

REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date:	20 th September 2012
Subject:	Standing Review of the Better Deal for Residents – Closing Report
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director, Partnership Development and Performance
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	All
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report updates the Overview and Scrutiny committee on the work which has been undertaken by the Standing Scrutiny Review of the Better Deal for Residents and proposes the closure of the project

Recommendations:

Councillors are recommended to:

- i. Consider and comment on the work of the standing the review of the Better Deal for Residents
- ii. Agree the closure of the project
- iii. Agree the proposals for the ongoing monitoring of T2

Section 2 – Report

This project was established to consider the impact of the council's transformation programme. Its relevance has increased over the last 12 months as the need for councils to fully investigate the equalities impacts of their change proposals was highlighted in the High Court judgement against Birmingham City Council ¹. By working with project managers to ensure they fully explored the impact of their proposals on local people, prior to a project commencing, the review group hoped to safeguard both residents' and the council's interests

The second component of this review's remit was to consider the outcomes of completing projects: have they achieved the anticipated outcomes, how can project managers evidence this, what has the impact been on residents and what lessons can be learnt for the future?

Since the last report, the review group has considered one more completing project:

Public Realm – Improving Street Based Services

There are four components to this project:

- Mobile Working Technology & New Back Office systems
- Organisational Restructure and Process Review
- Route Planning Software
- Interface with Access Harrow

All phases of the project have been completed and it was closed in January 2012

The group noted a number of issues in relation to the project:

- The project requires residents to raise issues via their household's 'My Harrow' account, residents can report any issues and also track progress to resolution of the issues which they have raised. However, they must log into their account to monitor progress. *The group felt that the tracking/notification process/ feedback loop could be improved perhaps via the generation of emails to advise residents when issues are resolved.*
- *There was also concern that the reporting of incidents is not mapped in order that they are visible to other residents who might then report the same issue and create potential delays in the system through duplication.*
- It was accepted that, at least in the short term, the project priority was to maintain performance in the context of delivering significant savings. Improved performance and the development of indicators to track this is a longer term ambition.

¹ The Queen (on the application of) W -v- Birmingham City Council and The Queen (on the application of) M, G and H -v- Birmingham City Council, 19th May 2011

Recent Developments

Since the establishment of the Better Deal for Residents review, the council has delivered most of the projects initiated and has embarked on a further transformation programme – T2. Whilst some of the projects included in the new programme have a potential impact on the lives of residents, a significant number are focussed on internal process of the council or on the necessary implementation of government proposals.

Recommendation

As a result of this change in the content of the council's transformation programme, the Scrutiny Leadership Group has proposed the closure of the Better Deal for Residents standing review.

However, it has also proposed that the content of T2 continues to be monitored by both the Leadership Group itself and by the Performance and Finance sub committee on a quarterly basis in order to identify any individual projects which might warrant more detailed scrutiny consideration. As a result of initial consideration, the scrutiny leadership has agreed the following:

- Parking Review – Further information to be requested
- Co-regulation phases 1 & 2 – Further information to be requested
- Commercialisation – recommend consideration by the Standing Review of the Budget when it considers Fees and Charges
- Scenario planning – recommend consideration by O&S
- Harrow Green Grid – recommend incorporation into any challenge panel which consider the Climate Change Strategy
- Strategic Review of Day Care – recommend specific challenge panel to consider
- Strategic Review of Residential and Nursery Care – recommend consideration by Health and Social Care sub committee

As and when projects are agreed for more detailed investigation, residents' involvement in project groups will be sought.

Phase One of this project made a number of recommendations with regard to the council's project management processes. Given the need to continue to ensure that the council is cognisant of potential impact on residents in the projects it proposes, the Performance and Finance sub committee will be asked to continue to monitor how effectively individual projects are assessing their impact and will seek reassurances on the implementation of the phase one recommendations.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Performance Issues

There are no specific performance issues associated with this report

Environmental Impact

There is no environmental impact associated with this report.

Risk Management Implications

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

Equalities implications

There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

Corporate Priorities

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Not required for this report

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

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Background Papers:

None