

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	21 st April 2009
Subject:	Report from the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee Chairman.
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix One: Report from the Performance and Finance Sub-Committee Chair.

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the items that have been considered by Performance and Finance Sub-Committee at the 31st March 2009 meeting.

Recommendation:

Councillors are recommended to:

- Note the issues as set out in the report of the Performance and Finance Sub-Committee meeting held on 31st March 2009.
- Consider and approve:
 - I. an investigation into the Housing Revenue Account, dependent upon information received from Housing in July 2009, following on from P&F Sub-Committee on 21/01/09 and subsequent discussions with the Divisional Director of Housing; and
 - II. An in-depth Performance and Finance scrutiny investigation into the Kier partnership.

These items are further detailed in the Work Programme Report.

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

Considerations

Resources, costs and risks

None

Staffing/workforce

None

Equalities impact

None

Legal Implications

None necessary.

Financial Implications

None necessary.

Performance Issues

These are considered in the report attached below.

Risk Management Implications

There are none specific to this report.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

This is no longer required.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Ofordi Nabokei, Scrutiny Officer, 020 8420 9205 or
ofordi.nabokei@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

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

Meeting:	Performance and Finance
Date:	31 March 2009
Subject:	Chairman's report
Key Decision: (Executive-side only)	No
Responsible Officer:	Ofordi Nabokei, Strategy and Improvement Tom Whiting, Assistant Chief Executive
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	None

SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report sets out issues considered by the Chairman since the last meeting of the Performance and Finance Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is requested to:

- 1) Note and endorse the content of the report
- 2) Identify any potential issues for Performance and Finance to investigate in the future.
- 3) Nominate the Chairman to submit a summary of Harrow-wide performance issues, as identified through the Chairman's Meetings and at this meeting, to the next convenient meeting of Overview and Scrutiny.

SECTION 2 - REPORT

Background

Under the protocols established for the agenda planning process of the Performance and Finance Committee, the Chairman receives detailed performance information from a wide variety of sources – both internal and external – on a monthly basis.

At the monthly meeting, assisted by officers, the chairman considers the scorecards on a “by exception” basis, identifying those where questions exist about current performance.

Individual performance indicators are then selected, and cross-cutting trends are identified. The background to the performance is considered in more detail. The agenda is then built around these issues.

Current situation

Members are being asked to note and endorse the agenda items for this meeting as outlined below.

The table indicates the origin of items for this meeting’s agenda; members are being asked to endorse these decisions, which were made by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman following a briefing provided by the scrutiny officer.

They are also being asked to identify any additional items which can be considered by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in the course of planning for the next meeting.

Additionally, members are requested to nominate the Chairman to provide a summary of Harrow-wide performance issues, as a component of the scrutiny leads’ report, to the next meeting of Overview and Scrutiny.

Why a change is needed

Not applicable.

Main options

It is recommended that members endorse the proposals, which are reflected in the rest of the committee papers and which were circulated to members immediately after the chairman’s meeting to which they refer. They are also recommended to task the Chairman with submitting a summary of performance issues to the next meeting of Overview and Scrutiny.

Other options considered

No other options are being presented.

Recommendation: - To note and endorse the contents of the report, and to identify any potential issues for P&F to investigate in the future.

CONSIDERATIONS

Resources, Costs and Risks: Failure to endorse the Chairman’s decision will not prevent the meeting from continuing and the agenda provided being considered. However, it will damage the principle of collegiate decision-making in terms of the agenda planning process.

Staffing/workforce:

None

Equalities impact:

None specific

Legal comments:

None

Community safety:

None

Financial Implications

None specific.

Performance Issues

The below issues were considered:

Issue	Chairman's Proposal	Timescale
<u>6 Month Update: On Obesity Review</u>	This issue came to committee on 21/01/09 therefore this should be considered at committee in 6 months time, as agreed in the reports.	To come to P&F in 6 months time – 20 th July 2009.
3 Month Update on the Right to Manage	This item came to Overview and Scrutiny on 10/02/09 and therefore should be considered at Committee on a three monthly basis. However the next committee is in July.	To come to P&F on 20 th July 2009.
<u>Kier Review Update</u>	Due to the sensitive nature of this issue the Chair and Vice Chair have received regular updates on the investigation. <u>The Chair is proposing an in-depth performance and finance scrutiny investigation into the Kier partnership</u>	
<u>Decent Homes</u> was considered in November. Whilst there has been an improvement, further information is necessary to ascertain whether the improvement was as a result of improvement action that has been undertaken. This is a cross cutting issue and	This issue came to P&F on 21/01/09 however it was felt that this matter should return to P&F for further investigation. The discussion is to focus on the slowing down of the rate of work and any issues around the standard of the work.	To come to P&F on 20 th July 2009

other factors can and may affect the ability to attain the decent homes target.		
<u>Healthy schools</u> 'Healthy schools' has been below target for some time. Harrow is said to be performing worse than our neighbours. In November it was said that Harrow would achieve the national target of 90% by late 2009.	For an update to come to P&F and to consider the issue further at committee.	To come to P&F on 31 st March 2009
<u>Bed-Blocking</u> Concerns have been raised that the Council maybe keeping people in local hospitals for longer than would be possible if there were provisions for them in terms of care at home or care accommodation	When this was investigated at the chairman's meeting, it became clear that there was no issue regarding bed blocking and therefore should not be looked at further or come to committee.	N/A
<u>Chlamydia Screening</u> whilst this has moved from 'Red' to 'Amber' and therefore does not entirely fit the 'by exception' criteria. Compared with the data presented at the Chairman's briefing on 25/11/08, there has not been a significant improvement. It is unlikely that by the end of the year the PCT will meet its trajectory In the PCT performance report this has also been highlighted as an area of concern.	For this item to come to P&F sub-committee	Will come to P&F Committee on 31 st March 2009
<u>Childhood Immunisations</u> – have been under performing in all six of the immunisations provided. This matter has also been highlighted as an area of concern in the PCT performance report.	This item warrants further investigation and therefore will come to committee.	Will come to P&F Committee on 31 st March 2009
<u>Ambulance Response Times</u> Looking at the figures from the pervious scorecard as well as this current scorecard, there has been no change since the last performance scorecard in October 2008. Targets are under trajectory	Further information is required on this issue (via a short report and question and answer session at a chairman's briefing) – it is requested that the Chair and Vice Chair receive further information from Ambulance	To come to Chairman's meeting 21/04/09

<p>Both the performance and the trajectory remains the same.</p>	<p>drivers regarding congestion on Harrow's streets. To come to Chairman's briefing and depending on the information the issue may come to committee.</p>	
<p><u>Early Intervention services(EIS)</u> There has been a shift in the required trajectory which will make it difficult for the PCT to hit its target. There may well be a significant impact if EIS is poor as it could cause a greater drain on resources for both the PCT and the council.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor this item against the year end target to see if the target is met and in order to ascertain what strategies have been put in place to mitigate.</p>	<p>At the Chairman's meeting on 21/04/09</p>
<p><u>Complaint Handling</u> Whilst there has been an improvement since the last quarter, both scorecards have the performance at red – failure to meet target. Whilst there has been an improvement there does not appear to have been a significant one.</p>	<p>This is a Governance issue rather than a Performance issue therefore this tem will not be taken up by the committee.</p>	<p>To continue to loosely monitor the issue through the Chairman's meeting.</p>
<p><u>Failure to improve and communicate the value for money of service within Community & Environment:</u> The risk ratings and discussion are the same (no improvement) as they were in the previous scorecard. There has been little or no change / development in this area. This issue could affect overall performance.</p>	<p>This item and the item below have been monitored at the Chairman's briefing for some time and it is felt that there has been no improvement. Therefore the Head of Service will be asked to attend the next Chairman's meeting to discuss the matter further and provide specific things that are being done to improve this. If this is a viable issue that warrants it, it will come to committee</p>	<p>Chairman's meeting 21/04/09</p>
<p><u>Work pressures lead to low staff morale impacting on delivery of service within Community & Environment</u> This was cross referenced with the same item in the Q2 report. The risk ratings are also the same (no improvement) There has been little or no change / development in this area.</p>	<p>This item and the item above have been monitored at the Chairman's briefing for some time and it is felt that there has been no improvement. Therefore the Head of Service will be asked to attend the next Chairman's meeting to discuss the matter further.</p>	<p>Chairman's meeting 21/04/09</p>
<p><u>Improved street and</u></p>	<p>Whilst there has been some</p>	

<p><u>environmental cleanliness</u> Whilst there has been an improvement in performance and performance is considered adequate. Nevertheless, it is recommended performance has been below target for at least 2 quarters. It is not yet clear whether or not it will meet the year end target.</p>	<p>improvement, this issue will continue to be monitored to see if this meets the end of year target. Dependant on the out come this issue may come to committee for further investigation.</p>	
<p><u>Inadequate recruitment, retention / staff morale</u> These items were cross referenced with the same items in the Q2 report. The risk ratings are also the same (no improvement) There has been little or no change / development in this area.</p>	<p>As there is a workforce strategy in place this strategy will be monitored to see what impact it has on the service.</p>	<p>At the Chairman's briefings.</p>
<p><u>A&E 4-Hour waits performance year to date</u> The PCT has flagged this as an issue of concern as there have been an increasing number of weeks where the 98% target has not been achieved due to increased pressure on resources. There is concern on the part of the PCT that if there is a continuation of this there is a significant risk that the PCT will not be able to deliver the full year 98% target.</p>	<p>This item warrants further investigation and therefore will come to committee.</p>	<p>Will come to P&F Committee on 31st March 2009</p>
<p><u>CIP & CPA</u> Update from the CIP Challenge Panel and a discussion about how the CPA scores will translate under CAA</p>	<p>Following a discussion with the Portfolio Holder and officers, this item to come to committee</p>	<p>Will come to P&F Committee on 31st March 2009</p>
<p><u>Annual Health Checks</u> Formal assessment of the PCT which includes assessment against a number of targets</p>	<p>This has been to Overview and Scrutiny (16/03/09) and therefore will not come to Performance and Finance Committee.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><u>Children Looked After in residential accommodation</u> This has gone over the targeted level since the last quarter – it has gone from amber in Q2 to red in Q3. The service states that is due</p>	<p>Both the Chair and Vice Chair are of the view that this issue will continue to come under review at the Chairman's meeting and may come to committee</p>	<p>Chairman's meeting</p>

<p>to a small number of necessary placements. Management overview of all placements continues. Nevertheless this was flagged as an issue by Children's Services</p>		
<p><u>Timeliness of adoption</u> This indicator dipped in Q3 because of adoption finalisation on historical cases but all new adoption processes are being carried out in a timely way. Indicator is back up to 75% post end of Q3</p>	<p>This item will not be considered further.</p>	
<p><u>Core Assessments (Children's Services)</u> The % of core assessments completed in time dropped in Q3 Robust management action has been taken to minimise further late assessments and this has already impacted at the end of Q3 and into Q4.</p>	<p>This item will not be considered further</p>	
<p><u>Care leavers in suitable accommodation</u> Leaving care team are working to ensure that the maximum number of care leavers are in suitable accommodation The target is challenging as status of each care leaver has a significant effect on performance and the % can be determined by factors beyond the control of children's services.</p>	<p>This item will not be considered further</p>	
<p><u>IT failure and/or lack of timely support impacting on service delivery.</u> Awaiting corporate developments and definite arrangements regarding back up sites. Looking to obtain back-up site agreements with other Councils. Corporate IT disaster recovery project in progress.</p>	<p>Explanation from IT of the salient points of why this matter still appears to be an issue.</p>	<p>To come to 21/04/09 Chairman's meeting.</p>
<p><u>Reviews for clients 18+ as % of total service users</u></p>	<p>Information requested for the Chairman's briefing as to why</p>	<p>Chairman's meeting 21/04/09</p>

	this matter has been amber for two quarters.	
<u>% urgent repairs to council housing completed within government time limits</u>	This item to come with the decent homes item to the next committee. This issue came to P&F on 21/01/09 however it was felt that this matter should return to P&F for further investigation.	To come to P&F on 20 th July 2009 with Decent Homes.
<u>Average length of stay in hostel accommodation (weeks)</u> This has been amber for Q1-3. The target is over the quarters has increased Taken with the PI below, it shows that there may well be a significant problem with regards to re-housing.	It was felt that this item should come to the next Chairman's briefing and potentially committee in July along side the decent homes item. This is a potentially serious issue in light of the economic down turn.	21/04/09 Chairman's meeting.
<u>Average time in B&B (weeks)</u> This indicator has been red for the last 3 quarters and meets the 'by exception' criteria and should be read with the item above (Average stay in hotel accommodation)	It was felt that this item should come to the next Chairman's briefing and potentially committee in July along side the decent homes item. This is a potentially serious issue in light of the economic down turn.	21/04/09 Chairman's meeting.

These issues arise from a number of PIs which, on the basis of an analysis, have been distilled down into these items, some of which are cross-cutting.

Legal and Financial Implications

There are no legal or financial implications to this report.

SECTION 3 - STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE

This is no longer required

SECTION 4 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

Contact: Ofordi Nabokei, Scrutiny Officer, Strategic and Performance
020 8420 9205: ofordi.nabokei@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers:

None.