

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date: 25th February 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
- Health and Social Care

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 for Children and Families, Community Health and Well Being, Environment and Enterprise, Health and Social Care

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:

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Background Papers:

None

SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBERS CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Thursday 28th November 2013

PRESENT

- § Cllr Victoria Silver, Performance Lead Children and Families
- § Cllr Lynda Seymour, Policy Lead Children and Families

- § Catherine Doran, Corporate Director Children and Families Services
- § Melissa Caslake, Divisional Director Targeted Services
- § Dipika Patel, Senior Professional, Performance and Data – Children’s Social Care
- § Richard Segalov, Divisional Director Early Intervention Services
- § Richard Selwyn, Head of Commissioning
- § Fola Irikefe, Scrutiny Officer

Commissioning and Service Plans

The Head of Commissioning presented the Strategic Commissioning Framework for the council. He explained that the council’s approach to commissioning involved identifying the needs of service users and then developing services tailored to those needs. Co-production with service users and families is key to this. On enquiry over how the behaviour shift and focus was being measured in staff, the Head of Commissioning explained that the ‘*outcomes on the wall*’ has been useful in measuring the change in the approach to service commissioning and provision. The Corporate Director, Children and Families further added that the Ofsted framework was being used to measure changes and outcomes.

The overall directorates service plan and the various service plan's for the different service areas also provide a framework to measure performance. Service plans focus on targets and outputs rather than outcomes. Individual performance is also measured through performance appraisal (IPAD’s). The Corporate Director, Children and Families explained that a great deal of progress had been made as a number of areas had started from a very low base.

Progress Update on Young Carers

The Divisional Director Early Intervention Services gave an update on the work being done in relation to young carers, including:

- § Induction for new staff now includes a section on working with young carers and the voluntary sector.
- § The councils database for Adults and the young carers database is now being reviewed to look into what information should be available on the framework i system.
- § Pro-active work is now taking place with schools and youth centres in highlighting Adults who are receiving a service who have children to gain a better idea of identified young carers. Communication and dialogue between the various organisations is key to this.

On enquiry over how many young carers are known to the service it was heard that there is possibly between 130 and 140 in the borough. The service is currently working with around 10% of young carers and considering ways to

reach out and work with the others. Councillor Silver explained that she is aware of some positive young carer to young carer work that has taken place at Bentley Wood School. The peer to peer relationship building has had some positive outcomes.

The Childs Journey through care Implementation Plan

The Corporate Director for Children and Families explained that workshops were now being held with staff to further embed the approach to see things through '*the eyes of a child*'. The lead member expressed that this approach has been around for some time and is viewed as good practice for working with vulnerable children and young people. The Divisional Director responded saying that the approach has been present for a while but has very much been staff lead; progress is now being made to ensure that this approach to working is actually embedded and policy is actually being put into practice.

The Corporate Director for Children and Families explained that the safeguarding service area previously had some cultural problems and a number of managers have now left. There is now a major cultural and management change underway in safeguarding. Members took note of the previous problems that were reported and enquired over what the plans were to improve things. It was explained that progress had been made and the workforce strategy that has recently been developed was considered to be good by Ofsted.

Training has always been strong in the directorate and will continue to be utilised effectively by staff. The POD model of working was also being implemented. This approach focusses on social workers having effective group discussions regarding their cases and responsibility is shared across teams looking at key issues and risks involved with individual cases. The POD model has been running since August 2013 officially but the foundation for this working practice had been in place prior to this.

Councillor Seymour expressed her concerns with staff morale in view of negative media towards the social work profession, the challenges related to the actual day-to-day job and caseloads and the number of temporary staff in post. The Divisional Director Targeted Services explained that caseloads are a challenge in the borough and have come down slightly but still remain very high. The aim is to have 18; the caseloads are monitored weekly but persistently remain high. The Corporate Director Children and Families further added that the organisation is running with 12/13 above establishment and plans are underway to try and make temporary agency staff permanent.

In respect of an enquiry over the relationship between social workers and manager's it was explained that an '*open door*' policy and culture now exists. The lead member's expressed that she would like to view working relationships at first hand and was interested in the multi-agency communication and how it all works. The Corporate Director Children and Families expressed that she would be happy to help facilitate Councillors to witness working practices at first hand as previous lead members had also done.

Follow up action: Councillor's to sit in and witness a Case Conference/ MASH meeting.

The following was also discussed in brief:

Protection of children under 5

It was enquired over what work was done in relation to outreach for children under 5. The Corporate Director Children and Families explained that she regularly meets with Divisional Director - Children and Families to, monitor and track cases and look into emerging cases. Early intervention step down and step up cases now form part of the key judgement for the Ofsted inspection.

CLA Improvement Plan

The leads learnt that more needs to be done in relation to the implementation of the CLA Improvement Plan and the role of the Virtual Head has had some challenges in terms of making an impact. The key issues for CLA attainment, attendance and achievement is placement stability.

Follow up action: Members requested an update on participation levels. Report to be presented to Corporate Parenting Board in January 2014 to be circulated to lead members.

Children and Families Bill 2013/ SEN Changes

The Government is reforming childcare to try to ensure the system focuses on providing safe, high-quality care and early education for children. The Bill will extend the SEN system from birth to 25. The changes take forward the reform programme set out in *Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability: Progress and next steps* including by:

- § replacing old statements with a new birth- to-25 education, health and care plan;
- § offering families personal budgets; and
- § improving cooperation between all the services that support children and their families, particularly requiring local authorities and health authorities to work together.

Follow up action: It was agreed that a briefing/seminar on the new requirements for SEN provision and support and the changes the council is making to meet the requirements will be organised before the end of the year.

The next meeting will take place in February/ March 2014.

**SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBERS COMMUNITY HEALTH AND
WELL BEING
Wednesday 8th January 2014**

PRESENT

- ⌘ Cllr Nana Asante, Performance Lead Children and Families
- ⌘ Cllr Chris Mote, Policy Lead Children and Families

- ⌘ David Corby, Service Manager Public Realm Maintenance
- ⌘ Lynne Margetts, Service Manager Scrutiny

This briefing had been arranged in order for the Community Health and Well Being scrutiny leads to be advised as to how the borough's parks are being utilised to contribute to residents' well being.

Informal Activities

The Service Manager Public Realm Maintenance outlined how the parks are being used. He advised that his preference is for the parks to offer 'informal' physical activity. He proposed that this informal approach is more likely to be attractive to residents less involved in physical activity. He advised that there are 6.5 green gyms in the boroughs parks, the first having been introduced in 2003. The gyms are provided by Wickstead Leisure and are well used. Each provides 6 – 7 stations each of which is designed to exercise separate parts of the body using the individual's body weight and no additional resistance.

The gyms are proving very popular and are not only contributing to the physical well being of residents but also to the social cohesion of the borough as people who would be unlikely to engage with each other, exercise together.

Each installation costs £18k and the council would like to install more. The Service Manager Public Realm Maintenance outlined how some of the developments had been funded. The Alexandra and Chandos gyms are funded jointly by the council and Harrow Primary Care Trust (now Clinical Commissioning Group) and have specifically attempted to address the needs of an area experiencing high levels of obesity. Government grant has been used to fund two more gyms to provide a more geographically equitable distribution, funding from the Neighbourhood Investment Scheme had funded two more and Section 106 money had been used for Harrow Recreation Ground

The Service Manager advised that he would like to see more older people using the facilities, some of the equipment is specifically designed to meet the needs of older people. Cllr Mote expressed his interest in ensuring that this is pursued in order to further enhance community cohesion, between older and younger residents, across the borough.

It is hoped that by bringing accessible physical activity into the parks, there will be positive health gains for residents and savings for health partners. Members asked whether there is any evidence of the potential impact. It was

pointed out that evidence has suggested that using one of the gyms 3 times per week can improve diabetes by 30%

Cllr Asante was advised that links are being developed with the Clinical Commissioning Group and also with parks user groups. The council has bid to the Mayor for funding in relation to our green grid plan, although there is no longer a requirement to produce a green grid plan, the council has seen the benefit of trying to join up our green spaces. Capital programme funding is also being sought to support this.

Cycle volume is also being increased in the parks as cycle routes through the parks take cyclists off busy roads and thus encourage cycling by making it safer.

Organised Sport

The Service Manager advised that there are a number of close links between football and cricket clubs and the borough's parks which are encouraging young people into their membership to improve their skills and thus develop an exercise 'habit'.

Bowls clubs, though generally more popular with older residents are seeing more younger people getting involved. The council no longer provides financial support for bowls clubs but ironically this appears to have increased their viability – Harrow has lost 2 out of 9 clubs whilst Middlesex as a whole has lost 50% of clubs. The self maintenance which has result from the withdrawal of council support has also helped to contribute to the well being of club members as they become increasingly involved in providing the maintenance support to their clubs.

The council is also developing links between schools and parks

Allotments

The council owns 33 allotment sites which enjoy 96% occupation. Site representatives operate at each location and are able to offer support to new allotment holders and are also a way for the council to communicate to he holders. In order to make take up more sustainable, the council is now splitting plots in half, which makes them more manageable

The Service Manager acknowledged that the council needs to do more in terms of communicating what is available in the borough's parks and open spaces. He intends to use neighbourhood champions' network, parks user groups, cycling networks and allotment representatives to support in this.

FOR ACTION

The Environment and Enterprise Leads would like to be kept informed of any developments in terms of sponsorship for parks

**SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBER'S ENVIRONMENT AND
ENTERPRISE
Monday 13th January 2014**

PRESENT

- § Cllr Phil O'Dell, Performance Lead, Environment and Enterprise
- § Cllr Yogesh Teli, Policy Lead, Environment and Enterprise

- § Caroline Bruce, Corporate Director, Environment and Enterprise
- § Philip Hamberger, Divisional Director, Business and Service Development
- § Andrew Baker, Head of Climate Change
- § Lynne Margetts, Service Manager Scrutiny

Update on the Energy Company Obligation

The Head of Climate Change briefed councillors as follows.

Over the past year, the council has participated in the 'Big Switch', a London-wide fuel switching project which has helped a number of residents reduce their fuel costs by changing provider. With one in eight households impacted by fuel poverty, it is essential that the council takes a strategic view of how to tackle the issue.

In March 2013 the council's 'Delivering Warmer Homes' strategy was submitted to Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) as required under the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA).

In April 2013, the Government introduced the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) which requires energy companies to meet targets to reduce carbon emissions in the domestic sector. This was to be achieved by investing £1.3bn a year in energy efficiency schemes. Over the last year, the council has explored options with a number of suppliers to provide ECO funded schemes in the borough. In December 2013, the Government indicated that the scheme is to be altered. The changes, which will be consulted on will extend the deadline for the ECO scheme by two years to March 2017 and reduce the annual carbon targets by a third. The net effect is that the scheme will increase by a third but be spread over four instead of two years. The changes will also allow the companies to carry out more cavity wall and loft insulations as opposed to the more expensive solid wall insulations – this is a particular concern for Harrow where nearly two thirds of homes have solid walls.

The changes have introduced some uncertainty into the procurement process for the delivery of the investment but this has also offered an opportunity to enter into a longer-term contract as a result of the extended end date for ECO. The council hopes to procure an ECO partner over the next three to six months to deliver the ECO project to cover the period up to March 2015. All types of tenure will be included in the project. The funding must be allocated before the end of 2014.

We have also submitted a bid to DECC under the Green Deal Communities fund to carry out a retrofit programme in the borough which will help over 1000 households. If the bid is successful, it will attract £1m funding from DECC and £1.3m ECO funding. The recent changes had quadrupled the budget to £80m but not extended the December 2014 deadline. We await a decision from DECC.

During the current year, the council has also supported:

- A Warm Zones CIC scheme which has helped 24 homes
- Allocated £45k to help 20 fuel poor households via the council's affordable warmth programme (£40k of ECO support has also been provided by match funding)
- Installed solid wall insulation to six houses in Stiven Crescent (funded by DECC Green Deal Pioneer Places)
- Installed solid wall insulation and roof insulation to 78 flats in Francis Road (Housing project)

Public Health has financed this year's Harrow Housewarmers project with a £80k allocation to provide assistance to some of the most vulnerable people in the borough. Environment and Enterprise have allocated £45k from the Affordable Warmth budget to support this project.

Organisational responsibility for the delivery of the Warmer Homes strategy was transferred to the Community Health and Well Being Directorate as many of the benefits of the programme are social with carbon reduction a welcome additional environmental benefit.

Cllr O'Dell queried how the decisions were made with regard to the ECO allocations locally. He was advised that allocation of funding is at the discretion of the authority but that the council will wish to target the fuel poor areas of the borough. He also enquired whether there is sufficient deficit in the council's housing stock to take up the funding, particularly as most of the council's stock has now achieved the 'Decent Homes' standard. He was advised that the Green Deal Communities fund is targeted at private sector properties. ECO funding can be applied to all types of tenure

Cllr Teli asked what the criteria for grant allocation would be. He was advised that a contribution towards overall cost is required and that there are a number of sources of funding which can be used for this purpose (E.g. ECO funding, Green Deal communities funding, Green Deal cash-back) before residents are required to make a contribution. Residents could use savings, bank loans or could take out a Green Deal. (Under the Green Deal repayments are made via the electricity bill.) If the resident moves, the debt stays with the property. He was also advised that approximately 58,000 properties in the borough have solid walls and the target submitted to Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) for this work is 425 properties. Cllr O'Dell asked if the solid walls insulation work can be specified in the contract. He was advised that the contract specifies the financial value of work which will be undertaken, thus the ambition to address a number of solid wall insulation properties can be included.

Cllr O'Dell enquired as to how the council is gearing up to deliver the project, given the tight time scales outlined above. He was advised that the project will be delivered by a contractor at arms length from the council. The procurement of this contractor is beginning and soft market testing is underway at the moment – a number of companies have experience in this area. The contract is likely to have two elements; – an ECO project based around all tenures but using the council housing stock as the “base-load” with a delivery date by April 2017; and, a Green Deal Communities fund project, which would be subject to DECC funding, with delivery by Dec 2014.

Cllr Teli asked if it is realistic for the work to be delivered by the end of 2014. He was advised that DECC had (informally) indicated that they are likely to want to ensure that the money has been allocated to local authorities by the deadline.(rather than require all projects to be completed by the deadline)

Budget Update

The Corporate Director advised that as a result of very tight financial management, the anticipated year-end overspend has been significantly reduced. This detail of this will be confirmed in the Improvement Board papers in February.

Towards Excellence

The Corporate Director introduced the paper which has been prepared for presentation to the Performance and Finance sub committee. The Corporate Director outlined some of the issues facing the project, in particular the timetable and concerns re the delivery of some of the IT. The E&E management team is monitoring the delivery of this project closely. .

Cllr Teli asked if there is any risk of demands for further payments being made as a result of the timetable delays. The Corporate director commented that the change request from Capita for additional payment as a result of the ‘pause’ work was nearing completion. There are no further payments associated with delays, but additional functionality could be charged.

Cllr Teli was also advised that further faults found during testing must be resolved at the provider’s cost, the savings from the Towards Excellence project are dependent on staff reductions and these cannot be delivered without an effective technological solution.

Cllr Teli asked how the systems were being tested, he is concerned that this must involve live, in-field testing with significant volumes. The Divisional Director assured him that this will be the case.

The Corporate Director also advised that the restructure has gone well, with 92% of staff being assimilated into new posts. The Directorate has worked well with the trade unions and there have been no appeals on job evaluations. There have been no compulsory redundancies to date.

With regard to New Ways of Working the Divisional Director advised that 230 processes have been mapped and 'Stop, Start, Continue' guides relating to this mapping have been produced and are being used in training. Service definition documentation is being approved on a daily/weekly basis and launches are dependent on the quality of training. The Directorate is transitioning to its new structure gradually – a phased, soft launch.

For Action

The Lead Councillors will consider the Improvement Board papers and associated performance and budget information at their next meeting. The Lead Councillors will continue to monitor the implementation of the Towards Excellence project

SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBER'S HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

2nd December 2014

PRESENT

Cllr Sachin Shah, Cllr Victoria Silver, Cllr Ben Wealthy
Paul Najsarek, Corporate Director, Community Health and Well Being, Interim
Head of Paid Service, Bernie Flaherty, Director Adult Social Services, Chris
Greenway, Interim Head of Safeguarding Assurance & Quality Services,
Lynne Margetts, Service Manager Scrutiny

APOLOGIES

Cllr Vina Mithani

HEALTH UPDATE/PIONEERS PILOT

The Corporate Director updated the members on health issues.

The council is now in the 3rd year of health funding transfer which sees monies allocated to health from Central Government passed to the local authority. This has been a challenging arrangement locally but 2013-14 has seen the council and Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) reach an agreement on payment.

Health finances are difficult, the CCG has budgeted to spend £20m more than they have available. The Department of Health have authorised a £10m overspend, to be financed from elsewhere in the health sector, but the CCG is still experiencing in-year pressures which mean it is likely to overspend on the agreed £10m.

The council and CCG continue discussions around 'continuing care' keeping the focus on the care user. A dispute resolution process has now been agreed.

The focus on integration continues and NW London has been successful in its bid to become an integration 'pioneer'. This will give the region access to additional bespoke expertise, support and constructive challenge through a range of national and international experts.

The Corporate Director and Director of Adult Social Services outlined some of the successful work which is underway involving GPs, Central and NW London Mental Health Trust, CCGs the Council and the local NHS Trust:

- The development of a 'Blue Book' for patients to include all key information, which can be taken by patients to all appointments.
- Care Home Support Team project. To develop more robust patient pathway for step up and step down for Harrow Care Home residents and reduce inappropriate admissions to hospital from residential homes.
- Age UK 'Home not Hospital' project which provides support for service users recently discharged from hospital to settle back into the home more successfully e.g. food, heating etc.
- ICE (In Case of Emergency) project – A pilot project which is providing support to some of the most vulnerable over 75 year olds in the borough – the pilot which involves 24 users runs until February when a full appraisal

of the success of the project will be undertaken. Initial results have been very positive with a large reduction in hospital admissions for the group compared to data on the previous six months representing a potentially large saving for the health service.

- Dementia services are being reviewed in the light of comments from service users who are in need of discreet support post diagnosis. This has resulted in the setup of a pilot project called 'Annie's Place' at the Milman's Centre. Up to 25 people have attended the service which is held one day per week. Cllr Silver sought clarification as to how this service will fit with other services, e.g. Dementia Café. The Director of Adult Social Services agreed that all services will be fully scoped to ensure there is no duplication.

The Corporate Director commented that the council needs to begin to plan the integration of health and social care. He advised that 8 local CCGs have now contributed to a shared financial pool to support the design of an integrated system. In order to deliver the design they have appointed consultants McKinsey and Company. In February 2014, a 3-year plan for integration will be presented to the council. It is assumed that the investment in the services required to deliver integration will be found from disinvestment in existing health services.

The Corporate Director advised that a summit is planned for next year to secure the views of the community. Cllr Silver commented that a single summit may not be sufficient and that the summit must be properly planned and funded in order to engage with the community effectively. The Corporate Director agreed and advised that Council colleagues are trying to influence the health approach to the design of the programme in order to maximise the benefit from it.

The Corporate Director advised that an £3.8bn Integration Transformation Fund has been established nationally from which Harrow can expect to receive £14m in 2015/16 which with funds from the Council and CCG will provide an investment pot for integrating services. However, he pointed out that the £3.8bn is existing money and is based on the requirement of all CCGs to find savings. This places Harrow CCG in an increasingly difficult position given existing financial difficulties.

Councillors continue to be concerned with regard to the announced closures of A&E services at Central Middlesex and Ealing Hospitals and the consequential increased pressures on the A&E at Northwick Park Hospital. The Corporate Director advised that he has been assured that no change will take place without clear planning of replacement services. He also advised that mitigating the changes will require up front investment in community services.

Cllr Wealthy commented that this is the first test of the success of integration proposals, he felt there has been poor engagement with scrutiny, the Health and Social Care sub committee has requested to be updated on plans but have not received any information. Cllr Silver felt that the lack of engagement may reflect a crisis of leadership and she was also concerned with regard governance arrangements – it is not clear how decisions are being made.

The Corporate Director commented that the CCG is under significant pressure and appears to be focussing on immediate issues rather than taking a longer term strategic view. He undertook to speak to the Chair of the CCG with regard to scrutiny's concerns and councillors agreed to consider whether the Chair of the CCG should be invited to the committee prior to the end of this administration.

The Government is again making funding available to address winter pressures being experienced by elderly residents in the borough. However, this year funding is being focussed specifically on those areas with identified need, Northwick Park hospital has been included in this distribution.

The Council is contributing to the reduction of winter pressures, specifically through provision which can minimise delayed discharge from the hospital. Last year's funding was used to establish a jointly funded post and this will continue this year. However it is not clear if there are sufficient resources to address the increased demand from winter pressures on Northwick Park hospital following the closure of A&Es at Central Middlesex and Ealing hospitals.

The Corporate Director advised that it is possible that a further announcement will be made offering increased support to deal with winter pressures.

ADULTS' SERVICES UPDATE

Finance

The Director of Adults' Social Services advised that currently the budget is projecting an overspend of approximately £150k on an overall budget of £60m. This represents a virtually balanced budget in relation to controllable spend, therefore leaving the overspend reflecting the late savings allocation. The service is hopeful that this position can be maintained until the end of the year.

The service is expected to deliver a large MTFS saving in respect of residential and day care services. However, as the changes are impacting on some of the most vulnerable residents, more time is needed to manage the changes and consult with users, families and community groups. As such the delivery will be delayed but the full savings will still be achieved over a two year period. The pressure of around £500k identified has been alleviated by the early achievement of Supporting People 14/15 MTFS savings plus a review of income on the placement budget.

The reablement process has delivered an increase in the number of people remaining independent in the community but as predicted, this has peaked after 3 years of implementation and we are now beginning to see an increase in the number of people presenting in distress with acute needs. These more complex cases have often reached the point at which they require nursing home accommodation.

The Care Bill going through parliament will lead to significant increase in referrals to social care. It is estimated that there are 6 -7k self funders in residential accommodation in Harrow who have previously not been assessed by the Council. These users will want to approach the authority to establish a

'Care Account' to cap spend on the cost of Social Care. This will result in a total of 13k people overall being provided with both care & financial assessments and need annual review.

The My Community ePurse system is now live and all new service users are being offered a Personal Budget through PayPal. The delivery of MyCeP is of national interest given that it is seen as revolutionary and may present the solution for many other local authorities seeking ways to address cost pressures, personalisation, and future changes required as a result of the Care Bill. The Council has secured intellectual property rights to the system to enable commercial proposals to be developed that would result in selling the product to interested parties at an appropriate cost. Thus far all members of the WLA and other local authorities in London have expressed an interest in attaining the system.

Performance

Personal budgets – national target is 70%, the council has set itself an annual target of 85% and has reached 80.3%. Within this, the cash target is 45% and current performance is 41%, this is expected to continue to rise with the roll out of My Community ePurse.

Harrow were first in London and third nationally at 18.5% last year for people with a learning disability who are in paid employment. This is based on those service users who are FACS eligible and who are in employment for longer than 1 hour per week. Current performance this year is positive and we should be able to maintain this good result. Cllr Silver asked if this includes people who have autism. The Director will provide information on the numbers included with autism.

Performance for people with mental health difficulties who are in paid employment is also 1st in London. The council is seeking to exceed the target this year.

The Director confirmed that 56% of carers linked to service users in the borough have already had their needs assessed this year, the 2nd highest in the country. Cllr Silver queried what support carers who have been assessed could expect to receive. The Director suggested there were a range of services from information and advice to personal budgets. The Director of Adult Social Services commented that this should include an understanding of the services which are available across the borough, not just from the council.

Cllr Silver cited figures from Carers UK which suggested a significant number of carers in Harrow are not receiving a Carers allowance. The Council provides details of entitlements and how to access them to all Carers approaching the Council for assistance and going on to be assessed. The Council also provides funding to the voluntary sector to provide information on carers allowance and other benefits to all Carers. Not all Carers will receive the allowance based on the DWP eligibility.

Care Bill

The Corporate Director commented that the implementation of the Care Bill in April 2015 will have implications for the council and that officers are assessing

this in order to be able to brief councillors and to clarify what the council can offer – this links to the issue raised by Cllr Silver with regard to the support available to carers. Officers will brief members in May/June next year.

PEER REVIEW

With the end of formal assessment by the Care Quality Commission, the council has continued to develop its own systems of accountability including the Local Account and support of the Sector Led Improvement programme. As the first part of this, a 2-day visit in February, by an external expert panel led by Professor Jill Manthorp considered the performance of the Adult Safeguarding Service. This visit resulted in an action plan, proposing things such as increased involvement of agencies in the safeguarding board – public health and Department of Work and Pensions.

On 18th, 19th and 20th November this initial assessment was followed up by a peer review involving a LGA lead and colleagues from other authorities, including two Directors of Adults Social Services. The review commented that the service is impressive and can expect to improve from 'good' to 'great'

Officers will share the report from the review with councillors and it has been put on the agenda for January Cabinet. Cllr Silver asked if it might also be shared with other parts of the council.

SAFETY HELIX

The Director of Adult Social Services described to councillors the process used by Adult Social Service to quality assure the performance of services. This had initially involved assessment of individual services from a number of perspectives including professional opinion and independent challenge. This has subsequently been refined to assess care provision from the perspective of the service user themselves, throughout the lifetime of their care experience. By tracking all information with regard to contact with a service user and by monitoring the service user on at least a quarterly basis, the council has a detailed account of the well being of the service users. This process is unique to Harrow and is attracting interest from national inspection bodies.

Cllr Silver was assured that information on the system is 'open source' and the Interim Head of Safeguarding Assurance & Quality Services commented that the system is inter- operable.

For Action

It is not clear whether there will be a further meeting of the Health Leads and Chair and Vice Chair of the Health and Social Care sub committee. The Scrutiny Team will liaise with councillors.