

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES

20 SEPTEMBER 2016

Chair: * Paul Osborn (Vice-Chair in the Chair)

Councillors:

* Ghazanfar Ali	* Ameet Jogia
* Richard Almond	* Chris Mote
* Mrs Chika Amadi	* Kairul Kareema Marikar (2)
* Jeff Anderson	
† Jo Dooley	

Voting Co-opted:

(Voluntary Aided)	(Parent Governors)
Mrs J Rammelt	Vacancy
Reverend P Reece	Vacancy

Non-voting Co-opted: * Harrow Youth Parliament Representative

In attendance: (Councillors)

Simon Brown	Minute 178
Barry Macleod-Cullinane	Minute 179
Mrs Christine Robson	Minute 176

* Denotes Member present
(2) Denotes category of Reserve Members
† Denotes apologies received

176. Local Assurance Test [LAT] Review

The Committee considered a report which set out further progress made since the Local Assurance Test (LAT) Progress Review undertaken in April 2016,

by the Local Government Association (LGA) following the establishment of the People Services Directorate.

Following a brief overview of the report, Members asked the following questions and made the following comments, which were responded to accordingly:

- When would the People Services Directorate be reviewed again? To what extent had the Key Recommendations of the Review been implemented?
- What were the circumstances surrounding the operational weakness in the MASH (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub)?
- Why had the same two senior managers who had carried out the initial LAT Review in May 2015 also been re-appointed to carry out the review in April 2016?

Officers could provide an update report to the Committee in 9-12 months' time, if required. However, there was no requirement to carry out a follow-up review of the Directorate.

Progress on the 4 additional Key Recommendations specified in the Review, was as follows:

- the Directorate had a more cohesive approach and was able to deliver a more integrated function;
- an integrated 0-25 years Children and Young Adults Disability Service had been established,
- an integrated commissioning (Adults and Children's) service had been established and operational for the previous six months;
- a single post of Principal Social Worker for both Adults and Children had been created and would shortly be appointed to;
- a single Harrow Social Work Conference (Adults and Children's) was in the advanced stage of planning.

An independent Review of the MASH in January 2016 had highlighted significant areas for improvement. A robust Action Plan had been drawn up and implemented and a second MASH review, completed in July 2016, had identified significant improved progress. Both Reviews had been reported to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

Both the Local Test in 2015 and the Review in 2016 had been undertaken by the Local Government Association Children's Improvement Adviser. The LGA had provided a sector-led adviser to carry out both LAT Reviews. The process undertaken had been robust and challenging and had been carried out by sector-led experts.

It was agreed that the Council would undertake a self-assessment using the Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care (TEASC), risk awareness tool which had been launched by the Local Government Association and Association of Directors of Adult Social Services in October 2015. Quality assurance of the self-assessment was then undertaken by two independent adult social care and health consultants. In addition to this, an OFSTED inspection, which would review the LAT, was expected to be carried out shortly.

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and Young People commended officers for the work undertaken in establishing the People Directorate and its achievements to date.

The Chair stated that the Committee were not best placed to assess the new arrangements in the People Services Directorate. In his view, the Directorate would benefit from further professional scrutiny in the form of a follow-up LAT Review in two years' time, to ensure that the service continued to be robust and safe. He proposed that a Recommendation be sent to Cabinet to this effect. This was agreed by the Committee.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Cabinet)

That a follow-up Local Assurance Test (LAT) of the People Directorate be undertaken in 2018.