

	<p style="text-align: center;">Full Council 20 January 2014</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Assistant Chief Executive</p>
<p>For Action Wards Affected: ALL</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny</p>	

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the work of the council's overview and scrutiny committees in accordance with Standing Order 14. It covers the period since overview and scrutiny last reported to Full Council in November 2013.

2.0 Detail

2.1 *One Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

The One Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee has met once since the last Chair's report to Full Council. At the November meeting, the committee received the Complaint's Annual Report 2012/13. The report provided an overview of complaints received and investigated by the council under the corporate complaints scheme and the statutory social care complaints procedure. Members' questions focussed on performance of the new two stage complaints procedure which was introduced in April 2012, improvement actions, training and equalities information and tracking.

A presentation on the Future of Customer Services project was deferred to March's meeting of the committee.

2.2 *Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

The Children and Young People's OSC met in December to discuss reports on educational standards, the Working with Families Project and an update on Children's Centres.

The Educational Standards report provided a snapshot of Ofsted ratings in Brent's schools, the national context for the changing relationship between schools and local authorities in relation to schools improvement and key trends. Members queried actions being taken to support Brent's schools to improve, work being undertaken with Brent Schools Partnership and comparisons with other London Boroughs and national averages.

The discussion on the Working with Families Project focussed on how the teams within the project worked with one another, recruitment and retention, including professional qualifications required for support workers, and how the project was funded.

The committee discussed a report Children Centres in Brent that focussed on progress to secure sufficient early childhood services and included service objectives, governance arrangement and identification of good practices. As a result of this discussion, members of the committee agreed to have a further report that provided an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the Early Years Service at the committee's meeting in March 2014.

2.3 *Partnership and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

The main focus of the November meeting was employment and enterprise. Members heard from the Head of Employment and Enterprise, who informed members that the team was located with Housing and Employment division, reflecting the strong links between employment and housing needs. The committee was also informed that a borough Employment Strategy which will be aligned with the Housing Strategy was in the process of being drafted and that consultation on the evidence base had taken place with key stakeholders such as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the College of North West London (CNWL).

The Head of Employment and Enterprise gave a presentation demonstrating unemployment trends, demographic breakdowns for various claimant groups and the challenges facing the team and the borough as a whole. Members raised concerns that several wards, including some with the highest unemployment rates, have failed to improve over a number of years, illustrating concerns that poverty was entrenched some areas of Brent. Further areas of discussion included the changing labour demands in the borough and the implications for those failing to adequately search for work.

The Operations Director, Housing and Employment informed the committee about the work undertaken to secure employment opportunities at the London Designer Outlet, where the Employment and Enterprise team had access to approximately 500 vacancies, 50 per cent of which being secured by people supported by Wembley Works.

In the course of discussions on the changes in Wembley and the opportunities available such as the stadium and Park Royal, members agreed that individual areas needed to be improved to ensure the whole of the borough shares in the benefits of economic growth and secures jobs for local residents.

The Head of Employment and Enterprise updated the committee on the council's in-house apprenticeship scheme, stating that the position would be advertised locally as well as nationally - though the National Apprenticeship Service website. Members were informed that the first trench of apprenticeships would start in January. The committee expressed an interest in having an update in March 2014.

2.4 *Health Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

At the December meeting, the committee heard from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and North West London Hospitals Trust (NWLHT) on plans to cope with the additional pressures services normally experience during winter months, particularly those at Accident and Emergency centres. Members challenged the CCG and NWLHT on whether the measures being taken were enough to guarantee that Northwick Park A&E would cope through the winter months and whether the additional temporary beds being provided to alleviate pressure were sufficient. Members also raised concerns about the adequacy of the 111 telephone service and GP out-of-hours services across the borough, both of which are generally considered to have an impact on demand at A&Es.

The committee continued to hear from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) on the commissioning arrangements. The Brent CCG introduced the consultants who will be undertaking an impact assessment and consultation on the "wave 2" commissioning of services. Members questioned the consultants on their understanding of the needs and diversity of Brent residents and, in particular, sought assurances that all sections of the community would be adequately consulted. Members also sought clarification as to the extent and outcome the consultation will have on future commissions.

Representatives from the NWLHT reported on an incident whereby a large number of patients had been discovered not to have an "open care pathway" and, as a result, had been waiting for more than the statutory 18 week maximum for treatment. To deal with this, members heard that a number of patients will be sent to alternative providers to address the backlog. The committee sought clarification as to how patients sent to alternative providers would be properly monitored. Members also queried what steps were being taken to address the capacity issues that had been highlighted as a result of

the incident. The committee will continue to scrutinise this issue at future meetings.

The committee also received an update on plans for Central Middlesex Hospital (CMH). The committee raised a number of concerns about the proposals to relocate Park Royal Centre for Mental Health into part of the CMH buildings. The committee requested a further update on this and other proposals for CMH at the next meeting in January, when the plans are due to be more fully developed.

2.5 *Budget and Finance Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

The Budget and Finance OSC has met twice since last reported to Full Council. In November the Interim Director of Adult Social Care provided the committee with information on the main budgetary issues facing the department, including resources, savings found to date, unit cost trends and proposed changes in the Care Bill. Members' questioning focussed on early intervention to reduce long term cost, partnership working with the Clinical Commissioning Group and the balance between keeping costs down and ensuring quality of care. The committee also discussed the First Reading Debate papers, particularly the savings schedule. Members queried a number of the proposals while asking for more radical ideas to come forward in the future.

In December the committee received a presentation from the Interim Director of Children and Families. The presentation focussed on resources, unit cost trends, changing demographics and other future challenges. The committee discussed support provided to Looked After Children, the difficulty recruiting Social Workers and school performance. The committee also received a report on non permanent staffing arrangement which covered agency workers, interims and consultants. Members raised question about the operation of the Reed managed contract, the processes for recruitment and monitoring of interims and consultants and actions being taken to review these.

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