

## Corporate Plan - Update for 2014/15

This is a time of unparalleled challenge, and opportunity, for both the Council and our local residents who we serve. This update to the Corporate Plan sets out the vision that will drive the Council's work over the coming year in preparation for further cuts to our funding from Central Government post 2015.

In 2010 we had to cope with the swingeing cuts of £62 that were imposed on Local Councils by Central Government over 4 years. This increased in Harrow to £75 million - 40% of our controllable budget - due to demographic pressures and increased demand for our services. Harrow has also suffered from having a historically low grant from central Government, compared to other London Councils.

Despite the unprecedented financial and demographic challenges we faced, this Council has been at the forefront of sector-led improvement, defending and enhancing front-line services and winning the accolade of the Council of the year award in 2011 - in recognition for our low cost, high performing, innovative council.

In Harrow, levels of inequality exist which are absolutely unacceptable. Our budget challenge remains stark, while at the same time demand for our services is rising. The impact of the reduction we are facing in our grant from central Government will leave a budget gap of around £25 million in 2015/16, with a further gap of around £20 million in 2016/17, and it could get worse.

We believe that it is fundamentally right that we ensure that the Council priorities are underpinned by fairness for all in these tough economic times. It is important for us to continue to work together with the community to improve the quality of life for all our residents, our families and our young people.

We must focus on our absolute commitment to do all we can to tackle the disparities that exist – in particular in terms of economic achievement, child poverty, health and wellbeing. We will stand up for those in need; especially targeting more support for carers and tackling the increase in domestic violence across our Borough.

At the same time, we are in a period of almost unparalleled economic opportunities that have the potential to significantly raise the aspirations and life chances of all our young people.

We have to change the way we deliver our services - critically evaluating everything we do and finding new, innovative solutions with our partners. Crucially we will seek to empower and inspire local people to build upon the many assets that exist at the heart of all our communities.

We give a commitment to you all; we will help families affected by the Cost of Living Crisis and stand up for Harrow, its businesses and residents.

We will use our position within Harrow to support the creation of jobs and apprenticeships, to support our young people in to work. To deal with our housing crisis we will work together to build more affordable homes and tackle rogue landlords. To support local businesses we will provide a period of free parking in our District Shopping Centres. To help clean up Harrow we will introduce on the spot fines for littering in our streets.

Our staff do a magnificent job and are our greatest asset. We are proud that we ensured Harrow Council pays the 'London Living Wage' to its employees. We will aim to have our contractors offer the London Living Wage to all their employees, as well as offering apprenticeships and training opportunities for young people; and all of our businesses avoid employing people on zero-hours contracts.

This new way of working is vital as we look to the future.

This Corporate Plan provides the blueprint for the next stage in our improvement journey – “**Working together, our Harrow, our community**”. This is the vision for Harrow that the council is working towards in partnership with key public sector organisations, residents, businesses, community and voluntary groups in the borough.

Serving our residents with openness, honesty and pride.

**David Perry**  
**Leader Labour Group**

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