

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	7 <sup>th</sup> October 2008
Subject:	Report from Lead Scrutiny Members
Responsible Officer:	Tom Whiting Assistant Chief Executive
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Paul Osborn Communication and Corporate Services Portfolio Holder
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix One: Reports from the scrutiny lead councillors

## 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
- Sustainable Development and Enterprise

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

- Corporate Effectiveness and Finance – the outcome of the last meeting of the leads, 4<sup>th</sup> September, was reported verbally to the committee that evening
- Safer and Stronger Communities

### **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: 3rd October 2008		
Name: Hugh Peart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring Officer
Date: 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 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 for Adult Health and Social Care, Cllr Vina Mithani and Cllr Rekha Shah, met with the Corporate Director for Adults and Housing Services on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

### **Issues discussed and key points arising**

#### 1. Adults and Housing Transformation Programme Plan (TPP)

##### Programme Area 1 - Continuous Service Improvement

- There has been good progress made on most areas of the workstream. The area of difficulty has been increasing the number of people receiving intensive homecare. Social care was within budget for 2007/08 and to achieve this, tough decisions needed to be made for some areas. Nobody is slipping through the net although we do not have as many people receiving more than 10hours per week intensive homecare as in some other boroughs. Harrow still has quite low residential care admissions. It is recognised that homecare remains the biggest challenge within the TPP.
- There has been significant progress in the number of carers receiving services – carers' vouchers which can be used for respite care. This has tripled in the last year.

##### Programme Area 2 - Developing Accommodation

- Supporting People is extending its schemes and next year there will be a 40-place extra care accommodation (sheltered) at Watkins House. This will be done by redeveloping an existing building.

##### Programme Area 3 - Developing Self Directed Support

- The number of direct payments has quadrupled from 50 to 200.
- This year's pilot project on individual budgets has reached its target of 40 by the end of August and is on track to reach 100 by the end of December. Harrow is ahead of many other authorities in rolling out individual budgets. There will be a review of this pilot and the Corporate Director encourages scrutiny's role in this.

##### Programme Area 4 - Well Being Early Intervention and Community Engagement

- There is a review of preventative services in the voluntary sector ongoing. We are looking to invest more in the voluntary sector's role in supporting people to manage their own care and budgets.

##### Programme Area 5 - Effective Working Practice

- There has been reasonable progress in this workstream for example there are fewer vacancies in the service and sickness levels are also down.

***To action:*** Pursue scrutiny's input into the review of the individual budgets pilot scheme.

## Safeguarding Adults

- This is progressing adequately and there is now much better involvement from outside bodies in the safeguarding work, demonstrating a multi-agency approach. A training programme is in place and this has particularly targeted non-Council staff e.g. staff in residential and health settings, private contractors.
- There have been more people raising issues around safeguarding adults to the council. The greater number of referrals is believed to stem from greater awareness of safeguarding issues in general.
- There will be a random audit of safeguarding cases at the end of the year.

## 2. Annual Review Meeting

CSCI held its annual review meeting with Harrow Council on 1 September and the draft from the inspectors arrived this week. A rating will be issued in November. Since the ratings began in 2001, Harrow has been at 1star with uncertain prospects. We are hopeful of 'promising prospects' this year.

## 3. Joint Commissioning of Learning Disabilities Service

- Government directive is that all local authorities be the lead for learning disabilities services by next year. In practice this means that most of the PCT's funding should come to the local authority. We will therefore need to have a close look at budgets and staffing which are transferring over to the Council. It would be remiss of the Council to take on the PCT's responsibilities without knowing the needs of the service and future requirements.
- CSCI, CHAI and the Mental Health Commission have stated that there will be an inspection of services to people with learning disabilities (complex cases only) in October. The inspection will be of the local authority and the PCT and focus on how services are commissioned. It has been noted to the inspectors that Harrow Learning Disabilities Services were only inspected in January 2008 and the action plan has been agreed by CSCI. As a consequence, the focus on the inspection will be more on health than the council and there should be limited impact on the local authority social care team. This will be a 'joint review' and will produce a report although no performance rating.

***To action:*** Ensure that the inspection report is brought back to Overview and Scrutiny. The report will be published in December 2008 so the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in January 2009 may be most opportune.

## 4. Identifying Issues for the Scrutiny Work Programme

- Evaluation of the work around self-directed support – the Corporate Director suggested a challenge panel on this in early 2009 as the pilot will complete by the end of December 2008.
- Report of the inspection on services for people with learning disabilities (complex needs).
- Transformation Programme Plan – performance progress on the TPP is reported quarterly through the Improvement Board and therefore performance by exception should be monitored through the Performance and Finance Sub-committee. Overview and Scrutiny Committee has suggested a standing review of TTP progress. The Corporate Director suggests that such an approach begins with a challenge panel on the self-directed support workstream (as above) and this is used as a springboard review meetings, focusing at one workstream at a time.

- Abuse of the blue badge scheme – Harrow Council and PCT have a plan to tackle this issue although it should be noted that this is not particular to Harrow but a more widespread concern. It is suggested that the scrutiny leads keep track of progress on this issue through their quarterly briefings.
- CRB checks – Again this issue is wider than for Harrow. This is a knotty problem, requiring action at national level and it should be noted that it is the contractors' responsibility to ensure that their staff are properly checked. Updates on discussions with partners and (national/regional) progress will be given through regular updates on safeguarding adults issues.
- Pooling of budgets in learning disabilities services – this is to be implemented from April 2009 (as discussed above) and therefore bringing this to scrutiny after 6months would be welcomed, to consider the change in operation and what benefits these have brought about for people with learning disabilities.

***To action:*** PN to check comparative data around abuse of blue badge scheme and the new approach by Birmingham – feed back to members.

#### 5. Local PCT Issues

- The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) has been produced and is currently being consulted upon. It will be presented to members at a quarterly members' briefing in September. Scrutiny may wish to see this once consultation has completed.
- One of London's five pilot polyclinics will be developed at the Alexandra Avenue Health and Social Care Centre. It will be important to look at the evaluation of this pilot, especially considering the impact upon other services (including GPs) and the impact of additional/enhanced services to the community.
- Healthcare for London – the first pan-London consultation will be around trauma and stroke services. Locally there will be the need to consider the risk upon Northwick Park Hospital if services are moved to another acute care provider for example Imperial College.
- PCT provider services – there is a move to merge these across four boroughs – Harrow, Hillingdon, Ealing and Brent.

***To action:*** Consider including the JSNA on the scrutiny agenda for January 2009.

Date of next meeting:

*To be arranged.*

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE**

The Scrutiny Leads for Sustainable Development and Enterprise Cllr Jerry Miles and Cllr Dinesh Solanki met on 29 September 2008.

### **Issues discussed and key points arising**

#### 1. Parking

- Information was received relating to the Efficiency Review currently under way on this subject – given the inherent duplication involved in suggesting a scrutiny review on this subject, it was thought to be more appropriate to consider the outcome of the ER at a future leads meeting.

**To action:** consider the outcome of the parking efficiency review at the next leads' meeting.

#### 2. Wealdstone High Street

- Some concern has been expressed over the completion of this work. It was suggested that scrutiny should investigate the reasons for this delay; a work programme item on this issue has been raised to carry out a challenge panel on this over 08/09.

**To action:** subject to O&S's decision on the work programme, this issue should be investigated further, either at a future leads' meeting or through a challenge panel.

#### 3. Housing – Decent Homes

- It has become evident through anecdotal evidence and through discussions with others that there seem to have been some issues relating to satisfactory performance in respect of the Decent Homes programme.
- Although P&F decided not to consider this issue at their next meeting following earlier assurances from the directorate involved (and given that the by exception criteria were, on this occasion, not met) it was agreed that officers should be invited to attend the next meeting to discuss prevailing issues, including the asbestos control matters further outlined below.

**To action:** Housing and Property and Infrastructure officers to be invited to attend the next leads' meeting to discuss this issue in more detail; more evidence on performance to be provided to the leads in the meantime.

#### 4. Planning issues

##### *a - Leisure centre*

- Following a recent Cabinet decision, the leisure centre at Byron Park was reportedly now not likely to be rebuilt in the near future. This is a knock-on impact from the doubt cast upon the ongoing development plans for certain sites in the town centre – the funding for the leisure centre would have been provided under a s106 agreement.

**To action:** no further action on this point.

*b - LDF development*

- It was discussed whether, when complete, the LDF Core Strategy should be brought to committee for discussion. It was concluded that, given that it would be for noting only, there would be little point in considering it at this stage.

*c – Residential development*

- Background information was received on the phenomenon of residential development on residents' back gardens.
- This was generally due to the official government designation of such areas as brownfield sites, making them more attractive to developers.
- Notwithstanding the importance to local residents of this issue, it is difficult to see how scrutiny can add value in this area.

**To action:** further information to be collected on this issue and submitted to the leads relating to the council's own policy on residential development.

5. Sustainability project

- A feasibility study for a proposed in-depth review of sustainability was considered. This project would be undertaken next year, and it was agreed that it should be submitted to Overview and Scrutiny as part of the work programme report on 7 October.

**To action:** to recommend to O&S that this project proceed as initially set out in the feasibility study.

6. Asbestos control project

- It was agreed that this project, also on the draft work programme, would be examined further.
- It was agreed that the most appropriate place for a discussion on this would probably be at the next leads' meeting, in conjunction with receiving more information on Decent Homes.
- Full data on these issues could then be submitted to either O&S or P&F depending on the precise context.

**To action:** subject to O&S agreement, that this project could be pursued by the leads in conjunction with further investigations into Decent Homes work.

Date of next meeting: *to be arranged*