

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda

Date: Thursday 9 February 2023

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Auditorium - Harrow Council Hub, Forward Drive,
Harrow

Membership (Quorum 4)

Chair: Councillor Amir Moshenson

Conservative Councillors: June Baxter
Govind Bharadia
Vipin Mithani
Samir Sumaria

Labour Councillors: Dan Anderson
Dean Gilligan (VC)
Eden Kulig
Phillip O'Dell

Representatives of Voluntary Aided Sector: Reverend P Reece / Vacancy

Representatives of Parent Governors: Ms M Trivedi / Vacancy

(Note: Where there is a matter relating to the Council's education functions, the "church" and parent governor representatives have attendance, speaking and voting rights. They are entitled to speak but not vote on any other matter.)

Representative of Harrow Youth Parliament

Conservative Reserve Members:

1. Philip Benjamin
2. Ramji Chauhan
3. Matthew Goodwin-Freeman
4. Kuha Kumaran
5. Salim Chowdhury

Labour Reserve Members:

1. Rashmi Kalu
2. Jerry Miles
3. Sasi Suresh
4. Antonio Weiss

Contact: Kenny Uzodike, Senior Democratic & Electoral Services Officer
E-mail: kenny.uzodike@harrow.gov.uk

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Useful Information

Joining the Meeting virtually

The meeting is open to the public and can be viewed online at [London Borough of Harrow webcasts](#)

Attending the Meeting in person

Directions by car:

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You will be admitted on a first-come-first basis and directed to seats.

Please:

- (1) Stay seated.
- (2) Access the meeting agenda online at [Browse meetings - Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#)
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- (4) Follow instructions of the Security Officers.
- (5) Advise Security on your arrival if you are a registered speaker.

Filming / recording

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Agenda publication date: Wednesday, 1 February 2023.

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 disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests, arising from business to be transacted at this meeting, from all Members present.

3. **Minutes** (Pages 7 - 12)

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2022 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

4. **Public Questions**

To receive any public questions received.

Questions will be asked in the order in which they were received. There will be a time limit of 15 minutes for the asking and answering of public questions.

[The deadline for receipt of public questions is 3.00 pm, 6 February 2023.

Questions should be sent to publicquestions@harrow.gov.uk

No person may submit more than one question].

5. **Petitions**

To receive petitions (if any) submitted by members of the public/Councillors.

6. **References from Council/Cabinet**

(if any).

7. **The Corporate Plan** (To Follow)

Report of the Chief Executive.

8. **Scrutiny Review on Customer Experience** (Pages 13 - 20)

Report of the Interim Deputy Assistant Director of Strategy & Partnerships

9. **Any Other Business**

Which cannot otherwise be dealt with.

Agenda - Part II - Nil

Data Protection Act Notice

The Council will record the meeting and will place the recording on the Council's website.

[Note: The questions and answers will not be reproduced in the minutes.]

Deadline for questions	3.00 pm on Monday, 6 February 2023
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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes

8 November 2022

Present:

Chair: Councillor Amir Moshenson

Councillors: Dan Anderson
June Baxter
Dean Gilligan
Matthew Goodwin-Freeman
Eden Kulig
Vipin Mithani
Phillip O'Dell
Samir Sumaria

Apologies received: Govind Bharadia

Absent: Harrow Youth Parliament
Representative
Reverend P Reece
Ms M Trivedi

1. Attendance by Reserve Members

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

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Govind Bharadia

Councillor Matthew Goodman-Freeman

2. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note the declarations of interest, if any, as published on the Council's website prior to the meeting.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the special meeting held on 17 October 2022 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

4. Public Questions

There were none.

5. Petitions

There were none.

6. References from Council/Cabinet

There were none.

Recommended Items

7. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2022-2026

The Committee received the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme, a report of the Acting Corporate Director, Resources which set out scrutiny work programme for 2022-26, as devised by the Scrutiny Leadership Group and provided an outline of the key areas of focus for the scrutiny function until the next whole-borough elections in 2026.

The officer informed Members that Council directorates and NHS partners were asked for advice on scrutiny's proposals for its work programme, on timing, feasibility and approach. As part of the engagement on the draft scrutiny work programme discussions were also held with CSB (Corporate Strategic Board) and DMTs (Directorate Management Teams).

The Scrutiny Leadership Group would provide steer for the work programme and have quarterly reviews to prioritise items and consider emerging topical issues that warranted attention during the course of the year.

The work programme was divided into the following three categories:

- the work Scrutiny Leads could pursue through scrutiny leads responsibilities,
- the reports that could be listed on the agenda of Committee for input
- work areas that warranted more in-depth scrutiny through review work.

The officer informed Members the following review areas had been that identified for immediate start from 2022 to 2024, once the work programme was approved:

- customer experience strategy – immediate start
- childhood immunisations – immediate start
- climate change strategy development - 2023
- enforcement strategy development - 2023

- implementation of the adult social care reform provisions – 2023/24.

The officer suggested that as there were several new Members in the Scrutiny Committee, an induction, or a briefing on the different available approaches in terms of taking identified topic areas forward might be helpful.

Members agreed that induction sessions would prove useful to both old and new Members and expressed a desire for them to be scheduled as soon as possible. The Chair commented that although the Committee Members had gone through an induction session previously, additional sessions would be welcomed.

A Member questioned about the time scales for the Committee's review of the implementation of a new customer experience strategy as stated on page five of the Programme and if scoping meetings would be held before the report was produced.

The officer explained that customer experience strategy reports to Cabinet could be listed on the Committee's agenda for the next meeting for Members' input and scoping would begin once the work programme was approved.

Resolved to RECOMMEND:

That the Scrutiny Work Programme 2022-26 be approved and referred to Council for endorsement.

Resolved Items

8. Harrow Strategic Development Partnership - Review and Progress

Following a brief introduction by the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration Councillor Marilyn Ashton, the Committee received the report of the Corporate Director, Place which set out review results and progress on the HSDP.

Members asked questions as follows:

- A Member questioned if homes for private sale were freehold or leasehold and if any thought had been given to present financial difficulties and people obtaining mortgages to purchase these homes in the future. The Interim Director for Commercial Development responded that the flats would have a 250-year lease and there was no intention to transfer the freehold but with the houses, the freehold would be transferred. He confirmed that current issues had been considered and the partnership would look to take advantage of whatever products may be available to help in the future. Mortgage difficulties would not help the sales rate which was important to the HSDP. However, the sales were not due to take place for some time and by then the situation may be different.
- A Member questioned about the availability of grant funding for Phases two and three of Grange Farm. Alison Pegg, the Director for

Regeneration responded that there was no grant funding. The Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF), which was available to the Council as long as the whole development continued, had been paid. Phases two and three would be funded entirely by the Council.

- A Member questioned if vacant properties in phase three of Grange Farm would be used as temporary accommodation as was done in phase one and the Director for Regeneration confirmed that phase three properties would be used as temporary accommodation for as long as possible, and there were plans to enable people currently living in phase two temporary accommodation to move to phase three so they could continue living in Harrow.
- Members questioned about the availability of public parking on the site for the Town Hall and the possibility of hiring out the council chamber and the large committee rooms to generate income for the Council. Interim Director for Commercial Development confirmed that 60 car parking spaces were intended to be dedicated to the Town Hall. It was early in the design process and there were a number of options available to the Council which would be considered in terms of what would go on site including car parking, subject to consideration by the planners. The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration stated that the construction of the Town Hall so that the building that could balance being a democratic hub and also be flexible enough to be hired out to generate income for the Council was an option.
- Members welcomed the fact that a decision had been made about the Peel Road site and the removal of the Civic Centre as the decision had been pending for many years. They also welcomed the proposal for the location of the Town Hall as they felt it would make the Town Hall a focal point and be a boost for both businesses and residents.
- A member questioned whether efforts would be made to market the homes for private sale to local residents. The Interim Director for Commercial Development confirmed that in the first period, the initial marketing would be targeted at local residents. It was subsequently confirmed to the Committee that this period was three months. It was also confirmed that the definition of local connection for this purpose was *'living, working, have family living within LB Harrow or have a connection with LB Harrow acceptable to the Council.'*
- A Member questioned if any homes were reserved for local residents that work in the public sector and essential services and Interim Director for Commercial Development responded that at present there was no prioritisation for public sector or essential services workers as affordable housing at Grange Farm was initially for the residents who were moving from demolished, homes and those on the local housing register, and there were no plans for additional prioritisation of market sale homes. Alison Pegg, the Head of Housing Regeneration

confirmed that where the Council markets shared ownership properties priority is given to those groups

- A Member questioned about the impact of development of a car park such as the loss of parking to businesses and residents and reduction in parking revenue. The Interim Director for Commercial Development responded that there would be loss of car parking as a result of the proposed developments, but as had previously been discussed at the Committee, parking at the Greenhill way site may be more defensible than at other centres, having regard of course to the London Plan. The site would need to be looked at as a whole and discussion take place.
- A Member questioned about the time scales for the development of Green Hill Way and the certainty of delivery. The Interim Director for Commercial Development explained that at this stage the timetable was indicative. The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration Councillor Marilyn Ashton stated that there was a commitment from the present administration that it would be built in a timely manner.

9. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED: That, in accordance with Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, for the reasons set out below:

Agenda Item No	Title	Description of Exempt Information
9.	Harrow Strategic Development Partnership Review and Progress – Appendix 1 Grange Farm Business Plan	Information under paragraph 3 (contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information)

The Committee received the confidential Appendix 1 – Grange Farm Business Plan. Members asked questions.

The Chair thanked the Interim Director for Commercial Development for the report and the following three recommendations were proposed.

- Proposed Recommendation 1

That Cabinet consider the early prioritisation of public sector workers in the allocation of new affordable homes or the marketing of homes for sale. This was put to the vote and was declared lost.

- Proposed Recommendation 2

That Cabinet review and attempt to maximise available car parking spaces on the development. This was put to vote and declared lost.

- Proposed Recommendation 3

That Cabinet consider the production of a report on the economic impact of the proposals for the Greenhill Way site. This was put to the vote and declared **passed**.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet consider the production of a report on the economic impact of the proposals for the Greenhill Way site

(Note: The meeting, having commenced 6.30pm, closed at 8.02pm).

(Signed) Councillor Amir Moshenson

Chair



Report for: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting:	9 February 2023
Subject:	Scrutiny Review on Customer Experience
Responsible Officer:	Shumaila Dar – Interim Assistant Director of Strategy & Partnerships
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	Resources – Councillor Samir Sumaria Councillor Phillip O'Dell
Exempt:	No
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1: Customer Experience Scrutiny Scope

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation

This document sets out and defines the aims, objectives, and scope of the Customer Experience Scrutiny Review.

Recommendation:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to approve the Customer Experience Scrutiny Scope document.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

The following is taken from the Key Strategic Issues for Scrutiny Work Programme

On the 18 July Cabinet agreed the **following** set of principles to underpin the strategy to improve the Customer Experience:

- Reduce the need for contact – be upfront and proactive when there is a problem and eliminate avoidable contacts through reducing the need to make contact in the first place through well run services.
- When a resident interacts with the Council, it will be a positive customer experience
- Ensure customers have a seamless journey through the Council for all their needs through joined-up technology, processes, and information The IT infrastructure should be centrally controlled and effectively utilised by staff to the benefit of the residents.
- ensure self-service is engaging and simple to use so that digital is the channel that residents actively choose.
- Provide alternative channels where required to support people to self-serve or provide an alternative means of contact for more complex issues
- Follow up with the customer either for a progress update and to set expectations or to confirm that the request has been resolved
- Ensure that Council services are the best that they can be; focussed around the customer and built on efficient processes.

A significant amount of work is underway, across the council, to take forward this strategy and deliver the customer experience improvements that our residents deserve.

The Administration has agreed a new vision for the Council to restore the pride in Harrow along with three priorities and these reflect the status of putting residents at the heart of what we do. An action plan has been developed to improve these areas, with continuous improvement over the next 18 months:

To **create a positive experience**, we will be clear as to what our service standards are and publish them on our website and set expectations through our email acknowledgements. A training programme will be developed for our staff to ensure that they can deliver against these, and champions will be identified across the Council to support the organisation.

To be an efficient Council it is important to **reduce the need to contact** where unnecessary. This means understanding where the customer ‘pain points’ are

and the causes of failure demand. [Failure demand is defined as demand caused by a failure to do something or do something right for the customer]. Further work will be done to be more proactive with our communications alerting residents to potential problems in advance and by using more modern communication tools to help provide useful web links. There will be additional training provided to our staff to ensure that we can handle requests at the first point of contact reducing wait times for enquiries to be resolved.

The Council is reviewing how its computer infrastructure is managed and links to our website to ensure our **residents have a seamless customer journey** through integrated technology. Council staff will have a greater awareness of services provided so that residents see how we operate as 'One Council.

With over 95% of enquiries being handled through self-service, **digital is the channel of choice**. Our residents will be treated as valued customers through our website through the provision of a personalised website with a consistent look and feel across our digital estate and we will be clearer where services are only available online. We are looking for all Council services to be delivered through the website in a friction-free way to reduce the need to use the telephone where demand is high, such as Council Tax, and user feedback will be integral to this. We will investigate the use of 'app' technology to provide more intuitive access utilising technical abilities of smartphones.

We appreciate that digital access is not appropriate for everybody, and we will **provide alternative channels where required**. Work is underway to better understand digital exclusion and those affected by it. The Council will provide advice and guidance through supported self-service at Greenhill library, and we are reviewing how to best use the staff resources working in the Council's contact centre to provide telephone support alongside the functionality that the telephone system provides.

To ensure that our **Services are the best that they can be** we will review both how services are delivered as a whole (such as the front door to Adult Social care and Council Tax) along with key customer journeys (such as subscribing to Garden Waste, reporting bin issues and ordering a parking permit

Once a service has been delivered it is important that we follow up with our **after care**. Along with checking that the issue is resolved we will capture resident feedback across all our channels so that we can further develop our service delivery. We will also review our complaints process to ensure that we better improve what we do and look at how we best interact with our elected representatives – both Councillors and MPs.

Councillor Samir Sumaria has agreed to chair this review which will report back to Overview and Scrutiny in June/July 2023.

The details of the scope for the scrutiny report are in Appendix 1 of this report.

Ward Councillors' comments

Not applicable as report relates to all wards.

Financial Implications

None for Council

Performance Issues

None for Council

Environmental Impact

None for Council

Risk Management Implications

None for Council

Equalities Implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

None for Council

Council PrioritiesPutting Residents First

The customer experience scrutiny review aims to make recommendations to improve the experience of Harrow residents accessing the various services provided by the Council.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Shumaila Dar - Assistant Director of Strategy & Partnerships

Date: 1 February 2023

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**Background Papers**

Improving the Customer Experience – Cabinet Report 18 July 2022

Contact:

Mira Chauhan, Policy Officer

Mira.chauhan@harrow.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

1.	SUBJECT	SCRUTINY REVIEW ON CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
2.	COMMITTEE	Overview & Scrutiny
3.	CHALLENGE PANEL MEMBERS	<p>Cllr Sumaria – Chair (Conservative)</p> <p>Cllr O'Dell (Labour)</p> <p>Cllr Moshenson (Conservative)</p> <p>Cllr Henson (Labour)</p> <p>Cllr Halai (Conservative)</p> <p>Cllr Teli (Conservative)</p> <p>Cllr Hickman (Labour)</p> <p>Cllr Blackman (Conservative)</p> <p>Cllr Goodwin-Freeman (Conservative)</p>
4.	AIMS/ OBJECTIVES/ OUTCOMES	<p>Aim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the review is to investigate how we might use all of the Council's policies and strategies to help improve the customer experience through considering future customer needs, modern customer service delivery models and technology and the best outcomes for the Borough. <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To monitor the progress on more intuitive digital access for residents e.g., refined search options on webpage • To better understand digital exclusion and those affected by it • Review how services are delivered as a whole (<i>such as the front door to Adult Social care and Council Tax</i>) and key customer journeys (<i>such as subscribing to Garden Waste, reporting bin issues and ordering a parking permit</i>) • To ensure an improvement in the council's complaints process and interaction with elected members • To ensure an improvement in the customer journey using the webpage and phone lines
5.	MEASURES OF SUCCESS OF REVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better customer experience, as measured by resident satisfaction, fewer failure demand contacts, increased ratings for services
6.	SCOPE	<p>The following areas will be in scope of the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide alternative channels where required – support people to self-serve or provide an alternative means of contact for more complex issues - Reduce the need for contact – get things right first time and be proactive when there is a problem. - Services are the best that they can be – ensure that services are built around the customer and identifying where the key

		problems are
(1)	SERVICE PRIORITIES	Choose from the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A council that puts residents first • A borough that is clean and safe • A place where those in need are supported
(2)	SPONSOR	Shumailla Dar
(3)	ACCOUNTABLE MANAGER	Rachel Gapp
(4)	SUPPORT OFFICER	Jonathan Milbourn
(5)	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	Mira Chauhan - Policy Team.
(6)	EXTERNAL INPUT	N/A
(7)	METHODOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desktop Research (system driven vs resident data) • Residents Survey – telephone consultation • Challenge Panel with Customer Service and Business Support owners • Online Consultation via social media • Resident Consultation • Partner Consultation <p>NB: The Challenge Panel can use outcomes from Peer Review which is due to take place</p>
(8)	EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS	The Challenge Panels will consider, during the course of its work, how equality implications have been considered in current policy and practice and consider the possible implications of any changes it recommends. In undertaking the Challenge Panels, members and officers will consider their practices and how it can ensure all relevant stakeholders in the borough to have their voices heard.
(9)	ASSUMPTIONS/ CONSTRAINTS	N/A
(10)	TIMESCALE	<p>9th February 2023 – O&S meeting and sign-off</p> <p>February – First scrutiny review group meeting</p> <p>February – Officers prepare Desk Research</p> <p>March – Online Consultation</p> <p>March/April – Challenge Panels</p> <p>April – Officers to prepare final draft Scrutiny Report</p> <p>May – Report to be sent to members for comments</p> <p>May – Final report to be send to members</p>

		<p>Overview & Scrutiny Committee May – Legal clearance of Scrutiny Report May - Final Scrutiny Report submitted to O&S June 2023 (date tba) – Final Scrutiny Report presented to O&S</p> <p>Option 1 – June Cabinet May – Legal Clearance May – Cabinet briefing papers dispatched May – Report deadline June (date tba) – Cabinet briefing June (date tba) - Final deadline for Scrutiny Report June (date tba) – Final Scrutiny Report presented at Cabinet</p>
(11)	RESOURCE COMMITMENTS	Policy team will provide a briefing and administrative support to the Challenge Panels. The Policy team will report recommendations to O&S; officers from the appropriate Service Area will provide a response to Cabinet and take forward any recommendations agreed by Cabinet.
(12)	REPORT AUTHOR	Mira Chauhan
(13)	REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS	<p>Outline of formal reporting process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant Divisional Director(s) and Portfolio Holder(s) will be consulted in the drafting of the final report and recommendations • Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee • Report referred to Cabinet • Officer response to Cabinet
(14)	FOLLOW UP ARRANGEMENTS (proposals)	It is anticipated that Cabinet would consider any recommendations made (alongside the officers' response) at the Cabinet meeting in [insert month] and responded to in [insert month].

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