

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting:	18 December 2012
Subject:	Changes in Public Realm Services
Responsible Officer:	Caroline Bruce Corporate Director Environment and Enterprise
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	Environment and Enterprise: Councillor Sue Anderson Councillor Stephen Wright
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix – Information from the latest Directorate Scorecard

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out a general overview of the Public Realm Services and the changes planned for the service area.

Recommendations:

The Committee is requested to note the changes impacting on Public Realm Services.

Section 2 – Report

The Overview and Scrutiny committee has requested a report on “Changes to Public Realm”, with information on performance data of the current service.

The Council currently has a service area called Public Realm that has introduced a range of award winning technological improvements over recent years, with consequent savings in the cost of providing the services. The Public Realm service is currently part of a wider transformation project taking place in the Environment Division – the PRISM project.

Public Realm Services

Public Realm Services are universal services that are provided to all sections of the community – residents, businesses, visitors and staff – on a daily basis having a major impact on the overall satisfaction levels for the Council and quality of life for Harrow residents. The services are also central to the delivery of the Council’s corporate vision. It is essential that the service continues to develop and move forward, adapting to both internally and externally driven change.

Departmental core services are street cleansing of 488 kilometres of road and major and minor shopping areas, waste and recycling collection services to 88,000 households, management of the Council Civic Amenity Site, maintenance of 26 major parks and 50 open spaces, and bereavement services. The department also takes a lead in the Council’s drive to engage with local Communities through leadership of the Neighbourhood Champions scheme and the Pride in Harrow scheme, and engaging and supporting voluntary groups to participate in assisting the Council to maintain parks and open space areas. Other key services include maintenance and management of the Council green infrastructure, such as 300,000 trees, grass verges and hedges.

Contextual Change for 2012/13

Public Realm Services has been incorporated into the new Environment and Enterprise directorate providing stronger links with the growth and economic regeneration initiatives of the authority.

Keeping neighbourhoods clean, green and safe

A step change in the quality of the maintenance of Harrow’s neighbourhoods has been achieved in recent years. We listened and acted on resident’s requests for improvements in street cleansing and grounds maintenance resulting in significant increases in satisfaction. We have invested in new technology to improve the service and reduce operational costs. We are working proactively to help our residents recycle and to keep waste down. We are committed to protecting and enhancing the natural beauty of our borough and at the same time tackling climate change - the most serious

medium and long term threats facing us today. Along with our partners we work creatively to develop a sustainable, clean and safe borough. The practical on the ground engagement with the Metropolitan Police is an exemplar for London. We work with communities and our partner agencies to reduce community tensions and develop safer neighbourhoods, as well as improve access for all to the Harrow's greener areas.

Working with our partners in Planning we provide support to deliver Green Grid Projects in conjunction with the Mayor of London's Blue River Network scheme to connect Harrow's green areas by the opening up of river side walks. This combines with our work with the GLA Drain London project to develop a Surface Water Management Plan that will support the National Strategic objectives for the EU Floods Directive.

Supporting our Town Centre, our local shopping centres and our businesses

We work with strategic partners across the council and externally to support and planned improvements to the infrastructure of the Borough: from managing the delivery of public realm services, supporting businesses, community policing and supporting the delivery of the Area Action Plan for the Intensification Area, TfL's major schemes programme and the Outer London Fund activities.

Consultation and Engagement

We engage with the community extensively and have used the Let's Talk programme engaging in the new debate about what kind of services can and should be delivered in the future. Given the financial challenges facing us we cannot continue to provide services in the way we do currently. The status quo is not an option. We want and need the help of the community to shape Harrow for the future.

We want to enable citizens to become more active by providing more support and creating opportunities to contribute to the decision-making process and take a greater part in making Harrow better. We remain ambitious about what we can achieve together, and listening to what local residents want and say, we will reform and modernise our services, making further improvements and at the same time saving money.

The customer consultation exercise undertaken as part of the initial Let's talk programme illustrated the value members of the public place on the services we provide. Of the four main priorities of the Council, the "Keeping neighbourhoods clean, green and safe" gained the most support (92% of respondents) and was the top priority for 50% of respondents.

PRISM

The PRISM solution will completely refresh and refocus both the management and delivery of street-facing services. It will bring together appropriate 'delivery' activities that are currently dealt with by discrete teams across

Community Safety Services, Highways and Public Realm Services. The effect of this will be to provide a unified, on-street focussed team, with the technology and capability to deal with a broad range of issues and enquiries under a 'one and done' ethos. In summary, the PRISM solution will deliver:

1. **A new Target Operating Model (TOM)** to support Environment in its move towards a Commissioning model. The new structure will have three distinct functions:
 - a. A function to commission and manage contracts and projects;
 - b. A service delivery function to deliver planned and reactive work;
 - c. A support service function to manage systems, reporting and service specific administration such as licensing applications.
2. **Unified on-street services** that move away from the existing operating scenario where, for example, highways defects, licensing and fly tipping issues in the same street are dealt with by three different people from three different teams. This joined up working will allow efficiencies to be made whilst improving front line delivery.
3. **A common technology platform** that will support the delivery of unified on-street services and provide near real time updates to customers via Access Harrow and end-to-end visibility to the service.

Over time and in line with the commissioning approach, the service delivery function will reduce and the client services function will increase its capacity as service delivery is rationalised.

PRISM BENEFITS

1. **Improved customer service** - Multi-skilled front line staff will be able to resolve a broader range of issues than ever before. For example, an Inspector surveying the highway for defects will be able to investigate an urgent report of fly tipping in the vicinity, and arrange for this to be cleared. This will provide swifter resolution, enable near real time closure of the feedback loop to customers and provide the Council with a cost effective service solution.
2. **Reduction in line management** - The TOM organisational structure will consolidate existing teams, which will significantly reduce the overall line management requirement. The new structure will adhere to the Councils span of control model where appropriate.
3. **Improved productivity and resource utilisation** - Mobile technology and scheduling will improve productivity as the need for staff to attend the office in order to receive job instructions is reduced. Additionally, supervisors will have access to real time management information about resource location and availability, enabling an increasingly structured approach to the assignment and utilisation of resource.
4. **More efficient provision of administrative support** - Consolidating non-service delivery activities into a single team, coupled with a review of business process will reduce current administrative overheads whilst

providing more effective support to the service delivery function.

PERFORMANCE

A benchmarking exercise has been carried out using LAPS (London Authority Performance Solution) data for y/e 2011/12.

Harrow achieved a top quartile position for waste collection related environmental indicators, but compares less well on street cleaning related functions.

Title of measure	Polarity	Harrow			All London boroughs 2011-12				
		Rank	Position	Actual 2011-12	Worst figure	Lower Quartile (LQ)	Median	Upper Quartile (UQ)	Best figure
NI 191 Residual household waste per household	▼	9th	 Best third	539kg	808kg	≤648kg	570kg	≥492kg	409kg
NI 192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	▲	2nd	 Best 25%	48%	19%	≥29%	34%	≤39%	50%
NI 195a Improved street and environmental cleanliness – Litter	▼	20th	 Lowest 25%	8%	15%	≤8%	6%	≥4%	2%
NI 195b Improved street and environmental cleanliness - Detritus	▼	20th	 Lowest 25%	13%	22%	≤12%	9%	≥6%	2%
NI 195c Improved street and environmental cleanliness – Graffiti	▼	18th	 Lowest 25%	6%	14%	≤6%	4%	≥3%	1%
NI 195d Improved street and environmental cleanliness - Fly posting.	▼	=5th	 Best 25%	1%	6%	≤3%	1%	≥1%	0%

Information from the latest Directorate Scorecard:

Note: RAG ratings are as per defined in SAP. Where there is no target, and a RAG rating, this is as assessed by the Service Manager.

Scorecard Objective: Keeping neighbourhoods clean, green and safe

Ref No	Title of Measure	Polarity	Target Quarterly	Actual Y/E 10-11	Actual Y/E 11-12	Actual Q1 12-13	RAG Q1 12-13	Actual Q2 12-13	RAG Q2 12-13	Dir	Y/E forecast	Quarterly Commentary/ Assessment
NI 191	Residual household waste per household	▼	135 kg	508kg	539kg	129kg	LG	Dec-12	-	↓	510kg	Q1 suggests that annual target will be met. Q2 data available Dec-12
NI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	▲	50%	50%	48%	50%	LG	Dec-12	-	↔	48%	Q2 data available Dec-12 2011/12 reduction in recycling mainly due to reduced recycling from dirty MRF contract operated by WLWA. Unlikely to improve this year
NI 195a	Improved street and environmental cleanliness - Litter	▼	6%	5%	8%	6%	LG	7%	HR	↑	6.5%	See commentary in performance section Y/E forecast is guide based on average of Q1/Q2.
NI 195b	Improved street and environmental cleanliness - Detritus	▼	9%	5%	13%	13%	HR	17%	HR	↑	15%	See commentary in performance section Y/E forecast is guide based on average of Q1/Q2.
NI 195c	Improved street and environmental cleanliness - Graffiti.	▼	3%	5%	6%	6%	HR	7%	HR	↑	6.5%	See commentary in performance section Y/E forecast is guide based on average of Q1/Q2.

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NI 195d	Improved street and environmental cleanliness - Fly posting.	▼	1%	0%	1%	2%	LR	2%	HR	↔	2%	See commentary in performance section Y/E forecast is guide based on average of Q1/Q2.
NI 196	Improved street and environmental cleanliness - fly tipping	▼	Very effective	Effective	TBA	Annual				↔	-	Chasing Y/E figures
Local	Tree planting	▲	500 (annual)	600	685	0	LG	0	LG	↔	650	Planting to take place in Q3 and Q4. End of year forecast is based on the same capital funding as previous years

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. The budgets for the service area are agreed by the Council through the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The PRISM project has been agreed by Cabinet for implementation to save £1.5 million for 2013-14 and a further £350,000 for 2014-15.

Performance Issues

Performance information has been provided in the main body of this report and at Appendix 1.

Environmental Impact

Although this service area has a significant impact on environmental practices, there are no direct implications arising from the report.

Risk Management Implications

None directly attributable to this report. The PRISM project has a separate Risk Register.

Equalities Implications

None directly attributable to this report. The PRISM project has separate Equality Impact Assessments.

Corporate Priorities

The Public Realm Services support the council to achieve its Corporate priorities, in particular:

- **Keeping neighbourhoods clean, green and safe**
- **Supporting our town centre, our local shopping centres and businesses.**

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

John Edwards
Divisional Director Environment Services
john.edwards@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

Appendix 1

Information from the latest Directorate Scorecard:

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