

## LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

CABINET – 21 JULY 2011

### REFERENCE FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –14 JUNE 2011

#### **Standing Scrutiny Review of the Better Deal for Residents Programme – Interim Report, Project Management**

The Chairman of the Challenge Panel tabled a presentation on the Standing Scrutiny Review of the Better Deal for Residents Programme. He outlined the approach to the Review, the objectives, the summary of the Group's findings and the implications of failing to implement the recommendations.

The Committee welcomed the report and congratulated the Challenge Panel on their excellent piece of work. A Member did, however, express concern that it had been necessary for Members to do this work as the issues raised should have been addressed as a matter of course as they would be in a business. It was hoped that senior managers would take the recommendations on board. The Chairman of the Panel reported that the resident participants had been surprised that the report had been necessary and had been instrumental in strengthening the recommendations and were keen to progress the project.

Another Member echoed the views previously stated and added that a weakness was that Better Deal for Residents (BDfR) had been set up in the run up to an election. Whilst accepting its remit needed to be change, he expressed concern that the BTP Panel had been abolished. He indicated that an increase in Member oversight of the project was required.

A Member questioned whether communication in relation to improving the corporate culture for customer satisfaction and resident involvement could be addressed. The Chairman of the Challenge Panel advised that he had spoken to the manager of Access Harrow with a view to improving the board displays on the ground floor of the Civic Centre by including customer feedback. An officer added that residents had indicated that the Council should talk to them as they may know a solution to an issue better than officers. Any further review could consider how residents' opinions were being addressed.

Further to the question in relation to communication, a Member stated that the communication on BDfR had not been good. He expressed concern that there had not been a new communication plan since May 2010 and no meetings of the Communications Review Group. Another Member advised that there was a new Communications Plan and referred the Member to the Assistant Chief Executive.

The Interim Director of Finance reported that the Corporate Strategy Board had recently received a paper on project management recommending that project management should be across the local authority. It had, however, been agreed that one size did not fit all.

**RESOLVED:** That (1) the report from the Standing Scrutiny Review of the Better Deal for Residents Programme be agreed;

**(2) the report be referred to Cabinet in July for consideration.**

**FOR CONSIDERATION**

Background Documents:

Report submitted to Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14 June 2011.

Draft minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 14 June 2011

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