CABINET MEMBER FOR PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE

REPORT TO CABINET – 15th APRIL 2010

1. COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT

The CAA process has commenced for 2010/11. Continuing liaison with the Audit Commission has indicated a lighter touch approach this year with the commission seeking to gather information as much as possible from published resources, such as the SBP website. To ensure one database of resources to the Council and partners, a Partnership Document Library has been established to aid both internal and external performance management. The Audit Commission has been given access to assist the lighter touch approach.

This repository contains up-to-date documents and data on all relevant priorities for the Partnership and for key agencies such as the Council, the PCT and the Fire and Police Services.

1.1 Organisational Assessment

The Organisational Assessment - Use of Resources process was submitted to Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) by the deadline of 8th March. The submission included a short summary self-assessment and completed key lines of enquiry.

The basis of the points raised has been drawn from the 2009/10 Use of Resources guidance. PWC have begun reviewing all submitted information and have provided initial feedback. It is not intended as a definitive or final report, and any scores presented at this time would be subject to change.

The feedback details areas where more evidence is required or areas where the requirements for a higher score appear not met. These points are drawn from an initial review, and are intended to be useful and are open to further discussion. The indicative scores are not included at this point, as the review is subject to both internal review and Audit Commission moderation, which may produce further queries at a later point.

The managing performance deadline has not been finally set yet but is likely to be no earlier than May.

2. GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The key milestones in the Governance Review have been met including:
- New Executive arrangements agreed by Council in December 2009, Constitutional amendments made for implementation in the new municipal year;
- Political Conventions in place;
- Refreshed Strategic Borough Partnership Board and Operations Board approved by Council on 4th March and current SBP Board for implementation in the new municipal year;
- Review of Thematics and other Boards being undertaken, and transition plans in process of being prepared to implement new framework for Area Management. Work underway with Political Groups to plan implementation as the first stage of an

'influence' model for a range of Council Services in the new municipal year (report elsewhere on the agenda);

- Council on 25th March approved a new Performance Management Framework for the Council and the SBP which will be implemented in the new Municipal Year;
- Partnership mapping exercise conducted, new database of partnerships goes live in new municipal year, with governance arrangements of key partnerships being reviewed. New process implemented within the Council to identify, at an early stage, the risks associated with the creation of new partnerships, and controls in place;
- Review of Outside Bodies underway – linked to partnership mapping exercise and a refresh of the Cabinet Member Portfolios following local elections;
- Overview and Scrutiny Away Day is in the process of being planned, to review the current arrangements and determine how O and S can meet its wider responsibilities relative to partners and to take account of the emerging roles of Area Committees and the Area Partnership model;
- Cabinet Member Portfolios will need to be refreshed in 2010/11 to ensure that they reflect priorities and to provide clarity of links to the new organisational structure.

Everything that was planned to be completed and implemented by the new Municipal Year is in the place. The new arrangements will need to be monitored and developed over the next 12 months. The review of the Overview and Scrutiny Function, quite appropriately, will take place in the new Municipal Year as the SBP and area management develops. The emerging arrangements for area management will impact on the O and S role as Area Committees will be well placed to performance manage what is being achieved at a local level by area partnerships.

3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT & INTELLIGENCE

3.1 Performance Management Framework

As indicated above, a new performance management framework has been approved by Council for implementation during the 2010/11 municipal year.

The new framework follows extensive consultation with Members, council officers and partners; and represents a new approach to managing, improving & reporting performance and risk.

3.2 Internal Intelligence

In support of the Strategic Budget Review Workstream on Performance Improvement, the *Knowing & Understanding our Communities Internal Working Group* is completing a data rationalisation exercise.

This exercise will determine what data/information is available within and across council departments, whilst assessing the usefulness of the information, its cost and any supporting IT systems. An initial sift has already been completed, and a follow up exercise to more fully capture the qualitative and usefulness of information will shortly commence.

3.3 Partnership Intelligence / Data Observatory

On 25th March 2010, the partnership intelligence group ("Sefton Understood") held its fourth meeting.

The group identified a number of council worksreams where it will be able to support either immediately or in the near future:

- *New performance management framework* – Sefton Understood will assist in mapping partner contributions and resources to community outcomes, performance indicators and projects/programmes
- Health Inequalities Overview & Scrutiny Pilot – Sefton Understood will provide required strategic information or data to support the pilot e.g. demographic information.

3.4 Quarter Four 2009/10 Performance Reporting

Quarter Four monitoring has commenced, and updates against the Corporate Plan, Departmental Service Plans and National Indicators will be completed by departments.

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

3.5 Service Planning

A lighter touch approach to Service Planning is underway for 2010/11, which involves the identification of no more than 6 priorities per department. A simple pro-forma has been devised and it is proposed these drafts will assessed against the core evidence base which was commissioned last year with partners on the Strategic Borough Partnership, but which is due to be refreshed to take account of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, and other up to date sources of information. Once the Cabinet is in place for 2010/11, Members will take the lead in determining priorities going forward, which will inform the development of the Corporate Plan.

It is anticipated that following this, service plans and new corporate plan will be in place by the end of May/early June for approval. A fuller approach to service planning is under development for 2011/12, but a lighter touch approach will assist the Council determine its priorities in the light of evidence. Supporting information such as value for money assessments, using the Audit Commission data, will be used to appraise services.

The Sefton Borough Partnership will be undertaking a similar exercise using the core evidence base, JSNA etc, to determine the priorities within the Sustainable Community Strategy. The challenge to partners will be to demonstrate how they are meeting, through planning and delivery, the aspirations within that strategy.

3.6 Other Developments

- SPRINT Enhancements version 3.2 will be uploaded mid April after testing.
- Data Quality - National Indicator responsibilities have been amended to include change of officer responsibilities
- The Audit Commission announced the removal of eighteen national indicators from April 2010.

4. Local Area Agreement

The first joint report of performance both Council and Partnership was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on the 23rd February (as outlined above). This incorporated LAA performance the Corporate Plan and National Indicators Overview and

Scrutiny Management Board requested a one-page summary to be produced which will be updated quarterly.

5. CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

The last quarter of 2009/10 has been logistically difficult for Corporate Communications as the team has mainly functioned with just two members of staff. This has meant that some pro-active PR work has suffered as the team had to deal with reactive media management issues as a priority.

However, during the last three months, 95 positive press releases have been issued which have generated newspaper coverage with an Estimated Advertising Value of £381,619. No figure for radio coverage is available at this stage, but will be reported to the next Cabinet Member meeting.

The Team has dealt with a total of 177 media enquiries which have resulted in mainly positive or neutral coverage in the media. These enquiries are made by various different media including local, regional and national newspapers, regional radio and regional and national TV (both news and documentaries).

Regular updates have been made to the news section of the Sefton Council Website and also the Team has maintained and updated the 'Informing Sefton' section of the staff intranet to spread corporate messages about the Transformation Programme and other internal matters.

Pre-Election Period "Purdah" guidance has been issued to elected members and Senior Officers for cascading across the authority. This has been drafted by Corporate Communications Team.

The Team is also currently involved in a review of communications activity across the council as part of a Strategic Budget Review Communications PID and updates will be given on this periodically through Cabinet Member meetings.

It is proposed that, in future, the performance of Corporate Communications will be reported on a quarterly basis to Cabinet Member meetings as part of the performance management of this function.

COUNCILLOR IAIN BRODIE-BROWNE