

*PART A

Report to: Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 8 July 2014

Report of: Partnerships and Performance Section Head

Title: Outsourced services performance data and information –
Quarter 4 2013/14

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Watford BC regularly collects and monitors performance data for a wide range of its service areas. This is to ensure that services are performing at an acceptable standard. It helps highlight areas of good performance as well as those areas which might require some additional focus to improve performance.
- 1.2 Although a number of service areas remain within the direct control of the council, over the last few years a number have been externalised. In these cases, there remains a requirement to collect and report performance data for the reasons outlined in 1.1.
- 1.3 This report focuses specifically on the performance information obtained from external service providers as of quarter 4 2013/14.
- 1.4 From 2014/15 additional performance measures will be included in reports to the Panel – these are detailed in 3.2.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Panel to note and comment on the performance of the identified outsourced service indicators at the end of quarter 4 (January – March / end of year) 2013/14 - Appendix A.
- 2.2 Panel to note the additional areas to be included in reports from 2014/15.
- 2.3 Panel to consider any improvements or changes to the report that would support its understanding of performance for 2014/15.

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3.0 **Background information**

Watford BC regularly collects and monitors performance data for a wide range of its service areas. This is to ensure that services are performing at an acceptable standard. It helps highlight areas of good performance as well as those areas which might require some additional focus to improve performance. This performance data and information is reported to the council's Leadership Team on a regular basis and to Cabinet and either Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Outsourced Scrutiny Panel on a quarterly basis.

3.1 **Current outsourced services**

3.1.1 Over the last few years, Watford BC has outsourced a range of its services. Within the contracts associated with these services is a requirement to collect and report performance information to the council to support its role as 'client' or 'commissioner'. The range and scope of this information is defined within each contract and would be relevant to the area of service delivery.

3.1.2 Whilst Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to scrutinise performance relating to services retained 'in-house', Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel established that performance information relating to the following outsourced contracts was to be reported to the Panel in 2013/14.

- SLM
- HQ Theatres
- Parking
- Veolia
 - Street cleansing
 - Waste and recycling
 - Parks and open spaces

3.1.3 Performance information available at Quarter 4 2013/14 (end of year) that relates to the areas outlined in 3.1.2 is included in this report to Panel at Appendix A.

3.2 **Additional areas for performance reporting and monitoring in 2014/15**

3.2.1 Since 1 April 2014, arrangements for the delivery of the four services the council shares with Three Rivers District Council (ICT, Human Resources, Revenues and Benefits and Finance) have changed and the two councils are now operating what is known as the 'lead authority' model of service delivery. This change impacts on the councils' relationships with the four service areas. The arrangement agreed between the two councils, is for each authority to 'lead' on the delivery of two of the services and, effectively, become clients for the others.

- 3.2.2 For Watford, this means leading on Human Resources and ICT whilst Three Rivers leads on Revenues and Benefits and Finance. Of these, ICT is the only service of the four being provided by an external supplier (Capita).
- 3.2.5 A consequence of this change is that the Joint Shared Services Committee, which had responsibility for the monitoring of performance information relating to the four service areas, no longer exists. Member performance monitoring is now undertaken by each council in line with its own constitutional arrangements. This means the following for Watford:
- Human Resources performance information will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee as this is an in-house service for Watford
 - Finance performance in the most part will be reported through Budget Panel (as happens currently)
 - Revenues and Benefits performance information will be reported to Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel
 - Although Watford is the lead authority for ICT, performance will be reported to Outsourced Scrutiny Panel because it is being delivered by an external supplier
- 3.2.6 Performance measures, therefore, for Revenues and Benefits and ICT will be included in the performance report to Outsourced Scrutiny Panel from quarter 1 2014/15.

3.3 Review of performance at end of year

- 3.3.1 2013/14 was the first year that performance relating to outsourced services was reported in this format. Work has been undertaken over the year to refine how, and what, information is presented to Panel for consideration and comment. This is to ensure Panel has the information and data it needs to support its role in monitoring and scrutinising service delivery for the council's outsourced service areas. It is anticipated that further refinement will be made in 2014/15 and Panel is invited to suggest where improvements could be made.
- 3.3.2 Overall, the council's outsourced services shows steady improvement and sustained levels of performance in most areas for 2013/14.
- 3.3.3 The performance achieved by Veolia in its first 9 months indicates an effective handover of responsibilities in the areas of waste, street cleansing and parks and relatively low levels of disruption to service performance despite significant change and the introduction of new ways of working. Recycling performance shows improvement. The council would expect to see the service achieve even better results for 2014/15 in line with targets set in the contract. Residual waste is also moving in the right direction (downwards). Street cleansing performance is good in the areas of graffiti and fly posting – both of which have improved since last year – but the council will want to see litter and detritus performance improve in 2014/15. Veolia introduced a new approach to the delivery of street cleansing from November 2013 and it was expected that, whilst the new ways of working were embedded, performance would dip slightly.

- 3.3.4 SLM's visitor numbers remain strong and the council is now monitoring usage of the two centres by identified community groups to ensure that take-up of the facility and activities is reflected across the Watford population. Both surveys undertaken (customer and resident) in 2013/14 showed good levels of satisfaction with the centres and Panel was presented with more detailed findings of the survey that was conducted with customers during 2013 to show where SLM intended to use the feedback to improve performance.
- 3.3.5 Watford Colosseum's performance shows increased use of the venue across a number of categories. More customer related information will be included from 2014/15 as this will present a more rounded picture of how well HQ Theatres is delivering the service.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS.**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 There are no financial implications within this report.

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 There are no legal implications within this report.

Appendices

Appendix A

WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL – MEASURES OF PERFORMANCE - Outsourced Services
Scrutiny Panel – Quarter 4 (January - March) 2013/14