

## LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

<b>Meeting:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	15 July 2003
<b>Subject:</b>	Harrow Sports Council Review
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Responsible Chief Officer:</b>	Joint Report of Executive Directors People First and Urban Living
<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder:</b>	Education and Lifelong Learning
<b>Status:</b>	Public
<b>Ward:</b>	All
<b>Enclosures:</b>	Harrow Sports Council Review (circulated in the Supporting Documents Pack)

### 1. **Summary**

Harrow Sports Council (HSC) is the umbrella organisation for the voluntary sports sector and receives an annual grant from the Council through a Service Level Agreement. HSC is an unincorporated organisation.

It delivers a number of services on behalf of the Council including the co-ordination of Harrow's participation in the London Youth Games and distributing grants to the voluntary sports sector.

The review consulted widely on the level of awareness, and the role, of the Harrow Sports Council within the local voluntary sports sector. The findings of the review suggest that the awareness level of HSC is low, that its role should be more focussed and that HSC should increase its membership base to be more representative of the sector.

The review also found that expectations placed on HSC through the SLA are, in some instances, unrealistic, as the organisation is run solely by volunteers and does not have the capacity to deliver.

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

2.1 That the recommendations set out in Chapter 8 of the Harrow Sports Council Review (attached) are agreed.

**REASON:** HSC to concentrate on tasks more suited to its role as a voluntary sports council with limited resources; and that the Council's sports development unit takes responsibility for key tasks such as the London Youth Games.

### 3. **Consultation with Ward Councillors**

3.1 Not applicable

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

4.1 The Sport and Leisure Inspection for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (September 2002) considered that the London Borough of Harrow should be more challenging about how the Harrow Sports Council (HSC) delivers services on its behalf.

4.2 On 14.1.03 Cabinet received the Harrow Cultural Strategy report which identified action to address the recommendations in the Inspection report.

#### 5. **Relevance to Corporate Priorities**

5.1 The review of Harrow Sports Council is in accord with the Council's strategic objectives, in particular objective three:

'We will promote Harrow as a centre of lifelong learning by offering the highest quality education services, by raising aspirations and outcomes of achievement, and by providing activities for cultural, artistic and leisure pursuits which reflect the profile and interests of all local communities'.

#### 6. **Background Information and options considered**

6.1 The Review provides a report on the Harrow Sports Council and its role. It further considers options to focus the work of the Harrow Sports Council to make it more effective and relevant to the local sports sector.

6.2 The London Youth Games (LYG) is the largest annual youth sports festival in Europe. It is organised by the London Events Agency on behalf of the London boroughs. The event has grown considerably since its inception in 1977. There is now greater emphasis on local authorities to embed the development and running of the games as part of their sports development programmes. Harrow is the only local authority that has its co-ordination and participation in the games organised by volunteers.

6.3 The review recommends that following the LYG in July 2003 subsequent games be organised by the Council's sports development unit. Harrow Sports Council are in agreement with this. They further acknowledge that the responsibilities attached to the games far exceeds their capacity.

6.4 Under the reorganisation of the Council, sports and leisure is to be located in Urban Living. The planning for this is still being undertaken and staff consulted before the transfer is made. This, along with the drawing together of the Borough Sport & Leisure Plan will ensure that the development of the LYG is integrated in to the work of the sports development unit and leisure.

6.5 The local authority pays the cost of the registration fee for the London Youth Games. The operational costs are met through the Service Level Agreement grant. This budget will need to be made available to the sports development unit if they are to be responsible for the games. There is no provision within the authority to meet this expenditure. Harrow Sports Council is in agreement that the budget is transferred to the sports development unit for this purpose and that they continue to play a role in the LYG.

6.6 The review recommends that a sum be agreed annually between HSC and the Council to deliver the games. This sum may vary from year to year subject to the development programme to be undertaken and the associated costs for transport etc.

#### 7. **Consultation**

7.1 The terms of reference for the review (included in Appendix 1) were discussed with Harrow Sports Council at its executive meeting on 29 January 2003.

- 7.2 The University of Westminster Business School was commissioned to undertake a postal survey of the HSC membership and stakeholders. This was followed by a focus group to explore further some of the issues identified in the initial findings of the survey.
- 7.3 Throughout the process Harrow Sports Council was given the opportunity to express its views about the process and issues emerging from the review.

#### 7.4 Consultation Schedule

<b>DATE</b>	<b>Consultation</b>
<b>03.03.03.</b>	Questionnaire circulated to London Youth Games Team Managers and annually HSC grant aided organisations.
<b>03.03.03.</b>	Postal survey of HSC membership and stakeholders.
<b>19.03.03</b>	Workshop to explore issues with executive committee of HSC.
<b>29.04.03.</b>	Open stakeholder consultation and presentation of initial findings from the postal survey. Focus group held by University of Westminster Business School.
<b>Throughout March 03</b>	Individual meetings with members of HSC and stakeholders.
<b>13.05.03.</b>	Consultation on recommendations emerging from the work to date with HSC executive members.

- 7.5 The chair of Harrow Sports Council and a representative of Sport England were on the management group overseeing the review. They received copies of the draft review document for comment. The Chair of Harrow Sports Council considers the review and its recommendations to be fair. Comments that were raised were addressed in the final draft of the document.
- 7.6 In particular, the point was made by the Chair of HSC that an additional sum should be included in the Service Level Agreement to meet the associated costs to the organisation of becoming self-servicing and carrying out its secretarial duties. This is a task currently undertaken by the local authority. The view taken in the report is that as a membership organisation, HSC should set its membership fee at a sufficient level so that these costs can be met by the organisation. It is usual practice for membership organisations to ensure that the fees set meet the costs of servicing the membership.

#### 8. **Finance Observations**

The financial implications are summarised in Chapter 8 of the HSC Review report. The recommendations propose that

(1) .the annual grants awarded by HSC to the sector on behalf of the local authority and its disbursement of individual and small grants are included in the Corporate Review of Grant Aid.

(2) the annual budget for the London Youth Games is agreed between Arts & Leisure and HSC and that this sum is transferred annually from the HSC SLA Grant to Arts & Leisure to deliver the London Youth Games.

Compensatory savings would need to be found if the Cabinet wished to provide further financial assistance to HSC.

#### 9. **Legal Observations**

- 9.1 Under the remit of Section 19 of the Local Government Act 1976, the authority is able to make facilities available for voluntary organisations, which includes the provision of grants and loans. This provision is supplemented by the wider power to do anything to promote community well being. This supplementary power is contained in Section of the Local Government Act 2000.

#### 10. **Conclusion**

- 10.1 The development of sport is an important part of the Harrow Cultural Strategy. The Sport & Leisure Plan, sports specific development plans, Harrow Leisure Card, development of school

and community facilities through the New Opportunities Fund, Prince Edward Playing Fields and the new leisure management contract with Leisure Connection are all now rolling out.

10.2 Harrow needs an umbrella organisation that is representative of the sector to formally engage with the local authority on these and other initiatives. The funding that HSC receives through the SLA is on the assumption that it is representative of the voluntary sports sector. It is important that the local authority maintains the integrity of the grant and that every effort is made by HSC to increase its membership base and fulfil this role.

11. **Background Papers**

11.1 Harrow Sports Council Service Level Agreement 2003 - 2004

11.2 Audit Commission LB Harrow Sport & Leisure Inspection September 2003

11.3 Anyone wishing to inspect the background papers should telephone 020 8424 1906

12. **Author**

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