

# London Borough of Harrow



## STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2003  
7.30 PM

SUB-COMMITTEE AGENDA (SCRUTINY)

COMMITTEE ROOM 5  
HARROW CIVIC CENTRE

### MEMBERSHIP (Quorum 3)

Chair: Councillor Thammaiah

#### Councillors:

Nana Asante  
Ann Groves  
Omar

Janet Cowan  
Vina Mithani  
Seymour (VC)

#### Reserve Members:

1. Ismail  
2. Choudhury  
3. Lent  
4. Gate

1. Anjana Patel  
2. Osborn  
3. Kara

Issued by the Committee Services Section,  
Law and Administration Division

Contact: Fiona Atkinson, Committee Administrator  
Tel: 020 8424 1265 E-mail: [fiona.atkinson@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:fiona.atkinson@harrow.gov.uk)

***NOTE FOR THOSE ATTENDING THE MEETING:  
IF YOU WISH TO DISPOSE OF THIS AGENDA, PLEASE LEAVE IT BEHIND AFTER THE MEETING.  
IT WILL BE COLLECTED FOR RECYCLING.***

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW**

**STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2003**

**AGENDA - PART I**

1. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**  
To note the attendance at this meeting of any duly appointed Reserve Members.
2. **Declarations of Interest:**  
To receive declarations of interest (if any) from Members of the Sub-Committee arising from business to be transacted at this meeting.
3. **Arrangement of Agenda:**  
To consider whether any of the items listed on the agenda should be considered with the press and public excluded on the grounds that it is thought likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that there would be disclosure of confidential information in breach of an obligation of confidence or of exempt information as defined in the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.
- Enc. 4. **Minutes:** (Pages 1 - 14)  
That the minutes of the meetings held on 9 April 2003 and 25 June 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as correct records.
5. **Public Questions:**  
To receive questions (if any) from local residents or organisations under the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules (Part 4F of the Constitution).
6. **Petitions:**  
To receive petitions (if any) submitted by members of the public/Councillors under the provisions the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules (Part 4F of the Constitution).
7. **Deputations:**  
To receive deputations (if any) under the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules (Part 4F of the Constitution).
- Enc. 8. **Harrow Magistrates' Court:** (Pages 15 - 22)  
Report of the Borough Solicitor.
9. **Presentation from Harrow Council for Racial Equality (HCRE):**  
Verbal presentation by Prem Pawar, Director of Harrow Council for Racial Equality, detailing the work undertaken at the HCRE, current and past obstacles faced and plan for the future.
- Enc. 10. **Update on Community Issues Raised:** (Pages 23 - 28)  
Report of the Manager, Strategic Partnerships Section.

- Enc. 11. **Update on the Development of the Harrow Community Strategy:** (Pages 29 - 38)  
Report of the Manager, Strategic Partnerships Section.
- Enc. 12. **Current Work Programme for Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2003/04:** (Pages 39 - 42)  
FOR INFORMATION.
13. **Any Other Business:**  
Which the Chair has decided is urgent and cannot otherwise be dealt with.

**AGENDA - PART II - NIL**

**Proposed Officer Attendance at this Meeting**

Bindu Arjoon-Matthews, Manager, Strategic Partnerships Section  
Gerald Balabanoff, Borough Solicitor

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

VOL.3 OSSC 11

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES SUB-COMMITTEE

9 APRIL 2003

Chair: \* Councillor Thammaiah  
Councillors: \* Nana Asante \* Janet Cowan  
\* Ann Groves \* Vina Mithani  
\* Omar \* Seymour

\* Denotes Member present

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS

PART II - MINUTES

34. **Attendance by Reserve Members: RESOLVED:** To note there was no appointed Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting.
35. **Declarations of Interest: RESOLVED:** To note that there were no declarations of interest made by any Council Members in relation to the business to be transacted at this meeting.
36. **Arrangement of Agenda: RESOLVED:** That all items be taken with the press and public present.
37. **Minutes: RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.
38. **Public Questions/Petitions/Deputations: RESOLVED:** To note that there were no public questions, petitions or deputations to be received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules 8, 9 and 10 respectively.
39. **Harrow Association of Disabled People (HAD):** The Sub-Committee received a presentation from Kathryn White, Deputy Chief Executive of the Association.

It was explained that the aim of the Association, which was established in 1972, was to promote equality of opportunity for all disabled people in all areas of life. Therefore the make up of staff and the decision-making Board were mostly disabled people.

Members of the Sub-Committee were told that the Association offered expert advice in the areas of: Advocacy; Direct Payments; Information; Welfare Benefits; Employment and Training; and Services for the Business Community.

In summing up, Kathryn White explained that there were a number of Key Issues for the Association to deal with in the future, such as: Staffing Structure and Board Membership; Financial Sustainability; Marketing and Fundraising; Maintenance of Quality Marks achieved; Community and Service Users Involvement; Recording and Monitoring; and Funding.

Members of the Sub-Committee welcomed the information presented and praised the Association for all its work undertaken for disabled people in Harrow, and wished it every success in the future.

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.

40. **Development of the Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP):** The Manager of the Strategic Partnerships Section addressed the Sub-Committee in relation to the developments that had so far taken place in the development of the Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP).

It was highlighted that the Partnership Steering Group in October 2001 agreed to develop a HSP. It was stated that the HSP was being developed in association with: the government guidance on 'Local Strategic Partnerships'; and the Council's priorities in promoting the environment, strengthening Harrow's local communities, promoting Harrow as the centre for lifelong learning, improving quality of health and social care, and developing a prosperous and sustainable economy in Harrow.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the Constitution and the membership structure of the HSP had been developed; elected Councillors nominated by Cabinet to sit on the HSP were: Lyne, Foulds, Lammiman and N Shah. It was also mentioned that the Harrow Association of Voluntary Services (HAVS) had taken the responsibility of organising and

conducting elections for the voluntary and community sector positions available on the Board of the HSP.

The Officer advised that the HSP would be launched on the 20 May 2003, and that Member Development sessions would be available for Members after the launch date.

Members of the Sub-Committee questioned the viability of the delivery groups in the HSP. The Officer responded by explaining the function of each group and described their roles, which demonstrated that they were distinctive and focused, thus eliminating duplication of workloads. It was also emphasised that the structure of the HSP was democratic and represented the various private and public sector businesses that operate in Harrow.

Members also questioned the election process of the HSP, in relation to voluntary and community groups that were not affiliated with HAVS; they asked how unknown groups were going to be accessed and encouraged to take part in the election process. The Manager advised Members that she would look into how HAVS were going to ensure that the elections were publicised to the community.

The Chair and Members of the Sub-Committee welcomed the progression of the HSP and requested that they be kept informed of the developments that take place.

**RESOLVED:** That the Sub-Committee note the developments of the Harrow Partnership into the HSP, and its intended membership.

41. **West London Community Cohesion:** The Sub-Committee received a report of the Chief Executive, detailing the West London Community Cohesion, the Manager of the Strategic Partnerships Section presented the report.

It was explained that an inter-departmental ministerial group, chaired by John Denham, had undertaken a study into the racially motivated riots that took place in Oldham and Burnley. Through the group's study and the consequential end report produced, they identified a number of contributory factors that played a motivating role in triggering the riots; so as a direct result, a Community Cohesion programme had been devised to address the issues identified.

It was announced that under the West London Pathfinder Bid, that included Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hounslow and Hammersmith and Fulham, who collectively form the West London Alliance, had successfully secured a bid for £570k. It was explained that there were 3 main elements to the project:

- 1) Communication and Dissemination, which included work with the media, faith and cultural networks, and the use of west London portal for online access to good practice.
- 2) How the public sector mainstreams community cohesion values, through regeneration and the planning and delivery of frontline services.
- 3) Community development and strengthening community and voluntary networks. This work would cover youth and community organisations and networks, which would include Black and Ethnic Minorities communities and refugees, sports, leisure and cultural activities; faith communities and ownership of the community cohesion agenda.

Partners in the project included the West London Alliance, West London Voluntary Sector Network, Metropolitan Police, West London Business, London Fire Brigade, Primary Care Trusts, and the Trinity Mirror Group

Members of the Sub-Committee welcomed the cross borough working, but mentioned who would be responsible for implementing the plans of the West London Community Cohesion in Harrow. The Officer indicated that the new HSP would play a vital role in overseeing the project.

The Chair along with Members agreed that this programme was an important one for Borough, and therefore asked to be kept informed of the progression of the programme.

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.

42. **Report on Current Community Issues:** The Manager of the Strategic Partnerships Section presented a report of the Chief Executive to the Sub-Committee, regarding the Chair's meetings with a variety of community groups.

It was explained that the meetings with the community groups had identified a number of issues for the Council. In an attempt to address the issues raised, the Lead Officer of the Sub-Committee created a proforma detailing issues, process and its eventual resolution, it was intended to be completed by the Officer in conjunction with Members.

However, Members felt that the Sub-Committee should become more proactive in investigating the issues raised in reports received at Sub-Committee meetings.

It was decided by Members that the Lead Officer should complete the preliminary findings of the meetings that had so far taken place, completing the relevant sections of the proforma. By doing this, it would then enable Members to select or probe an issue further, until a decision is reached on a review topic.

**RESOLVED:** That the requests of the Panel be noted.

43. **Draft Outline Work Programme for the Scrutiny Function for 2003/04:** **RESOLVED:** That the following topics be entered onto the Strengthening Communities Work Programme for 2003/04:

- Access to Justice – monitoring the developments of the proposed closure of Harrow Magistrates' Court by the GLMCA;
- Grant Funding;
- Better Government for Older People;
- Community Safety Unit (Police);
- CPS and Victim Support;
- Youth Crime

44. **Harrow Magistrates' Court:** Further to this issue being raised as an item for any other business, Councillor A Groves reported that the Greater London Magistrates' Courts Authority, who was proposing to close Harrow Magistrates' Court, had decided to defer their final decision to 30 May 2003. The Member said that she would continue to update the Sub-Committee on the developments that take regarding the proposed closure of the courthouse.

45. **Domestic Violence Officer's Post:** Further to this issue being raised as an item for any other business, Members of the Sub-Committee queried the outcome of the Sub-Committee's Reference to Cabinet, regarding having a permanent Domestic Violence Officer position in Harrow Council. They requested that written information be made available to them detailing what Cabinet had decided to do with their Reference and their plan of action in making the post permanent.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.55 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR THAMMAIAH  
Chair

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**STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY  
SUB-COMMITTEE****25 JUNE 2003**

Chair: \* Councillor Keekira Thammaiah

Councillors: \* Choudhury (2) \* Vina Mithani  
\* Janet Cowan \* Omar  
\* Ann Groves \* Seymour\* Denotes Member present  
(2) Denotes category of Reserve Member**PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL****PART II - MINUTES**

46. **Appointment of Chair:**  
**RESOLVED:** To note the appointment at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 May 2003, under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 11.2, of Councillor Thammaiah, as Chair of the Sub-Committee for the 2003/2004 Municipal Year.
47. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**  
**RESOLVED:** To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member: -
- | <u>Ordinary Member</u> | <u>Reserve Member</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Councillor Nana Asante | Councillor Choudhury  |
48. **Declarations of Interest:**  
**RESOLVED:** To note that the following interests were declared:
- | <u>Agenda Item</u>  | <u>Member</u>         | <u>Nature of Interest</u>  |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| 13. Better Government for Older People  | Councillor Ann Groves | The Member indicated a personal interest, as she was a member of the Better Government for Older People Panel. The Member remained in the room whilst the matter was considered and took part in the discussion relating to this item.   |
| 14 Possible Closure of Harrow Magistrates' Court                                      | Councillor Ann Groves | The Member indicated a personal interest, as she was a magistrate on the bench at Harrow Magistrates' Court. The Member remained in the room whilst the matter was considered and took part in the discussion relating to this item.   |
| 16. Current Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee's Work Programme 2002/03 | Councillor Seymour    | The Member indicated a personal and prejudicial interest, as he was currently involved with the Council's Housing Benefits Service and could therefore not participate in any future scrutiny review in this area. The Member remained in the room, as there was no further discussion on this matters. ( <i>Minute 16 below refers</i> ). |
49. **Arrangement of Agenda:**  
**RESOLVED:** (1) That all items be considered with the press and public present;

(2) that item 11 'Cross Cutting Review of Safer Harrow's Improvement Plan' be taken in advance of item 10 'Presentation on Youth Crime';

(3) that item 14 'Possible Closure of Harrow Magistrates' Court' be taken in advance of item 13 'Better Government for Older People'.

50. **Minutes:**  
**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 April 2003 be deferred until printed in the next Council Bound Minute Volume.
51. **Appointment of Vice-Chair:**  
**RESOLVED:** To appoint Councillor Seymour as Vice-Chair of the Sub-Committee for the 2003/2004 Municipal Year.
52. **Public Questions:**  
**RESOLVED:** To note that there were no public questions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8 (Part 4F of the Constitution).
53. **Petitions:**  
**RESOLVED:** To note that there were no petitions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 9 (Part 4F of the Constitution).
54. **Deputations:**  
**RESOLVED:** To note that there were no deputations to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10 (Part 4F of the Constitution).
55. **Cross Cutting Review of Safer Harrow's Improvement Plan:**  
The Sub-Committee received the joint report of the Chief Environmental Health Officer and Interim Head of Service for the Crime Reduction Unit, Drugs Action Team and Youth Offending Service. The report summarised the final report for the Safer Harrow Best Value Review. The Crime Reduction Manager requested that Members feedback on the conclusions contained in the executive summary and the improvement plan.

The Sub-Committee was informed of the background information, methodology, process and scope of the review. The Crime Reduction Manager advised that the Council had developed an effective partnership various local organisations; the police, community groups, etc; to address crime and disorder and that the performance of the Crime Reduction Unit has been good despite receiving low levels of funding. Members were invited to comment on any aspect of the Crime Reduction Unit's approach to date.

A Member of the Sub-Committee queried whether information could be provided on progress currently made against the five areas that respondents prioritised as requiring action to improve safety and reduce crime in the town centres. The five areas highlighted by respondents were: more police patrols; more youth activities; more CCTV (close circuit television); environmental improvements; and more work with offenders and improved street lighting.

In response, the Crime Reduction Manager advised Members that police patrols were still inadequate due to local police resources being relocated to inner London, in order to support anti-terrorism measures. Members were informed that other local initiatives were being used to fill this deficit, for example the work of the Community Support Officers and the Street Wardens. It was hoped that Harrow would have 19 Community Support Officers in post by the end of 2003. Members were additionally informed that neighbourhood patrols were also being recruited, in order to achieve local targets through local initiatives.

The Chair commented that the Street Wardens had made a significant difference in Wealdstone and that all involved in the establishment of this service were to be congratulated. A Member of the Panel seconded the Chair's comments and requested that every effort be made to retain the current number of Street Wardens with a view to increasing the number as and when funding became available.

Another Member suggested the creation of Park Wardens, as particularly high fear of crime levels had been reported in park areas. The Crime Reduction Manager advised that during a recent conference he attended on crime and disorder, the speaker stated that many young people were also wary of entering parks. He therefore felt it was

important to promote the mixed use of park areas, which could be achieved through increased police/warden presence.

The Crime Reduction Manager advised Members that there was a clear national agenda in place with regards to youth activities and that it was envisaged that external funding would become available from central government to support these initiatives. Members were informed that the introduction of CCTV in Harrow has assisted in reducing the high fear of crime levels in the Borough and that the Council would be receiving a mobile CCTV vehicle in August/September 2003.

The Sub-Committee was informed that officers were currently putting together a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) bid to deal with the problem of insufficient street lighting in Harrow and that the areas identified as having the highest fear of crime levels would be dealt with first, as and when funding became available.

In response to a question from a Member, the Crime Reduction Manager advised that progress was measured against police crime figures and that this was the main benchmark. Members were additionally advised that there was a correlation between the reduction in street crime and the increased usage of CCTV within the Borough and that burglary had gradually increased over the last 2-3 years following the reduction in the impact of the police crime initiative 'Operation Bumblebee'. The Crime Reduction Manager clarified the difference between street crime and burglary: the former being theft from a person and the latter being theft from a property.

A Member queried whether Wealdstone Police Station would be replaced by community groups or would work in conjunction with community groups at the same location. The Crime Reduction Manager advised that the intention was for Wealdstone Police Station to be run as a police station but with community organisation support and an increased focus on community-led activities.

The Sub-Committee discussed the multi-agency involvement in the regeneration and redevelopment of the Byron Park area. A Member commented that members of the community, of all ages, were now engaging in the area and that there was a perceptible difference in the safety and respectability of the area. The Member encouraged the usage of multi-agency initiatives and recommended that Byron Park be used as a model of best practice and copied in other areas of the Borough.

The officer wished for it to be clarified whether he should continue reporting to the Best Value Advisory Panel or the Sub-Committee with reference to updates on the Improvement Plan. Members agreed that the Sub-Committee was the appropriate body to updates on the progression of the Plan.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the Sub-Committee requested updates on the progression of the Improvement Plan.

(2) that the joint report of the Chief Environmental Health Officer and Interim Head of Service for Crime Reduction Unit, Drugs Action Team and Youth Offending Service, be noted.

56. **Presentation on Youth Crime:**

The Sub-Committee received the verbal presentation of the Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS), which outlined the Council's multi-agency approach and current performance in relation to youth crime and youth crime prevention in line with the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act. The multi-agency approach incorporates the utilisation of the following agencies: the police; the probation service; health authorities (PCT); education services; social services; Connexions; and other youth specialists.

Members were informed that the Council's Youth Offending Team (YOT) currently consists of 22 full-time members of staff and 50 volunteers. The role of the YOT is to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour by young people and to deal with young offenders and their victims once a crime has been committed. The Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) provided Members with a number of figures in relation to the youth crime rate: -

- (i) In 2002, 335 young people usually resident in Harrow were convicted of 624 offences.
- (ii) In 2002, the number of young people convicted of the Government's priority crimes (i.e. domestic burglary, robbery and vehicle crime) decreased by 46% overall in Harrow (22% nationally).

<b>OFFENCE</b>	<b>Number of young people normally resident in Harrow convicted of an offence in 2001</b>	<b>Number of young people normally resident in Harrow convicted of an offence in 2002</b>
<b>Vehicle crime</b>	42	28
<b>Robbery</b>	36	17
<b>Domestic Burglary</b>	25	12

- (iii) In 2002, the Youth Justice Board (YJB) targets for crime prevention were achieved and exceeded in Harrow. In comparison with the figures produced in 2001, there had been a 52% reduction in domestic burglary, a 33% reduction in vehicle crime and a 53% reduction in robbery.
- (iv) In 2002, the following categories of youth crimes were recorded: -

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number of Offences</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Theft and Handling	168	26.0%
Motoring	124	19.2%
Violence Against the Person	69	10.7%
Drugs	62	9.6%
Criminal Damage	45	6.9%
Robbery	35	5.4%
Vehicle Theft	27	4.1%
Fraud and Forgery	23	3.5%
Public Order	19	2.9%
Breach of Bail	16	2.4%
Domestic Burglary	14	2.1%
Racially Aggravated	13	2.0%
Non Domestic Burglary	11	1.7%
Breach of Statutory Order	8	1.2%
Other	8	1.2%
Breach of Conditional Discharge	1	0.1%
Arson	1	0.1%

The Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) also provided Members with a number of figures in relation to the youth recidivism (re-offending) rate: -

- (i) In 2001, 54.75% of young people re-offended within a year of being convicted, in 2002, the recidivism rate was only 30.25%.
- (ii) The recidivism rate of the 2000 cohort (after 12 months) was compared to the 2001 cohort (after 12 months) evidenced a reduction in re-offending of more than 3% for all four 'outcome' groups; a 3% reduction was the YJB target.
- (iii) There was a 53% reduction at the pre-court stage, an 8% decrease for 'first tier' penalties, a 48% decrease for community penalties and a 50% reduction for those receiving custody.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) provided the Sub-Committee with a breakdown of the ethnicity of young offenders: -

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
White	53.5%
Black or Black British	20%
Asian or Asian British	18.6%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	2.8%
Unknown	2.2
Mixed	1.7%

The Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) advised that Members that the YOT was utilising a strict performance management system to tackle youth crime, consisting of a three-year Youth Justice Plan, which was to be updated annually with increased performance targets. The Sub-Committee was informed that the Youth Justice Plan was required to be authorised by the Chief Executive and the YJB and that this year the plan had been accepted by both in the first instance, without the need for further amendments.

Copies of the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) were circulated to the Sub-Committee and the Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) discussed the content contained therein with Members. The Sub-Committee was informed that ISSP is a regime, which closely monitors the activities of young people who have offended and can be used where a secure remand or custodial sentence might otherwise be an option. Each scheme may utilise a mix of the following types of surveillance: tracking, tagging, voice verification and intelligence-led policing, alongside detailed and constructive supervision.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) advised that there was an array of restorative justice-based 'punishments' for young offenders, ranging from supervised activities, such as the removal of graffiti, to reparation with victims of crime. The Referral Order process by which young offenders were brought before a Panel, formed from a pool of approximately 40 volunteers from the local community, was also discussed.

The Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) described some of the benefits of the YOT: -

- (i) The YOT has brought together a range of agencies to combat youth crime. This kind of co-operative working has allowed agencies to learn from one another and share good practice.
- (ii) These agencies (police, probation, health, education, social services and Connexions and youth specialist staff) have been co-located in one office, which enables clear and timely communication.
- (iii) Systems and protocols have been produced to provide guidance to the members of staff from each agency, in order for the service to maintain consistency.
- (iv) Information is shared through one database. Therefore, all information on a young person can be accessed directly. This has enabled fast and effective targeting of services across the different agencies.
- (v) A new culture has been created whereby all the required resources to deal with offenders can be delivered from the same site.

Members were advised that it was important to build on the success of the YOT in Harrow, which was graded in the top 10% of YOTs in the country. The YOT has also made steady progress in reducing the fear of crime and reclaiming public areas, for example parks and bus stations, through joint working with the Crime Reduction Unit, the police and local communities.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) advised the Sub-Committee that the age of criminal responsibility in England and Wales was 10 years of age, and that the YOT therefore dealt with youth aged from 10 to 18. Members were additionally informed that since April 2003, through financial support from the Children's Fund, the YOT have been able to get involved with youths aged between 5 and 10 years old. It was envisaged that through earlier intervention with vulnerable children, the YOT would be able to take preventative measures to ensure that these children did not become future clients of the statutory agencies.

The Sub-Committee was informed that teachers and learning assistants could sometimes detect children that may fall into the 'vulnerable' category, for example children who had disengaged themselves from school or children whose parents exhibited a lack of concern for their welfare. The YOT was currently developing parenting courses for parents who fell into this latter category. In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) stated that the youth court had the power to make a parenting order but that the YOT would prefer for the parents of the young offender to attend the parenting course voluntarily, upon hearing the advice of the magistrates. Members were informed that the course had a

significant take-up rate.

The Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) advised that the YOT was also assisting some youths at the other end of the age spectrum, namely 18 to 21 year olds. Members were advised that the Home Office was currently looking into the possibility of removing the responsibility for 18 to 21 year olds from the Probation Service to the YOT. A Member of the Panel welcomed this proposal and stated that it would undoubtedly be a great help if the YOT took on this additional work. The Member also wished for the good work and recent successes of the YOT to be recorded and for all the individuals involved with the work of the team to be congratulated on their efforts to date.

The Panel discussed the effect of the Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) with the Sub-Committee and noted that it was important for young people to be prosecuted for the crimes they had committed in order for them to understand and realise the consequences of their actions. Members were informed that the criminal justice process (the time from arrest to sentence) had been accelerated due in part to all the information on the young person being contained on the same database at the YOT's office.

In response to another question from a Member, the Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) advised that pre-YOT, the Social Services Youth Justice Team would become involved with a young person only at the post-conviction stage, whereas currently the YOT would become involved with a young offender from the point at which they were being charged or even arrested. Members were informed that this process of early intervention was assisted by the existence of a police officer within the YOT, who could feedback reports on young people, received daily from the custody suite at the police station.

The Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) informed the Sub-Committee that the YOT was encouraging victims of crime to increase their involvement in the criminal justice system. However, Members were informed that currently the YOT was prevented from obtaining information on victims unless they gave their express permission, due to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. Therefore, the YOT could not obtain personal information about the victim until after the conviction. One way around this problem could be to recruit an individual to the post of Victim Liaison Worker. This individual would have the capacity to work jointly with the police and the YOT to contact the victim and involve them in the process, if they so wished. If the victim consents to involvement then the YOT would take over and work with the victim to obtain justice for them, for example, by updating them on the current status of the investigation or by offering reparation with the offender at a later stage.

The Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) informed Members that the current target from arrest to sentence was 71 days for persistent offenders and that to date this target had been mostly been met by the YOT. Members were advised that meeting 71 days for all offenders was difficult to achieve due to the fact that offenders could 'jump' bail, require psychiatric assessment or drug rehabilitation or there could be complicated forensic issues relating to the crime committed, all leading to lengthy delay.

In response to a question from a Member in relation to the fixed penalty notice scheme, the Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) advised that the YOT have not had any direct involvement with the scheme to date and that the YOT's future involvement, if any, would depend on how the scheme would be brought into effect. It was likely that lead responsibility would rest with the police.

A Member of the Panel welcomed the presentation of the Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) and enquired whether there was anything that the Council could do to publicise and promote the work of the YOT. The Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) advised that there was an article in Harrow People approximately a year ago detailing the work of the YOT and that the team currently had a media strategy and regularly formulated press releases. Members were also informed that young people had devised posters and flyers for the reparation programme, which could be displayed in public places, and that an article had also been published in a national teenage magazines with reference to the consequences of being caught shoplifting. Information is also available on the YOT Intranet and Internet web sites.

The Member requested that the work of the YOT be re-published in Harrow People, with an update on recent initiatives and successes of the team. Another Member requested that it be noted in any future article that the work of the YOT has cross-party support. The Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) thanked the Sub-Committee for

their positive comments and advised that he would pass on these comments to the YOT.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the work of the YOT be re-published in Harrow People, with an update on recent initiatives and successes of the team;

(2) that the presentation of the Head of Youth Offending Service (YOS) be welcomed and noted.

57. **Verbal Progress Report on Current Community Issues:**

The Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section circulated a document to Members of the Sub-Committee detailing a table of issues discussed by the Chair and representatives from numerous community groups. The Chair requested that Members analyse the issues raised during the meetings between the Chair of the Sub-Committee and numerous community group representatives and feedback to either the Chair or the Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section or the Sub-Committee as a whole at a future meeting.

A Member of the Sub-Committee queried the accuracy of issue 6; high number of elderly and little provision for after school activities for youths. It was therefore agreed that Members be provided with the correct statistics with reference to the elderly population in Harrow.

The Sub-Committee discussed issue 5; there is a need to strengthen the Harrow Association of Voluntary Service (HAVS) and the sector as a whole in order to make them less dependent on the Council in the future. A Member queried the use of the word 'strengthen' and advised that if it was intended to be a request for further funding that it needed to be made more specific.

Members discussed the possibility of appointing a scrutiny review group to examine the current situation with regards to the premises available for community group meetings/occupation, which were currently owned by the Authority. A Member suggested that the review group focus on schools, as many schools' premises were greatly under-used during out-of-school hours. The Chair advised that this was an area that the Sub-Committee could review in greater depth and that he would discuss this possibility with the Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section prior to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

A Member expressed concern about issue 7; there is a need for elected members to be aware of the work of the voluntary service and how this supports they provide to Council activities. The Member stated that many Councillors had extensive knowledge of community groups and their activities and that perhaps the community groups needed to learn more about the role and work of the Councillors. Another Member suggested that Members of the Sub-Committee could visit the community premises owned by the Council to meet and talk with community group representatives. The Chair welcomed this proposal and requested that Members who wished to speak with community group representatives should make arrangements with the Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That Members analyse the issues raised during the meetings between the Chair of the Sub-Committee and numerous community group representatives and feedback to either the Chair or the Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section or the Sub-Committee as a whole at a future meeting;

(2) that Member be provided with the correct statistics in relation to the elderly population in Harrow;

(3) that the Chair discuss the possibility of appointing a scrutiny review group to examine the current number of available premises owned by the Council with the Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section.

58. **Possible Closure of Harrow Magistrates' Court:**

The Sub-Committee received a verbal update from Councillor Ann Groves regarding the proposed closure of Harrow Magistrates' Court. Councillor Groves advised that the decision to close the courthouse was supposed to be announced on 30 May 2003 but had been postponed, and no new date had been set. Members were informed that the Greater London Magistrates' Courts Authority (GLMCA) and the Court Service were investigating a possible merger with Harrow Crown Court.

It was hoped that the work of the Magistrates' Court would be absorbed into the

building of the Crown Court, preserving the administration of local justice in Harrow. Councillor Groves advised that there was sufficient space within the building to enable this move, as numerous tribunals have been held at the Crown Court to absorb their excess space.

The Sub-Committee was informed that Harrow Magistrates' Court at present time, required more work to make it more suitable for the administration of modern justice, therefore, co-location of Harrow Crown Court with Harrow Magistrates' Court was the preferred option. It was also highlighted that the Magistrates' Court was not effective in respect of the separation of witnesses and defendants, and there was not sufficient accommodation for the police service on site.

Councillor Groves advised that, despite current difficulties, Harrow Magistrates' Court still provided a very high level of service for the local community, and that it was important for this service to be situated locally. Members were informed that if the move to the Crown Court was abandoned and the move to Brent upheld, then it was likely that a number of existing Magistrates would resign from the Bench.

Councillor Groves, with agreement from other Sub-Committee Members, vocalised the need for the Authority to undertake a Feasibility Study for the joint use of Harrow Crown Court building, and that the Borough Solicitor be requested to acquire agreement on this proposal.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the Borough Solicitor be requested to seek Council involvement in a Feasibility Study for joint use of the Harrow Crown Court building with the business of Harrow Magistrates' Court;

(2) that Sub-Committee Members be consulted on the draft response with Feasibility Study; and

(3) that the verbal presentation of Councillor Ann Groves be noted.

59. **Better Government for Older People:**

The Sub-Committee received a verbal report from Councillor Ann Groves, which outlined the current situation between the Better Government for Older People (BGOP) Panel and the Partnership with Older People (POP) Panels, of which there were currently 14. Members were advised that an informal meeting of the BGOP Panel was being planned to discuss support and funding for the POP Panels. Members were informed that funding for the POP Panels could cease in 2004 and that it was important for the BGOP Panel to address this funding issue in order to devise bids for alternative funding in good time.

Councillor Groves advised Members that the BGOP Members' Panel was also being revived in order to discuss the Panel's Terms of Reference and to raise awareness of the past and present work of the POP Panels and to ensure that these activities did not cease.

**RESOLVED:** That the verbal report from Councillor Ann Groves be noted.

60. **Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2002/03:**

**RESOLVED:** That the Chair's report of the Sub-Committee's work over the past year be approved, without amendment, for inclusion in the 2002/2003 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report.

61. **Current Strengthening Communities Work Programme for 2003/04:**

The Sub-Committee received the current Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee Work Programme for the 2003/2004 Municipal Year and were advised to select items for inclusion in the agenda for the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

**RESOLVED:** That the following items be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on 15 October 2003: -

- (i) Presentation from the Harrow Association of Voluntary Service (HAVS).
- (ii) A report back from the Manager of the Strategic Partnerships Section on issue 12 of the progress report on current community issues (agenda item 12): good practice and expertise in the voluntary sector should be disseminated to other community groups.
- (iii) Scoping report on the operation of the Housing Benefits Service; with a view to



appointing a scrutiny review group to examine issues in this area at the next meeting.

[Note: The Chair, Councillor Thammaiah, and Councillor Vina Mithani recorded that they wished to be appointed to this scrutiny review group].

- (iv) New Harrow Project Strategic Partnership report; progress report on the development of the community strategy.
- (v) Verbal update from Councillor Ann Groves on the proposed closure of Harrow Magistrates' Court.

62. **Domestic Violence Reference to Cabinet on 17 June 2003:**

Members received an extract from the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet on 17 June 2003, *Minute 278*, which detailed Cabinet's response to the Sub-Committee's reference on domestic violence.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That Cabinet's response to the Sub-Committee's reference regarding domestic violence be noted and recorded as a success for the Sub-Committee;

(2) that letters be sent to the Domestic Violence Forum, Victim Support and the Women's Centre advising them of Cabinet's response to the Sub-Committee's reference.

**(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7:30 pm, closed at 9:56 pm.)**

(Signed) COUNCILLOR KEEKIRA THAMMAIAH  
Chair

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**LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW**

<b>Meeting:</b>	Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee
<b>Date:</b>	15 October 2003
<b>Subject:</b>	Harrow Magistrates' Court
<b>Key decision:</b>	NO
<b>Responsible Chief Officer:</b>	Borough Solicitor
<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder:</b>	N/A
<b>Status:</b>	PART I
<b>Ward:</b>	N/A
<b>Enclosures:</b>	Appendix A – Harrow's response to the Family Proceedings consultation

**1. Summary/ Reason for urgency (if applicable)**

- 1.1 This report updates Members with information available to officers regarding the current position on the proposal to close Harrow Magistrates' Court and informs Members of the objection lodged to the proposal to create Family Courts (which, for Harrow, means transferring the business to 185 Marylebone Road, NW1).

**2. Recommendations (for decision by the Sub-Committee)**

**2.1** to note the position;

**2.2** to approve and support the representation attached to this report concerning the family court proposal.

**REASON:** To continue the Sub-Committee's monitoring of the GLMCA's proposals as they affect the local authority, partners and residents.

3. **Consultation with Ward Councillors**

3.1 N/A

4. **Policy Context (including Relevant Previous Decisions)**

4.1 Members will recall that Councillor Ann Groves has reported at recent meetings on the position regarding the proposal from the Greater London Magistrates' Courts Authority (GLMCA) to close our Court and transfer the business to Brent Magistrates' Court situated on the High Road in Willesden.

4.2 At their meeting on 13 June 2003, the GLMCA decided to conduct: "a 3-month feasibility study to establish whether it would be possible to co-locate the magistrates' court within Harrow Crown Court. Results from the study which will be undertaken in conjunction with the Courts Service, will be considered by the Authority when it meets on 29 September 2003. The possibility of moving work to Harrow Crown Court does not have an impact on GLMCA's proposals to close Harrow Magistrates' Court" (Quotation from the GLMCA website [www.glmca.org.uk](http://www.glmca.org.uk)).

4.3 As requested at your 25<sup>th</sup> June meeting (minute 58), I duly wrote to the GLMCA seeking involvement in the study, but as Members will know from my letter of 10 July 2003, I regret that the Council's offer of assistance was rejected. However, the Harrow Members of Parliament met the previous Minister, Yvette Cooper MP; and the Chief Executive met the Harrow Crown Court Resident Judge and certain of his colleagues.

4.4 At the time of revising this report, I have been verbally informed that the GLMCA decided at its 29<sup>th</sup> June meeting to close the Harrow Court, and that the business will be transferred to Brent Court in Willesden, ie the co-location with the Crown Court proposal has been rejected. Harrow officers do not know what information was before the GLMCA when it made its decision. As Members know, the GLMCA always (except for their Annual Meeting) meets in private, and whilst their agenda frontsheet is published on their website, after the meeting, the reports listed on the agenda are kept confidential. This complies with the GLMCA's legal obligations, although questions about this and the GLMCA's accountability have been asked in Parliament.

4.5 Therefore the current position is that formal notice is awaited from the GLMCA, following which the local authority has a statutory one month period in which to lodge an objection with the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA), now discharging the functions previously undertaken in the Lord Chancellor's department, whilst Lord Falconer as Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor, is the

senior responsible Minister. In accordance with Cabinet's previous decision (minute 199 of 18<sup>th</sup> February 2003) an objection will be lodged, and a meeting sought, which is likely to be with Christopher Leslie MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, it being understood that he has assumed the duties previously held by Yvette Cooper MP.

- 4.6 A matter of some concern is the last sentence of the quotation in paragraph 4.2: **“The possibility of moving work to Harrow Crown Court does not have an impact on GLMCA’s proposals to close Harrow Magistrates’ Court”**. This is capable of interpretation that the Court was going to be closed whatever the result of the feasibility study, because the quotation refers to the Court not the Court House. In fact, our understanding is that, prior to 29<sup>th</sup> June, the only decision regarding Harrow, which the GLMCA made on 13 June 2003, was to defer a decision on Harrow Court pending the result of the feasibility study. In the appeal, we shall be representing to the Minister that not only was the Council's offer to assist with the carrying out of the feasibility study refused, but that the impression was publicly given on the GLMCA website during its conduct that the result was a foregone conclusion, ie that the GLMCA would close the Court. Although it is not to be taken as a precedent, Kingston's appeal against closure was allowed by the previous Minister, when she said there were serious concerns about the capacity of the Wimbledon Court to which Kingston's work would have transferred (which would not apply to our case), but she went on to say “We also took into account the convenient location of Kingston Court, which is so close to the Crown Court and the police station as well as the convenience for local people”, much of which applies to our case.
- 4.6 Members are also aware that concurrent with the feasibility exercise, the GLMCA ran a pan-London consultation on their proposal for the future delivery of Family Proceedings in Greater London and the creation of Family Centres (“the Family Courts proposal”). On 16<sup>th</sup> June 2003 copies of this document were distributed to Members. The extended date for responses was 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2003. A copy of the response submitted on Harrow's behalf is attached to this report. The effect, for Harrow, would be that Harrow's family cases would be heard at 185 Marylebone Road, NW1, one of three family centres covering the whole of London. The Harrow representation envisages that Harrow Court would become a family centre to serve Harrow and adjoining areas (on the basis that the criminal work would be co-located with Crown Court).
- 4.7 Although Harrow has done everything possible to argue its case for the retention of local administration of justice, the GLMCA has decided in private session to persist with its proposal. A formal objection will be lodged with the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord

Chancellor, and a meeting sought with him or one of his Ministers, as previously requested by Cabinet.

5. **Relevance to Corporate Priorities**

- 5.1 In the general sense that the local court, and the co-operation between local agencies who are associated with it, contribute to the strengthening of Harrow's local communities.

6. **Background Information and options considered**

- 6.1 N/A

7. **Consultation**

- 7.1 Partnership Unit, Members of the Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub- Committee, Cabinet and Harrow Bench

8. **Finance Observations**

- 8.1 N/A

9. **Legal Observations**

- 9.1 Incorporated in the report.

10. **Conclusion**

- 10.1 N/A

11. **Background Papers**

- 11.1 GLMCA consultation document: Proposals for the Delivery of Family Proceedings in Greater London and the Creation of Family Centres  
GLMC website: [www.glmca.org.uk](http://www.glmca.org.uk)  
Correspondence to and from the GLMCA

12. **Author**

- 12.1 Gerald Balabanoff, Borough Solicitor, room 116, Civic Centre,  
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## **APPENDIX A**

### **CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL FOR THE DELIVERY OF FAMILY PROCEEDINGS IN GREATER LONDON AND THE CREATION OF FAMILY CENTRES**

This document responds to the GLMCA document dated 3rd June with the above title.

It acknowledges that the GLMCA's primary aim is to identify how the needs of family court users can be best met and the following points reflects the concerns of the London Borough of Harrow as a service user of the Family Court system.

#### **Needs of Family Cases and Flexibility**

The consultation document recognises the need for a high level of flexibility when dealing with family work and proposes that the more work running in a hearing centre the greater the possibility of flexibility.

The document fails to address the concern that by the same token over listing of family matters would in fact compromise flexibility. Overlisting limits availability of Courts for hearing emergency applications or allows it with a high level of disruption to existing workloads. It is not realistic to rely on transfer of cases from one bench to another as often justices will have spent considerable time reading the case bundle and there will be no advantage in transfer to a new bench if reading has again to be undertaken.

In terms of listing cases this Authority's experience of the Principal Registry, the existing centralised service, is that it is much harder for the Court to identify time to list final hearings within a reasonable timescale than local family proceedings courts are able to. This can considerably lengthen disposal time of cases and the document does not address this issue.

### **Justices/District Judges**

The document proposes that a consistency of approach from justices and district judges may be achieved if they operate from the same hearing centre. Without a rolling programme of training common to both justices and judges this authority believes it is highly unlikely that relocation alone will achieve consistency. Whatever the outcome of this consultation there is a clear need for more frequent and regular liaison opportunities between the justices/judges.

### **Venue/Accessibility**

The document proposes Marylebone Road as an option when considering venue for one of the three proposed centres and as the centre that would serve Harrow.

The document contends that Marylebone Road could provide four or five hearing rooms, if present occupants of the building are relocated and with some adaptation/and redevelopment.

Marylebone Road has a lease until 2025. It is proposed that this venue would accommodate the needs of the following Boroughs:

Brent

Westminster

Ealing

Harrow



Hillingdon

Hounslow

Newham

Richmond upon Thames and

Wandsworth

and has it is said been chosen based on accessibility. For this Local Authority and its neighbouring boroughs, Marylebone Road is not easily accessible and considering the client base may in fact prove to be a (further) disincentive to involvement in their children's cases if a lengthy journey is required. In addition to difficult travel arrangements the relocation would require court users to travel into London incurring travel costs that are currently not met by Legal Aid, and which are now sometimes met by local authorities in Higher Court cases. Relocation would increase this need for costs to be met to each and every case.

In terms of accessibility Harrow's Court House has excellent road and rail links being within a stone's throw of British Rail and underground lines. For a number of boroughs proposed to be served by Marylebone Road, Harrow would be a far more accessible venue than Marylebone Road.

Harrow Court House currently operates three courts, one of which was refurbished specifically to meet the needs of children's cases after the introduction of the Children Act 1989. It currently deals with criminal matters but if that work were to transfer to the nearby Crown Court there would, it is submitted, be potential scope within the Court House for redevelopment to offer at least four hearing rooms together with accommodation for staff. This may well be achieved at a lower cost than redevelopment of Marylebone Road and without disruption of the buildings existing use. The consultation document has not addressed this option at all which from this Authority's point of view would much better meet the needs of its service users, both professional and lay parties and in particular parents themselves. The Court House could offer a less impersonal

and imposing space than Marylebone Road without leasehold limitations or existing use difficulties.

Gen-a-ss/0603

<b>Meeting:</b>	Strengthening Communities Sub Committee
<b>Date:</b>	15 October 2003
<b>Subject:</b>	Update on Community Issues Raised
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Responsible Chief Officer:</b>	Jill Rothwell
<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder:</b>	Portfolio Holder for Partnership and Property
<b>Status:</b>	Part 1
<b>Ward:</b>	All
<b>Enclosures:</b>	Appendix 1- Update on Issues Raised by Community Groups

1. **Summary/ Reason for urgency (if applicable)**

- 1.1 To make members of the Committee aware of the work currently being undertaken in the areas of interest raised by community groups.

2. **Recommendations (for decision by the Committee )**

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the work being done in the relevant areas.
- 2.2 That the Committee agrees an appropriate format to respond to the Community groups on the issues raised.

**REASON:** Consideration of issues raised by the community is part of the work programme for the Committee.

3. **Consultation with Ward Councillors**

- 3.1 None

4. **Policy Context (including Relevant Previous Decisions)**

- 4.1 N/A

5. **Relevance to Corporate Priorities**

5.1 Engagement with the local communities and responding to issues raised by them is fundamental to the Council's objective of Strengthening Communities.

6. **Background Information and options considered**

6.1 None

7. **Consultation**

7.1 With umbrella organisations representing Community Groups.

8. **Finance Observations**

8.1 None

9. **Legal Observations**

9.1 None

10. **Conclusion**

10.1 Members may wish to note that considerable work is being done in the areas of interest raised by the Community Groups.

11. **Background Papers**

11.1 None

12. **Author**

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## Appendix 1

### Strengthening Community Sub Committee

#### Issues Raised by Some Community and Voluntary Sector Groups in Harrow

Issues Raised	Current Progress	Responsible Service area
<p>1. The role of the voluntary sector in partnership working and the burden it places on scarce human resources.</p>	<p>The Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP), launched in May 2003 aims to rationalise partnership working in the borough which will reduce the burden. The development of the local Compact will also formalise the role between the statutory and voluntary sector in Harrow.</p>	<p>Harrow Association of Voluntary Service and the Partnership Unit, under direction from the HSP Executive.</p>
<p>2. The way in which the Council consults is perceived to be meaningless. There is a need to make consultation papers more accessible.</p> <p>3. There is a need for support to the sector for fund raising as this consumes a substantial amount of time and resources which could be used helping clients and the community.</p>	<p>The new Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP) has developed a Consultation Framework which it recommends for adoption to all partners</p> <p>Grants Review, development of local compact, proposals for jointly funded post to raise funds for a permanent fund raising post for the voluntary sector.</p>	<p>Harrow Strategic Partnership Board and Executive</p> <p>Business Connections</p>
<p>4. There is a need for specialist skills to be made available to the voluntary sector, for example,</p>	<p>The Local Government On Line Project (LGOL) includes the development of a</p>	<p>LGOL Steering Group (chaired by</p>

<p>community accountancy support, legal expertise, IT troubleshooting, procurement. This could be done through secondments from the Council and other statutory partners.</p> <p>5. There is a need to strengthen the local Council of Voluntary Service (HAVS) and the sector as a whole. This would, make them less dependent on the Council in the future.</p> <p>6. Little provision for after school activities</p> <p>7. Given the high number of elderly people in the borough, there are not sufficient facilities provided for them.</p> <p>8. There is a need for elected members to be aware of the work of the voluntary service and how this supports Council activities. There is a need for a 'champion' for the voluntary sector.</p> <p>9. What is the role of Residents' Panel. There was a concern about the quality of materials that were produced by Quantify. Is the Panel reflective of the diversity of the community?</p> <p>10. There was a concern about the level of consultation that had been done with the sector on the New Harrow Project. Suggestions were sought for the pilot- how have these been actioned?</p> <p>11. How are the Tenants + Residents' Associations</p>	<p>Community Based IT Forum which will provide exactly the type of support identified.</p> <p>There is currently a review being done of the Residents Panel</p> <p>3 stakeholder forums have taken place with local voluntary and community organisations. Suggested actions have been incorporated into the work of the Pilot and further work will be done as part of Phase 2 to develop joint projects between the Council and the Community.</p> <p>Work has been done with specific Tenants</p>	<p>Nick Bell)</p> <p>Organisational Development</p> <p>Lead for Phase 2, Project Manager of the New Harrow Project.</p> <p>Manager, South Harrow Pilot,</p>
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being engaged with for the NHP?	and Residents Fora in the pilot area. They have also been involved in the wider stakeholder Forums.	Manager
<p>12. There is a need to for the Council to recognise umbrella groups in Harrow and involve them in Partnership forums.</p>	<p>Since the launch of the Harrow Strategic Partnership on 20 May, the Harrow Association of Voluntary Service and the Harrow Council For Racial Equality are members of the Partnership Board.</p>	<p>HSP Board and Executive</p>
<p>13. Good practice and expertise in the voluntary sector should be disseminated to other community groups.</p>	<p>This is currently done through the Community Consultative Forum and Strengthening Communities sub committee</p>	
<p>14. Most of the community groups indicated that their greatest priority was securing premises to run services for the elderly, childcare and generally to allow their communities to meet.</p>		
<p>15. There is a perception that the needs of the African and Caribbean communities were not being sufficiently addressed by the Council.</p>	<p>The Council funds a lunch club for older members of the African- Caribbean community via the Harrow African Caribbean Association (HACAS)</p>	

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<b>Meeting:</b>	Strengthening Communities Sub Committee
<b>Date:</b>	15 October 2003
<b>Subject:</b>	Update on Development of the Harrow Community Strategy
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Responsible Chief Officer:</b>	Jill Rothwell
<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder:</b>	Portfolio Holder for Partnership and Property
<b>Status:</b>	Part 1
<b>Ward:</b>	All
<b>Enclosures:</b>	Appendix 1- Timetable for Production of the Community Strategy Appendix 2- Consultation Programme for the Community Strategy

1. **Summary/ Reason for urgency (if applicable)**

- 1.1 That the Committee is aware of the process for development of, and consultation on the Community Strategy.

2. **Recommendations (for decision by.....)**

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the development timetable  
2.2 That the Committee notes the Consultation arrangements for the Community Strategy

**REASON:** The Council has a statutory responsibility to develop and deliver a Community Strategy.

3. **Consultation with Ward Councillors**

- 3.1 None

4. **Policy Context (including Relevant Previous Decisions)**

- 4.1 The Committee were made aware of the development of the Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP). At that time, it was emphasised to the Committee that one of the key tasks of the HSP was the development and delivery of the Community Strategy.

5. **Relevance to Corporate Priorities**

- 5.1 The work of the Harrow Strategic Partnership addresses the Council's stated priorities of

enhancing the environment, strengthening Harrow's local communities, promoting Harrow as a centre for lifelong learning, improving the quality of health and social care in Harrow and developing a prosperous and sustainable economy in Harrow.

6. **Background Information and options considered**

6.1 Government Guidance on the development of Community Strategies is available upon request from the Strategic Partnerships Section.

7. **Consultation**

7.1 Consultation on the development of the Community Strategy has taken place with the Executive of the HSP, the Council's Corporate Management Team and the Executive Directors Group.

8. **Finance Observations**

8.1 Costs can be met out of existing budgets.

9. **Legal Observations**

9.1 Under section 4 of the Local Government Act 2000, every local authority must prepare a community strategy for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom.

10. **Conclusion**

10.1 The Community Strategy is the overarching strategic document for the borough and therefore effective consultation on the priorities must be insured.

11. **Background Papers**

11.1

12. **Author**

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## Appendix 1 COMMUNITY STRATEGY PRODUCTION



<b>TASK</b>	<b>TIME PERIOD</b>
Draft produced incorporating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priorities from existing strategies</li> <li>• Corporate Plan information</li> <li>• Initial information from Harrow Vitality Profile</li> </ul>	1 October 2003
Draft considered by HSP Board and Executive	Tuesday 7 October
Draft considered by CMT	Wednesday 8 October
Comments made by HSP and CMT incorporated plus further information from the Harrow Vitality Profile	Thursday 9 October – Wednesday 22 October
Final draft sent to partner organisations of HSP Board/Exec for them to send to their own boards	Wednesday 22 October
Cabinet consider draft	11 November
Consultation (focus groups and existing meetings)	13 November – 17 December
Scrutiny and Overview	25 November 2003
<b>CHRISTMAS 22 DECEMBER 2003 – 4 JANUARY 2004</b>	
Write Second Draft inputting data from consultation period	5 January 2004 – 16 January 2004
HSP Board and Executive comment on second draft	26 January 2004
Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub Committee	2 February 2003
Written consultation period for second draft (internet, libraries etc)	2 February 2004 – 27 February 2004
Finalise document	1 March 2004 – 19 March 2004
HSP Board and Executive endorse Community Strategy	31 March 2004
Document sent to Cabinet	2 April
<b>EASTER 3 APRIL – 18 APRIL</b>	
Cabinet endorse Community Strategy	20 April
Council endorse Community Strategy	29 April
Printing of document and distribution	30 April – 18 May
HSP Board and Exec	19 May
HSP Summit – launch of Community Strategy	19 May 2004

## Consultation Programme for the Harrow Community Strategy

<p>Project Title: <b>Consultation Programme for Harrow Community Strategy</b></p>	<p><b>Project Sponsor:</b>   <b>Jill Rothwell, Executive Director Organisational Development. London Borough of Harrow</b>   <b>Project Leader: Bindu Arjoon-Matthews Manager, Strategic Partnership Section</b></p>
<p>Context: The Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP) aims to produce the Harrow Community Strategy by May 2004 (details can be found in the project initiation document for the Community Strategy).</p> <p>The Community Strategy guidance <i>Preparing Community Strategies: Government Guidance to local authorities, December 2000, Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, states: community strategies must give local people a powerful voice in planning local approaches to economic, social and environmental well-being and in holding public services and local politicians to account...the key to an effective community strategy will, therefore, be successful partnership working and community involvement throughout the process'.</i></p> <p>Development of the Community Strategy is a year 2 indicator within the London Borough of Harrow Race Equality Scheme. In 2003/04 a report will be presented to the HSP showing how the Community Strategy was produced in line with the general duty to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- eliminate unlawful discrimination</li> <li>- promote equal opportunities</li> <li>- promote good relations between people from different racial groups</li> </ul> <p>The HSP is committed to promoting social inclusion and as a key element of that commitment, promoting race equality. Black and minority ethnic communities will be one section of the local population targeted for consultation during the development of the HSP's Community Strategy. Key representatives from these communities will also monitor the achievements of the Community Strategy through their membership in the Harrow Strategic Partnership.</p> <p>The development of the Community Strategy will be reported against Best Value Indicator 1, which for 2003/04 requires the Community Strategy to be produced by May 2004.</p>	
<p><b>Links to corporate / departmental / service priorities</b></p> <p>As stated in the HSP Constitution the priority for the HSP is to work to make a measurable improvement to the quality of life of the people of Harrow through robust and inclusive partnership working. In particular the HSP facilitates involvement in the work of the HSP by stakeholders in Harrow who wish to make this priority a reality. The HSP aims to develop strong cohesive communities and the community planning process aims to assist in this development and involvement.</p>	
<p><b>Aim</b></p> <p>To ensure that local communities and partner agencies are engaged in the community planning process for the production of the Harrow Community Strategy, thus enabling them to articulate their aspirations, needs and priorities regarding the improvement of the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Harrow.</p>	

## **Methodology**

Consultation will follow the process shown on the flow diagram in appendix 1

Consultation will be undertaken using 3 stages:

Stage 1:	mapping	(26 June 2003 – 20 October 2003)
Stage 2:	interactive	(20 October 2003 – 12 December 2003)
Stage 3:	written	(2 February – 27 February 2004)

## **STAGE 1: Mapping: 26 June 2003 – 20 October 2003**

- a) Mapping of partnership priorities already identified in existing strategic documents and being addressed through joint working
- b) Mapping of Harrow indicators through the Harrow Vitality Profile

## **STAGE 2: Interactive: 20 October 2003 – 12 December 2003**

The mapping stage will result in the identification of key priorities for Harrow. These priorities will then be consulted on as per the flow diagram in appendix 1, using 4 mechanisms:

Four mechanisms will be used in the interactive period:

- a) Questionnaire
- b) Focus Groups
- c) Existing Meetings
- d) Newsletters

### **a). Questionnaire (reaching partners and residents)**

A questionnaire will be used in conjunction with mechanisms b) – d). It will also be posted on the Harrow Live Website and sent out separately to the HSP database and people who have specifically asked to receive information about the Community Strategy.\*

\* The Residents Panel will not be used to receive the questionnaire as it is currently under review and is no longer representative of the make up of the Borough.

### **b). Focus Groups (reaching partners and residents)**

The Focus Groups will address issues affecting the whole Borough as well as taking a specific area based approach based on postcodes. The Borough will be split into three postcode groups

- i) HA2 & HA5
- ii) HA1 & HA3
- iii) HA7 & HA8

For each of the three postcode groupings there will be three focus groups held (i.e. nine in total). The times of these will vary in order to engage as many stakeholders as possible.

It is requested that HSP Executive and Board members are available for the Focus Groups, being involved by giving presentations and facilitating discussions. Members of the Strategic Partnership Section will be available to offer support.

### **c). Existing meetings (reaching partners)**

A number of meetings are held across the Borough that discuss issues relevant to the Community Strategy and the future of the Borough (see appendix 2). An agenda item focusing on the Community Strategy will be sought at each meeting. A standard presentation will be used which will explain what the HSP is, what the Community Strategy is for, explain the consultation process and request initial input. The questionnaire will also be distributed.

Members of the Executive and Board are requested to participate in this meeting programme by giving presentations and facilitating any discussion. A member of the SPS will be available to offer support. Appendix 2 scopes the meetings identified for inclusion in the consultation programme.

### **d). Newsletters**

There will be a special edition of Partnership News focused on the Community Strategy. In addition articles will be placed in partners newsletters to enable stakeholders to participate in the consultation process.

## **Prioritising**

During the period 5 January 2004 – 26 January 2004, the HSP Executive and Board will prioritise the range of issues arising through the consultation and a draft Community Strategy will be produced.

## **STAGE 3: Written: 2 February 2004 – 27 February 2004**

Copies of draft Community Strategy will be available for comment in libraries, schools and via the Harrow Live website. Copies will be sent to those people who have participated in the interactive consultation programme and request the written draft. The Harrow People will highlight the key priorities identified for inclusion in the Community Strategy and enable comment.

## **Reaching as wide a range of people as possible**

### **a) Advertising consultation**

The dates for consultation will be advertised using

- The Harrow Live website
- The local press
- Partnership News
- Community notice boards
- Partners newsletters
- Database of people who have expressed an interest in receiving further information about the Community Strategy and participating in consultation.

### **b) HSP Constitution and Protocols for Consultation and Communications**

Consultation will be carried out adhering to the HSP Constitution and HSP Protocols for Consultation and Communication. As such, accessibility issues will be addressed and endeavours made to reach all communities in Harrow.

## **Results of Consultation**

### **The following principles will be followed:**

- a) People who have responded to consultation and provided their contact details will receive a written response detailing what has happened to their contribution.
- b) Be clear about how priorities will be determined
- c) The HSP Information Sharing Protocol encourages sharing certain information in a safe way between partner organisations. If there is any information that it is felt cannot be addressed through the community planning process these concerns will be passed on to the relevant organisation for them to be addressed.

The final Community Strategy will be launched at the HSP Summit in May 2004. The HSP will then work to implement the Strategy.

### **Delivery of the Community Strategy Priorities**

The HSP will be the vehicle for delivering the Community Strategy.

Current delivery mechanisms being used to deliver issues in existing strategies will be brought into the HSP and be monitored through the Management Groups.

Issues identified through consultation, which are currently not being addressed in existing strategies, will be allocated to HSP Management Groups. The Management Groups will set up Project Groups to deliver against the targets.

**Measures of success**

The success of the project will be measured by the results of an evaluation of the consultation programme through the use of feedback surveys for the consultation mechanisms

**Scope**

The consultation programme for the Community Strategy will impact on staff within all partner agencies of the HSP and members of the local community. The Community Strategy will become the overarching strategic document for the Harrow locality and will provide prioritisation of partnership issues to be addressed through the HSP.

**Approvals sought**

The HSP Executive and Board will approve the consultation programme.

The following committees will be involved in the final endorsement of the Community Strategy

HSP Board

HSP Executive

LBH Overview & Scrutiny

LBH Strengthening Communities sub Committee

LBH Cabinet

LBH Corporate Management Team

LBH Council

Executive Bodies of partner organisations

**Assumptions and constraints**

1. Harrow Vitality Profile information will be timely and inform the Community Strategy consultation programme
2. Information being provided by internal and external sources for the grid mapping plans, partnerships and resources is timely and comprehensive
3. An adequate budget is ringfenced for the consultation programme based on proposals submitted for resourcing from the Corporate Service budget.

*Start and end dates or estimate of time-scale*

9 September 2003 – 30 June 2004

*Specific critical dates*

Please see consultation programme dates in methodology section.

**Reporting arrangements**

Reporting arrangements for the development of the Community Strategy are detailed in the CS PID.

**Monitoring mechanism**

The consultation programme will be monitored by the HSP Executive and project sponsors.



#### Evaluation and review

The success of the project to develop the Community Strategy will be evaluated in June 2004. A report will be produced on achievements against the success measures outlined above and those in the CS PID. Lessons learnt and examples of good practice will be recorded for use in future Community Strategy development and shared across the HSP as a guide when producing strategic documents and undertaking consultation.

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<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Type of Report</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<b>Strength Comms Sub 25 June 2003</b>	Presentation on Youth Crime	SCHEDULED ITEM	Min 43 of SC Sub on 9/4/03 refers.
	Safer Harrow - BV Review & Action Plan	SCHEDULED BV REPORT	Report and Improvement Plan approved by Cabinet on 15 April 2003.
	Verbal Progress Report on Current Community Issues		
	Better Government for Older People	SCHEDULED ITEM	Min 43 of SC Sub on 9/4/03 refers.
	Access to Justice – monitoring the developments of the proposed closure of Harrow Magistrates' Court by the GLMCA	SCHEDULED ITEM	Min 43 of SC Sub on 9/4/03 refers.
	Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2002/03	REGULAR ANNUAL	
	Work Programme for the Sub-Committee for 2003/04	REGULAR ITEM	

<b>Strength Comms Sub 15 Oct 2003</b>	Update on the Proposed Closure of Harrow Magistrates Court	SCHEDULED ITEM	Min 61 of SC Sub on 25/6/03 refers.
	Presentation from Harrow Council for Racial Equality (HCRE)		
	Update on Current Community Issues: Report Back on the Dissemination of Good Practice and Expertise in the Voluntary Sector to other Community Groups	SCHEDULED ITEM	Min 61 of SC Sub on 25/6/03 refers.
	Progress Report from the Harrow Strategic Partnership on the Development of the Community Strategy	SCHEDULED ITEM	Min 61 of SC Sub on 25/6/03 refers.
	Work Programme for the Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2003/04	REGULAR ITEM	

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Type of Report</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<b>Strength Comms Sub 2 Feb 2004</b>	Members' Verbal Progress Reports on Reviews  Work Programme for the Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2003/04	REGULAR ITEM  REGULAR ITEM	
<b>Strength Comms Sub 30 March 2004</b>	Review of the achievements of the Sub-Committee in 2003/04  Annual Work Programme for the Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2004/05  Members' Verbal Progress Reports on Reviews	REGULAR ANNUAL  REGULAR ANNUAL  REGULAR ITEM	
<b>Strength Comms Sub</b> It has not yet been determined to which meeting the following items will be submitted	Community Strategy  Grant Funding  Community Safety Unit (Police)  CPS and Victim Support  Update on the Implementation of the Improvement Plan arising from the Safer Harrow Best Value Review  Options for the Scope of a Review of the Operation of the Housing Benefits Service	STATUTORY PLAN  SCHEDULED ITEM  SCHEDULED ITEM  SCHEDULED ITEM  SCHEDULED ITEM  SCHEDULED ITEM	No statutory deadline. The Local Strategic Partnership, when established, will take responsibility for developing this plan.  Min 43 of SC Sub on 9/4/03 refers. Min 43 of SC Sub on 9/4/03 refers. Min 43 of SC Sub on 9/4/03 refers. Min 55 of SC Sub on 25/6/03 refers.  Min 61 of SC Sub on 25/6/03 refers.

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Type of Report</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<b>Strength Comms Sub</b> It has not yet been determined to which meeting the following items will be submitted	Support Through Funding - BV Review & Action Plan	SCHEDULED BV REPORT	Provisionally due to be considered by BVAP in 2003-04. To be considered by Cabinet before reference to Scrutiny

Also need to programme in

- Annual/six-monthly attendance by the Deputy Leader (Partnership, Best Value and Performance Management Portfolio Holder)
- Reporting of External Assessments on Info Circular once they have been considered by Cabinet

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