

REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: 23 July 2013
Subject: Scrutiny Lead Member Report
Responsible Officer: Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director, Strategic Commissioning
Scrutiny Lead Member area:

- Health and Social Care
- Environment and Enterprise
- Corporate 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.

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: Felicity Page, Senior Professional Scrutiny, 020 8420 9204, felicity.page@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY LEADS BRIEFING - 5 JUNE 2013

Present

Cllr Ben Wealthy

Cllr Janet Mote

Felicity Page, Senior Professional Scrutiny

The purpose of this introductory briefing was for the new Health and Social Care Leads to discuss some initial views on priorities for the Municipal Year 2013-14.

Following recent national media focus on the performance of hospitals Accident & Emergency (A&E) departments exceeding the four hour waiting time, Members requested further information on the picture locally – of particular interest was hospitals in NW London associated with the Shaping a Healthier Future consultation. Furthermore, as part of the future changes Members agreed that it was important to look at performance of local hospitals and how this fits with readiness to provide more community based services e.g taking into account the negative media attention the new 111 telephone number had received. Members also agreed they would like to consider the overall challenges facing the Council and the hospital.

The Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee had been considering the performance of the Integrated Care Organisation and district nursing – there had been some concern that there was insufficient resource to match the requirement. This was an issue the Leads felt was important to pursue.

The leads receive CQC inspection reports from the Senior Professional Scrutiny on a weekly basis (where one or more improvement had been identified). The Leads requested this continue.

Going forward, the leads agreed they would like monthly meetings with the Senior Professional Scrutiny, quarterly meetings with the Corporate Director and quarterly meetings with CCG/NHS colleagues.

For action

To action all issues raised by Leads and report back on progress at the next briefing.

Next meeting: July 2013

ENVIRONMENT AND ENTERPRISE SCRUTINY LEADS BRIEFING - 14 MAY 2013

Present

Councillor Sue Anderson, Councillor Stephen Wright
Caroline Bruce, Philip Hamberger, Simone van Elk

1. Service plan

Members had been provided with a draft version of the service plan for the directorate in advance of the meeting. The process of writing the service plan had started with workshops to consult staff on their views of what should be included. Drafts of the plan have been discussed in the directorate and divisional management teams. The latest version, dated 14th May, will be put forward for broader consultation with staff and also discussed in staff team meetings.

The service plan contains a description of the directorate's new structure, the department's objectives based on the corporate plan and a plan of action to achieve those objectives. The service plan forms a link from the corporate plan on the one hand to the supporting divisional service plans through to individual staff's IPADs.

Members were also advised that the budget in the service plan contains savings of £7m in the first year and £2m in the second year.

Councillor Wright suggested including in the service plan the assumptions underlying the mission statements to provide the context within which the goals in the service plan are set. He also suggested adding a record of last year's objectives, whether they'd been achieved and what still needed to be done. Philip Hamberger offered to provide the members with a one page summary of last year's goals, taken from the improvement board papers.

Members were advised that the directorate is currently running weekly review board meetings, to monitor delivery of the MTFS. Budget profiling was currently being developed. Councillor Anderson commented that the new budget forecasting system and revenue monitoring system should assist the budget monitoring. Members were advised that monthly finance meetings and quarterly improvement boards were also in place to monitor progress effectively.

Members were advised that the profiling of the capital spend is an area for improvement. In addition, the website could contain more detailed information about the capital programme and delivery to time and budget against the schedule.

Councillor Wright inquired about the policy in the service plan of using the pension fund to support house building in the borough. It was explained that this was taken directly from the corporate plan and that the policy would legally be possible, but more work would be required to understand whether it was desirable.

Councillor Anderson commented that she was pleased to see that the integration of different services in the directorate was highlighted in the service plan, as this has a significant effect on residents' experiences of the council.

Councillor Wright suggested adding measurements to the goal of operational excellence, to provide a starting point against which performance could be measured. Members were advised that work is currently being done to consolidate the corporate score card. The aim is to move towards a pyramid model where the scorecards are more detailed for teams.

2. Implementation of PRISM

The PRISM project consists of a restructure of the department, a reengineering of the business processes and improvements in the technology used. The restructure should be fully implemented in July, while the changes in technology will follow at the end of the year. The decision was made to implement the staffing changes from the MTFS and PRISM at the same time to ensure members of staff received one letter explaining their status rather than two.

PRISM safeguards staff at the service level and aims to improve customer service standards, while reducing the management layers. The MTFS does affect the numbers of frontline staff and the services offered. The projected savings from PRISM are £1.85m; £1.5m this year and £0.35m in 14/15. Members were advised that during the implementation of PRISM, staff have been provided with fortnightly newsletters, team briefings and the opportunity for individual meetings with senior managers. Fortnightly meetings are organised with trade unions to discuss the implementation of PRISM. Caroline commented that she has recently briefed the Labour group on PRISM and offered briefings to the Conservative group and other members.

3. Capital Programme and Disposals

Members were advised that the budget includes provision for two disposals. Work is currently being undertaken to develop a strategy for disposals. In addition, a discussion is taking place in the directorate and across the Council around the wider area of regeneration.

For action

That the members be provided with an excerpt from the improvement board papers containing a one page summary of the directorate's goals.

Next meeting: 6 June 2013

ENVIRONMENT AND ENTERPRISE SCRUTINY LEADS BRIEFING - 6

JUNE 2013

PRESENT:

Councillor Philip O'Dell, Councillor Stephen Wright
Caroline Bruce, Philip Hamberger, Simone van Elk

1. Directorate's restructure

A) Public Realm Integrated Service Model (PRISM)

In the coming weeks, workshops will be organised to address staff concerns and identify potential solutions. The technology that will support the new organisational model is currently being reviewed and staff engaged. Councillor Wright asked whether the council's software would get linked that of the council's major contractors, for example for highways maintenance. The corporate director advised that these links hadn't originally been part of the PRISM business case but the idea was being looked at. Councillor O'Dell inquired whether any changes were expected to or within the organisational model. The corporate director answered that this could be possible, but it was important to see what came out of the workshops, and alternative views from staff, before she could comment further.

B) Service plans

Members were advised that the service plan was written to show how the Environment and Enterprise directorate supports the commitments in the council's corporate plan.

Councillor Wright commented that he appreciated that a risk register was included in the service plan and suggested adding measurements of start points for priorities against which progress could later be assessed.

Councillor O'Dell asked about the directorate's plan to explore setting up a Harrow Energy Co-operative. Members were advised that this idea was based on the big London Energy Switch, where the council supports residents to switch energy suppliers collectively and save money. The next opportunity for residents to sign up is in September.

Councillor O'Dell commented on the performance indicator that sets out that 50% of the boroughs properties would have a smartwater property marking by March 2013 and asked what percentage of the Boroughs properties currently had the marking. Members were advised that these measures were included to indicate that the original target date for completion had lapsed and reflected the corporate scorecard that is under review.

Councillor O'Dell commented on the performance indicator around residual house waste (residual household waste per household in kilograms). As the target for 2011/12 had been met, Councillor O'Dell suggested that the target for 2013/14 could be more ambitious. The corporate director advised members that all corporate performance measures are undergoing review.

Councillor Wright inquired about the £185k budget to help unemployed residents back to work. The corporate director advised members that the DWP has a back to work scheme that is delivered by Reed. Alongside it, the directorate is running the Xcite programme which helps long term unemployed residents, often facing multiple difficulties, back to work. So far the Xcite scheme has supported a significant number of people into employment and was significantly out-performing the Reed programme. Councillor Wright suggested greater visibility of the Xcite programme and it was agreed that it would feature in the members' monthly briefing.

2. Improvement board papers

Councillor O'Dell commented on the performance measure NI 192 (percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting) where the estimated end of year result is 46%. Councillor O'Dell commented that if more waste goes to landfill, more tax will have to be paid and inquired whether these costs are reflected in calculations for the future Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Corporate director advised the members that the budget had been revised to incorporate the risk of rising costs for waste disposal.

The corporate director advised members on the debt recovery of rent arrears. The directorate is in conversation with the organisation in arrears and specific questions were asked about Flash Musicals.

3. Property portfolio

A) Policy development and B) Disposals

The members were informed that they could receive an updated list of disposals following further discussion with the portfolio holder about the details of that list. A regeneration strategy is being developed for the whole borough and officers from different directorates are included in that work. The plans will, no doubt, be presented at a future Cabinet meeting. There would also be a full schedule for disposals and is likely in the Autumn.

4. Any matters the corporate director wishes to raise with members

The Corporate Director suggested that the regeneration strategy might be an item scrutiny would want to look at before it goes to Cabinet.

5. Major contracts

Philip Hamberger provided the members with a document which lists all the major contracts over £1m held in the Environment and Enterprise department. Members were advised that Philip Hamberger chairs the directorate's contract management board, which concerns all the contracts in the department over £1m. At every renewal of a contract the directorate has a savings target. The procurement team is involved in the negotiations as well as the officers who are the lead contact for the contracts.

ACTIONS:

- That members are provided with an updated schedule for disposals after agreement by the portfolio holder
- That all members are provided with information on the Xcite scheme via the monthly written members' briefing
- That members are provided with additional information regarding the percentage of properties with smartwater property marking
- That members be provided with the final version of the service plan

Next meeting: Monday 29th July 2013

CORPORATE RESOURCES SCRUTINY LEADS BRIEFING - 13 JUNE 2013

Present

Cllr Kam Chana, Performance Lead Member, Resources

Cllr Jerry Miles, Policy Lead Member, Resources

Tom Whiting, Corporate Director – Resources

Simon George, Director of Finance & Assurance

Guy Fiegehen, Scrutiny Officer

1. Update on the new Resources Directorate

Members agreed:

- To ask to see copies of the consultation document issued for re-structure
- That this item be kept on the agenda for their next briefing.

2. Performance of Corporate Resources Directorate in 2012-13 Quarter 4

Members agreed:

- To ask for a breakdown of the directorate's performance in dealing with Freedom of Information (FOI) requests distinguishing request by their level of complexity

3. School Places

Members noted the information provided.

4. Capital Debt Structure

Members agreed:

- To ask to see the relevant section of the February 2013 Cabinet report
- To recommend to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that a scrutiny review is conducted of the council's debt structure.

5. Rise in Pension Fund Levy

Members noted the information provided.

6. Agenda for next Leads Briefing

Members agreed:

- To meet the Scrutiny Officer in advance of the next briefing to consider agenda items.

7. Date of Next Meeting

- 4th September 2013