

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

CABINET - THURSDAY 18 DECEMBER 2008

PARTNERSHIP BOARD - TUESDAY 13 JANUARY 2009

Scrutiny Review of 'Delivering a Strengthened Voluntary and Community Sector for Harrow' – Final Report

Reference from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 9 December 2008

1. At its meeting on 9 December 2008, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report of the Project Sponsors, the Corporate Director of Finance, Harrow Council, and the Chief Executive of Harrow Association of Voluntary Services, which set out the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review on Delivering a Strengthened Voluntary and Community Sector for Harrow. It was noted that the Scrutiny Review Group had conducted its enquiries over two phases of work between March and November 2008.
2. The Chairman of the Review Group introduced the report and thanked all participants for their work on the Review. He was pleased that the outcome of the Review had been accepted by the Voluntary Sector, and he commended the Review Report for referral to Cabinet. He added that the report would initially be considered by the Cabinet on 18 December 2008 and that detailed feedback would be received by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting in February 2009. The Council's Corporate Strategy Board had welcomed the Review Report.
3. It was noted that detailed feedback from Cabinet would be delayed until February 2009 because of the unavailability of the Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services and to allow for a considered response to the recommendations of the Review Group.
4. Some Members were disappointed that a response from Cabinet would be delayed, particularly as the Review Group had progressed the Review according to the timescales requested by the Cabinet and the deadline given was 18 December 2008. As a result the Review Group had not had the opportunity to address all issues in as much depth as wished, for example the issue of strategic commissioning, which was considered to be an important aspect of the Review. The lack of a full exploration of this matter and the implications on future models were considered to be a weakness of the report.
5. An officer explained that an officer group had been tasked with implementing the recommendations when approved. Some of the recommendations had financial implications and, as a result, would require a considered response from Cabinet.
6. The Chairman of Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee stated that progress on the recommendations from the Review Group would be monitored by the Sub-Committee on a quarterly basis.

RESOLVED: That (1) the report and the recommendations of the Review Group be endorsed;

(2) the report be referred to Cabinet and the Partnership Board for consideration and agreement and that they be requested to report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the earliest opportunity;

(3) the monitoring of the progress against the recommendations of the Review Group be placed on the Scrutiny Work Programme for addressing by the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee and that the Sub-Committee submit quarterly progress reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Background Documents:

Report considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Draft Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9 December 2008.

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