



COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE FORUM

TUESDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2004

7.30 PM

PANEL AGENDA (CONSULTATIVE FORUM)

COMMITTEE ROOM 1&2
HARROW CIVIC CENTRE

MEMBERSHIP (Quorum 3)

Chair: Councillor N Shah

Councillors:

Bluston
Currie
Omar

Arnold
Janet Cowan
Anjana Patel

Reserve Members:

1. Lavingia
2. Gate
3. Nana Asante
4. Burchell

1. Harriss
2. Kara
3. Mrs Champagne

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

***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.***

HARROW COUNCIL

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE FORUM

TUESDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2004

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 Forum 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.
4. **Presentation regarding Diversity in the National Curriculum:**
Patrick O'Dwyer, General Education Adviser (People First directorate, Harrow Council), will be giving a verbal presentation on the extent to which the National Curriculum promotes and celebrates diversity in England.
5. **Presentation by Ethnic Alcohol Counselling Service:**
Lakhvir Randhawa, Manager of the Ethnic Alcohol Counselling Service, will be giving a presentation based upon the Services' work carried out, past and present obstacles faced such as funding and plan for the future.
6. **Presentation on the New Harrow Project - Progress Report:**
Andrew Trehern, Area Director (Urban Living directorate, Harrow Council) will be giving a presentation upon the developments that have taken place in Areas 2 and 3 of the New Harrow Project.
- Enc. 7. **Consultation on the Draft Community Strategy - Update:** (Pages 1 - 6)
Report of the Executive Director (Organisational Development), presented by Bindu Arjoon-Matthews, Manager of the Strategic Partnerships Section (Organisational Development directorate, Harrow Council).
8. **Planning for Black History Month 2004:**
Bindu Arjoon-Matthews, Manager of the Strategic Partnerships Section (Organisational Development directorate, Harrow Council), will be discussing the preparations currently taking place for this year's Black History Month.

9. **Widening the Community Consultative Forum Membership:**
Members of the Forum are requested to put forward names of community groups in Harrow that are not already members of the Forum – in order to widen its membership.

[It is anticipated that groups would be contacted before the next meeting to ascertain whether they wish to be apart of the Forum's membership.]

- Enc. 10. **Asian Applicants Review Group - Progress Report:** (Pages 7 - 18)
Report of the Executive Director (Organisational Development directorate, Harrow Council) FOR INFORMATION.
11. **Open Forum:**
This is an opportunity for members of the Forum to identify topics for discussion at future Forum meetings.
12. **Public Questions:**
To receive questions (if any) from local residents or organisations under the provisions of Consultative Forum Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).
13. **Petitions:**
To receive petitions (if any) submitted by members of the public/Councillors under the provisions of Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 13 (Part 4E of the Constitution).
14. **Deputations:**
To receive deputations (if any) submitted by members of the public/Councillors under the provisions of Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).
- Enc. 15. **Minutes:** (Pages 19 - 24)
That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2003 having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.
16. **Matters Arising from Minutes of the Last Meeting:**
17. **Any Other Urgent Business:**

AGENDA - PART II - NIL

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Meeting:	Community Consultative Forum
Date:	10 February 2004
Subject:	Consultation on the draft Community Strategy For Harrow
Key decision:	No
Responsible Chief Officer:	Jill Rothwell, Executive Director (Organisational Development)
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Cllr N. Shah, Property and Partnership
Status:	Public
Ward:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1- Initial Outcome of Phase 1 of Public Consultation on the draft Community Strategy For Harrow.

1. Summary/ Reason for urgency (if applicable)

- 1.1 This paper updates the Forum on the process of consultation on the draft Community Strategy for Harrow, which is being developed by the Harrow Strategic Partnership and the main issues raised through the public consultation undertaken up to December 2003.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Forum notes the consultation process so far and the early results received.

REASON: Guidance on the development of the Community Strategy indicates that it should be a document that articulates the needs of residents.

3. Consultation with Ward Councillors

- 3.1 None

4. Policy Context (including Relevant Previous Decisions)

- 4.1 The local authority has a statutory responsibility under the Local Government Act 2000 to develop a Community Strategy in consultation with local partners.

5. Relevance to Corporate Priorities

5.1 The draft Community Strategy For Harrow reflects all of the Council's corporate priorities.

6. **Background Information and options considered**

6.1 The stages of consultation are identified below:

First Phase- Interactive Consultation: 13 November 2003 – 17 December 2003

This was conducted based on the draft Community Strategy which included:

- Partnership priorities already identified in existing strategic documents and being addressed through joint working
- Initial data from the mapping of Harrow indicators through the Harrow Vitality Profile

Interactive consultation was then undertaken to determine what work should be done in the future to further address the priorities. This is being done using four mechanisms:

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

a). Questionnaire (reaching partners and residents)

The questionnaire was used in conjunction with mechanisms b) – d). It has been posted on the Harrow Live Website and sent out separately to the HSP database and to people who had specifically asked to receive information about the Community Strategy.

b). Focus Groups (reaching partners and residents)

The Focus Groups were held as follows:

- Thursday 27 November, Belmont Community Hall (HA7 & HA8)
- Thursday 4 December, Harrow Civic Centre (HA1 & HA3)
- Wednesday 10 December, Northolt Road Hall (HA2 & HA5)

Meetings were held at 3.30pm – 5.30pm and repeated at 6.30pm – 8.30pm at each venue.

Members of the Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP) Executive attended each session to give a short presentation about the development of the Draft Community Strategy and the Harrow Strategic Partnership. Total attendance was in the region of 80.

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. Coordinators of these meetings were

approached to include an agenda item about the Draft Community. The consultation questionnaire was also made available to people who attended these meetings.

d). Newsletters

A special edition of Partnership News focusing on the Community Strategy was produced which also contained the consultation questionnaire. In addition articles were placed in partners' newsletters.

6.2 Reaching as wide a range of people as possible

The consultation programme was advertised using:

- HSP database including 900 organisations, partners and Members
- The Harrow Live website
- The local press for 2 weeks running
- 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
- Places of Worship
- Schools

Second Phase of Public Consultation

Written consultation on the Second Draft will take place 2 February 2004 – 27 February 2004 via copies being made 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 second draft. The January 2004 edition of Harrow People will report on consultation to date and provide another opportunity for people to comment on the priorities within the draft document.

6.3 Summary of issues raised during the consultation to date

The information received up to 17 December, which was the end of the first phase of the public consultation, are attached as appendix 1. These will be incorporated in the second draft of the Strategy, for consideration by the HSP Board and Executive.

6.4 Prioritising

At the 26 January meeting of the Board and Executive, the issues raised during the consultation period will be presented. The HSP Executive and Board will then need to prioritise the range of issues arising through the consultation and devise which will be included in the Second Draft.

7. Consultation

7.1 The consultation arrangement have been detailed above.

8. Finance Observations

8.1 None

9. Legal Observations

9.1 Included in report

10. Conclusion

10.1 Public consultation is an integral part of the development of the Community Strategy for Harrow and efforts have been made to ensure that as many stakeholder, partners and residents have been engaged in the process.

11. **Background Papers**

11.1 Background papers on the HSP and guidance on developing Community Strategies are available from the author of this report.

12. **Author**

12.1 Bindu Arjoon-Matthews, Manager, Strategic Partnership Section
Telephone: 8420 9637 Email: bindu.arjoon-matthews@harrow.gov.uk

Appendix 1- Initial Outcome of Phase 1 of Public Consultation on the draft Community Strategy For Harrow

**Initial Results of Phase 1 Consultation on the
Draft Community Strategy For Harrow**

December 2003

AREA	EMERGING ISSUES
Children & Young People	More clubs, leisure and exercise opportunities for young people
Community Cohesion	Increased support to voluntary groups including enhanced communication mechanisms and community development resources Services to support Harrow's refugee communities
Greener Harrow	Employ park wardens to make parks safe and suffer from less vandalism Provide more trees and plants and a replacement program Continue development and extension of recycling programmes Focus on cleaning streets and educating residents and businesses to dispose of litter properly A range of transport issues
Healthy Harrow	Develop and promote opportunities for leisure to improve health
Learning For All	Extend library open hours Provide more non-vocational adult education course Use schools during the evenings and holidays for training course
Making ICT Work for Harrow	Provide computers in libraries and schools Development of a community website Develop information sharing protocols Support to voluntary sector to procure ICT and help with IT problems
Regenerating Harrow	Increase the amount of affordable housing in the borough Support to businesses e.g. business units, and develop plans for secondary shopping/business areas and links to initiatives in neighbouring boroughs e.g. Wembley, Heathrow
Safer Harrow	Increase the number of police on the streets

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Meeting:	Community Consultative Forum
Date:	Tuesday 10 February 2004
Subject:	Asian Applicants Review Group – Progress Report
Key decision:	No
Responsible Chief Officer:	Executive Director, Organisational Development
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder For Partnership & Property Portfolio Holder For Finance & Human Resources & Performance Management
Status:	Part 1
Ward:	N/A
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference of Asian Applicants Review Group Appendix 2 – Feedback notes from Asian Applicants Workshop

1. Summary

- 1.1 A Review Group was established following a recommendation by the Employees' Consultative Forum in January 2003 to investigate the disproportionate adverse impact between black and ethnic minority and white job applicants and ways of improving the success of Asian job applicants. The group has met twice and has agreed the terms of reference and the work programme for the group.
- 1.2 Work undertaken has included extending recruitment and selection (R&S) applicant monitoring systems to include age, R&S feedback questionnaire, a R&S workshop for unsuccessful Asian applicants following interview and a comparative research exercise of best practice in R&S with other organisations.
- 1.3 Further analysis of data is underway and other work identified by the group is continuing.

2. Recommendations (for decision by the Forum)

- 2.1 **That the progress report on the work of the Asian Applicants Review Group be noted.**

3. Consultation with Ward Councillors

- 3.1 N/A

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

- 4.1 This is a progress report on the work of the Asian Applicants Review Group. The Review Group was established following a recommendation by the Employees' Consultative Forum in January 2003. The Group's remit is to investigate the disproportionate adverse impact between black and ethnic minority and white job applicants and ways of improving the success of Asian job applicants – **Employees' Consultative Forum 28-01-03.**

5. **Relevance to Corporate Priorities**

- 5.1 This report addresses the Council's stated priority of striving for a community, which is cohesive and strong, which strengthens Harrow's local community by valuing and celebrating the rich diversity of our local community.

6. **Background Information**

- 6.1 This report sets out progress made by the Council on the work of the Asian Applicants Review Group. The Review Group was established as recommended by the Employees' Consultative Forum in January 2003 to investigate the disproportionate adverse impact between black and ethnic minority and white job applicants and ways of improving the success of Asian job applicants.
- 6.2 The group is comprised of elected members, representatives from Harrow Council for Racial Equality, Harrow Anti Racist Alliance, Unison, Harrow Black Workers Group and officers from Personnel Services and is chaired by Councillor Dighe.
- 6.3 To date the review group has met twice. The first meeting of the group was held in September 2003 at which the terms of reference and the work programme for the group were agreed. The terms of reference are attached at Appendix 1.
- 6.4 The group has instigated the following work:
- Applicant monitoring statistics to include age as monitoring criteria from 01 October 2003.
 - To retrospectively include age as monitoring criteria for applicant monitoring statistics from 01 April 2003 to September 2003 for cross analysis of statistics between ethnicity, gender, and age by paybands.
 - To obtain feedback from unsuccessful black and ethnic minority applicants following interview (for period January 2003 to September 2003) via a recruitment and selection feedback questionnaire exercise.
 - To hold a workshop for unsuccessful Asian applicants following interview to find out their experience of going through Harrow's recruitment and selection process.
 - To investigate and compare good practice in recruitment and selection in other private and public sector organisations.
- 6.5 A full report of the review group will be submitted to the Employees' Consultative Forum later in 2004.
- 6.6 The following progress on the work programme has been made:

Applicant Monitoring

- 6.7 Recruitment and Selection recording monitoring systems have been amended from 1st October 2003, to include age as a monitoring category.
- 6.8 Applicant monitoring statistics (excluding schools) have been extended retrospectively from April 2003 to September to include age as a monitoring category. Cross analysis of statistics between ethnicity, gender, and age by paybands has started.

Recruitment and Selection Feedback Questionnaire and Analysis

- 6.9 Feedback from unsuccessful black and ethnic minority applicants following interview (for period January 2003 to September 2003) has been undertaken in two stages via a recruitment and selection feedback questionnaire exercise.
- 6.10 The first stage identified unsuccessful Asian applicants who were then sent questionnaires and their responses analysed. The second stage involved sending questionnaires to the remaining black and ethnic minority unsuccessful applicants. Analysis of these is currently underway.
- 6.11 The percentage return of questionnaires from Asian applicants was 24%. Analysis of these questionnaires was broken down in the following areas:
- Before the interview
 - During the interview
 - After the Interview
 - Equal Opportunities
- 6.12 Overall conclusions drawn from analysis of the questionnaire results were that Harrow's application pack is seen as a strength and suggestions were made of how it could be made even better. Another area of strength identified was having ethnically balanced interview panels which contributed to a positive interview experience for the majority of respondents.
- 6.13 Areas identified which would benefit from closer review when updating the recruitment and selection policy are; setting interview questions, which enable applicants to express their best qualities to demonstrate that they meet the criteria on person specification for jobs, and clarity of instructions provided to applicants sitting for tests.
- 6.14 An area of weakness identified was that of feedback provided to applicants on their interview performance. Some useful comments were made of how Harrow can improve on offering feedback, how it should be given and its content.
- 6.15 The response on the equal opportunity aspects of the recruitment and selection (R&S) process needs serious consideration as almost a third of respondents made unfavourable comments and felt disadvantaged by the R&S process. However, despite this the majority of respondents have applied for or have considered applying for other jobs in Harrow and would recommend that other people apply for jobs with Harrow.

- 6.16 The questionnaire exercise has been extremely useful with respondents making several suggestions about how Harrow's R&S process can be improved for all applicants and did not identify any specific barriers to recruitment.
- 6.17 The Review Group has considered the feedback received via the questionnaires sent to unsuccessful Asian applicants and has requested additional information be collected on the views of black members of interview panels. A questionnaire is currently being prepared, which will be sent to black panel members seeking their views and experiences of participating in the recruitment process including interview panels. This will provide further information for reviewing the R&S policy.

Recruitment and Selection Workshop for Asian Applicants

- 6.18 Unsuccessful Asian applicants were also invited to an R&S workshop. The workshop was specifically for Asian applicants, as analysis from previous applicant monitoring statistics has shown that the disparity between numbers shortlisted and numbers appointed is more significant for Asian applicants than for any other racial group.
- 6.19 An evening workshop for unsuccessful Asian applicants was held on 9th December 2003. The aim of the workshop was to enable them to provide more detailed feedback of their experience of having being through Harrow's R&S process and to explore ways of improving the success of Asian applicants.
- 6.20 The Workshop also provided an opportunity for participants to find out about current job opportunities within Harrow Council. In addition, information was available on learning development resources related to recruitment and selection and on how to prepare for interviews with the Council. Members of the Learning Development Unit were available to offer participants one to one appointments and provide free information advice and guidance on careers with Harrow Council or in local government.
- 6.21 The results of the analysis of the R&S feedback questionnaire above (see paragraph 6.9 to 6.16) helped to determine the topics for the workshop which are listed below focussing answers to areas of testing, interview, person specification, feedback.
- What problems/difficulties/barriers do you think are present in Harrow's R&S process?
 - How can we improve our R&S processes in order to eliminate the problems/difficulties/barriers identified above?
 - How do you think our R&S process disadvantages Asian applicants?
 - What support can we provide to you as individuals i.e. career development, job search, information and guidance.
 - Other Issues/comments
- 6.22 The workshop was chaired Councillors Dighe and Shah and was facilitated by HR officers. All members of the review group were invited to attend the workshop as observers.
- 6.23 Positive feedback was received from everyone involved it was considered to be a very successful event, which provided the Council with useful feedback to take into consideration when reviewing the R&S policy.

- 6.24 Feedback notes from the workshop groups are attached at appendix 2 for information. The initial finding from the questionnaire exercise that the feedback provided to unsuccessful candidates following interview was not always offered, and when requested not given, that it was poor and untimely was confirmed at the workshop.
- 6.25 As an immediate result of the workshop, the Chief Executive and Executive Directors agreed that appointing officers receive further guidance on best practice in recruitment selection practices including providing meaningful feedback. Processes for providing feedback to candidates following interview have been reviewed and a Guidance Note has been developed which will be issued to all Directorates.

R&S procedures and best practice from other organisations

- 6.26 A research exercise was undertaken to find out best practice in R&S procedures from other Local authorities and private organisations and make comparisons with Harrow's R&S policy. The main conclusions drawn from the comparative research show that Harrow's approach to Recruitment & Selection is not dissimilar to other organisations. However it is apparent that there are areas that Harrow could build on to improve the process e.g. the guidance provided for managers, consider a variety of opportunities that are available for selecting candidates, the use of testing, recruiting to achieving diverse teams.

7. Finance Observations

- 7.1 The additional resources required to undertake the research requested by the Review Group are being funded from within existing budgets.

8. Legal Observations

- 8.1 None.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 The work undertaken under the direction of the Review Group has already identified areas in which the Council can improve its performance in recruitment and selection. Although at this time no specific barriers have been identified to account for the apparent adverse impact for Asian applicants, further research is ongoing.

10. Background Papers

Employees' Consultative Forum - 28-01-03
Minutes of the Asian Review Group – 11-09-03
Minutes of the Asian Review Group – 09-12-03

11. Author

- 11.1 Sangeeta Jerath, Principal; Employee Relations Officer
Tel: 020 8424 1952
e-mail: sangeeta.jerath@harrow.gov.uk

Review group to consider the disproportionate adverse impact on Asian applicants

Terms of Reference

1. To consider what additional monitoring information or further research may be required in order to identify reasons for the disproportionate adverse impact on Asian applicants.
2. To review the Council's recruitment and selection policy, procedure and practice and identify areas that may potentially have a disproportionate adverse impact on Asian applicants.
3. To consider and recommend positive actions that the Council may take to improve the success ratio for Asian applicants.

1. What Problems/ Difficulties/Barriers do you think are present in Harrow's Recruitment & Selection			
Testing			
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No feedback on testing Instructions not clear Too little to shortlist on. Just tests Test and interview over too many days 	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not enough time – notes/spreadsheet/word Why test for a managerial job? Lack of information about test Relevancy to job? Why test if you have years of experience 	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of familiarity with tests Time to do tests not sufficient Test not matching explanation 	<p>Group 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools: specific 'software' No room for transferable skills Test not job related – more emphasis given to excel (no feedback given) No clarification re: 'weighting' of test
Interview			
<p>Group1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not job related questions No feedback from interview/ no feedback offered Panel could not have shortlisted? Too informal – off putting Poor environment No notice or contact information on letter 	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too many interviewers – level of job, nervous Too much time spent on equal opportunities Feedback Short interview – felt decision had already been made 	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of practice on interviewing Structure of interview Panels generally good 	<p>Group 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short notice for interview – 24 hours Score 1: how did someone do better? How come after 8 years still score same Equal opportunity questions – how scoring done? Lack of clarity re: scoring Panel was not balanced – all 'white' (exchequer department)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough contact during process 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar in social services – not balanced • Similar in schools – not balanced • Did not receive feedback need for local knowledge
Person Specification			
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific but too rigid transferable skills? • Too rigid doesn't allow people to develop • Person specification restricted information (no of sheets) 	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks the same information – with different view • Experience – too specific for internal applicants/relevancy • Too much of the same paperwork 	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally very helpful • Possible repetition 	<p>Group 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantage is: specific software or database • Essential is relevant experience
2. How can we improve our R&S processes in order to eliminate the problems/difficulties/barriers identified above?			
Testing			
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude tests not so work based 	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No tests – probation period is enough 	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve materials • Mock tests • More realistic time 	<p>Group 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be job related/ what 'weight' it carries
Interview			
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information about interview set up (names, style, 	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better rooms – less clutter, more air! 	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing of information to interviews 	<p>Group 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balanced panels

format)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less talk on EO, more practice • Less people on panel 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions to encourage transferable skills • Very difficult/ not comfortable/how much they want • No indication whether you're addressing a question? • Need detailed feedback – open and honest
Person Specification			
Group 1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally good • Broader criteria to prevent favouritism 	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OK 	<p>Group 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should use information from application form to match with person specification - application and interview do not gel!
3. How do you think our R&S process disadvantages Asian applicants?			
Testing			
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to assess without data • Lack of Senior Managers from Asian or BME community 	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English as second language (but can always be a positive) 	<p>Group 3:</p>	<p>Group 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In writing an essay or scenario – English as a second language – may be hindering expression of thoughts/views

Interview:			
Group 1:	Group 2:	Group 3:	Group 4:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel – biased (origin of birth asked/favouritism) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Visual'- seen as Asian (colour) – specially at senior level jobs Whether 'accent' presentation comes in way! What are the buzzwords? How we express ourselves – second language could be a barrier
Person Specification:			
Group 1:	Group 2:	Group 3:	Group 4:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second language could be a barrier Other details may give away ethnicity/national origin 			
4. What support can we provide to you as individuals i.e. career development, job search, information and guidance?			
Group 1:	Group 2:	Group 3:	Group 4:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback Give room for people to learn and develop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Layout cramped Feedback More information on tests – reasons, how long Too long waiting – no reasons given! Waiting area – irate member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mock interviews Training opportunities Guidance on personal statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give opportunity for job – with development within that job

	<p>of public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits Harrow and environment • Meet kinds of people • Keep to the time • Provide more information promptly • Central point of contact • Applying is too time consuming • C.V's 		
5. Other issues/comments			
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No feedback on shortlisting application forms • Wrong job pack • Details incorrect • Quality of paperwork • Felt discouraged by experience 	<p>Group 2:</p>	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daunting environment • Open days • Interviews in the workplace (schools, department, unit) 	<p>Group 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive comment: Harrow is the only Borough who has made an effort to bring people together

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COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE FORUM

22 OCTOBER 2003

Chair: * Councillor N Shah

Councillors: * Arnold * Mrs Champagnie (3)
* Bluston * Janet Cowan
* Burchell (4) Currie

* Denotes Member present
(3), (4) Denote category of Reserve Member

[NB Attendance at this meeting by representatives of community organisations and representatives of the Local Authority is recorded at Appendix 1].

43. **Introduction by the Chair:**

The Chair took the opportunity to welcome members of the Forum, it was explained that October was an extremely busy month for community activities and religious celebrations which affected member attendance. However, he thanked those who managed attend and greeted new members of the Forum.

44. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

Ordinary Member

Councillor Anjana Patel
Councillor Omar

Reserve Member

Councillor Mrs Champagnie
Councillor Burchell

45. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interests made by Members of the Forum arising from the business transacted at this meeting.

46. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all the items be considered with press and public present. It was decided by the Chair that item 6 of the agenda would be first, followed by item 7, the rest of the items continued in the same sequence stated on the agenda. For clarity purposes, the layout of the minutes correlates with the order of the items that were heard at the meeting.

47. **Presentation by Sangat Community Centre:**

The Forum heard a presentation from Kanti Nagda, Manager of the Sangat Community Centre regarding the Centre's work and future plans.

The mission statement of the Centre was explained to provide cultural and linguistic services and support for the Asian community in Harrow and neighbouring areas with the aim of reducing deprivation.

Members were advised that the Sangat Centre that exist now was not always like that, it was explained that in 1973 it was known as the Anglo-Indian Art Circle, it came into existence as a result of the migration of Asians from Uganda and diaspora to Harrow. The Circle's aims then was similar to the Sangat Centre now in that it was registered charity, non-party political and provided help and support to combat stress related to migration and adaptation to a new country.

In 1982 the Circle bought a dilapidated Second World War building traditionally occupied by the Territorial Army. The building was used by disabled people and for the Asian community to meet.

In 1982 the world war building was renovated as it was reaching breaking point due to its age and the numbers of people who used it, when it was renovated the building was renamed the Sangat Centre.

The Manager advised the Forum of the economic hardships the Circle group faced in buying the building and renovating it. It was also said that organisers and volunteers came under tough opposition in respect of discrimination and manipulation by authorities at that time. It was mentioned that the Centre raised £20,000 by fundraising to equip the building and received financial assistance from the Department of Environment and Harrow Council. More recently the Centre had received further funding from the Millennium Commission for further development work.

The Centre's long term goals included: providing culturally sensitive community centre facilities to the Asian community, high quality welfare advice and advocacy services, create jobs, training scheme for unemployed people, educational support for under achievers, strengthen the voice of the Asian community, assist members of the community who face injustice, organise activities, health promotion and provide information and advice on social and welfare issues.

The Centre had 8 projects currently running simultaneously, they included: legal advice centre, therapeutic workshops for children and young people experiencing emotional and behavioral difficulties, dance and drama workshops for disabled children, Information, advice and guidance services, exhibition titled 'History of Asians in Harrow' that dates back one hundred years (the exhibition was a permanent feature of the Centre), IT projects and cultural and fund raising activities.

It was also highlighted that Centre was the first in Harrow to achieve a Legal Service Quality Mark for excellence.

The Manager advised the Forum that funding was always a problematic area but work was being carried out to resolve that problem by fundraising. It was also stated that the workload of the Centre in relation to casework undertaken was very high when compared with resources available.

The Manager ended his presentation with the many achievements that the Centre had undertaken over the past couple of decades, such as encouraging Asian people to become more aware of local politics in relation to voting and what councillors say. It was also emphasised that despite the Centre being aimed at helping and supporting the Asian community, the Centre's doors were always open to help people of different backgrounds especially young people.

The Chair and Forum Members welcomed the presentation particularly the way the Centre had grown despite facing difficulties.

A community representative of the Forum asked about the make-up of Asians that used the Centre such as people from Uganda or India. The Manager responded by saying the Centre could be used by all communities in Harrow and that there was no requirement to hold such information relating to users' ethnic origin.

The Chair, Members and community representatives thanked the Manger of the Sangat Community Centre for his presentation

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

48. **Presentation regarding Council Grants:**

The Forum received a presentation form Zach Stavrinis, Community Development Officer detailing the Council's grant process.

It was explained that the deadline to submit a Council grant application had passed on 26 September 2003 therefore the process for next year's grants (2004/5) had started. The eligibility criteria for receiving a grant was explained, it was said that community organisations interested in applying for a grant had to be based in Harrow and that 80% of the users who would benefit from the service should come from Harrow, however, allowances could be made if an legitimate explanation was made regarding why.

It was said that the Grants Advisory Panel, which was made up of Councillors, make decisions of whether a community group receives a grant; meetings were not held in private and minutes of decisions were published in the public domain. It was said that applications were available for groups between June and September of any year, after that time officers sort through applications ensuring that each application meets the set criteria. Completed applications were passed to the Panel for decision then community groups were informed of the Panel's decision. Decisions of the Panel were then passed to Cabinet for endorsement. However, grants were not ratified until after the Council meeting in February or March of the following year, when the Council's expenditure had been agreed. In April of that year an officer would write to the

organisation stating the position of their grant. It was also said that groups who had been refused a grant or had a grievance regarding their application could appeal.

The officer indicated that an important component of a grant application was having an equal opportunities policy, not just referring to ethnicity in the group's terms of reference but demonstrate an awareness and safeguards against possible discrimination in relation to age, gender and disability. It was also emphasised that requests for grants hugely out-weighed the funding available.

It was stated that financial administration was important when completing an application and when in receipt of a Council grant, particularly documenting how it would be used. It was also stated that having an audit trail representing income and expenditure of the group's affairs was important especially at the time of Council assessment.

The officer stated that monitoring of grants was carried out by officers and the results of their findings were reviewed by the Panel annually. Members were advised that groups who had received grant funding under three and half thousand were required to submit an annual report of their activities and accounts which was presented to the Panel. Groups that received funding over three and half thousand were visited and assessed on how they spent their grant which was presented to the Panel.

A community representative asked a question in relation to the equal opportunities policy, it was said that her group she represented did not have a policy however reference was made to it in the constitution, it was asked whether that would be acceptable. The officer responded by saying it was difficult to give an answer having not seen the document, but said decisions were made on the perception of how a member of public would see their document and the group's intentions.

It was queried by a community representative whether there was information available detailing the amount of money given to refugee groups in Harrow. The officer responded by saying it was possible for information to be given to him detailing the amount of money refugee groups had received last year, but he did not have the information with him, so advised the community representative to contact him after the meeting. The Chair also advised the Forum that a review of the grants process was being undertaken, which was hoped to make the whole process of applying for grants easier.

A community representative asked whether groups that received a Council grant had their own autonomy in spending the money. The officer replied that it was entirely the decision of the group on how they spend the grant, unless the Panel had placed conditions, in which case the group would have to adhere to them.

A community representative asked whether it would be possible for the Council to consider having a system whereby a group completed an application that covered a three-year period instead annually, as it was very traumatic. The Chair replied by reinforcing the need for a review and saying the Council would not like to preclude new groups from getting a grant which could happen if that idea was adopted.

A community representative also asked whether groups such as HAVS and HCRE that had a Service Level Agreement had to apply for grants each year. The officer responded by saying each group had to complete an application form for a grant each year and that the Panel decides whether to issue the grant based upon their application.

The Chair thanked the officer for presenting to the Forum and said that it would be a good idea if a workshop was organised concentrating on grant funding for community groups.

RESOLVED: That (1) the presentation be noted; and

(2) work would be undertaken to arrange a grant workshop for community groups.

49. **Presentation on the Harrow Strategic Partnership:**

The Manager of the Strategic Partnerships Section addressed the Forum in relation to the developments that had so far taken place in the Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP).

It was explained that the Harrow Partnership Steering Group in October 2001 agreed to develop a local strategic partnership for the borough to be called the Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP). The HSP was launched in May 2003. Members of the Forum was

advised that one of the key tasks of the Partnership was the development, delivery and monitoring of a Community Strategy for Harrow. The document would be the key strategy document for the borough and would promote Harrow's environment, strengthen local communities, promote lifelong learning, improve quality of health and social care, and develop a prosperous and sustainable economy in Harrow.

The Forum 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 undertaken the responsibility of organising and conducting elections for the voluntary and community sector positions available on the Board of the HSP, it was confirmed that Prem Pawar of the Harrow Council for Racial Equality, Asoke Dutta of Harrow Association for Voluntary Services, David Summers of HA21 and Barry Newitt of Harrow churches had been elected.

The officer advised that in November 2003 the Partnership would be undertaking a major consultation exercise to establish community groups' issues and what should be addressed by the Partnership. It was stated that a meeting would be arranged and that Members of the Forum should make every effort to attend as the four members representing the voluntary and community sectors interests were not enough.

A community representative asked why a refugee member had not been invited to sit on the Board, the officer responded by saying the elections were carried out by HAVS and input from the Council would affect the democratic process. It was emphasised that the Partnership had only been in operation since May 2003 and was hoped next year that other groups would become more involved. Members were advised that elections would be held annually, therefore making it possible for groups to nominate a representative from a refugee and community organisation (RCO) to sit on the HSP Board.

A Member commented that it would be a good idea for community groups to meet and elect two members to sit either on the Board or on a focus group, which would present an opportunity for smaller groups to get involved in the Partnership.

RESOLVED: That the Forum notes the developments of the Harrow Strategic Partnership.

50. **Presentation on Black History Month:**

The Manager of the Strategic Partnerships Section advised the Forum of the Black History Month activities. Members were advised that this was the seventh year that the Council had played a role in Black History Month.

It was also explained that the title of this year's activities was called 'Celebrating Cultural Diversity in Harrow' and included forty-four events that ranged from book reading to cultural dances; the programme had taken a year to plan and organise.

Members were informed that each year the event grows in strength and includes more community groups, it was emphasised that most of the planning and decisions come from the Black History Month steering group which comprised of community groups and volunteers, it was emphasised that the Council's input was mainly financial.

It was said that evaluation of Black History Month's activities would be carried out on 19 November 2003 at 7pm at the Civic Centre in order to discuss issues that had arisen and to plan for next year. Forum members were advised to attend the meeting if interested in contributing to Black History Month activities.

A Member of the Forum commented that the activities detailed in Black History Month should include more youth presentations. The officer responded by saying she was aware of the issue, and it was hoped that more schools and teachers would get involved next year as funding had been reserved for youth initiatives.

The Chair thanked the officer for her presentation.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

51. **Open Forum:**

The Chair called for suggestions of topics for discussion at future meetings. Members put forward the following ideas:

- Information relating to refugee groups in Harrow
- Other areas of grant funding
- Possible ways to celebrate Divali next year.

RESOLVED: That the above ideas be noted.

52. **Satisfaction Surveys 2003/4:**

RESOLVED: That the Information be noted.

53. **Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no public questions, petitions or deputations submitted to this meeting under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rules 18, 15 and 16 (Part 4B of the Constitution) respectively.

54. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record, with the addition that Mr M Rizvi of the Pakistan Society Harrow was present at the last meeting.

55. **Any Other Urgent Business:**

- **Indian Vegetarian Meals**, Vijay Malik, Equalities Manager advised the group of the progress that had been made in relation to providing Indian Vegetarian meals to elderly Asian people who were currently on the waiting list. The officer reminded the Forum that there was a six months' waiting time for the fresh cooked vegetarian meals service, which was unsatisfactory. Therefore, as an interim arrangement it had been decided to offer an alternative option. All those currently on the waiting list would be given the opportunity to consider whether they wish to accept the offer of a fortnightly delivery of frozen meals service. The arrangement would continue until such time when they were able to receive the fresh cooked meal delivered to their home on a daily basis.
- **Margaret Nun of Harrow Association for Voluntary Services**, the Chair explained that Margaret Nun former chief executive of the Association had retired earlier that month; the Chair and Forum Members expressed their good wishes to her for the future.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.16 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR NAVIN SHAH
Chair

APPENDIX 1

Community Consultative Forum - 22 October 2003**(1) Representatives of Community Organisations:-**

Anna Reynolds	Okapi Women's Association
Bibi Mayo	Okapi Women's Association
Anzayi Antamkapa	Okapi Women's Association
K Mahmood	Harrow Muslim Education Society
Dr M. A Rahion	Harrow Bengalee Association
K Nagda	Sangat Centre
V Bavishi	Harrow Mencap
Punitha Perinparaja	Kala Anjali Arts Circle
G Ali	Pakistan Society Harrow
M Rizvi	Pakistan Society Harrow
P Turner	Harrow African Caribbean Association
A Hassan	Refugee Link and Training Agency
K Pujara	Harrow Refugee Forum
J Masliete	SAHARA, Harrow
A Icelils	Harrow Somali Women's Association
L Salah	East African Welfare and Development Group
N Hatin	Harrow Bengali Association
Mr Maw	Hatch End Association

[Please note that Mr M Rizvi of Pakistan Society Harrow was in fact present at the last CCF meeting held on 2 July 2003]

(2) Officers of the Council:-

Vijay Malik, Equalities Manager
 Bindu Arjoon-Matthews, Manager of the Strategic Partnerships Section
 Zach Stavrinou, Community Development Officer