation of targeted groups. The provider is expected to report on the increase in participation of these groups every two years but to provide an outline of action being taken to increase participation at each joint partnership meeting

Annual plans for each library are being produced and an overall annual library plan for the service will be presented in April..

The provider is expected to pursue additional funding and has recently been successful in a bid entitled Enterprising Libraries to develop libraries as small business hubs providing support and advice to local SMEs and entrepreneurs

The restructure of the libraries has taken specific time. 4.5 FTEs will be made redundant as a result of this process.

The provider is expected to increase customer satisfaction and will participate in the annual public library user survey. A customer satisfaction baseline figure is already in place. Mystery shopping exercises will take place every 2 years.

Like the Leisure contractor, the Libraries provider is expected to provide:

- Customer Satisfaction (Public Library User Survey)
- Environmental targets – including accreditation in accordance with ISO 14001
- IIP
- Staff satisfaction and staff profile analysis
- Apprenticeships/local supply chains etc

Reports in all of these areas will be required at the end of the 1st year.

More detailed performance indicators to cover the following will also be expected:

- Total library visits per 1000 population
- Stock – adults and children
- Feedback and complaints resolution
- New member and active member analysis
- Use of People Network and WiFi
- Attendance at library events

Cllr Asante asked for information regarding the usage of libraries – both visits and issues.

The Divisional Director commented that the CIPFA statistical returns made by all authorities show that Harrow has the 4th highest number of loans in outer London and 7th highest number in London as a whole in 2012/13. This information will be provided to Cllr Asante.

The Divisional Director advised that study space has been increased at Gayton Library and that space has been opened at the Masefield Suite to augment this in peak study periods. It was agreed that this space needs to be properly advertised in order to make sure the space is used. Use of outreach and schools advisors might be helpful in this.

Cllr Asante asked about the future of the library service. The Divisional Director confirmed that the contract specifies the number of libraries required to be run and the minimum opening times.

FOR ACTION

The Environment and Enterprise Leads will receive the information offered by the Divisional director and a report on the performance of the Library and Leisure contract will be received by the Performance and Finance sub committee in the next administration.

SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBERS COMMUNITY, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Briefing Wednesday 5 March 2014

Present

- Councillor Chris Mote, Scrutiny Policy Lead, Community, Health and Wellbeing
- Councillor Nana Asante, Scrutiny Performance Lead, Community, Health and Wellbeing
- Lynne Pennington, Divisional Director, Housing Services
- Jon Dalton, Service Manager, Housing Needs
- Alison Pegg, Service Manager, Housing Partnerships and Strategy
- Dave Roberts, Housing Finance Business Partner
- Toni Burke, Head of Resident Services
- Heather Smith, Scrutiny Officer

Housing need

The Service Manager, Housing Need advised that approximately 1,400 households are threatened with homelessness, but that the council works with households as early as possible to prevent homelessness, including prior to court action. The council can offer help such as top-up rent payments.

Housing benefit has not kept pace with rents and there is a shortfall of affordable properties. A recent examination of Zoopla (which covers most of the rental market) found that only 4% of properties were available at the Local Housing Allowance level. This makes it difficult for households to find accommodation and also puts pressure on existing tenants as landlords believe that they could re-let their properties for a higher rent given the level of demand.

Of the 1,400 at risk of homelessness, the council formally assesses and accepts about 150 (1 in 10) as homeless and in priority need. The council has secured 268 properties in the private rented sector but there are still nearly 100 households in bed and breakfast accommodation. If the council can secure a further 150 properties this would help to further reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation. The council is having to provide landlords with heavy financial incentives to accept tenants and there is significant competition from other local authorities who are also providing landlords with incentives.

With regard to residency requirements, under the council's new allocations scheme (agreed in October 2013) there is a five year residency test to secure a council property. The council will help households after six months' residency but the household will not qualify for council or social housing.

Members were advised that the council can assist households going into emergency accommodation by providing storage. There is however, no free storage available and households are charged a maximum of £50 per week. A Member responded that her casework suggested that households without family/friends to help with storing items could not meet this cost. The officer responded that most households avoided B&B accommodation where storage

is limited; in any case there could be some flexibility in budgets as households were not required to pay utilities, for example, while in B&B accommodation. The Member added that living in B&B accommodation was more expensive to the household because of, for example, limited cooking facilities.

The Divisional Director advised that the council's legal duty is restricted to providing temporary accommodation for households in priority need. There was no requirement for the council to pay incentives, to pay rent upfront or to offer storage. However, without the council providing some of these services the number of homeless households would only increase. There was also some provision in the emergency help scheme that might be able to assist.

The council can find households accommodation but this is not always in the borough. Most households do want to stay in the borough. Out of the 268 households who have been found accommodation, 40-50 have been outside London.

Future housing development

Take up of the Grants to Move scheme has been low. The increase of the Right to Buy (RTB) allowance to the £100,000 level has meant that the £38,000 grant offered under Grants to Move is not financially attractive enough. It is difficult to replace the properties lost through RTB; RTB is also impacting on the cost effectiveness of regeneration schemes because of the cost to the council in buying back properties in order to regenerate. Notices can be served to stop RTB sales but the council needs firm plans to do so. The level of discount makes RTB very appealing especially in cheaper parts of the borough.

Housing associations have been building properties (more than in the private sector) and the council has nomination rights to more than 1,000. However, there is insufficient building to meet demand. The council receives money from the New Homes Bonus scheme for each completion regardless of tenure, however in the context of a reduced grant overall, this has not resulted in an increase in funding and the money has been used for projects in the General Fund.

The council has undertaken a review of the impact of welfare reform on patterns of spend. This has changed the support that the council provides; it was noted that changes are not yet complete.

A Member commented that there seemed to be a focus on fees and charges rather than on the wider opportunities for income generation. The Divisional Director responded that as part of the Regeneration Strategy, the board, chaired by the Corporate Director, Environmental Services, was considering both the civic centre site and the council's corporate asset base to determine how the council could maximise income generation. This could include a range of future uses including homes, businesses and owner-occupation. Under the Homes for Harrow project, architect's drawings have been commissioned for developments on garage sites and consultation is underway on eight small regeneration sites.

Although the level of income in the Housing Revenue Account is sufficient for the council to borrow to build new property the council is prevented from doing so by current Government policy. The council is considering a range of investment models whereby General Fund borrowing could fund new development (either fully or partly council owned) but ultimately the route taken will be a Member level decision.

Action:

- Housing to provide presentation on Homes for Harrow – completed
- Housing to provide briefing on impact of welfare reform – completed
- Housing to provide briefing on investment approaches – completed

**SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBERS' ENVIRONMENT AND
ENTERPRISE
Briefing Tuesday 4 March 2014**

Present: Councillor Phillip O'Dell, Performance Lead, Environment and Enterprise
Caroline Bruce, Corporate Director, Environment and Enterprise
Philip Hamberger, Divisional Director, Business and Service Development
Heather Smith, Scrutiny Officer

Apologies: None

Update on Towards Excellence project

The Divisional Director advised that the remaining six teams will be live by 7 March 2014. There is some recruitment still underway. Technology is now the main area of focus. He explained that customer enhancements will be introduced in the summer, which will involve changes to the website and to webforms. Environmental health and public protection will now be included. Users will be able to see whether work has been reported, as well as details of when work is scheduled to be completed. In response to a question from Cllr O'Dell, he confirmed that the upgrades to the front-end of the website have been delayed pending a corporate upgrade affecting the whole website. The directorate is working with Capita to make alternative plans should the upgrade be uncompleted when the enhancements are fully introduced in the autumn.

Cllr O'Dell queried whether a MyHarrow account will be required for licensing payments and was advised that in general there is a push for the MyHarrow account to be used. Officers undertook to clarify the position.

As well as staff launches, the Corporate Director advised that the directorate is also undertaking a leadership development programme for all managers.

Actions:

- Monitoring of the Towards Excellence project by the scrutiny leads be incorporated into the annual report. (Scrutiny)
- To confirm whether a MyHarrow account will be required for licensing payments. (E&E)

Corporate Plan 2014/15

The corporate plan was discussed with regard to the areas of focus for the directorate.

Tree Strategy

The Corporate Director advised that a strategy has been drafted in accordance with best practice and the spatial requirements of the Mayor. It describes action the council will/will not take as well as cyclical maintenance strategy. All trees must be inspected, but it is for the council to determine the appropriate level of maintenance. Additional revenue and capital funding has been included in the budget for 2014/15. There is a full capital allocation for tree replacement. Cllr O'Dell requested a briefing on the Tree Strategy and that the matter be followed up by scrutiny.

Action:

- A briefing on the Tree Strategy to be arranged. (E&E)
- The Tree Strategy to be included in the annual report for future follow-up by scrutiny. (Scrutiny)

Performance update Q3

The following areas were raised by Cllr O'Dell:

Harrow Town Centre – Lowlands – the Corporate Director advised that further information was sought on negotiations with the GLA. Work is underway to quality assure the design for the space following concerns raised by the contractor.

Cashless parking (RingGo) – Cllr O'Dell sought further information on the scope of the project and whether it included visitor parking in addition to CPZs.

NI 195 – street cleanliness – Cllr O'Dell asked whether a conscious decision had been made to focus on addressing litter in primary retail areas; the Corporate Director confirmed that this was the case. She added that the indicator included all visible graffiti regardless of whether or not it was on council property. All offensive graffiti is removed regardless of its location.

Sickness absence – Cllr O'Dell sought an update on sickness absence in the directorate. The Corporate Director advised that in the last year 30% of absences related to 20 staff members; these absences have now been addressed through the absence procedure. The directorate is increasing its robustness with regard to return to work interviews.

Actions:

- To clarify scope of the Cashless Parking project. (E&E)
- The Regeneration Strategy to be added to the annual report for future follow-up by scrutiny. (Scrutiny)

PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE CHAIR/VICE CHAIRMAN

Briefing Tuesday 4 March 2014

Present

- Councillor Sue Anderson, Chair, Performance and Finance sub-committee
- Sarah Kurylowicz, Violence against Women and Girls Co-ordinator
- Heather Smith, Scrutiny Officer

Apologies

- Councillor Anthony Seymour, Vice-Chairman, Performance and Finance sub-committee
- Councillor Lynda Seymour, Scrutiny Lead, Children and Families
- Councillor Chris Mote, Scrutiny Lead, Community Health and Wellbeing
- Councillor Nana Asante, Scrutiny Lead, Community Health and Wellbeing

Repeat incidents of domestic violence

Definition

Following a review in May 2013 the Home Office definition is as follows:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological, emotional, physical, sexual, and financial. This includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

It now covers coercive control, young people aged 16-17 (reflecting abusive teenage relationships) as well as family relationships. It is not restricted to intimate relationships.

Reported incidents in Harrow

Reported incidents include both crime and non-crime. Crimes include assault or grievous bodily harm, whereas non-crimes include disturbances. There are approximately 2,300 reported incidents each year. The British Crime Survey suggests that there are about 6,000 incidents, which reflects the level of under-reporting.

Crimes in Harrow

Comparing the criminal offences with overall total crime, in 2013, domestic crime represented 10% of the total in comparison with an average of 7% across London. Harrow's rate seems high but this must be viewed in the context of Harrow being a low crime borough overall. Awareness and reporting has generally improved over the past thirty years and the police recognise when incidents are related to domestic abuse.

MARAC

The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is a monthly meeting where agencies meet to share information about the highest risk cases (top 5%) and to put action plans in place. The Harrow MARAC usually reviews 15-20 cases per month.

Repeat incident indicator NI32

A repeat incident is when a case previously seen at the MARAC is re-referred within a twelve month period. To identify the repeat incidents, organisations should 'flag and tag' their files so that repeat referrals can be identified. The expectation is that each organisation has systems in place but it is for each organisation to determine its own process. Effectiveness of flagging is related to having both appropriate systems in place and staff knowledge.

The CAADA¹ recommends that between 28-40% of cases considered by the MARAC should be repeats. This reflects the severity and complexity of the cases reaching the MARAC.

The performance indicator is therefore both positive and negative: CAADA suggests that if more than 40% of cases are repeats then the MARAC's action planning may not be effective, but if there are fewer than 28% systems may not be in place to identify repeats. Between October 2012 and September 2013 the Harrow MARAC repeat rate was 12%.

Action to improve performance

Harrow has undertaken a self assessment with CAADA. An audit of participating organisations has been undertaken to ensure that organisations are properly flagging and tagging cases. In addition ongoing training is being run jointly by the council and the police to improve staff awareness.

Action:

The NI32 indicator be included in the scrutiny annual report as an area for follow-up by scrutiny in the next administration.

¹ Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse – the body quality assuring MARACs

SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBERS' RESOURCES

Briefing Monday 17th March 2014

Present

- Councillor Varsha Parmar, Scrutiny Policy Lead, Resources
- Councillor Amir Moshenson, Scrutiny Performance Lead, Resources
- Tom Whiting, Corporate Director Resources
- Lynne Margetts, Service Manager Scrutiny

The Corporate Director updated the scrutiny lead councillors on the key issues and challenges in the Resources directorate.

Project Minerva

Project Minerva is the key development in Resources Directorate. It was launched March 2013 to address long term challenge of cost reduction in the Resources Directorate post 2015 and to develop a recommendation for the re-let of the IT Contract.

Minerva recommendations agreed at Cabinet January 2015 which allow us to:

- Go back to market for IT so to have a new IT contract in place from October 2015
- Implement the 20% cost reduction programme identified in Human Resources, Finance & Assurance and Revenues & Benefits
- Continue to explore opportunities for Shared Services with other Councils

Cllr Moshenson queried the time for pay back of the costs associated with outsourcing. The Corporate Director clarified that the payback from the outsourcing option was less attractive than the in house option. An internal examination of the potential to reduce savings had identified the possibility of reducing costs by 17% without the cost associated with outsourcing. The Corporate Director clarified that the costs relate to replacement of the SAP system and the relocation of staff. The Directorate has also looked independently at the potential to replace the SAP system. The payback from this would be delayed for between 4- 6 years.

Human Resources

Key points discussed include:

- A new contract for the recruitment of permanent staff has been agreed at Cabinet January 2014 which will make use of the Pertemps contract and redesign the recruitment process.
- Following Phase 1 of the Minerva project a review of the HR function is about to commence led by the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) and the Institute of Employment Studies (IES)
- The proportion of the top 5% if earners who are women continues to be above target and the percentage of BME employees shows a very slight improvement.

- The proportion of the workforce for the whole Council with an IPAD has increased to 92% from 86%.
- The proportion of the top 5% of earners who are BME or who declare a disability is below target. Performance is monitored by the Corporate Equalities Group. The Council's recruitment and selection policy remains to appoint the person best suited to the role.
- The overall figure for the average number of days lost through sickness across the Council this quarter shows a slight increase from 9.39 to 9.56 of which 60% is long term absence. Challenges are greatest in Enterprise & Environment where sickness is 13.54 days per employee. An approach to reducing the volume of sickness has been agreed at CSB.

Councillors discussed the arrangement of the HR functions and the roles of staff within HR. In particular Cllr Moshenson queried the location of the payroll function and why it hadn't been located with either the IT function or finance. The Corporate Director explained that the location was felt to facilitate the exchange of information between contracts staff and payroll staff in the most efficient manner but acknowledge that different authorities organise their payroll functions in different ways. He offered to accompany Cllr Moshenson on a visit to the overall HR division to demonstrate how the different units' co-location supports the effective delivery of HR support to the authority.

Cllr Parmar queried what action is being taken to address the rising levels of sickness. The Corporate Director commented that there are clear procedure in place to deal with staff absence but that these processes are able to distinguish between long term serious ill health issues and persistent short term absence. He also clarified that whilst sickness levels are increasing across the council, there is a particular issues for depot based staff.

Finance and Assurance

Key points discussed include:

- Council-wide, a forecast underspend is projected at Q3 on the revenue budget.
- Work has been ongoing to prepare the Council's Budget for Full Council February 2014.
- The Finance restructure has been completed

Strategic Commissioning

- There is improving performance with regard to a number of crime indicators – burglary detection and domestic residential burglary
- Media coverage for the Council has improved since September with the monthly media points score improving from 477 to 559 in December and peaking in October at 651, reflecting the greater emphasis on the media in the Communications Plan.

- The reputation tracker question with regard to whether the media is portraying the council positively or negatively is showing a deteriorated score since May 2013.
- There is a reduced number of cases presenting to the MARAC
- The restructure of the policy function in Strategic Commissioning is proceeding

Commercial, Contracts and Procurement

Key points discussed include:

- A new Commercial Strategy is under development led by the new Divisional Director and Commercial Business Partners and will shortly be ready for discussion.
- The recruitment to the permanent team has progressed well and has significantly reduced the expenditure on the team. One Commercial Business Partner role has been hard to fill and one further role will be advertised. Two category specialists have been appointed now as internal promotions.
- The WIFI concession is almost complete.
- New Contract Procedure Rules are being drafted which will be designed to be simpler and more user friendly while at the same time strengthening practice across the Council. These will be considered by the Constitution Working Group before being presented to Council in July.

Legal and Governance

Key points discussed include:

- Preparation is fully underway for the Elections May 2014.
- Work is underway to deliver individual electoral registration and is progressing as planned.
- The Harrow Barnet Legal Practice restructure is complete.
- Steady improvement in Freedom of Information response times which has increased from 51% in Q2 to 67% Q3. A review of the handling of FOIs is now complete and common responses will be placed on the Council's website. Reporting is being improved to support all Directorates showing the full ongoing FOI caseload and an early warning system for cases that are reaching 20 days.

Cllr Moshenson queried why there is a problem with FOI response times. The Corporate Director clarified that there has been an increase in overall volume and also the response clearance process means that responses are being released more slowly, the early warning system should help in this regard.

Cllr Moshenson asked whether the council has analysed potential FOI caseload going forward. The Corporate Director commented that this is

difficult as each FOI is unique and will require different information in order to generate a response, however, it is likely that the number of requests will continue to increase.

Cllr Moshenson asked if any work has been undertaken to quantify the costs of dealing with FOI. The Corporate Director commented that information is not currently collected as no time reporting is undertaken in the council except within Legal Services with regard to case costing. He will check to see if FOIs in Legal Services are treated as cases and therefore whether any information is available regarding costs from which an overall sense of the resource impact of FOIs on the council can be extrapolated.

Customer Services

Key points discussed include:

- 18th March likely to be the busy day of the year for Access Harrow following the despatch of Council Tax bills.
- Call volumes are increasing especially in Council Tax and Housing Benefit
- The % of issues resolved at first point of contact has increased to 94%, above target. Resolution rates have increased within Public Realm and Housing Repairs pushing the quarterly achievement up.
- Wait times in the One Stop Shop have increased to 05:56mins from 04:37 mins, although this is well ahead of target. 91% of customers were seen in less than 10 minutes. Customer satisfaction remains high with the OSS at 96% despite the introduction of the appointment system.
- The number of phone calls answered in 30seconds has improved from 84% to 87% and the number of calls abandoned has fallen from 9% to 5%. The number of calls that we classify as avoidable have fallen from 20% to 16%.
- 95% of emails and 99% of web forms were answered within a timely manner despite an increase of in email volumes. Completion is high due to end to end integration of webforms into both CRM and the LOB system.
- The council has rolled out over 52,000 MyHarrow accounts on the back of the electoral canvass.

Council Tax and Revenue and Benefits

Key points discussed include:

- Collection rates are as expected and overall collection rate is on target. This includes expecting to achieve the 70% forecast collection rate under the CTS scheme.

IT

Key points discussed include:

- The Council achieved its Public Sector Network (PSN) compliance certificate with a significant amount of changes having to be out in place and after lengthy discussion with the Cabinet Office. Nationally a number of improvements will be made by Cabinet Office in their approach to the

programme. It did however cause Harrow significant difficulty with unclear requirements and a lack of communication.

- The IT upgrade is now 18 – 24 months behind schedule
- The delivery of the two remaining ITO projects for Citrix Migration and End User Devices was halted in December due to multiple performance issues on the new devices. It is hoped that the migration will start again before the end of March
- Upgrades to both CIVICA and SAP are also in train.

Councillors expressed concern that having identified the potential source of the problem being experienced in December, these were still unresolved. Cllr Moshenson asked for a copy of the root cause analysis report on SAN issues in CITRIX. The Corporate Director undertook to provide this.

For Action

- The Corporate Director will investigate if FOI requests are treated as 'cases' and thus whether resource impact of FOIs on the council can be extrapolated and advise the leads
- The Corporate Director will provide the leads with a copy of the root cause analysis report on SAN issues in CITRIX.

This is the final meeting of the Resources Leads in the 2013/14 municipal year.

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting:	8 th April 2014
Subject:	Scrutiny Work Programme, Closing Report
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap Divisional Director Strategic Commissioning
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	All
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report summarises the review programme work which has been undertaken by the scrutiny committees during the last municipal year. As this is the final year of the administration, the report also includes recommendations to the 2014 – 18 administration with regard to projects which might be considered for inclusion in the subsequent work programme.

Recommendations:

Councillors are asked to:

- I. Note the conclusion of the work programme for 2013-14
- II. Agree to recommend to the successor Overview and Scrutiny committee the list of issues for possible investigation identified in this report

Section 2 – Report

This is the final work programme update report to be made to the Overview and Scrutiny committee for this administration, 2010-14. The report updates councillors on the projects which have been undertaken and completed this year. The report also makes recommendation to the next Overview and Scrutiny committee on the projects and issues which have been identified by councillors during this administration which could be included in the next administration's scrutiny work programme, it does not recommend how these issues should be investigated.

Work Programme 2013 – 14

During 2013 – 14, the scrutiny committees have completed an annual programme of review projects. The programme is shortened in comparison with other years as the onset of purdah and general preparation for local council elections mean that all projects must be completed in time for them to be considered by Cabinet by April 2014. The paragraphs below summarise the conclusion on the reports undertaken this year.

Accessible Transport

This project was pursued initially by the scrutiny lead councillors for Environment and Enterprise and was subsequently programmed as a specific, more detailed investigation. The project has enabled scrutiny to work with local residents, to highlight the difficulties in getting around the borough for our less mobile residents. Scrutiny was able to highlight the concern with regard accessible London Underground services with colleagues consulting on changes to local health provision and to draw the lack of accessible transport to the attention of the 'Shaping a Healthier Future' programme which has proposed the establishment of Northwick Park hospital as a major hospital. There is currently no fully accessible London Underground station to service this hospital.

The recommendations from the review were fully endorsed by Cabinet.

Customer Care

The council has a growing, and deserved, reputation for providing excellent customer care. However, despite this reputation, councillors still receive significant correspondence from local residents which raise concern about a number of aspects of customer care and how far our processes and procedures are embedded throughout the council.

In order to understand how the council can consolidate excellent customer care across the council, this project was undertaken and councillors experienced a range of customer care activities which enabled them to make recommendations to Cabinet for improvement, if not change in our activities.

All of these recommendations have been accepted by Cabinet

Deletion of Chief Executive's Post

In November 2013, the departure of the Council's Chief Executive was confirmed along with the administration's proposal to move to the permanent deletion of the post. This was a controversial proposal and one which scrutiny councillors wished to consider and comment upon. The members of the panel which considered the issue were able to discuss the proposal with the Leader of the Council and to contribute to her consultation and in this way offer challenge and an alternative perspective to the proposal.

The findings from the project were considered as a part of the consultation process.

NHS Health Checks

Scrutiny councillors were invited to participate in a national project being run by the Centre for Public Scrutiny to investigate the take up of NHS health checks. As Harrow's public health function is shared with Barnet, scrutiny councillors from both boroughs co-operated on this project which was designed to investigate how we might increase take up.

Recommendations from the project have been welcomed nationally and publicity for the overall national project, which was published as "Checking the Nation's Health", has suggested that the findings and recommendations may contribute £4m savings across the five areas that participated.

Shaping a Healthy Future Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Significant change is underway in the National Health Service. Proposals to change the configuration of hospitals in North West London have been made as part of the 'Shaping a Healthier Future' programme. Alongside Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster councils, Harrow has participated in a joint overview and scrutiny committee in order to contribute to NHS NW London's consultation on the proposals.

The joint committee made its comments on the proposals, which include the establishment of Northwick Park hospital as a major hospital and the closure of the Accident and Emergency service at Central Middlesex Hospital, and has continued to meet as a body in order to receive progress reports from NHS NW London.

Scrutiny councillors in the next administration will need to consider how/if they wish to continue to be involved with the joint committee in order to monitor progress.

Standing Scrutiny Review of the Budget

This project has been running throughout the 2010-14 administration. Councillors have considered a number of issues in relation to changing local government financial policy. In particular, they have looked at

- Management of major contract renewal
- Implications of the Business Rate Retention Scheme
- Self financing of the Housing Revenue Account
- Implications of the localisation of council tax benefits
- Management and strategic of use of capital

Unfortunately, the work of the Standing Review has suffered this year due to the number of political changes in the administration which meant that membership of the review has been uncertain and thus, the specific projects to be pursued could not be confirmed.

Nonetheless, this has been an extremely influential project which has brought challenge to the council's approach to the changing policy context within which budgets are being developed.

With this in mind, councillors are asked to recommend to the subsequent scrutiny function that arrangements are made which can enable scrutiny to continue to contribute to the ongoing consideration of financial policy

Proposals for Future Investigation

In concluding the scrutiny business for this administration, a number of potential projects have been identified for consideration by scrutiny councillors in the next administration. These are issues which have been identified during the final months of the administration but which there has been insufficient time to investigate or they are issues which current scrutiny councillors feel should continue to receive scrutiny consideration.

The issues are outlined below and it is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny committee refers this list to the subsequent Overview and Scrutiny committee for consideration after the next election to determine whether and if so how (by scrutiny lead councillors, by committee or by more in-depth investigation) these issues will be scrutinised in future.

Issues for future consideration by Harrow scrutiny:

- Continuing consideration of the impact of changing financial policy, including the consideration of the use of capital
- A child's journey through the care system
- The Council's regeneration plans
- West London Waste plans
- Council Tax support consultation
- Tree Strategy
- Review of travel plans, their coverage and enforcement
- Children's Services' performance – including inspection outcomes, safeguarding by health partners, IT problems affecting the Youth Offending Team, Children Looked After health and dental checks
- Implementation of the Libraries and Leisure Services contract
- Use of payday loans
- Staff sickness absence
- Number of food premises compliant with food hygiene legislation
- Implementation of IT systems and business continuity with a particular focus on IT disaster recovery
- Repeat incidents of domestic violence
- Continuing Harrow's contribution to the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Shaping a Healthier Future programme
- Tracking the progress of Public Health transition
- The merger of Ealing Hospital Trust and North West London Hospitals Trust

- Mental Health service provision
- Care Quality Commission's inspection of local care homes
- Care Quality Commission inspection of Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital results
- Care Quality Commission inspection of North West London Hospitals NHS Trust results
- Protocol for working together – Harrow Scrutiny and Harrow Health and Well Being Board.

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 environment impact associated with this report.

Risk Management Implications

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No

No Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out as a result of this report as no changes to service delivery are proposed.

Corporate Priorities

Scrutiny investigations support the delivery of all of the corporate priorities

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

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