

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2008
Subject:	Report from Lead Scrutiny Members
Responsible Officer:	Tom Whiting Assistant Chief Executive
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Paul Osborn Performance, Communication and Corporate Services Portfolio Holder
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix One

## 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 July and August, and details the recommendations they would like the committee to consider with regard to further action/escalation

### **Recommendation:**

Councillors are recommended to:

- consider the report from the Scrutiny policy and performance leads and
- consider recommendations as included therein.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **(Background (if needed))**

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. Individual reports have been included in this report for:

- Adult Health and Social Care
- Children and Young People
- Safer and Stronger Communities

No meetings have taken place since the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny committee for:

- Corporate Effectiveness and Finance
- 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 consider and endorse the reports from the scrutiny policy and performance leads.

### ***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**

None

### **Financial Implications**

Any costs arising from the recommendations will be contained from existing budgets.

### **Performance Issues**

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

### **Risk Management Implications**

There are none specific to this report.

## **Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance**

Name: Sheela Thakrar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer
Date: 22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2008		
Name: Hugh Peart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring Officer
Date: 20 <sup>th</sup> August 2008		

## **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

Contact: Lynne McAdam, Service Manager Scrutiny, 020 8420 9387

Background Papers: None

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	YES / NO
2.	Corporate Priorities	YES / NO

# **APPENDIX ONE** **REPORTS FROM THE SCRUTINY POLICY AND** **PERFORMANCE LEAD** **COUNCILLORS**

## **ADULT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

The Scrutiny Lead Members met with the Corporate Director for Adults and Housing Services on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008.

### Inspections

1. The CSCI inspection (January 2008) concluded that:
  - Safeguarding of adults was adequate.
  - Delivery of personalised services for people with learning disabilities was poor.
  - The capacity to improve was uncertain.Furthermore CSCI reported that safeguarding practice is good although to date strategic efforts are poor and this is where the good practice is let down – by poor planning and strategic approach in the past. There are rapid improvements beginning and so this should allow for the service to realistically aim for an overall shift from ‘uncertain prospects’ to ‘promising prospects’ in the future.
2. The Learning Disabilities inspection highlighted a number of areas for improvement and development. A number of issues are highlighted as hampering progress e.g. PCT funding, uncompleted health action plans, weak joint commissioning. Commissioning is now a joint priority for the local authority and PCT - to be implemented by April 2009.

**To action:** Scrutiny is asked to provide robust challenge to the outcomes of and the agreed action plan arising from the safeguarding adults’ inspection.

*(Please note: it has now been arranged that this will be brought to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8 July – an item to focus on safeguarding adults and therefore also learning disabilities, to be related to the Transformation Programme Plan)*

### Adults and Housing Transformation Programme Plan

- This is a three-year plan for the service and includes within it picking issues raised by the inspection findings. Activity is phased over the course of three years
- The centrepiece to the plan is the development of self-directed support, as this affects much of the services the local authority delivers for users. A six-month pilot of 100 service users started in April. Following evaluation of this, a wider programme may be rolled out in the Autumn.
- Relating to Programme Area 4, much of the emphasis to success will be work with the voluntary sector to deliver especially around preventative care.
- Programme Areas 5 and 7 demonstrate a change in working in practice as the HARP project will bring in mobile working through the use of PDAs and computerised systems within Housing. Lessons learned from applying this to Housing can then be considered for Social Care.
- An important factor to address is the capacity within the organisation to deliver service improvements.

### Partnership working between the council and PCT

- A Department of Health consultant will facilitate work between the PCT and Local Authority on progressing work around joint commissioning. In April 2009, the PCT will transfer learning disabilities to the local authority. Mental health services will be transferred from the local authority to the PCT.
- The PCT has yet to discuss with its social care colleagues local plans for the implementation of the *Healthcare for London* (Darzi) framework.

**To action:** *Scrutiny may wish to follow up progress on joint commissioning arrangements with both the PCT and council at a later date.*

### Fair Access to Care Services

- The council's position on FACS was absolutely clarified at Cabinet on 15 May. The local authority will continue to meet critical and substantial needs.
- Paul provided the scrutiny leads members with written responses to the questions raised by Councillor Shah at Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 April regarding FACS.  
*(Please note: These responses have since been copied to all members of O&S Committee.)*

### **Recommendations:**

- That scrutiny continue to provide robust challenge to the outcomes of and the agreed action plan arising from the safeguarding adults' inspection.
- That scrutiny considers monitoring progress on joint commissioning arrangements with both the PCT and council at a later date

### Date of next meeting:

*Friday 19 September, 4-5pm in Director of Adult and Housing Services' office.*

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Scrutiny Lead Members met with the Director of Schools and Children's Development on 30 July 2008.

### School reorganisation

The leads received a report on progress and it was agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would receive an information report at the 4 September meeting.

### Extended schools

The leads discussed the draft scope with the Director. The Director commented that with regard to the planned focus groups, it would be helpful to separate the groups into users (parents and young people) and providers (head teachers, governors and cluster co-ordinators). The policy lead advised that it had been intended to run separate groups but agreed that the scope could clarify this by alluding to users and providers.

It was noted that the scope would be circulated to the relevant portfolio holder for information prior to agreement at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 September.

### Increasing interaction between young people and councillors

It was proposed that the leads arrange a meeting in the autumn with the Head of Service for Young People with a view to discussing increasing interaction.

### Future scrutiny work programme

The Director commented that she was content the two projects currently identified (the Extended Schools light touch review and the Care Matters challenge panel). In terms of possible future activity beyond 2008/09, the Director suggested that scrutiny may wish to contribute to future work around the development of a formal children's trust approach, possibly in 2009/10.

### **Recommendations:**

- That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive a progress report on school reorganisation at its 4 September meeting and that the lead members maintain a watching brief on progress thereafter.
- That scrutiny leads arrange a meeting in the autumn with the Head of Services for Young People with a view to discussing how interaction between young people and councillors can be increased.

## **CORPORATE EFFECTIVENESS LEADS BRIEFING**

There is no report from the Corporate Effectiveness Lead members for this meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for, 4<sup>th</sup> September

## **SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES**

The Scrutiny Lead Members met with the Crime Reduction Unit Team Leader, the Interim Head of Service, Community Development and the Community Events Manager, and on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2008.

### Community safety

Members received an update from Ian Pearce, Community Safety Manager, on the Policing Green Paper, supplementing a written briefing previously circulated. They considered a number of particular issues, including the changes to the "stop and account" process (involving a reduction in form-filling, but raising questions about civil liberties), the new policing pledge (which has similarities to the Charter Mark scheme) and the new single national policing target.

In relation to the single target, the leads were advised of changes to national targets as a result of a reorganisation of roles between the Home Office and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies (HMIC). Members discussed the tensions between national and local target setting and the need for CDRPs to be able to pursue their own local targets.

The leads also considered the potential locally for improvements, including collocation of services, shared back-office functions between partners and the prospect of ring-fenced (in practice, if not in theory) seed funding to further enhance Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) and local communities.

The leads were advised that officers would have to ensure that the Strategic Assessment within the Community Safety Plan fitted in with the changes likely to be made when the Green Paper's proposals pass into law. In particular, the requirement for much more information about police performance to be publicly available in future was cited as a driver for the development of new skills sets within the police service.

There was also a discussion of local governance issues. It was felt that steps might be taken to refine these, particularly the need to link in more effectively with the operation of SNTs. The leads resolved to keep this issue under review.

It was agreed that the scrutiny officer would provide members with a briefing identifying how the various policing bodies (HPCCG, CDRP, Race Hate Forum, Safer Neighbourhood Panel and so on) link together.

### Community development

The leads discussed with Stephen Porter and Deven Pillay from the Community Development Team issues relating to the upcoming Edgware street party and lessons that might be learned for the future.

The leads were advised of the background to the street party. They were advised that detailed consultation was carried out following the initial proposal for the street party from Community Connects. Ward councillors appeared to have been omitted from this consultation as the result of an oversight. It was agreed that a simple protocol of involving ward councillors at an early stage may help facilitate engagement with local communities. It was suggested that a “duty to inform” could be placed into SLAs in the future to enhance engagement.

The leads noted the good work being carried out by Community Development on community cohesion; success of the initiatives would depend on all council departments stepping out of a silo mentality and working with the CDT to deliver improvements in the future.

It was felt that – although the event itself was very much to be welcomed - the way in which it had been planned and consulted on demonstrated an inward-looking approach, while understanding that the event had been planned on an extremely tight timescale. The leads, and officers, felt that to minimise the risk in future of members of the community feeling left out of the planning of similar events, the community database should be updated.

The leads felt that the concerns in this instance gave rise to a more fundamental point about trust between the council and local communities, and an issue about the commitment of other directorates in assisting the Community Development Team to deliver an effective service.

Although it was noted that many of these issues were already being addressed through the voluntary sector scrutiny review, the leads considered that the issues raised might demonstrate that a scrutiny review of communications – building on the Hear/Say review of 2004/05 – might be profitable for 2008/09. It was felt that such a review would be able to make recommendations across all areas of the Harrow Strategic Partnership to improve the way in which the council and its partners engage and inform local people about local issues, and strengthen the management of the partnership by ensuring that consultation is more of a two-way process.

**Recommendations:**

- To keep the issue of local governance of community safety under review.
- To carry out a mapping exercise of local community safety governance prior to the next meeting.
- To suggest, for the long list of scrutiny projects being submitted to Overview and Scrutiny Committee, that a scrutiny review of communications might be carried out, to define more effectively the way in which the Harrow Strategic Partners engages and informs local people.

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE LEADS BRIEFING**

There is no report from the Sustainable Development and Enterprise Lead members for this meeting. The next meeting is to be confirmed.