

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	13 December 2011
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Report of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee Chair</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director, Partnership, Development and Performance
<b>Scrutiny Lead Member area:</b>	All areas
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Enclosures:</b>	Minutes of the sub-committee meeting held on 22 November 2011

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

**Recommendations:**

That the report of the Performance and Finance sub-committee chair be noted.

## Section 2 – Report

### Introductory paragraph

This report provides a summary of issues to be taken forward by the Performance and Finance scrutiny sub-committee following the meeting held on 22 November 2011. The minutes of the meeting are attached.

### Issues identified for further follow-up

#### Agenda item 8: Chair's report

As detailed below, updates will be sought on the indicators listed at the next chair's briefing, to be held on 14 December 2011. The full comments and appendices are available at:

<http://www.harlow.gov.uk/www2/documents/s93060/PF%20chairs%20report%202011-11-11.pdf>

Indicator	Comments and action to be taken
NI 32 repeat incidents of domestic violence	A detailed update was provided at the meeting. Monitoring at the Chair's briefing to continue.
NI 40 number of drug users in effective treatment	A detailed update was provided at the meeting. Monitoring at the Chair's briefing to continue.
NI 64 – duration on the child protection register	This indicator has been replaced with a local measure on the Corporate Scorecard. It was agreed that the local measure <i>Numbers of children with child protection plan for over two years</i> would continue to be monitored at the Chair's briefing.  ACTION: The Chair requested further information on the plans in place to improve performance.
Termly rate of fixed term exclusions as a % of Harrow school population [local measure]	Monitoring at Chair's briefing to continue.  The Chair requested an update on reasons for the fluctuations in fixed term exclusions.
Processing of major planning applications in accordance with statutory timescales or Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) [local measure]	No further monitoring required at this stage.
BV 8 - % of undisputed invoices paid within 30 working days  [also % of SAP purchase orders raised before invoice date]	Monitoring at the Chair's briefing to continue, and reviewed when the Internal Audit report has been issued.  It was noted that 94% of invoices from local small businesses were paid within the 30 day period.
NI 195c – Improved cleanliness – graffiti	Monitoring at the Chair's briefing to continue, as data is not available until Q2.
NI 125 – Achieving independence for older people through	Monitoring at the Chair's briefing to continue; data is not available until Q2 as calculations are one quarter in

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Comments and action to be taken</b>
rehabilitation	arrears. The Department of Health has yet to provide guidance and there is no target.  This indicator is no longer on the Corporate Scorecard.
NI 101 – Looked after children achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent at Key Stage 4, including English and maths [Annual])	No further monitoring required; to be reviewed annually. See original report for further detail.
NI 107 - % pupils achieving L4 or above in both English and maths at Key Stage 2 for BME groups [Annual]	No further monitoring required; to be reviewed annually. See original report for further detail.
% pupils achieving 5+ A*-C including English and maths GCSEs for White British pupils eligible for FSM (free school meals) [Annual]	The Chair advised that part of the concern had been that the target seemed to be very low compared with targets set for other low-performing groups. The Service Manager, Performance Management advised that this particular group were the most under-achieving group; the then DfES <sup>1</sup> had set very ambitious targets and it could be argued that the target should be the same across all groups. The decision had been taken to set an achievable target.  Monitoring at the Chair's briefing to continue, and Members to be provided with data including the size of the cohort when available.
% tenants satisfied with the outcome of their anti-social behaviour case [local]	No further monitoring required. See original report for further detail.

<b>Newly identified indicators</b>	<b>Comments</b>
How well informed do residents feel (Involvement Tracker)	The survey was conducted while much of the planning for the year's communications activity was taking place. As communications campaigns are delivered over the course of the year, this figure is expected to increase.  To monitor at the next Chair's briefing.
Number of trained neighbourhood champions	An ambitious target was set for the recruitment of neighbourhood champions. The target has since been re-profiled across the year; the target for Q1 would have been 750. This change to the target will be reflected in Q2.  To monitor at the next Chair's briefing.
Children Looked After:	A new strategy is in place but has had less impact so far than hoped. Pastoral support for CLA has been strengthened

<sup>1</sup> Department for Education and Skills.

Newly identified indicators	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- % sessions absent from school amongst school age CLA in the school year to date</li> <li>- Rate of fixed term exclusions as a % of the Harrow CLA population</li> </ul>	<p>through a dedicated CLA education welfare officer (EWO).</p> <p>ACTION: The Chair requested details of the action plan.</p> <p>To monitor at the next Chair's briefing.</p>
<p>Total number accepted as homeless and in priority need</p>	<p>ACTION: The Chair requested details of plans in place to address performance.</p> <p>To monitor at the next Chair's briefing.</p>
<p>Council adaptations: average time from assessment to completion of work (weeks)</p>	<p>The Chair requested further information in order to understand the impact of the backlog on performance.</p> <p>To monitor at the next Chair's briefing.</p>
<p>Housing voids: number of empty properties going over 25 days (excludes time taken for major works)</p>	<p>To monitor at the next Chair's briefing.</p>
<p>Visits to libraries – number of physical visits</p>	<p>It was noted that visits to libraries were affected by temporary library closures to enable the introduction of RFID self service.</p> <p>No further monitoring required at this stage.</p>
<p>Total debt collected in quarter as a % of total debt raised</p>	<p>Two high volume invoices were raised at the end of the quarter that were not settled in quarter. The Chair enquired whether the indicator should in fact reflect the <i>collectable</i> debt within the quarter but was advised by the Director of Finance that there were a mix of due dates.</p> <p>It was noted that Scrutiny has commissioned a challenge panel on debt recovery.</p> <p>To monitor at the next Chair's briefing.</p>
<p>% forecast variation from net budget</p>	<p>This indicator is showing a forecast overspend. The target is showing as high red, though the actual variation is only 0.57%. The tolerance for the indicator may need to be adjusted because of the target set.</p> <p>To monitor at the next Chair's briefing.</p>
<p>Rent arrears:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current rent arrears as % of rent roll</li> <li>- Overall current tenants' rent arrears</li> </ul>	<p>The Chair requested that the consistency of scoring and status for these indicators be investigated.</p> <p>To monitor at the next Chair's briefing.</p>

- **Agenda item 10: Revenue and Capital Monitoring for Quarter 1 as at 30 June 2011**  
The Quarter 2 report will be reviewed by the chair and vice-chair at their next briefing. The Interim Director of Finance would circulate the proforma for capital bids.
- **Agenda item 11/14: Major contracts and procurement savings**  
Additional information was requested by Members under part 2.

### **Issues where no further follow-up required**

- **Agenda item 9: Information report – Cabinet Decision Making Protocol**  
Members agreed the report.

### **Other matters identified outside committee**

#### **Scrutiny review – Measuring up: Council’s use of performance information**

O&S recently agreed the phase 2 report on the Council’s Use of Performance Information. The report recommended that P&F review the Corporate Finance scorecard with the Director of Finance as it had not been possible to undertake this work as part of the review. It is proposed that this review be undertaken in Q4 to inform the new scorecards for 2012/13.

#### **Children Looked After**

In addition to follow-up at the next chair’s briefing, a meeting will be set up between the chair and vice-chair, vice-chair of O&S and the Children’s Scrutiny Lead Members to consider performance in this area.

### **Agenda planning for the next meeting of the sub committee – 2 February 2012**

Scrutiny Members are requested to notify the Scrutiny Officer if there are matters that they would like the chair and vice-chair to investigate or to consider adding to the agenda.

Provisional items are:

- P&F chair’s report
- Revenue and capital monitoring
- Performance of the sport and leisure contract
- Customer contact information
- Report on progress - Better Deal for Residents’ Review
- Report on progress - Council’s use of performance information - Phase 1

The chair’s briefing for this meeting will be held on Wednesday 14 December.

#### **Financial Implications**

There are none specific to this report.

#### **Performance Issues**

There are none specific to this report.

#### **Environmental Impact**

There are none specific to this report.

#### **Risk Management Implications**

There are none specific to this report.

#### **Corporate Priorities**

The work of the sub-committee addresses all of the Council’s corporate priorities.

### **Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance**

Not required for this report.

### **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Heather Smith, Scrutiny Officer, 020 8420 9203, [heather.smith@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:heather.smith@harrow.gov.uk)

**Background Papers:** None.