

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	28 January 2008
Subject:	Report from the scrutiny policy and performance lead members' quarterly briefings
Key Decision: (Executive-side only)	N/A
Responsible Officer:	Tom Whiting, Divisional Director Strategy and Improvement
Portfolio Holder:	
Exempt:	N/A
Enclosures:	None

## Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the items that have been considered by the scrutiny policy and performance leads at their quarterly briefings between October and December 2008. It details the recommendations they would like the committee to consider with regard to further action or escalation.

As part of the reconfiguration of scrutiny it was agreed that the deliberations of the scrutiny lead members would be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This report fulfils this requirement, thus ensuring that activities and recommendations for further action are publicly reported and endorsed by the Committee.

### **Recommendations:**

Councillors are recommended to:

- i To note the reports from the scrutiny policy and performance leads and endorse recommendations where necessary.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Background**

This report records the outcomes of quarterly briefings of scrutiny lead policy and performance councillors and seeks the endorsement of committee of the action proposed. The report is divided into 5 sections and individual reports are included from each policy and performance lead team:

- Adult Health and Social Care
- Children and Young People
- Corporate Effectiveness and Finance
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Sustainable Development and Enterprise

### **Current situation**

Not appropriate to this report.

### **Why a change is needed**

Not appropriate to this report.

### **Main options**

Not appropriate to this report.

### **Other options considered**

Not appropriate to this report.

### **Recommendation:**

To note the reports from the scrutiny policy and performance leads and endorse recommendations where necessary.

### ***Considerations***

#### **Resources, costs and risks**

Any costs associated with these recommendations will be met from within existing resources. Where specific projects are escalated for more detailed consideration in the scrutiny process, specific implications of these projects will be considered during the scoping process.

#### **Staffing/workforce**

There are no staffing or workforce considerations specific to this report. Where specific projects are escalated for more detailed consideration in the scrutiny process, specific staffing implications of these projects will be considered during the scoping process.

#### **Equalities impact**

There are no specific equalities implications in this report. Where specific projects are escalated for more detailed consideration in the scrutiny process, specific equalities implications of these projects will be considered during the scoping process.

#### **Community safety (s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998)**

There are no specific equalities implications in this report. Where specific projects are escalated for more detailed consideration in the scrutiny process,

specific community safety implications of these projects will be considered during the scoping process.

### Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

### Performance Issues

Current KPI's and Likely impact of decision on KPI's

Scrutiny performance management issues

Recommendations matrix attached as appropriate

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Sheela Thakrar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 15 January 2008		
Name: Jill Travers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 15 January 2008		

## Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Lynne McAdam, Service Manager Scrutiny  
020 8420 9387

Background Papers: N/A

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	N/A
2.	Corporate Priorities	YES

## APPENDIX 1

### REPORTS FROM THE SCRUTINY POLICY AND PERFORMANCE LEADS QUARTERLY BRIEFINGS FROM OCTOBER – TO DECEMBER 2007

#### **Adult Health and Social Care**

Councillor Vina Mithani has now been appointed the Policy Lead for Adult Health and Social Care. As this role has been vacant until recently, a formal quarterly briefing for Leads has not been held. In the meantime, a number of issues have been progressed and discussed informally by the Leads:

#### **'Healthcare for London: A Framework for Action' ('Darzi Review')**

a) Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC): A pan-London JOSC has been established to scrutinise the implications of the broad principles contained in the Darzi Review and the public consultation process by NHS London on these. This JOSC has met on three occasions to date and Councillor Mithani has represented Harrow at these meetings. The JOSC intends to complete its work by May 2008 and the next meeting is on 18 January.

b) Local consultation: Harrow PCT is leading the local consultation on Darzi's broad models of care and PCT colleagues will be bringing this to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 January.

c) Scrutiny working group: O&S has set up a working group to support its member on the pan-London JOSC. This group has met on a couple of occasions and agreed the following terms of reference (based on the JOSC terms of reference and local needs):

- Consider the proposals for change as set out in the PCT consultation document Healthcare for London: A Framework for London.
- Consider whether the Healthcare for London proposals are in the interests of the health of local people and will deliver better healthcare for Harrow residents.
- Consider the PCT consultation arrangements and whether this is inclusive and comprehensive for local people.
- Develop a Harrow perspective on the Healthcare for London proposals and consultation process and their impact on Harrow residents.
- To support Harrow's representative on the JOSC in feeding in Harrow's experiences, needs and concerns into JOSC deliberations.

The group has also suggested that it leads discussions on Darzi with key stakeholders (PCT, Corporate Director of Adults, Portfolio Holder) at the O&S meeting on 28 January.

#### **Local Involvement Networks**

Local progress to procure a host organisation to develop Harrow's Local Involvement Network is ongoing. A preliminary meeting with stakeholders took place in December and an officer project group has been established to progress this project.

### **Obesity Review**

The final report of the Obesity Review Group will be presented to O&S on 28 January.

### **Future briefings**

A briefing for the Leads is being arranged for early in the new year. All scrutiny members are invited to a subject-specific briefing on health issues (led by PCT colleagues) on 4 February, as part of the Scrutiny Member Development Programme.

## **Children and Young People**

Leads meetings were held on Tuesday 4 December (with Heather Smith, Scrutiny Officer) and Tuesday 18 December (with Paul Clark, Corporate Director).

### **Brent Birth Centre**

The Lead Members support without reservation the Option 4 proposal outlined in the consultation paper on the future of the Birthing Centre, for reasons of (1) improved patient care through relocating the midwife-led birthing unit in Northwick Park's maternity unit, thereby increasing access to an obstetrics unit, (2) realising over £300,000 in savings per annum, and (3) increasing use of these services and reducing average cost per delivery.

However, the Lead Members did note that the relocation of the Brent Birthing Centre contradicted the approach to maternity and childbirth advocated by the Darzi Report and believe that Harrow's experience should be used to inform the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee's work on Darzi.

#### Recommendation:

- That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorse the Lead Members' draft response letter (Appendix Two) and that the letter be sent by the Leads on behalf of the Committee as a response to the Birthing Centre consultation.
- That the Darzi working group use the Birthing Centre as a case study in its future work.
- That the letter, along with any further notes from the Darzi working group, be submitted to the JOSOC as part of its work on evaluating Darzi's proposals.

### **Building Schools for the Future**

#### Recommendation:

- That Leads monitor progress.

### **Care Matters and Children and Young Person's Bill**

The Leads received briefings from the Corporate Director on progress so far alongside a paper on initial proposals for the challenge panel from the Scrutiny Officer.

#### Recommendation:

That the scope for the challenge panel be developed by the Leads and submitted to O&S on 12 February.

### **Children's centres**

Harrow has been set a target of developing 7 more children's centres between 2008-2011. The suggested number of centres for phase 3 is based on DCSF calculations on the remaining under 5s left to reach. In Harrow this is approximately 5,500 children aged birth to five.

#### Recommendation:

That Leads monitor progress in the context of the future of schools review.

### **ContactPoint**

Members were provided with a written description on the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), ContactPoint & Integrated Children's System (ICS).

#### Recommendation:

- That Leads monitor progress and seek further information on the cost and service implications of ContactPoint for the council, including risks, implementation issues, data protection concerns and so on

### **Staying safe and children at risk of exclusion**

A formal update on this area is scheduled for O&S on 12 February.

### **Other information**

Lead Members also requested populated copies of the organisational structure charts for Children's Services detailing names of officers in each role; to date, these have only been partially provided.

The Leads are hoping to arrange a visit to maternity and paediatric A&E provision at Northwick Park Hospital.

#### **Future meetings:**

- Monday 18 February, 6:30pm (with Scrutiny Officer)
- Monday 25 February, 2pm (with Corporate Director)

## **Corporate Effectiveness and Finance**

Leads meeting held on 11 December 2007

Attending: Cllr Stanley Sheinwald (Policy Lead); Cllr Mark Versallion (Performance Lead); Lynne McAdam (Service Manager Scrutiny), Jon Turner (Head of Human Resources)

Documents provided: Members' briefing (available from the scrutiny team on request); Human Resources and Development Service Plan

### **Local Area Agreement**

Information on the performance of the current LAA was provided – currently 10 of the 12 targets are on track to achieve 'stretch'. Information was also provided on the change in the arrangements for future LAA

## **CSR 07**

Key issues for local government include:

- 3-year settlements
- area-based grants
- 3% cashable efficiency savings
- much lower increases in public spending

### **Comprehensive Area Assessments**

Significant changes are proposed in the current comprehensive performance assessment regime, which will result in the first holistic assessment of the prospects for local areas (boroughs in our case) and the quality of life of people living in this area. Its key focus will be the performance of local partnerships, and in particular the effectiveness of local strategic partnerships and local area agreements and will assess the performance of councils in leading and shaping the communities they serve.

### **Councillors' Commission**

Information regarding the outcome of the councillors' commission was provided which outlined proposals to encourage a more diverse range of people to stand as councillors.

### **Human Resources**

Issues discussed include:

- Cultural Change
- Management Training
- Member Development
- Well-Being Strategy and Delivery Plan
- Strategic Workforce Planning

The Human Resources and Development Service Plan was used as the basis for discussion of these issues. The importance of early implementation of the training and development proposals incorporated in the service plan and thus a rapid transformation of the organisation was emphasised by the Lead Councillors.

The Lead Councillors will continue to monitor the implementation of the service plan.

They also asked for early feedback on the results of the staff survey which will be undertaken in January 2008.

## **Safer and stronger communities**

Leads' meeting – held on 3 December 2007

Attending: Cllr Seymour (Policy Lead), Cllr Asante (Performance Lead), Ed Hammond (Scrutiny Officer).

Documents provided: Members' briefing, précis of Home Office Crime

Strategy 2007-2011

### **Community development**

It was thought that the post office closures programme, when announced next spring, might prove contentious locally – it is planned that one fifth of post offices in London will be closed. Any work would build on the previous review conducted by scrutiny into this matter.

### **Voluntary sector**

The plans for a review of the voluntary sector were briefly discussed. The leads considered that the review's scope should concentrate on building capacity within the voluntary sector to allow them to deal with the challenges of increased partnership working that will result from the new LAA proposals to be implemented in 2008.

### **Crime reduction**

The leads considered the implications for the new approach to the scrutiny of CDRPs, and examined the pilot of this kind of work carried out in Rugby. It was considered prudent that any steps taken to further engage partners working in this area would have to link in with existing police structures; as such a process map will be prepared for members explaining how the different bodies in this field link together.

### **Public realm and liveability**

The review of the town centre redevelopment was discussed. More information on the progress of the review will be provided at the next meeting.

### **Future meetings:**

These are provisionally scheduled for:

- 18 March 2008, 7.30pm
- 23 June 2008, 7.30pm

## **Sustainable development and enterprise**

Leads' meeting held on 5 December 2007

Attending: Cllr Miles (Policy Lead), Cllr Solanki (Performance Lead), Ed Hammond (Scrutiny Officer).

Documents provided: Members' briefing, information on town centre redevelopment review

### **Transport**

Members considered a number of issues relating to transport improvements in the borough.

- Street lighting PFI – members requested a list of companies who expressed an interest in this contract.
- Wealdstone High Street reopening
- Petts Hill bridge – members were advised that delays on this project were as a result of Metronet having gone into administration and the consequent effect on their capital programme. It is still anticipated that



the project will be completed by the end of 2008.

- Parking – members asked for further information as to how the success or failure of the Improvement Programme priorities relating to parking are measured. (In fact it now transpires that these priorities have been removed from the CIP).

Members also considered sub-regional issues such as the transfer of Silverlink Metro services to TfL under the London Overground brand.

### **Housing**

Members considered issues relating to the Decent Homes Strategy. Kier have been contracted to deliver the DHS and the issue affects delivery across a number of BVPIs. Members requested more information relating to where responsibility for delivering this project lay. The officer advised that many of these questions would probably be answered at the meeting of P&F on 22 January, when housing was due to be discussed.

### **Economic development and tourism**

Members considered policy issues pertaining to the town centre redevelopment (including the planned scrutiny review) as well as climate change. Sustainability will be an element of the town centre review.

### **Skills and training**

No outstanding issues, although the voluntary sector review may impact upon the provision of training and skills by the voluntary sector.

### **Strategic planning**

Nothing to update since last meeting. Members and officers will continue to monitor the development of the LDF. It is expected that more on this subject will be provided at the next meeting in March.

### **Redevelopment of Byron Leisure Centre**

The scrutiny leads were contacted by Tom Morrison of the Harrow Squash Club. He asked that a scrutiny review be carried out into the council's decision to redevelop the leisure centre, and in particular the decision to reduce the number of squash courts on the site from eight to two. Members will be aware that this is one of a number of issues that has been raised by several community groups into the plans for the site and the request was considered in the light of this wider context. However, given the significant public interest in this issue, it was decided by the leads that a project looking at this issue would not meet the criteria for inclusion in the work programme. Further details are provided in the letter provided to Mr. Morrison, which is attached as Appendix 3.

### **Future meetings**

Future meetings have been scheduled for:

- 12 March 2008, 7pm
- 11 June 2008, 7pm

## **APPENDIX 2 – The future of the Brent Birth Centre**

January 2008

Fiona Wise  
Chief Executive  
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust  
c/o Northwick Park Hospital Communications Department  
Brent Birth Centre Consultation  
FREEPOST  
HA 4413  
Watford Road  
Harrow  
HA1 3BR

Dear Fiona

### **The future of the Brent Birth Centre – response to public consultation**

Thank you for attending the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 September 2007 to talk about the proposals for the Brent Birth Centre.

We are in favour of Option 4 as outlined in the consultation document:

*Transfer inpatient (delivery) maternity care to Northwick Park Hospital's Maternity Unit. Create a dedicated midwifery-led unit within Northwick Park Hospital's recently refurbished maternity unit. Provide antenatal services at Central Middlesex Hospital, but not within the Brent Birth Centre*

Fundamentally, we believe that Option 4 will strengthen maternity provision for Harrow women by offering a midwifery-led unit in a more accessible location, backed by a full obstetrics unit in case of difficulties – neither of which is the case with the present Brent Birth Unit's location at Central Middlesex Hospital.

Further, Option 4 will also use the NHS' scarce resources more efficiently for both Harrow and Brent. The proposed saving of over £300,000 per year could be put into expanding or improving existing services or towards establishing new services, or to restraining NHS London's overall budget growth.

However, while we believe Option 4 is the best solution for local people, we are concerned with the fit of the proposals with the Darzi Review's Framework for London models of care, also currently out for public consultation.

Option 4 appears to run counter to the Framework's emphasis on localising birthing services, of moving to more mid-wife led units and home births. Indeed, the experience of the Brent Birth Unit to date shows that a more localised approach to child birth fails to deliver better care standards (as patients have to be transferred to an obstetrics unit in emergencies), fails to serve as many people, and is significantly less cost effective than a more centralised approach, with a birthing unit attached to a general hospital.

Option 4 does, however, allow for pre- and post-natal care at Central Middlesex Hospital to continue. This raises the further question as to whether the current structure and setting

## **APPENDIX 2 – The future of the Brent Birth Centre**

for services at Central Middlesex is indeed the most appropriate or whether, in the longer term, even pre- and post-natal care should be moved out of a hospital setting into a community setting.

To reiterate, we are in favour of Option 4 – your preferred option for provision locally – but we are concerned about later strategic fit with regional developments. We hope to explore the impact of regional policy on local provision through Harrow's contribution to the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee and hope to further explore the sub-regional proposals with you in the future as they emerge.

Yours sincerely

**Cllr Margaret Davine**  
Scrutiny policy lead member,  
Children and young people

**Cllr Barry Macleod-Cullinane**  
Scrutiny performance lead member,  
children and young people

On behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

cc: Cllr Vina Mithani, Scrutiny policy lead member, adult health and social care  
Cllr Rekha Shah, Scrutiny performance lead member, adult health and social care  
Cllr Eric Silver, Portfolio Holder, Adults Services, Harrow Council  
Paul Najsarek, Corporate Director, Adults Services, Harrow Council  
Cllr Chris Leaman, Chairman, Health Select Committee, Brent Council

## **APPENDIX 3 - Redevelopment of Byron Leisure Centre**

11 January 2008

Dear Tony,

Your request for scrutiny to look at the reduction in the number of squash courts at the leisure centre has been passed to Cllr Solanki and myself as the scrutiny councillors with responsibility for sustainable development and enterprise.

There are a number of issues relating to the planned development of the leisure centre at Byron Park. The ones which have generated most public interest and concern are:

1. The reduction in the number of squash courts from eight to two.
2. The removal of the Harrow Skate Park in its current form
3. The demolition of Byron Hall.

Given the nature of the work and the site, any work undertaken by us into this issue would have to examine the proposals for the entire site, looking at all three issues. This is the context in which we have to examine any proposals for a review of this decision.

Any proposals for the undertaking of a scrutiny review have to fulfil a number of criteria, which have been set down by scrutiny councillors themselves. It has been agreed that reviews will only be undertaken when:

1. Where there is poor performance in the service in question
2. Where the area in question requires policy development
3. Where there are concerns about value for money
4. Where the issue is an emerging one arising from a referral from the community, cabinet or another committee
5. Where there is a statutory duty to look at an issue
6. Where long term financial benefit is anticipated
7. Where the issue relates to one of the council's corporate priorities

There is an eighth "overriding" consideration as well – whether the review is likely to deliver change.

Having looked at the criteria, a couple of the seven main criteria are probably met – 2, 3 and 4 in particular. However, the overriding criterion – on whether the review is likely to deliver change – is moot. The plans are at an advanced stage and I think that you are looking for immediate action here. The scrutiny process works best at the early stages of decision-making. Here, detailed plans have already been published and although a piece of work on this subject would serve to act as a focus for community concerns about the leisure centre project, it is not clear whether scrutiny by a formal review, conducted by councillors, would add a great deal to the campaigning work already being done by community or user groups such as yourselves.

It is possible that scrutiny work would also interfere with consultation work being carried out by the council in this area.

Under the circumstances it is probably best for you to contact the department or Portfolio Holder directly, as Ed advised in his earlier e-mail. That said, this is obviously an issue of

### **APPENDIX 3 - Redevelopment of Byron Leisure Centre**

significant local importance and I will be maintaining an interest and naturally reserve the right to investigate the issue further should anything else come to light.

Please let Ed know if you have any queries or require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

***Cllr Jerry Miles***

Scrutiny Policy Lead, Sustainable Development and Enterprise

***Cllr Dinesh Solanki***

Scrutiny Performance Lead, Sustainable Development and Enterprise