

PUBLICATIONS ADVISORY PANEL

5 AUGUST 2003

Chair: * Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan

Councillors: * Branch * Lent
 * Knowles * Stephenson (3)
 * Jean Lammiman

* Denotes Member present
 (3) Denotes category of Reserve Member

PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**64. **Appointment of Chair:**

RESOLVED: To note the appointment at the meeting of Cabinet on 20 May 2003, of Councillor Marie Louise Nolan as Chair of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2003/2004.

65. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance of the following Reserve Member:

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Harrison	Councillor Stephenson

66. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note there were no declarations of interest made by Members of the Panel in relation to the business to be transacted at this meeting.

67. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.

68. **Appointment of Vice Chair:**

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Jean Lammiman as Vice-Chair of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2003/2004.

69. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: (1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2003, having been agreed at the meeting of Panel on 13 March 2003, be signed as a correct record;

(2) That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record, subject to the amendments listed in Minute 70.

70. **Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 March 2003:**

Update on Councillors' Laptops and the Intranet and the Member's e-newsletter (Minute 62) That the last sentence be corrected to read 'an IT Officer visiting the Councillor at their home' rather than 'an IT Officer visiting the Council at their home'.

Summer Edition of Harrow People (Minute 60) The Chair reminded the Panel that they had previously agreed to prepare and agree the Harrow People budget 2004-5 consultation document at a much earlier stage. In order to facilitate this process, a timetable would be formulated in September following discussions with the Head of Communication, the Chief Executive and the leaders of the political groups. As information on the budget was often only available at a late stage, a Member proposed that information be released as it became available from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review of the Budget process.

71. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no public questions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

72. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no petitions to be received at this meeting under provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 13 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

73. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no deputations to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

74. **Communications Strategy:**

Members received a draft copy of Harrow Communications Strategy 2003. The Head of Communications informed the Panel that targets would be incorporated into the document and these were being currently worked on. The final document would also include three protocols on the following: corporate identity, publication standards and media guidelines. These and the targets would be available shortly, and would be circulated to Members for consultation. The Chair asked that, when documents were emailed to Members, Officers check they have been received.

A Member queried the description of the Council web-site as 'informative'. He suggested the description 'a core information source' would be more accurate. The Panel agreed that the sentence be changed to include the phrase 'provide essential information'. A Member also queried the use of the word 'organised' to refer to training and the Member Development Panel. The Panel agreed that the sentence be changed to read 'seminars etc coordinated by the Member Development Panel as part of the Member Development Plan'.

A Member enquired what mechanisms were currently in place to maximise disability groups' inclusion in Communications. The Head of Communications advised the Panel that Communications liaised with the disability Officers on a regular basis and that they currently produced a number of documents in large font sizes. A Member suggested that this was an area in which targets would be of benefit. Members of the Panel discussed issues surrounding this area and made a number of suggestions, including links to larger font size pages on the Internet and the use of plain language. The Head of Communications informed the Panel that under the new First Contact initiative there would be a 'signer' at the main front reception of the Civic Centre every Thursday from 4 September 2003. The Chair enquired whether disability groups were aware of facilities available to them. The Officer informed Members that they were publicising this initiative through a number of means including word of mouth. The Panel requested that the new 'signer' facility be publicised in Harrow People. A Member also requested two copies of the advertisement of this new facility which he would pass on to two deaf associations in Harrow.

A Member welcomed the Overview and Scrutiny section of the Corporate Strategy, which she felt was an important step in informing Harrow residents of the work of Overview and Scrutiny. The Member asked that Chair of Overview and Scrutiny and the Chairs of its four Sub-committees be consulted by the Communications Unit before the publication of Scrutiny findings. The Chair added that an interactive web-page on Scrutiny would be an appropriate tool for engaging the public and getting them involved.

The Chair asked that the Officer report the objectives, targets and protocols of the strategy back to the Panel and that the strategy be reviewed annually by the Panel. The Officer advised the Panel that the final version of the strategy would be going to the September Cabinet and that he would circulate the updated copy and protocols to Members beforehand. The Panel agreed that the documents be forwarded simultaneously to Overview and Scrutiny when they go to Cabinet.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Head of Communications circulate the updated version of the Corporate Strategy and the protocols to Members of the Panel before they are tabled at the September Cabinet and report back to the Panel at its next meeting;

(2) that the Head of Communications forward the amended Corporate Strategy to

Overview and Scrutiny, in addition to Cabinet;

- (3) that the Panel annually review the Communications Strategy;
- (4) that the verbal update of the Head of Communications be noted.

75. **Publications Audit:**

Members of the Panel received a copy of the Publications Audit. The Panel were advised that publications were produced by all departments and it was estimated that the audit had been able to include two thirds of publications produced. The audit had underlined the importance of a unified corporate brand since the Council distributed some 1.5million printed items, externally, every year. The Communications and Publications Manager informed the Panel that the report highlighted the need to promote electronic publishing, which produces cost savings and reaches more people worldwide. The Officer advised Members that an annual audit would enable the measurement of improvements in quality and savings and that procurement were currently investigating several printing options to meet future needs with the possibility that centralised printing would lead to greater savings.

The Chair welcomed the report and advised that the Panel would also welcome an annual publications review since publications were currently being produced on an ad hoc basis by individual departments. The Chair quoted a recent example where a publication had been issued into the public domain without having been seen by the appropriate persons. The Communications and Publications Manager informed Members that information was still emerging from investigations. The Chair asked that the Publications Audit be updated and brought back to the next meeting. A Member of the Panel also requested that the document group publication types together and include a breakdown of costs.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Communications and Publications Manager report back to the next meeting of the Panel with an updated version of the Audit to include grouped items and breakdown of costs;

- (2) that the Verbal Update of the Communications and Publications Manager be noted.

76. **Corporate Branding:**

The Panel received a verbal update and visual presentation from the Communications and Publications Manager. This included a report of recent focus groups held to examine a new identity for Harrow. The Officer informed Members that 100 people in total had been consulted. Four focus groups had been held which had covered a representative proportion of the public.

Each group had been shown a short presentation outlining the development of a new identity for Harrow and asked for their opinion on logos and on their perception of the Council. In summary, Harrow Council was chosen over the London borough of Harrow, the majority of participants favoured incorporating the word 'London' into the new identity and the colours purple and orange were approved. The linear version of the logo was favoured by most and also addressed worries from the Royal National Institute for the Blind about using block colour. The Communications and Publications Manager informed Members that the new logo would represent young people's views and represent a more modern image of the Council.

The Panel discussed the logo, in particular the word 'Council' which appeared to be thinner than the word 'Harrow'. Members agreed that 'Council' should be changed to the same thickness as 'Harrow' and the orange shade should be darkened. Members were enthusiastic about the inclusion of the word 'London' into the logo.

The Head of Communications informed the Panel that the new logo would be going to the September Cabinet with the hope that it could be launched on 1st October 2003. In response to a query from a Member the Officer informed the Panel that in the future the Harrow crest would be used only for civil duties, the Mayors office and for tourism and the new logo be used on vans, uniforms and generally in the streets. The Head of Communications informed the Panel that the cost of launching the new logo would be spread over time.

RESOLVED: (1) That the word 'Council' in the logo be thickened and darkened

- (2) that the new logo be noted.

77. **Advertising on Harrow Live:**

The Head of Communications reported that enquires had been made of other Councils and local government bodies on advertising on Council websites, but that at present no other Council had advertising on their websites. The perceived fear was that Council/Council Bodies did not want to appear to be giving their endorsement to the advertiser. However the Officer reported that they had not been informed of any legal obstacles that would prevent advertising on the website.

A Member informed the Panel that libraries produced bookmarks with information on one side and advertisements on the other. He felt there was a prospect for some revenue earning from appropriate advertising on the Council website and for such public information services as police and fire services adverts. Members noted that commercial advertisements already appear in the Harrow People magazine, which is a Council publication, but agreed that since internet advertisements could be more intrusive, any advertising in the Harrow website would have to be discreet. Members discussed the issues surrounding advertising on the website and agreed that any advertising would have to adhere to a set of guidelines. A protocol would ensure non-obtrusive, appropriate advertising. Officers informed Members that they had the resources to run small trials in this area.

The Chair asked that the Officers report back to the Panel at the next meeting with some examples of possible advertising clients and with potential revenue raising estimates based on the number of hits on the Council website.

RESOLVED: That the Head of Communications investigate potential advertising on Harrow website and report to the next meeting on possible revenue earnings.

78. **Autumn Edition of Harrow People:**

The Panel, having received a draft copy of the Autumn Edition of Harrow People by email, received an updated draft version at the meeting. The Publications and Communications Manager informed the Panel that there were still a number of articles to be included and these would be emailed to Members for consultation in due course. Consideration was given to each page of the Magazine. The Panel noted minor changes to content. Major changes were discussed as set out below:

The Leader's Column: Members requested that there be an explanation of the use of the term 'West' in the South and West Harrow pilot of the New Harrow Project since this had previously been referred to only as the South Harrow pilot. A Member also asked that the column mention the Scrutiny review on the pilot project.

Restaurant fined for bad hygiene: Members expressed concern that the highlighting of one particular restaurant that had been fined by Harrow Magistrates for breaching the Food Hygiene legislation may be deemed discriminatory of the Council. The Panel agreed that the article should refer only to 'a local restaurant' and not include the name of the restaurant involved.

New Cultural Approach for Harrow: Details of a new leisure card scheme due to start in September were unavailable for this article. Members asked the Officers to liaise with the Arts and Leisure Unit Manager for exact details of the scheme and agreed that a small article in this magazine would suffice and that a bigger feature be included on it in the next edition of Harrow People.

My first government launch: That Stephen Twigg be referred to as 'Minister for London Schools' rather than simply 'Minister for Schools' and that there should be a list of specialist schools underneath the article.

African Adventure: The Chair proposed that the article following a headteacher's summer in Uganda be split into smaller sections with extracts from different diary entries both for further interest and ease of reading and that the date be removed since it was deemed unnecessary.

Are you doing as much as you can? Members expressed concern at the repetition of the of 'Sue says' in this article and asked that the article be presented in a simple question and answer format.

Members expressed concern that they were not commenting on the formatted version of the magazine. The Publications and Communications Manager explained that due to the August recess, the Panel's meeting was being held some time in advance of the printing of the magazine and consequently the magazine was not at the advanced stage Members were accustomed to reviewing. The Officer agreed to forward the formatted version to Members via email and hard copies by 15 August to allow

Members time to comment.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Publications and Communications Manager forward the formatted version of the Harrow People to Panel Members by 15 August for their comments;

(2) that the draft copy of the magazine, as amended, be noted.

79. **Any Other Business:**

The Publications and Communications Manager informed Members of new committee services available to Members on the Intranet. The Officer asked the Panel for possible approaches in raising Member awareness of this facility. Members discussed the possibility of a demonstration and some wider general training. A Member informed the Panel that this subject had been raised at a recent Member Development Panel Meeting. General training for all Members had been timetabled into the Member Development Plan and would be held later this year.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Publications Panel be given a demonstration of the facilities available on the new committee system at its next meeting;

(2) That the Publications and Communications Manager liaise with the Training and Development Manager on general training.

80. **Termination of Meeting:**

In accordance with Paragraph 22.2 of the Executive Procedure Rules in the Council's Constitution it was

RESOLVED: (1) At 10.00 pm to continue until 10.15 pm;

(2) At 10.15 pm to continue until 10.20 pm.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.35 pm, closed at 10.20 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MARIE-LOUISE NOLAN
Chair