

## **REPORT TO CABINET – DECEMBER 17<sup>th</sup> 2009**

### **CABINET MEMBER - PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE** **COUNCILLOR IAIN BRODIE-BROWN**

#### **COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT**

The CAA process is now complete for the year 2008-2009. The final official publication date is 9<sup>th</sup> December 2009 (brought forward from the 10<sup>th</sup>). The Council and its partners elected not to seek review of any of the quantifiable judgements – Red or Green flags in the Area Assessment, either of the two sub-set scores or the composite Organisational Assessment score. A small but significant amount of negotiation was undertaken with the audit commission regarding the narrative components of each assessment.

#### **Organisational Assessment**

Sefton has been judged as a 2 for its Use of Resources which the Audit Commission advises equates to 'performing adequately'. Sefton has been judged as a 3 for Managing Performance which is to be regarded as 'performing well'. The Commission uses discretion in such cases to award a final score and the result in this case has been positive with Sefton being awarded an overall 3 – 'performing well'. There is a complete change of methodology from the CPA, so like for like comparisons can not be made to the judgements under the former regime.

#### **Area Assessment**

As previously reported, there were some stages of the process when it seemed that Sefton might attract Red Flags for its Area Assessment but in the end, only one was awarded for the Inspection of Youth Offending Service. A robust action-plan is being implemented to ensure rapid improvement in time for the re-inspection in 2010.

The Audit Commission has indicated that areas of concern will be monitored closely for improvement over the next year. An Improvement Plan has been developed with the participation of officers in relevant departments and partner organisations and this will act as the working plan in progress over the next year.

In general the narrative in the Area Assessment is positive reflecting a partnership which is working hard to make Sefton an attractive area, and has in place robust plans to improve yet further. The strategic budget review and governance review will ensure that the Council is well placed to continue its improvement journey.

#### **Ongoing developments - Comprehensive Area Assessment**

##### **Responding to the Recession**

The LRAP Group has successfully facilitated two events to further this agenda. An update meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> October identified empty shop revival as an issue and funding has been successfully won to support plans to address this. A further event on the 17<sup>th</sup> November addressed the whole issue of business support during the recession. A recession tracker has been developed by Economic Development and Sustainability Thematic Group. The Performance and Partnerships Team will continue to support the development of this tracker to include some wider issues, such as housing.

## **Risk Register**

The Risk Register for the jointly shared goals of the Local Area Agreement has been completed.

## **GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

An update report on the Governance Review was submitted to the Cabinet Member meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. Of particular relevance, is the work underpinning the review of the Sefton Borough Partnership and the review of Area Management. In relation to the SBP, a number of challenges have been highlighted which will be addressed by the implementation of the review:

- Lack of clarity of vision for the Partnership, the current vision was felt to not reflect the uniqueness of Sefton,
- There were many priorities, which led to a difficulty of accountability and understanding as to 'what drives what'.
- The main drivers of the vision are not clear, meaning thematic groups express their priority drivers very differently.
- The current structure does not reflect all the activity the partnership should be involved with.
- The self assessment results particularly expressed a lack of operationalisation at the SBP Board and Executive, meaning decisions on how services were delivered, aligned etc were not being made.

To support strategic and local prioritisation, a core evidence base has been produced. Area Committees are currently being briefed on what the evidence points to, in order to support the development of local plans, and to inform a refresh of the Corporate Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy. Area Committees are also being consulted on a governance model, which involves the creation of local area partnerships, under the umbrella of the Sefton Borough Partnership, so that improved links can be made to area committees. The emerging issues from the evidence base are:

- Older People - What do we need to do to ensure our growing population of older people have the best quality of life.
- Children and Young people - We have a good standard of Education, but poorer outcomes for vulnerable groups and the importance of those young people leaving education.
- Inequalities, geographic inequality but also between communities, for example health inequalities, gender and area
- Connectivity, transport and travel to work, the importance in Sefton of not only the City Region but also strong links to West Lancashire and Preston, improving transport links that way.
- Stronger communities, varied results on low civic participation and residents' perception of their ability to influence decision-making.

It is anticipated that revised governance arrangements for the SBP and Area Management will be submitted to Cabinet in January 2010 for approval and implementation from the new Municipal Year, to co-inside with the new executive arrangements.

## **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

### **Performance Portfolio**

Recent developments include:

- SPRINT Enhancements are being tested before incorporation into the system.
- Data Quality - The quality of information within SPRINT has improved although the information is variable between departments.

- Work contributing towards a data observatory is progressing well. A report and proposal was endorsed by the Sefton Borough Partnership Executive on 20th July 2009 paving the way for the creation of a Partnership Intelligence Group and initial action plan.

### **Qtr. 2 Corporate Performance/Escalation Policy**

Quarter two monitoring has been completed and is currently being presented to Members, reports included updates on the Corporate Plan, Departmental Service Plans and National Indicators. Corporately officers have stated that of the 60 Corporate Plan actions in SPRINT five (8%) are completed, two (3%) are recorded as all activities completed in year, five (8%) are delayed/overdue and 48 (80%) are on target.

Officers have stated that of the 152 Departmental Service Plan actions in SPRINT 11 (7%) are completed, four (3%) are delayed/on hold 135 (89%) are on target, and two (1%) have not reported progress.

Using Sefton's latest performance, officers have compared our performance with that published regionally and nationally to determine Sefton's direction of travel.