

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	16 March 2009
Subject:	Report of the Scrutiny Lead Members
Responsible Officer:	Tom Whiting, Assistant Chief Executive
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix One: Report from the Children and Young People Lead Members Appendix Two: Report from the Safer and Stronger Communities Lead Members Appendix Three: Report from Adults Health and Social Care Lead Members

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the issue that have been considered by the Children and Young People, Safer and Stronger Communities and Adults Health and Social Care scrutiny policy and performance leads at their quarterly briefing in late January and February 2009.

Recommendations:

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 summarises the discussions that have taken place between the Scrutiny Lead Policy and Performance councillors for Children and Young People, Safer and Stronger Communities and Adult Health and Social Care and recommendations for action relating to these discussions. The detailed summaries are included in Appendices One, Two and Three.

Current situation

Not relevant to this report

Why a change is needed

Not relevant to this report

Main options

Not relevant to this report

Other options considered

Not relevant to this report.

Implications of the Recommendation

Not relevant to this report

Financial Implications

Any costs associated with the scrutiny leads report will be met from within existing resources

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Not relevant to this report

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

REPORTS FROM THE SCRUTINY POLICY AND PERFORMANCE LEAD COUNCILLORS

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Scrutiny Lead Members for Children and Young People, Councillor Margaret Davine and Councillor Janet Mote, met on 4 February 2009 with the Corporate Director for Children's Services and the Director of Schools and Children's Development and the Scrutiny Officer.

Issues discussed and key points arising:

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Meeting – 21 April 2009

Lead members expressed that they would like the April Overview and Scrutiny meeting to cover Children and Young People's issues with the following items on the agenda:

- Children's Trusts - options paper
- Extended Schools Review Final Report
- Adoption Inspection Report
- Pan-London Pledge which is linked to Care Matters

The lead members advised officers that they would like further updates and position statements, highlighting any key issues progress or challenges with regards to the items listed above.

The Corporate Director for Children's Services explained that Care Matters had been signed and the Children' Trusts options paper would shortly be going to the portfolio holder. The framework of the Children's Trust Boards is currently being considered and is required to be in place by April 2009.

The lead members explained that they were also keen to view the full Adoption Inspection report having only received a verbal update in October 2008.

Transition

The issue of transition from Children's services to Adults was discussed and lead members expressed that some further clarity with regards to what is being done to resolve the challenges in this area was required. The Corporate Director for Children's Services explained that the issue of improving and delivering transition services was an area that needs further thought and development and that he welcomed the input of Scrutiny in this area.

The Director of Schools and Children's Development explained that there is a disjoint between funded management of the child and the independent individual management of adults and a gap in the whole package of care provided. In view of the personalisation agenda, it would also be an opportune

time for scrutiny to address the issue of transition from children to adults. A draft plan will be developed for June 2009.

The policy lead also explained that the issue does not exist with leaving care service which is excellent and the level of service with leaving care should be the same with transitions.

Recommended Action: *It was decided to that this could be an area for possible inclusion in the Overview and Scrutiny work programme 2009/2010 with a view of starting in September 2009. It was suggested that in the period between now and then, some research could be done to identify good practise elsewhere.*

Overview and Scrutiny Meeting – 10 February 2009

The lead members discussed the School Re-organisation including the impact of the 6th Form Reorganisation item on the upcoming Overview and Scrutiny Meeting on 10 February in brief.

Safeguarding

The lead members raised the issue of safeguarding and where the council was with regards to ensuring that the right processes and procedures are in place, especially in view of the recent high profile negative media cases involving other local authorities.

Recommended action: *Lead members felt that it would be useful to hold further meetings with the Head of Service-Safeguarding & Family Support, the Joint Head of Learning Disability Services and other key officer.*

APPENDIX TWO

REPORTS FROM THE SCRUTINY POLICY AND PERFORMANCE LEAD COUNCILLORS

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES LEADS

The Scrutiny Lead Members for Safer and Stronger Communities, Councillor Nana Asante and Councillor Anthony Seymour, met on 9 February 2009 with the Crime Reduction Manager and the Scrutiny Officer.

Community Safety

Members received a briefing from the Scrutiny Officer on the various policing bodies (HPCCG, CDRP, Race Hate Forum, Safer Neighbourhood Panel etc) on how they link together to which the Community Safety Manager added further context. The Community Safety Manager informed the lead members that the HPCCG was soon to be turned into a community engagement group as the MPA wish to make the remit of the HPCCG wider that just a police consultative group.

Members raised concerns that with this the HPCCG may to some extent lose the emphasis of acting as a critical friend to the Safer Harrow Management Group with the expansion of the HPCCG's remit.

Harrow Strategic Assessment 2008/09

The lead members considered the Harrow Strategic Assessment that was to be presented at the Overview and Scrutiny Meeting on 10 February. The areas where crime had increased and was likely to increase including residential burglary, anti-social behaviour and domestic violence were discussed in brief.

Community Cohesion

The lead members expressed that they would be considering further the safer communities element of their roles as leads and discussed the implications of up-coming guidance on Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) guidance. The leads further added that their particular concerns were with how CCfA would operate on the ground in view of the fact that it sits within their remit.

Future Meeting

The lead members decided that they would hold their next quarterly meeting on Wednesday 6 May 2009.

APPENDIX C

Notes of Quarterly Briefing for Scrutiny Leads for Adults Health and Social Care - Friday 30 January 2009, 4.30pm

Meeting attendees:

Paul Najsarek (Corporate Director Adults & Housing)
Councillor Vina Mithani (Policy Scrutiny Lead for Adult Health and Social Care)
Councillor Rekha Shah (Performance Scrutiny Lead for Adult Health and Social Care)
Nahreen Matlib (Senior Professional - Scrutiny)

Purpose of meeting

As part of the support provided to the scrutiny leads, quarterly briefings on the leads' subject areas are arranged. The purpose of these meetings will be to discuss key policy areas in social care, local priorities for the services, forthcoming issues that may be of interest to scrutiny or issues that could be suggested for scrutiny to pick up.

Issues discussed and key points arising

1. **Adults and Housing Transformation Programme Plan (TPP)**
 - **Individual budgets** (IB) - Harrow's target of 100 users having individual budgets by Christmas has been reached. This is impressive given the figure of only 500 across London – therefore one in five IB holders are in Harrow.
 - The evaluation of IB is starting and the findings of this will be brought to a future leads' briefing. About 4/5 users are happy with their budget and feel they can use it well. Many of the others are not satisfied mainly for the reason that they find the process too difficult. However it must be recognised that there is a fine balance between giving people freedoms whilst ensuring that public funding is used appropriately.
 - **Learning Disabilities Service** (LDS) – the action plan following inspection (in January 2008) commenced in May 2008 and this addresses a number of areas including management, quality of social care and budget.
 - Although the work for the LDS action plan is all on target, the service needs to ensure that improvements are happening rapidly enough to meet users' needs and expectations.
 - **Neighbourhood Resource Centres** (NRC) – three new NRC will open in July 2009. NRC offer a more modular approach to day care and a different philosophy. The NRC will allow for different activities to be run at the same time within centres so users can choose the activities to take part in and there is more scope for choice. Furthermore NRC will have more advisory and joint services. It is hoped that all those attending will be IB holders.
 - One challenge in adopting this new model will be discussing with the community and voluntary sector (CVS) groups who often provide current services, how they can be flexible in service provision especially with regard to IB.
 - The Adults budget shows that the Council is investing more in the CVS and efforts are being made to fund more brokerage and advocacy services.

To action: That the evaluation of the Individual Budgets scheme be presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee after it has been to Cabinet in March. In the meantime, the scrutiny leads should receive a briefing from the Divisional Director of Community Care to receive their feedback on the findings, to inform the report to Cabinet.

2. Safeguarding adults

- In the most recent inspection, Harrow was judged as 'adequate'. Locally there is much work going on quality assurance arrangements and procedures. Training has been provided across the sectors providing services.
- There will be a random audit of safeguarding cases at the end of the year, including auditing from external/peer sources.

3. Following up issues from the last scrutiny leads' briefing - other issues

- Blue badge scheme – a team to run the scheme locally is being set up. Funding arrangements for this are still to be agreed with the PCT.
- Joint commissioning of the Learning Disabilities Service – a final report and action plan will be presented to Cabinet in March so this could be seen by scrutiny in April.

To action: To include the report and action plan on the joint commissioning of the learning disabilities service on the scrutiny work programme (April O&S).

4. Identifying issues for the scrutiny work programme

- Healthcare for London - the scrutiny working group that has been reconvened should involve discussions with Adults, PCT and NWL Hospitals Trust.
- Acute services review – see above
- Annual report of safeguarding – June/July
- Review/evaluation of individual budgets pilot schemes - a briefing for scrutiny lead members in the first instance

5. Local PCT Issues

- Brent and Harrow PCTs have been working on an acute services review, covering services run by NWL Hospitals Trust. The communications plan for this recognises the need to consult with scrutiny – scrutiny will need to check that this involvement also adequately covers adequate community involvement. It would be in the best interests of the Council if the consultation also sought the views of and involved the Executive side of the Council, to consider the impact on residents.
- A change in local health and social care governance arrangements are being consulted upon. This includes that responsibility for learning disabilities services transfer to the local authority by April 2009. The results of the consultation are due to go back to Cabinet and the HSP in April/May.
- Harrow PCT and Ealing PCT's provider services are to be merged.

6. Any Other Issues

There were none.

Date of next meeting:

Friday 17 April, 4.30pm.

**Nahreen Matlib
Senior Professional - Scrutiny
February 2009**