

Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee Agenda

Date: Thursday 14 December 2023

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: The Auditorium - Harrow Council Hub, Kenmore Avenue, Harrow, HA3 8LU

Membership (Quorum 3)

Chair: Councillor Yogesh Teli

Conservative Councillors: Nitesh Hirani
Samir Sumaria

Labour Councillors: Jerry Miles (VC)
Natasha Proctor

Conservative Reserve Members: 1. Salim Chowdhury
2. Govind Bharadia
3. Vipin Mithani

Labour Reserve Members: 1. Dan Anderson
2. Kandy Dolor

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Useful Information

Joining the Meeting virtually

The meeting is open to the public and can be viewed online at [London Borough of Harrow webcasts](#)

Attending the Meeting in person

Directions by car:

Go along Kenmore Avenue and head towards the Kenton Recreation Ground. When approaching the end of the Kenmore Avenue turn right before reaching the Kadwa Patidar Centre.

The venue is accessible to people with special needs. If you have specific requirements, please contact the officer listed on the front page of this agenda.

You will be admitted on a first-come-first basis and directed to seats.

Please:

- (1) Stay seated.
- (2) Access the meeting agenda online at [Browse meetings - Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee](#)
- (3) Put mobile devices on silent.
- (4) Follow instructions of the Security Officers.
- (5) Advise Security on your arrival if you are a registered speaker.

Filming / recording

This meeting may be recorded or filmed, and if you choose to attend, you will be deemed to have consented to this. Any recording may be published on the Council website.

Agenda publication date: Wednesday, 6 December 2023

Agenda - Part I

1. **Attendance by Reserve Members**
To note the attendance at this meeting of any duly appointed Reserve Members.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary or non pecuniary interests, arising from business to be transacted at this meeting, from all Members present.
3. **Minutes** (Pages 5 - 8)
That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2023 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.
4. **Public Questions**
To note any public questions received.

Questions will be asked in the order in which they were received. There will be a time limit of 15 minutes for the asking and answering of public questions.

[The deadline for receipt of public questions is 3.00 pm, 11 December 2023. 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.
6. **References from Council and Other Committees/Panels**
To receive any references from Council and/or other Committees or Panels.
7. **Draft Revenue Budget 2024/25 & Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2026/27**
(To Follow)
8. **Any Other Business**
Which cannot otherwise be dealt with.

Agenda - Part II - NIL

Data Protection Act Notice

The Council will record the meeting and will place the recording on the Council's website.

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

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Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Minutes

18 July 2023

Present:

Chair: Councillor Yogesh Teli

Councillors: Kandy Dolor Jerry Miles
Nitesh Hirani Samir Sumaria

Apologies received: Natasha Proctor

1. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Natasha Proctor

Councillor Kandy Dolor

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

RESOLVED: To note that Councillor Jerry Miles was appointed Vice-Chair of the Sub-Committee for the 2023-24 Municipal Year.

3. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that there were none.

4. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2023, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

5. Public Questions

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were received at the meeting.

6. Petitions

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were received.

7. References from Council and Other Committees/Panels

RESOLVED: To note that there were none.

Resolved Items

8. Annual Complaints Feedback Reports 2022 - 2023 - Children's and Adults'

Members received the Children's Services Complaints and Feedback Annual Report 2022/23.

The report provided an overview of the Council's performance on Children's Services complaints and feedback activity between the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Children's social care complaints were handled in line with the Children Act 1989 Regulations 2006 and Getting the Best from Complaints guidance 2006.

There was a legal requirement for all local authorities to have a complaint process in place in accordance with these regulations, The Children and Adoption Act 2002 and Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and related guidance. The statutory complaints procedure was designed to ensure the needs of the child were the heart of the process.

The three stages of the Children's statutory complaints procedure were:

- a) Stage 1 - Local Resolution stage (10 - 20 working days);
- b) Stage 2 - Independent investigation stage (25 – 65 working days); and
- c) Stage 3 - Independent Review Panel (30 working days).

Non-social care complaints, concerning Education and Special Educational needs, complaints were investigated in line with the Council's Corporate complaints procedure, which comprises two stages as follows:

- a) Stage 1- Local Resolution (15 working days); and
- b) Stage 2 - Review (20 working days)

The final stage for both corporate and statutory children's complaints was escalation to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Complaints about schools were managed within each school's own complaints procedure. Appeals for school places were considered under the School Appeal Process and disputes, such as those relating to the Education, Health and Care plans were considered through appeals to the Statutory Appeals tribunal.

Members made comments, and asked questions, which were responded to by Officers.

During 2022/23, the complaints team received a total of 309 representations for Children's Services, as compared to 246 in 2021/22.

Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023, the complaints service recorded:

- a) A total of 69 stage 1 complaints;
- b) 9 complaints escalated to stage 2 and there were no stage 3 reviews;
- c) the Ombudsman made a decision on three complaints;
- d) there were 96 Member and MP enquiries;
- e) 21 compliments were recorded;
- f) 106 queries were received.

43 stage 1 complaints concerned Children's social care and 26 complaints concerned Education and SEN services.

Complaint response times improved by 14% during 2022/23, with 63% of stage 1 complaints responded on time, as compared to 55% in the previous year.

68% of the complaints were not upheld, with 32% either upheld or partially upheld.

The complaints team will continue to work with all service teams to identify and address areas of learning from complaints for service improvement and to improve response times.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Members also received the Adult Social Care Services Complaints & Feedback Annual Report 2022/23.

The report provided an overview of the Council's performance on Adult Social Care Services complaints and feedback activity between the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Adults social care complaints were investigated in line with the requirements set out in the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.

Adult social care complaints were investigated under the Council's Adult Social Care Statutory Complaints procedure, which is a two-stage process for handling social care complaints. There was a statutory duty to produce an annual report on the complaints received, issues raised, and actions taken.

During 2022/23, the number of adult social care complaints recorded increased significantly, from six stage 1 complaints in 2021/22 to 116 complaints. This was due to an internal refresh of the complaints handling procedures.

Two thirds (66%) of stage 1 complaints were responded on time in 2022/23, which shows an improvement on the previous year (50%). Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023:

- a. the complaints team recorded a total of 510 representations;
- b. there were 116 stage 1 complaints;
- c. sixteen complaints progressed to stage 2 review;
- d. the Ombudsman made investigation decisions on four complaints;
- e. there were 196 Member and MP enquiries;
- f. the service recorded 64 compliments; and
- g. there were 106 queries addressed outside the formal complaint process.

There was an increase of 23% of total representations in 2022/23, with 510 total representations, compared to 414 total representations received in 2021/22.

The complaints team remains committed to improving performance activity across all areas of our complaint processes in responding to complaints and enquiries.

Adult social care services will continue using the learning from complaints to inform practice development.

Members made comments, and asked questions, which were responded to by Officers.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 7.35 pm).

(Signed) Councillor Yogesh Teli
Chair