

Meeting: Haringey Strategic Partnership

Date: 26 February 2009

Report Title: Preparing for Haringey's Comprehensive Area Assessment – the Area Assessment

Report of: Eve Pelekanos – Head of Policy and Performance

Purpose

To agree the governance arrangements and to oversee the forthcoming Area Assessment in preparation for the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

Summary

The Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) is the new inspection framework for public services that comes into place from April 2009 and replaces the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. The Audit Commission and other inspectorates will assess how well the council and its partners are working together to improve outcomes for local people.

Legal/Financial Implications

The 2006 White Paper: *Strong and Prosperous Communities* sets out proposals for a new performance framework for local services. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 establishes the legal framework for the changes, including for the CAA.

Recommendations

1. To agree the governance arrangements for the Area Assessment as set out in paragraphs 1.11.
2. To decide on a chair person for the Area Assessment working group.
3. To note the timetable for Area Assessment in Appendix 3
4. To note the CAA briefings contained in Appendix 2.

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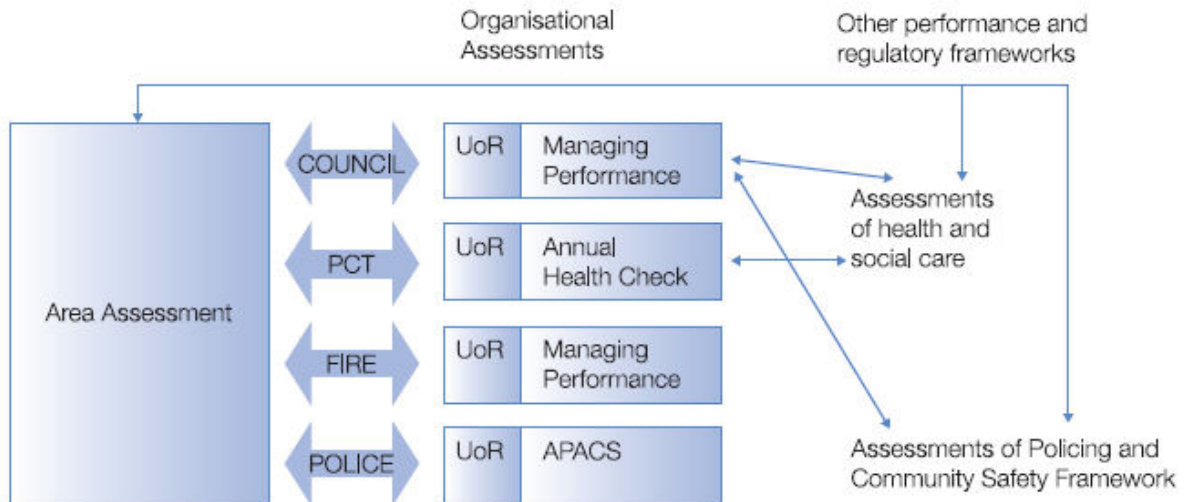
Background

- 1.1 The Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) is the new inspection framework that comes into place from April 2009 and replaces the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. The Audit Commission and other inspectorates will assess how well the council and its partners are working together to improve outcomes for local people. The details of the new framework have been consulted on and the final guidance will be published towards the end of February 2009.
- 1.2 The CAA's Area Assessment will assess the contributions of partner agencies in improving outcomes for local people within the local area.
- 1.3 The CAA will have two elements; the Area Assessment and the Organisational Assessment.
- 1.4 The **Area Assessment** will look at local priorities as well as some national themes and focus on the prospects for better outcomes, looking at the area covered by the Local Area Agreement. The assessment will focus on three main questions:
 - How well do local priorities express community needs and aspirations?
 - How well are the outcomes and improvements needed being delivered?
 - What are the prospects for future improvements?
- 1.5 In assessing the delivery of outcomes the Area Assessment will focus on the following:
 - How safe is the area?
 - How healthy and well supported are people?
 - How well kept and environmentally sustainable is the area?
 - How strong is the local economy?
 - How strong and cohesive are local communities?
 - How well is inequality being addressed?
 - How well is housing need met?
 - How well are families supported and the well-being of children and young people.
- 1.6 The **Organisational Assessment** will focus on an organisation's effectiveness with consideration of how well it delivers value for money through the use of resources assessment and how well it manages its performance. Evidence from the Area Assessment will be used to inform the Organisational Assessment. The Council, Police Service, PCT and Fire Service will have their own organisational assessments.
- 1.7 The Organisational Assessment will consist of the Use of Resources which has three themes; managing finances, governing the business and managing resources, together with the managing performance element.
- 1.8 The Use of Resources assessment considers how well organisations are managing and using resources to deliver value for money and better and sustainable outcomes for local people. The managing performance theme focuses on the organisation's ability to deliver services,

improvements in priorities and outcomes that are important to local people. These elements are combined to provide the organisational assessment.

Alignment of performance frameworks

The Audit Commission's diagram below shows how the different performance frameworks are linked together within the CAA.



CAA Pilot

1.9 In conjunction with the Improvement and Development Agency and the Local Government Association, ten local authorities participated in a CAA trial, focusing on the Area Assessment, to help develop and test the methodology. The participating authorities were; London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Birmingham City Council, Hampshire County Council, Kirklees Council, North Tyneside Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, Thurrock Council, Torbay Council, London Borough of Westminster.

1.10 The councils taking part in pilot placed emphasis on the following key points for councils when preparing for the CAA:

- Understand the ambition and potential of CAA. It is very different to CPA
- Take the initiative locally and promote knowledge and understanding amongst local partners. Try and ensure all partners are working together to respond to CAA
- Develop a positive on-going relationship with the council's CAA Lead and with the leads for the other Inspectorates
- Undertake a self evaluation. Where councils in the trial sites had done one it was helpful
- Make sure there are good performance management systems in place across the partnership and that there is evidence of improvement, with good quality quantitative and qualitative data

- Ensure that publicity, and accessible information about the council and local partners, is of a good quality and up to date
- Ensure Executive members are aware of CAA and the implications for assessment. Consider how best to keep non Executive members informed.

Managing the Area Assessment

1.11 The following governance arrangements are proposed for the Area Assessment:

- that the Performance Management Group (PMG) should be the overseeing body for the Area Assessment.
- a working group be set up, through nominations from the PMG, with a representative for each of the themes set out in paragraph 1.5, who will be able to provide input from their organisation and have knowledge of the partnership activity.
- the working group would be responsible for compiling the self assessment and collecting the supporting evidence.
- the PMG is asked to identify a chair for the Area Assessment working group.
- the working group should meet monthly from February 2009 until May 2009.

1.12 In compiling evidence to support the Area Assessment, and its self assessment, certain key strategies and documents will be of major importance, these include: the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Housing Strategy, the Homeless Strategy, the Greenest Borough Strategy, the Regeneration Strategy, Changing Lives the Children's and Young People's plan, the Child Poverty Strategy, the Safer Communities Strategy and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment core data.

1.13 The guidance for the CAA will not be finalised until February 2009, and although some areas lack detail and/or key lines of inquiry, in order to prepare for the CAA assessments and evaluation, information from the available guidance has been analysed to produce the following grid for the Area Assessment outlining the key questions and areas covered (Appendix 1).

Appendices

Appendix 1 Area Assessment grid

Appendix 2 CAA briefings

Appendix 3 Actions for the Area Assessment / timetable