

Meeting:	Performance and Finance
Date:	15 July 2008
Subject:	Scrutiny scorecard
Key Decision: (Executive-side only)	No
Responsible Officer:	Ed Hammond, Scrutiny Unit
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Paul Osborn, Strategy and Business Support
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Scrutiny Scorecard Methodology document

SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report sets out scrutiny performance in the last quarter, as recorded in the scrutiny scorecard.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is requested to:

- 1) Note the scorecard, attached at Appendix 1, and the commentary.
- 2) Discuss proposals for improvement.

SECTION 2 - REPORT

Background

The Scrutiny Scorecard was agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 July 2007. It was agreed that it would be used to monitor scrutiny's performance on a quarterly basis. Some of the measures, recorded quarterly, would be reported regularly to Performance and Finance. Annually, the scorecard data would be reported to Overview and Scrutiny for a more general discussion.

Following the end of the performance year 2007/08, minor changes were made to the scorecard, including a revision of targets for 2008/09 and the removal of a number of indicators. Efforts were also made to strengthen the methodology used to assess the indicators. Information on the defined methodologies has been prepared for audit purposes, and has been attached.

Current situation

Members are being asked to note the scorecard for Quarter 1, which is attached.

An important element of performance management is the use of performance information as an integral part of the improvement process. It is not an add-on, but a fundamental aspect of ensuring that the service provided by the Scrutiny Unit, and the value of the work provided by the scrutiny function in a broader sense, is value for money and making a positive contribution both to Harrow as an authority, and Harrow as a community.

There are a couple of additional issues that should be noted in looking at the attached scorecard.

1. The scorecard does not take into account reports considered at scrutiny committee relating to scrutiny's own business. This is to say, reports relating to review scopes, update reports, and reports on the reconfiguration have not been included, so as not to bias the figures. These reports constitute 63% of all items considered at O&S, mainly because O&S has now moved to concentrating on only one or two substantive items per meeting.
2. Original sources of data / methodology – many PIs are based on relatively small data samples. Where fluctuations in performance exist, this may provide some explanation. However, the situation for individual PIs is explained in more detail in the table below.
3. Methodology. A document relating to detailed methodology is attached.

Why a change is needed

Not applicable.

Main options

It is recommended that members note the scorecard. Further recommendations may be made relating to the "performance issues" outlined in the section below.

Other options considered

No other options are being presented.

Recommendation: - to note and endorse the contents of the report, and to identify any potential issues for P&F to investigate in the future.

Considerations

Resources, costs and risks: broad issues relating to risks and resources are referred to below, but there are no implications pertaining directly to this report.

Staffing/workforce: none

Equalities impact: none specific

Legal comments: none

Community safety: none

Financial Implications

None specific.

Performance Issues

Particular issues, and information on improvements either under way or planned, are identified below. More general analyses for all indicators are provided in the commentary section of the members' card attached to this report.

This scorecard is considered as a matter of course at every meeting of Performance and Finance, and is excluded from the ordinary "by exception" criteria for consideration at committee.

Issue / PI	Analysis of performance	Improvement proposals
General performance	A relatively strong start for 2008/09 with few specific causes for concern.	Most improvement points are addressed below.
General performance – target setting	Targets have been set on the basis of 07/08 performance, which provides an accurate baseline. However, fluctuations can still be expected on account of the small data sets being collected.	This is not an improvement issue, necessarily. Target setting will be revisited at the end of 08/09. It may be necessary to make more dramatic changes to the way data is collected and to the individual PIs in order to minimise fluctuations as a result of small data sets; however, the data currently being collected is in volumes high enough to be statistically significant.

<p>% of items considering data from the Forward Plan</p>	<p>This problem was identified in 07/08, but the O&S and P&F agendas do not consider Forward Plan items regularly.</p>	<p>Any improvement would need to be on the basis of analysis of the FP and the identification of projects on it that might be of interest to members. However, it is likely that many of the CIP projects and projects on the FP will intersect – consequently, it is suggested that, when considering steps to be taken regarding the monitoring of the CIP, members might consider how FP actions might be accommodated within this, should it be thought to be appropriate.</p>
<p>Production of scrutiny newsletter</p>	<p>No newsletter was produced in Q1 08/09</p>	<p>It is a target for one edition of the scrutiny newsletter to be produced every quarter. In Q1 08/09, pressures on staff meant that the production of this newsletter was delayed. It was subsequently felt that the newsletter should be further delayed to accommodate the production of the Annual Report.</p>
<p>Attendance by members/co-optees</p>	<p>Performance continues to be below target.</p>	<p>This remains an issue requiring member resolution, as all meetings in Q1 were notified to members well in advance.</p>
<p>Review group agendas made available five days in advance</p>	<p>Performance continues to be a little below target on this indicator.</p>	<p>More effective programming has meant that performance has improved on last year, but is still sub-optimal. More detailed proposals are being developed to improve performance which will be explained at the next meeting.</p>

Legal and financial implications

There are no legal or financial implications to this report.

SECTION 3 - STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE

Name: ...Sheela Thakrar.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: .24 June 2008		
Name: Hugh Peart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring Officer
Date: 25 June 2008		

SECTION 4 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

Contact: Ed Hammond, Scrutiny Officer, Strategic and Performance
020 8420 9205: ed.hammond@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers:

None specific