

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	26 th January 2009
Subject:	Report from Lead Members
Responsible Officer:	Tom Whiting, Assistant Chief Executive
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the items that have been considered by the Corporate Effectiveness scrutiny policy and performance leads at their quarterly briefing in December 2008.

Recommendation:

Councillors are recommended to:

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

Section 2 – Report

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: 16 th January 2009		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

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

Background Papers: None

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	NO
2.	Corporate Priorities	NO

APPENDIX ONE **REPORT FROM THE CORPORATE EFFECTIVENESS SCRUTINY LEAD** **COUNCILLORS**

The scrutiny lead councillors for Corporate Effectiveness met on 9th December 2008.

Local Area Agreement

Councillors were advised that there are two LAAs in existence. The 'old' LAA runs from 2006 – 09 and has 12 targets each of which attracts up to £540k – if a minimum of 60% of the target is met. The council's performance against a number of these targets is red but additional resources have been made available to improve performance in some of these areas – not all of the pump priming funding available to the partnership was drawn down and it was decided to use some of this finding to support improvement in performance. It is anticipated that only two of the targets may not be met:

- **Percentage of people who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together** – the target is 61% and current performance has dropped to 48%. This reflects the methodological shortcomings of the monitoring process rather than a real decline in community cohesion – the survey gives residents the option to respond that they 'don't know' whether people from different backgrounds get on well together and it is an increase in this type of response that has resulted in the more negative result. A number of proposals are in place to try to improve the performance of this indicator.
- **Improve school attendance at the 25% worst performing primary and secondary schools** – as the council has some of the highest performing schools in the country an exceptionally high target had to be set which will make it less likely to be achieved.

All of the others are expected to achieve at least the minimum 60% of the target and will thus receive some reward grant though the precise amount is not clear. It has been agreed that half of the reward grant will be passed to the Harrow Strategic Partnership for pump-priming the new LAA and half will be given to those organisations whose activities have contributed to the delivery of improved performance.

The 34 targets for the new LAA are almost agreed. Whilst all have reward grant attached to them, this is significantly reduced from the amount attached to the current LAA with only approximately £60k for each target. There is also no pump priming money associated with the new LAA.

If the council is successful in delivering the new targets, it has again been agreed that 50% of the reward grant will be passed to the HSP to support the delivery of the next LAA and 50% will go to those organisations that played a part in delivering the improvement.

Recommended action: Corporate Effectiveness leads will continue to monitor the LAA target plans outside of committee

Strategic Workforce Development Plans

Councillors were advised that it is the council's ambition to begin to develop workforce development plans with partners. The development of a council wide workforce development plan, which will flow from the individual directorate plans, will support the council's use of resources score – which has now been extended to include staff as a resource of which the council must make effective use.

Councillors received an update on progress in each of the council directorates towards the development of strategic workforce development plans. Two areas which appeared to be experiencing some difficulties are Community and Environment – which includes large number of blue collar workers and Adults and Housing – which has a number of big service issues that need to be addressed as a priority.

Councillors were also advised that informal feedback from events such as the Chief Executive's lunches and staff forums suggest that staff morale is improving.

Councillors were also advised on progress towards the achievement of IIP accreditation across the council, corporate accreditation is no longer a priority for the council and individual directorates are being encouraged to pursue accreditation in their own right. Progress is being made in most areas at a pace with which the Director of Human Resources and Development is comfortable.

Recommended action: To note progress in this area and continue to monitor

Sickness Absence

Councillors were advised that the overall level of sickness absence in the council is falling and that in the only areas of concern, Community and Environment and Adults and Housing there are clear reasons as to why this might be. In previous briefings, the low level of sickness reporting had been identified and officers had advised that improvements in this area might result in increased sickness levels. This had not happened. The Director also confirmed that problems with the SAP absence recording system had been resolved.

Recommended action: To note progress in this area and continue to monitor

Management Development Programme

Information was provided on the number of managers who have participated in the Management Development Programme, these indicate a high level of coverage of the programme. Feedback also suggests that there is a high level of satisfaction with the programme – 89% of attendees are positive about the content, 81% feel they can apply the learning to their role and 78% feel that it is a good use of their time.

Councillors were advised that a second phase will assess managers' performance against a revised IPAD process which will include objectives, learning and development and behavioural standards. This new process is likely to be rolled out in 2009 and will be linked to contribution based pay. Longer term developmental needs will be met using this process.

Recommended action: To note progress in this area and continue to monitor

Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) Update

The Councillor Call for Action as proposed in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 empowered all councillors to refer local government matters for consideration by an overview and scrutiny committee. It is expected that this will be brought into force by the end of 2008. A similar Call for Action to address crime and disorder issues is also part of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Home Office is currently consulting on how this might be integrated into broader accountability arrangements for crime and disorder and guidance on this is also expected by the end of 2008.

The guidance will explain how councillors can use their power and will advise local authorities as to how they can deal with Councillor Calls for Action. It will include timeframes, how to deal with vexatious issues and issues that span a number of wards.

The council has considered the implementation of Councillor Calls for Action and the reconfigured scrutiny structure has been specifically designed to clarify appropriate access for CCfAs into the scrutiny system. As increased guidance is made available further briefings will be provided to the Lead Councillors.

Recommended action: Corporate Effectiveness Leads are awaiting further information from relevant officers and will consider again at the March 2009 briefing'