

PUBLICATIONS ADVISORY PANEL

27 NOVEMBER 2003

Chair: * Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan

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

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

81. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

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

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Lent

Councillor Stephenson

82. **Declarations of Interest:**

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

83. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: (1) That all items be considered with the press and public present;

(2) that the following item be added to the business set out on the original agenda on the grounds now set out:-

Item

Reason

14. Budget Consultation Document

Special circumstances: the budget consultation document was not available at the time the original agenda was dispatched.

Urgency: to enable the Panel to advise Cabinet on the form of the consultation document prior to its distribution.

84. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 August 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

85. **Public Questions:**

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

86. **Petitions:**

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

87. **Deputations:**

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

88. **Reference from the Grants Advisory Panel: "Harrow Agenda 21":**

A reference was received from the Grants Advisory Panel meeting of 15 September 2003, arising from that Panel's consideration of a progress report on the work and role of Harrow Agenda 21. It was agreed to request that this Panel work with Harrow Agenda 21 in order to raise its profile. The formal Grants Panel resolution read:-

"That the Publications Advisory Panel be requested to consider ways of publicising and promoting the role of Harrow Agenda 21."

RESOLVED: That (1) the Head of Communications be requested to arrange for Harrow Agenda 21 to be featured in an issue of the Harrow People and appropriately on the Harrow Council Website, having liaised with Harrow Agenda 21 on receiving a contributing article and establishing a link to the Agenda 21 Website, if available;

(2) the Chair of the Panel be authorised to write to Harrow Agenda 21 to confirm the proposals now agreed.

89. **Winter Edition of Harrow People:**

The Panel, having received a draft copy of the Winter Edition of the Harrow People by email, received an updated draft version and various tabled supplemental texts at this meeting. Consideration was given to each page of the Magazine. A number of drafting proposals and issues of clarification were discussed, as follows.

Front Cover: This was to feature Ian Whybrow, a local Harrow author.

Contents Page: A current revised Contents listing was pending. An "action" picture was intended for the Kickboxing article.

Photographs: As a general point it was noted that the quality definition of all the pictures featured in the final version of the Magazine would be significantly enhanced as a matter of course. This would be inclusive of showing clearly the Council's New Identity logo as depicted on employee clothing (Pages 4 and 5).

Leader's Column: Members discussed the relative merits of retaining the "Leader's column" or not in an issue which would also be featuring the Council's prospective budget and Council Tax level, given the possible political implications.

Having taken account of the opportunities for all three political group leaders to make contributions within the context of the budget item, Members considered that the Leader might review the appropriateness of also having a dedicated column in the Winter issue. Were it to be retained Members favoured a 'neutral' approach, perhaps emphasising elements of the New Harrow Project roll-out.

Page 6:

Diwali: It was agreed that a more "colourful" picture be sought, better to reflect the spirit of the Diwali festival.

Restaurant in Court: Concerns were expressed about the underlying implications of naming a particular Restaurant, future consistency and the similarity to a previous item. It was agreed that Environmental Health be requested to offer an alternative story to illustrate their service quality.

Page 8:

Post 16 Education: A number of suggestions were made for the improvement of the article, better to reflect the wider aspects of the Post 16 review and the revised Admissions arrangements.

Keeping Fit: A picture to illustrate the article was to be included.

Page 11:

Harrow Magistrates' Court: Members identified a number of additional details to supplement this feature. A previous reference to a public petition was suggested to be restored, linked to encouragement for the public to write direct to the relevant Government Minister and, to access the Council's Website for up to date progress. A correct spelling of "Ann Groves" was noted.

Page 12:

Ofsted Reports: It was agreed that featuring individual School Ofsted reports was unnecessarily repetitive and invidious for Schools not included. It was proposed that “Elmgrove” and “Weald First” be deleted, in favour of including a general reference to accessing any School’s Ofsted report via the Website. In place of the removed text it was suggested that the turn-round at Woodlands School be an enhanced feature, linked into a wider coverage on PFI (currently referred to on Page 15) together with a suitable picture.

Page 15:

Paul Clark: The accuracy of the text was queried and would be verified.

Somalis: The article was welcomed and it was noted that its inclusion was “news” led and not intended per se as a regular feature.

Page 16

Allotments/Green Awards for Schools: Some spelling corrections were noted and it was queried whether, subject to space, this was a good picture opportunity.

Page 27:

Community Strategy: Several textual changes were suggested, together with a sequencing of the paragraphs. It was requested that the article emphasise the development of the Harrow Partnership, the partnership focus of the Community Strategy and the fact that the Strategy was a draft being consulted on.

Page 28:

“Welcome to a Safer Harrow”: There was a general discussion on the likely public reaction to and perception of the general claims in the article: it was noted that the current draft did reflect a moderated presentation.

Page 39:

Harrow Reading Groups: If it were verified that the Groups were “free” to participate in, this point should be included.

Page 40:

Councillor Profile: It was confirmed that the profile would be of Councillor Williams.

Supplemental Information: The following draft texts for additional features were tabled.

“What about Wealdstone”: There were a number of criticisms of the content, which would be taken into account.

“Shop Litter”: Noted.

“Well done Harrow”: It was suggested that a commentary might be added reflecting on the stability of the Harrow population and linked through to the Fiftieth anniversary.

“News to Come”: Members identified additional items:-

- The contribution of the Cadets in cleaning War Memorials prior to Remembrance.
- Cycling and Walking (linked to the item on Fitness).
- Tenth Anniversary of the Domestic Violence Forum (November), together with other initiatives which the Partnership Unit may be able to advise.
- Whitefriars School – a trip undertaken to Africa by the Head Teacher.

“Fiftieth Anniversary”: To be clarified that the list of events was incomplete and to refer readers to the Council Website for updates through the year.

Budget Consultation Insert: (See Minute 95 below).

RESOLVED: That the texts not yet available should be emailed to Members of the Panel.

90. **Communications Strategy:**
Further to the consideration afforded the Strategy at the Panel's previous meeting (Minute 74: 5.8.03), the Head of Communications re-submitted the document and drew attention to the additions at the end, relating to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the particular provisions for compiling and issuing Press Releases on the Committee's behalf, in demarcation from the considerations on behalf of the Council Executive.
- RESOLVED:** That the revised Communications Strategy be received and endorsed with regard to the additions in respect of the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
91. **Harrow Observer:**
Arising from the previous item on the Communications Strategy, there was a discussion of the Council's current relationship with the Harrow Observer newspaper having regard to numerous, recent examples of inaccurate and partial coverage of the Authority in that publication. The Head of Communications confirmed his own representations made to the Editor of the Harrow Observer and those of the Chief Executive at higher levels of the owning company on this issue.
- RESOLVED:** That the information provided orally in this matter be noted.
92. **Publications Audit:**
Further to the consideration of this matter at the Panel's previous meeting (Minute 75: 5.8.03), the Head of Communications represented the Publications Audit document, inclusive of the revisions which had been sought.
- The Head of Communications also provided an update on the role of the "Print Factory" appointed as the Council's preferred printer and the potential benefits which the Authority could obtain in the consistency of print quality and savings on print costs corporately.
- It was confirmed that the Audit findings and the availability of a preferred printer, working co-operatively with the internal Print Unit, would be promoted to the Council's Departments by the Communications Unit. The Panel noted the potential role of the Portfolio Holders in encouraging and monitoring their service areas in taking advantage of the print procurement facilities. It was understood that Harrow's Schools would be afforded a 10% discount on print costs by the Print Factory.
- RESOLVED:** That the revised Publications Audit document be received and an update report be made to the Publications Advisory Panel in approximately six months' time on relevant developments and savings being attained.
93. **Advertising on Harrow Live:**
Further to Minute 77 (5.8.03), the Head of Communications tabled a paper reporting on the potential for providing advertisements on the Harrow Council Website and securing revenue earnings.
- The report confirmed the growing popularity of the Harrow Website as a source of public information and the expansion and improvements which would be derived from adopting the APPLAWS content management system in 2004. However, it was also advised that general advertising on Council managed Websites was not currently practised by any other Authority that officers were aware of and a number of difficulties were associated with the concept. Public sector Websites normally confined adverts to public information content. The wide variation in revenue costs was noted.
- Following a discussion on the implications of involvement with commercial advertising, including the likely monitoring costs which would be incurred, it was
- RESOLVED:** (1) That the roll-out of the APPLAWS facilities be utilised to increase the direct Website links to the Authority's partners;
- (2) that, subject to the imminent consideration of the Council's role in promoting local tourism, the Website be developed to provide information on the traditional attractions in Harrow, local events, links to hoteliers and to provide a good quality map and other information to assist visitors; and
- (3) that the progress in the above matters be reported to the Panel in due course.

94. **New Harrow Project: Area Roll-Out News Updates:**

The meeting received tabled draft versions of the intended "News Issues" for the South and West Harrow and Central Harrow New Harrow Project areas. The South and West Harrow publication was due to be circulated in mid-December. The Panel Chair requested that Members should read the draft and notify any comments back to the Head of Communications.

The Panel took into consideration that over the course of time the Council would be producing News Issues for nine NHP areas, with several editions of each every year and that this would give rise to significant production and distribution capacity problems. The Chair proposed that the implications of that volume of information potentially would be better managed under the auspices of the Harrow People, with the area News Issues being included as inserts.

It was advised that the New Harrow Project monies were currently funding a temporary member of staff to produce the News Issues, with uncertain future arrangements. On an initial assessment the Harrow People could increase from 3 to 4 issues per year within existing budget provision, to facilitate the regular distribution of the area News Issues as inserts.

It was also noted that the fiftieth anniversary events in 2004 would provide material to support 4 issues of the Harrow People.

RESOLVED: That it be agreed in principle to provide for 4 editions of Harrow People in 2004/05, and to pilot the inclusion of New Harrow Project area News Issues as inserts, subject to receiving a detailed report on the resource implications of this proposal at the Panel's next meeting.

95. **Budget Consultation: Proposed Insert to Winter Edition:**

A draft colour version of the design for the budget consultation insert was tabled, entitled "Your Money, Your Choice". Other than indicated section headings none of the detailed text was as yet available for consideration at this meeting. It was hoped that an updated version to then include the text could be provided to the Panel Members by 5 December.

Having regard to the approaching deadlines, it was

RESOLVED: (1) That a special meeting of the Panel be convened to receive and consider the budget consultation document, to be held at 6.00 pm on Tuesday 9 December 2003, which meeting would have this as the single substantive item and was expected to be of about one hour's duration;

(2) that this arrangement be drawn to the particular attention of the Conservative Group Members of the Panel, who had been unable to be in attendance at this meeting (having offered their apologies due to another commitment).

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.28 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MARIE-LOUISE NOLAN
Chair