

**BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**North East Area Council Meeting:  
31<sup>st</sup> July 2014**

**Agenda Item: 6**

**Report of North East Area  
Council Manager**

**The Performance Management Role of Area Councils**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report outlines the performance management and improvement role of Area Councils in relation to commissioned services as well as area based and borough wide services provided locally.

**2. Recommendations**

**It is recommended that:**

- 2.1 Members familiarise themselves with the proposals outlined in Section 7 of Appendix 2.**
- 2.2 Members give consideration to the service areas they would wish to prioritise as part of a North East Area Council performance monitoring programme.**

**3. Introduction and context**

- 3.1 This report is set within the context of decisions made on the way the Council is structured to conduct business at Area / Ward / Neighbourhood levels, as agreed in the following Cabinet reports: Cab.13.2.2012/6; Cab.16.1.2013/10.3; Cab.13.2.2013/9; and Cab.8.5.2013/7.1
- 3.2 Subsequently the North East Area Council agreed to the Terms of Reference. Please refer to Appendix 1.
- 3.3 Since the North East Area Council was established, a number of the functions outlined in the Area Council's Terms of reference have been effectively undertaken and the identification of priorities and subsequent procurement has been prioritised.
- 3.4 Looking forward it will be necessary for the North East Area Council to consider how the Area Council's other functions will be conducted.
- 3.5 A number of neighbouring Area Councils have also identified the need to challenge performance. A paper circulated at the Central Area Council in May

2014 has prompted the writing of a report which details the framework that will enable some of these roles to be realised. As a result a discussion paper is attached to this report Appendix 2.

#### **4 North East Area Council Performance Monitoring Role**

- 4.1 Section 7.2 of Appendix 1 considers the Area Council role in influencing and improving area based and borough wide services provided locally. This may involve local scrutiny investigations.
- 4.2 Members are asked to give consideration to service areas for consideration as part of the performance monitoring / scrutiny role of the Area Council.
- 4.3 Members are also asked to consider that procurement of services to address Area Council priorities are currently the focus of the Area Manager.

#### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Area Council Terms of Reference (N.B. The Terms of Reference are currently undergoing a revision)

Appendix 2 – Discussion paper on the performance management and scrutiny role of Area Councils

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**Date:**  
July 2014

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **AREA COUNCILS – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **Terms of Reference**

To set local priorities in relation to the Electoral Wards comprising the Area and approve the Area Plan

To approve the allocation of the Area Budget and the commissioning of services from the Area Budget to support Area Plan priorities

To monitor the performance of services commissioned from the Area Budget in relation to the Area Council's priorities and desired objectives / outcomes

To influence the planning of services provided on a Borough-wide basis

To request reports as appropriate on area-based service activity

To monitor the performance of area-based services and those Borough-wide services provided locally, and identify issues for attention or action

To consider Councillor Calls for Action that would not more appropriately dealt with by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

To provide a reference point for local consultation and the increase of public engagement

To appoint the community representatives to serve on the Ward Alliances, on the recommendation of the Members of the Ward in question

To receive minutes or reports of the proceedings of Ward Alliances within the Area Council's area, as appropriate

To receive reports on decisions made in relation to the Devolved Ward Budgets

To make recommendations to the Council, Cabinet or the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on relevant matters relating to the area in question

To consider any matters relating to the area in question that might be referred to them by the Council, Cabinet or the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **The Performance Management & Monitoring Role of Area Councils**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to outline the performance management, monitoring and improvement role of Area Councils in relation to commissioned services as well as area based and borough wide services provided locally.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 Knowing how well an organisation is performing as a basis of challenging and reviewing progress and delivering improvements is an essential characteristic of any effective organisation and the Council is no exception.
- 2.2 The reports to Cabinet, Arrangements for Future Council Governance (Cab.21.11.2012/6) and the Realignment of Support for the Council's Area Governance (Cab.13.2.2013/9), the Area Governance Handbook and the Area Council's terms of reference, all identify that one of the main functions of the Area Councils is to monitor the performance of services commissioned from the Area Budgets, area based services and those borough wide services provided locally.
- 2.3 For the first 12 months of the revised arrangements, Area Councils have been focused on defining what their priorities and outcomes are, creating their Area plans and starting the commissioning process for the services/activities which reflect the priorities they have identified.
- 2.4 Performance measures have been developed and included within the tender specifications for services being commissioned and they will be built into the resultant contract with the preferred supplier. Performance measures have also been built into any Service Level Agreements with internal Council services.
- 2.5 A range of area data and intelligence has been provided to Area Councils and further work is currently underway to develop Area Profiles which will provide a more holistic data and intelligence tool pulled together in one place from a number of different data sources.
- 2.6 The existence of service performance management data and the availability of this at both an area and ward level vary across the organisation. However, as part of the business modelling and planning exercise that is currently underway any gaps will be identified and addressed ready for the implementation of the new business units and Future Council on 1 April 2015.

### **3. Area Councils Performance Management & Monitoring Role**

3.1 The role of Area Councils will have increasing importance, both in terms of influencing service delivery at a local level, and challenging and improving existing performance levels, both of Council services - whether directly delivered or commissioned - and the work of partner agencies.

3.2 Specifically, Area Councils discharge their performance management role in the following ways:-

- Challenging and reviewing existing performance in relation to their areas.
- Identify areas for improvement through the use of area and ward based community intelligence.
- Review the work of partner agencies such as GPs, schools, Berneslai Homes, in relation to their area and wards within.
- Building in performance and review processes and milestones to track the progress of commissioned services, to ensure that they have delivered the agreed outputs and outcomes.

### **4. Performance Management and Monitoring of Commissioned Services**

4.1 Once the commissioning process has completed and preferred suppliers have been selected, Area Councils, supported by the Area Manager and team, will have an ongoing contract and performance management role to undertake for the lifecycle of the contract.

4.2 Area Councils will ensure that the providers are delivering the contractually agreed outputs and outcomes and this will be monitored and reviewed through key performance measures.

4.3 Each provider of the commissioned service, whether that be an external provider or a Council service provider through a Service Level Agreement, will be responsible for providing performance management monitoring reports. The monitoring reports should be reviewed along with any available community intelligence and area and ward based data and intelligence.

4.4 Building in appropriate arrangements for customer feedback should be a key consideration as part of the overall approach to performance monitoring, review and improvement.

4.5 Area Councils may also need to take into account how certain groups are targeted and in what ways, ensuring that residents who are hard to reach and / or have multiple needs are not left out in the interests of securing 'better' quantitative performance with individuals who may not need intensive intervention to help them achieve better outcomes.

**5. Performance Management and Monitoring of Area Based and Borough Wide Services**

- 5.1 Area Councils will also have a key role in reviewing and challenging the performance of area based and borough wide services delivered locally, which could be Council, commissioned or partner agency services.
- 5.2 Currently, data and intelligence is not readily available from one source, in an easily usable format, broken down to an area and ward level. However, work is underway to create Area Profiles which will provide high level socio-demographic intelligence and to look at how this information can be shared and illustrated to enable Area Councils to use it more effectively to inform decision making and to help monitor performance.
- 5.3 Within Council provided services the availability of performance data and the availability of this at an area and ward level vary from service to service.
- 5.4 The Council is currently undertaking a full organisation re-design with the creation of new directorates and business units. This will result in some functions being moved, some functions being split and the business modelling and planning exercise will also look at how services can be delivered differently.
- 5.5 As part of business planning, Service Directors will have to review current and consider new performance measures and they will be asked to capture this information at an area and ward level. The new business plans and business units will not come into effect until 1 April 2015.
- 5.6 Once this revised performance data is available, Area Councils supported by the Area Teams and Performance and Partnership officers, will need to decide which data they would like to monitor which might be based around their priorities and also informed by the Area Profiles.
- 5.7 Local members will continue to gather community intelligence regarding the performance of area based and borough wide services and they should continue to make services aware of this to help inform improved service delivery.

**6. Performance Framework and Reporting**

- 6.1 The Council's Corporate Plan Performance Report is produced quarterly and this is reviewed and challenged by the Senior Management Team before being submitted to Cabinet for Members to challenge and review.
- 6.2 The report is also used as a basis for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to add further challenge and identify areas of further investigation for the Task

and Finish Groups to undertake and they produce recommendations back to Cabinet.

- 6.3 Area Councils may choose to investigate an area of concern and any conclusions will be recorded in the minutes. Governance and Member Support will ensure that the issues raised are processed through appropriately.
- 6.4 Initially, these concerns would normally be raised with the relevant Executive / Service Director for a response back to the Area Council in question. The relevant Cabinet Spokesperson might also be involved where there are serious concerns about performance. Where it becomes apparent that the same issue affects most of the Area Councils, the issue may be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration. This can be done through discussions by the Area Chairs, Governance and Member Support and the Scrutiny and Member Development Officer.
- 6.5 Area Councils and local members also have the opportunity to gather community evidence to be able to contribute to borough wide Overview and Scrutiny investigations, when required.

## **7. Proposal**

- 7.1 It is proposed that Area Councils commence the performance management of commissioned services from the contract start date. This will be achieved through the production of regular monitoring reports from meetings with the providers. The reports should be reviewed against the performance measures, outcomes, available community evidence and any timely data and intelligence.
- 7.2 It is proposed that Area Councils should continue to use community based intelligence and any available and timely data and intelligence to help influence and improve area based and borough wide services provided locally. This may involve local investigations and if appropriate recommendations can be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 7.3 It is proposed that from 1 April 2015, once socio-demographic data has been linked with the new business unit's performance data, Area Councils will play a more active performance management role of area based and borough wide services provided locally. This could involve agreeing which areas of performance should be monitored, inviting services to discuss and explain their performance including any strengths and areas for improvement and undertaking local investigations and reviews.

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