

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Update on actions and questions arising from previous meeting 23 June 2011

Action to be carried out	To be completed by	Comments/officer
Performance Report		
1. Where the Partnerships and Performance Section Head can see areas of concern then more detailed information to be added to the report. (Partnerships and Performance Section Head)	For inclusion in the next report to OSC	Noted for action.
2. The Partnerships and Performance Section Head's responses to the Chair's and Vice-Chair's questions to be attached to the minutes. (Committee and Scrutiny Officer)	Monday 4 July 2011	The response has been attached to the minutes. (Committee and Scrutiny Officer)
3. The Partnerships and Performance Section Head to circulate Environmental Services' response to the question about the impact the closure of Wiggshall Recycling Centre has had on the fly tipping and waste figures. (Partnerships and Performance Section Head)	26 July 2011	See below for responses.

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<p>4. Has there been a noticeable increase in fly tipping following the closure and the geographical location of these incidents. (Partnerships and Performance Section Head)</p>	26 July 2011	<p>Head of Environmental Services' response:</p> <p>There has been minimal impact on the incidents of fly tipping following the closure of the Wiggshall Recycling Centre (or Herts Waste Recycling Centre - HWRC).</p> <p>There were very few incidents of fly tipping at the old entrance to HWRC after its closure, with one FPN being issued to a local resident, however overall it seems to have had no impact across the borough. This may be in part due to the vicinity of HWRC's at North Watford and Rickmansworth. Analysis of the number of fly tips in Apr - June 2010 and Apr - June 2011 actually show a small decrease.</p> <p>Watford does not have many hot spot areas, but when they occur they are tackled with a cross-cutting team from Environmental Crime, Street Cleansing, and Service Improvement, and by working with our residents, through information, education, and enforcement. These hot-spots can be a combination of fly tipped material from various domestic or trade sources. The reasons can be varied, ignorance of WBC collection procedure, irresponsibility, through to evasion of payment for legal waste removal. We target these areas jointly, and deal with them accordingly as the reasons become evident.</p>
<p>5. Are communal recycling facilities in flats incorporated into the residual household waste statistics? (Partnerships and Performance Section Head)</p>	26 July 2011	<p>The Head of Environmental Services' response:</p> <p>The waste from communal recycling facilities is treated as any other household waste.</p>

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<p>6. What is the extent of communal recycling within the Borough? (Partnerships and Performance Section Head)</p>	26 July 2011	<p>The Head of Environmental Services' response: All flats have recycling facilities but it is only those sites that had repeated contamination problems that received the new bins with aperture lids. We have a review planned for September/October 2011 to assess the effectiveness of this style bin. Although the greenwaste aperture has not been popular with all residents, we have had no contaminated bins/loads since the new bins have been used.</p>
<p>7. Have the new green bins with locked lids and narrow slits, used in flats, had a negative impact on the level of green recycling? (Partnerships and Performance Section Head)</p>	26 July 2011	<p>The Head of Environmental Services' response: Initially we experienced high levels of contamination in the on street recycling bins and so moved bins away from takeaway food premises and similar problem areas. Although the contamination has improved it is still an issue that requires continually monitoring. The impact on recycling performance from these bins is negligible and difficult to measure because we collect the waste as part of the normal recycling round. However, this is as much about changing overall behaviour and encouraging residents to think about the choices they make on how they dispose of their recyclable wastes. We have more bins for placement at shop fronts across the town, but will work to resolve the town centre problems before these are placed out.</p>
<p>8. Have the differential Town Centre recycling bins had a positive effect and have they proved to be worthwhile? (Partnerships and Performance Section Head)</p>	26 July 2011	<p>The Head of Environmental Services' response: Initially we experienced high levels of contamination in the on street recycling bins and so moved bins away from takeaway food premises and similar problem areas. Although the contamination has improved it is still an issue that requires continually monitoring. The impact on recycling performance from these bins is negligible and difficult to measure because we collect the waste as part of the normal recycling round. However, this is as much about changing overall behaviour and encouraging residents to think about the choices they make on how they dispose of their recyclable wastes. We have more bins for placement at shop fronts across the town, but will work to resolve the town centre problems before these are placed out.</p>

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<p>9. Planning performance statistics PL1 to PL3 to incorporate the number of applications for each type of application.</p> <p>(Partnerships and Performance Section Head)</p>	<p>For inclusion in the next report to OSC</p>	<p>Noted for action.</p>
<p>10. The Head of Human Resources be asked to provide a written response regarding the poor performance of indicator HR1, sickness absence.</p> <p>(Partnerships and Performance Section Head)</p>	<p>26 July 2011</p>	<p>To be circulated.</p>
<p>11. Revenues and Benefits statistics – to incorporate within the performance report statistics relating to the processing of applications within 3 days once the client has provided all the necessary information.</p> <p>(Partnerships and Performance Section Head)</p>	<p>For inclusion in the next report to OSC</p>	<p>Noted for action.</p>
<p>12. The Revenues and Benefits report presented to the Shared Services Joint Committee to be circulated to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in paper format.</p> <p>(Committee and Scrutiny Officer)</p>	<p>1 July 2011</p>	<p>A paper version of the report was circulated to all members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. (Committee and Scrutiny Officer)</p>
<p>13. Future performance reports to incorporate statistics relating to the accuracy of information and the length of time taken to complete assessments, which affect the subsidy received by the Council.</p> <p>(Partnerships and Performance Section Head)</p>	<p>For inclusion in the next report to OSC</p>	<p>Noted for action.</p>

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14. Future performance reports to include the 'downtime' of IT services. (Partnerships and Performance Section Head)	For inclusion in the next report to OSC	Noted for action.
15. The usage figures for SLM Ltd to be included in future reports. (Partnerships and Performance Section Head)	For inclusion in the next report to OSC	Noted for action.
16. Does the service have any accurate predictions on the extent of affordable housing that might be delivered this year and in the medium term (Community Services)	26 July 2011	The Housing Section Head comments: The council has figures to predict numbers of affordable housing for the current year. Medium term we would not be able to include as yet. We are waiting to hear the outcome of which housing associations have had funding bids approved by the Homes and Communities Agency and this will help with setting a medium-term figure.
17. Bed and breakfast numbers and length of stay to be included in future reports. (Partnerships and Performance Section Head)	For inclusion in the next report to OSC	
18. Does the length of stay in hostel accommodation (as reported) tie in with the number of households in temporary accommodation (also reported) or does the measure only include hostels (i.e. not other forms of temporary accommodation)? (Community Services)	26 July 2011	The Housing Section Head comments: The key criterion is shared facilities so this does include our hostels and bed and breakfast but not any self contained properties we are using as temporary accommodation.

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<p>19. Is a high or low number good performance for the indicator: <i>Number of households who considered themselves as homeless, who approached the local authority's housing advice service(s), and for who housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation</i> (Community Services)</p>	26 July 2011	<p>The Housing Section Head comments: We generally take a high number as good because it shows successful prevention work. Of course it would be better if those people didn't need to approach the council in the first place but what we are measuring is how good the council's interventions are when they do). What can be useful to report alongside is the number of cases necessitating statutory provision (i.e. the number we could not prevent during the same period and where the council has a statutory duty).</p>
Voluntary Sector Task Group – Cabinet response		
<p>19. The recommendations to be reviewed once the review of current priorities has been completed. (Committee and Scrutiny Officer)</p>	In July 2012	<p>Added to rolling work programme (Committee and Scrutiny Officer)</p>
<p>20. Further clarification required on the application process for Members submitting applications to the Mayor's Community Fund. (Committee and Scrutiny Officer)</p>	26 July 2011	<p>Information to be confirmed (Committee and Scrutiny Officer)</p>
<p>21. Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider whether to set up a Task Group to look at a review of the property policy in relation to the voluntary sector.</p>	26 July 2011	<p>This was considered under the work programme item and it was agreed to establish a Task Group. Scrutiny proposal form being developed by the Chair.</p>

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Community Safety Partnership Task Group		
19. Contact the Community Safety Manager regarding the new Community Safety Partnership Task Group. (Committee and Scrutiny Officer)	26 July 2011	Contacted the Community Safety Manager by email on 5 July. Spoke to her on telephone on 12 July 2011 to discuss arrangements for first meeting.
20. Contact the members of the Task Group and identify a date for the first meeting. (Committee and Scrutiny Officer)	26 July 2011	Sent an email to all Members on 8 July 2011 to confirm the Task Group membership. Sent an email to the Task Group Members advising that a meeting needs to set up.
21. Check any outstanding work for the Task Group from the previous year. (Committee and Scrutiny Officer)	Task Group's first meeting	Contacted the Task Group Members and checking through previous reports and minutes to compile a list of items.
Forward Plan		
22. In the report provide further clarification regarding the decision-maker for those items deleted from the Forward Plan. (Committee and Scrutiny Officer)	For the next report to OSC on 26 July 2011	Report amended, see item 9 on the agenda.

Action to be carried out

To be completed by Comments/officer

Work Programme and Task Groups

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| <p>23. The scrutiny proposal 'recruitment of ex-offenders and disadvantaged youth' to be referred to the Community Safety Partnership Task Group for review from a general aspect and not just related to the Council.
(Committee and Scrutiny Officer)</p> | <p>For consideration by the Task Group at its first meeting</p> | <p>The suggestion has been included in the list of items for consideration by the Task Group.</p> |
| <p>24. Task Group to be set up to review 'hospital parking and its charges' – email non-executive members to invite them to participate in the Task Group
(Committee and Scrutiny Officer)</p> | <p>Invites + Scoping Form by 15 July 2011.
TG to be appointed on 26 July</p> | <p>Original proposal emailed to Chair (Committee and Scrutiny Officer)
Non-executive members have been invited to take part in the Task Group. Details are included in item 10 on the agenda.</p> |
| <p>25. Develop the hospital parking scope for the review.
(Chair and Vice-Chair)</p> | <p>Invites + Scoping Form by 15 July 2011.
TG appointed on 26 July</p> | |

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<p>26. Bin collection service in narrow streets – a representative from Environmental Services to attend the Railway Terrace Residents' Association's meeting to discuss this issue.</p> <p>Members to identify any particular hot spots in their wards to advise Environmental Services.</p> <p>(Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee)</p> <p>(Committee and Scrutiny Officer to contact service)</p>	26 July 2011	This requires further work to be carried out.
<p>27. Use of Cassiobury Park – provide the Scrutiny Committee with information regarding the Cassiobury Park Steering Group.</p> <p>(Committee and Scrutiny Officer)</p>	1 July 2011	Councillor Meerabux circulated information about the Steering Group by email to all Members on the OSC.