

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	11 th June 2009
Subject:	Lead Member Report
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director, Partnership Development and Performance
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Paul Osborn, Performance, 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
- agree 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
- Corporate Effectiveness
- Safer and Stronger Communities

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

- Sustainable Development and Enterprise
- Children and Young People

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

Not appropriate for this report.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

Lynne Margetts, Service Manager Scrutiny 020 8420 9387

Background Papers:

None

APPENDIX ONE

Notes of Quarterly Briefing for Scrutiny Leads for Adults Health and Social Care **Friday 17 April 2009, 4.30pm**

Meeting attendees:

Bernie Flaherty (Divisional Director, Community Care)

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)

- Programme Area 1 - Continuous Service Improvement: the new Neighbourhood Resource Centres are still on track to open in July 2009. These use the typical model of a resource centre as the heart of the community.
- The second learning disabilities (LD) inspection made similar observations to the first inspection requiring a number of the same actions. The two action plans have been cross-referenced.
- Programme Area 2 - Developing Accommodation: an options appraisal paper on the community equipment store was presented to Cabinet in March.
- Programme Area 3 - Developing Self Directed Support: see below for the evaluation of personal budgets and self-directed support.
- Programme Area 4 - Well Being Early Intervention and Community Engagement: there has been an increase in the choice of providers in advocacy in LD services. Furthermore the 'Slivers of Time' initiative has been used as a mechanism for employment of people with LD within the Council.
- Programme Area 5 - Effective Working Practice: the HARP (covering housing, revenues and benefits, and planning) programme was delivered on time. IT continues to be a challenge and the Directorate is working with Capita to resolve issues.
- Programme Area 6 – People, Partnerships and Capacity Building: the workforce development strategy is currently in the process of being updated.
- Programme Area 7 – Maximising Financial Resources: the transfer of the LD service from the PCT to the local authority has been agreed at a first stage.

2. Safeguarding adults

- It is suggested that the annual report on safeguarding adults be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June.

To action: the annual report on safeguarding adults to be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 June 2009.

3. Personal budgets and self directed support – findings of pilot evaluation

- The personalisation agenda started in Harrow in January 2008. The pilot has now been evaluated and the findings will be fed back to the users involved. Harrow is one of the leaders in London for personalisation. One in five personal budget holders in London live in Harrow.
- It was the service users' views that to be able to adequately evaluate the pilot, it would be necessary to have at least 100 individual budget users in the system. The targets were ambitious but on time/target nonetheless.
- The evaluation found that 83% of people value the choice and control afforded by individual budgets. Particular successes were identified as safeguarding and risk management, the stakeholder reference group, mentoring, voluntary sector engagement.
- Areas suggested for improvement/development included the tension between FACS (Fair Access to Care Services) and choice and control, the significant time needed to guide and support customers, the need for simpler forms, the need to develop a range of budget holding options and the development of the social care market.
- There is a need to focus on market demand however it can be difficult to manage customer demands if the service is not available in the market, and therefore there is a need to seed the market. The community and voluntary sector has been engaged to broker these functions.
- The target for individual budgets for 2009/10 (Local Area Agreement target) is 750 users, for 2010/11 this is 1300 users. In part, this will be achieved by 'front-ending the process' so that when a person approaches social care, an individual budget is the default option. The focus will be on older people as the main clientele.
- The new Neighbourhood Resources Centre at Byron Road will be the base for the personalisation services (services for the users and also the support staff).

To action: The Scrutiny Lead Members for Adult Health and Social Care are invited to visit a new Neighbourhood Resource Centre when they are open. It is suggested that the new centre at Byron Road would be the best option.

4. Any Other Issues

There were none.

Date of next meeting:

To be arranged.

Corporate Effectiveness Lead Members Quarterly Briefing

20th April 2009

Meeting attendees:

Councillor Stanley Sheinwald (Policy Scrutiny Lead for Corporate Effectiveness)

Councillor Mark Versallion (Performance Scrutiny Lead for corporate Effectiveness)

Mike Howes, Service Manager, Policy and Partnerships

Lesley Clarke, HRD Strategy Manager

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 corporate issues or policy changes, local priorities for the council and partners, forthcoming issues that may be of interest to scrutiny or issues that could be suggested for scrutiny to pick up.

Meeting 16th March 2009

An update on the LAA – specifically the ‘people from different backgrounds getting on’ indicator

Councillors received an update on this indicator. The percentage of people who feel that people from different backgrounds get on well together has decreased to 48% which means, if performance remains the same, that no reward grant will be received. However, the indicator is not formally measured until September 09 and there is therefore time to pull the performance back. When this question is asked using the place survey methodology, which does not give respondents the option to respond that they ‘don’t know’ the figure rises to 76% which is more encouraging.

Councillors were advised that the council plans a programme of sports and arts activities in the 4 lowest scoring wards to try to ensure that this is addressed along with a publicity campaign. However, it is acknowledged that it is unlikely the performance can be addressed to resolve the difference between the recorded score of 48% and the target of 61%.

Councillors asked how the recession is impacting on the cohesion of the borough and were advised that as yet there does not appear to be any adverse impact as there has not been significant competition for public services. However, the council is not being complacent and both the ‘recession busting group’ and the scrutiny review of sustainability will help the council to understand the impact and resolve any difficulties.

Recommended Action: The report be noted.

Topline results from the place survey

The topline results of the place survey were discussed. These are attached. The responses to question 2 ‘Which things most need improving’ are significant as these indicate where local people feel that the council should focus its improvement priorities. The comparisons with other boroughs will provide additional information.

Whilst overall satisfaction levels are encouraging, there are other concerns, in particular that local people have a perception that local public services do not promote the interests of local people. There are also concerns that expectations with regard to services are rising faster than the performance of these services and that the increase in dissatisfaction suggests that there is low visibility of what the council provides and concern regarding level of taxes.

The survey has also highlighted the issue of communications, in that residents are generally badly informed. The council is developing a communications plan to address this, which will include things such as retiming of street cleaning activities to increase their visibility

Recommended action: The report be noted and councillors to be provided with the unconfirmed comparative information.

Update on workforce planning issues

The council's strategy for people will need to be renewed for 2010. Each service area will be responsible for reviewing their own component of the strategy but will be supported by Human Resources and Learning and Development staff. There is generally good progress in terms of the production of departmental strategies across all of the council with the exception of Community and Environment. This probably reflects the range of services in the directorate. A new Corporate Director joins the council soon and this should help, particularly as his background is in human resources.

The departments' workforce strategy groups also have responsibility for consideration of other issues human resources issues e.g. results of the staff survey and IIP planning.

The council is also moving towards workforce planning with partners.

The IPAD process now incorporates the CREATE values and the overall process has been improved.

Councillors enquired about the state of staff morale, which they were aware had suffered in recent months. This will be investigated further using the latest staff survey, which will also assist the council to understand how effectively cultural change is being achieved.

Recommended action: Results of the staff survey to be provided to councillors in order to determine whether further investigation is required.

Councillor Calls for Action

Preparation for CCfA in the borough is well advanced, though national guidance has only just been published. The council hosted a launch for the guidance on behalf of the Centre for Public Scrutiny on 6th March attended by council representatives from London and the South East of England.

Recommended action: Maintain a watching brief on the implementation of this process

Comprehensive Area Assessment

The method of assessing councils' performance has been radically changed. In future, in addition an assessment of the council's own performance, via an expanded 'Use of Resources' assessment, the council's and our partners' performance as members of the Harrow Strategic Partnership, will also be assessed via the 'Area Assessment'. The partnership will be measured in terms of:

- How well local priorities express community needs and aspirations
- How well outcomes and improvements needed are being delivered
- The prospects for future improvement

The council and partnership has decided to develop a self assessment for both assessments in order to establish a baseline and accurate improvement plan to guide activities in future. Scrutiny has been asked to offer a challenge to the development of the assessment and these have been scheduled. For the area assessment, the corporate effectiveness leads will receive copies of the relevant sections of the document and will be invited to comment, these comments will be fed back to the officers drafting the self assessment.

Recommended action: Special meeting of the corporate effectiveness leads will be timetabled to discuss the area assessment.

Notes from the Safer and Stronger Communities Leads Briefing

The Scrutiny Lead Members for Safer and Stronger Communities, Councillor Nana Asante and Councillor Anthony Seymour, met on 6 May 2009 with the Scrutiny Officer.

Community Safety

Members received a briefing from the Scrutiny Officer on the new Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Regulations 2009. The new legislation further re-enforces the lines of democratic accountability and the official requirement for Overview and Scrutiny to scrutinise and ensure CDRPs are effectively tackling crime and disorder.

Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)

Members reviewed the CCfA report that went to the Overview Scrutiny meeting on 16 March which provided details of the plans for implementation. The lead members are keen to review further details of the council's plans as they are being developed to support and implement CCfA on the ground

Recommended action: to continue to monitor the development of CCfA

The Duty to Involve, Inform and Consult

The leads expressed that they would like to look further into the Duty to Involve, Inform and Consult came into force in April 2009. The leads will be keeping a watching brief of how Harrow will be putting this in place and have requested to have further information on the network of empowering authorities who are working with the IDeA to develop this. The leads members are also keen to look into how this will fit with CCfA and CAA.

Recommended action: to continue to monitor the duty

Community engagement and empowerment in Harrow

Members requested to have a matrix put together detailing how various divisions, bodies and organisation focused on developing community engagement and empowerment work together. This would be helpful in developing the stronger communities element of their remit as policy and performance leads.

Recommended action: further information be provided on how the responsible parts of the organisation work together to develop stronger communities

Hear Say Review

Lead Members expressed that they would like to re-visit the progress of the Overview and Scrutiny, Hear Say Review. They will be looking at the progress of the implementation of the recommendations and the implications of the new policy developments such as CCfA.

Recommended action: the implementation of the recommendations of the HearSay review to be considered by the leads

Overview and Scrutiny work programme

Lead members discussed the Overview and Scrutiny work programme which featured two topics relevant to their remit including:

- Communications and fear of crime
- Young People and Crime

Future Meeting

The lead members decided that they would hold their next quarterly meeting on Tuesday 28 July 2009.