

## PUBLICATIONS ADVISORY PANEL

13 MARCH 2003

Chair: \* Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan

Councillors: Branch \* Osborn  
 \* Harrison \* Stephenson (3)  
 \* Jean Lammiman

\* Denotes Member present  
 (3) Denotes Category of Reserve Member

## PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL

## PART II - MINUTES

55. **Attendance by Reserve Members: RESOLVED:** To note the attendance of the following Reserve Members at this meeting: -

<u>Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Lent	Councillor Stephenson

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

57. **Arrangement of Agenda: RESOLVED:** That all business be considered with the press and public present.

58. **Minutes: RESOLVED:** (1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2003 of the Publications Advisory Panel, having been circulated, be taken as read and agreed as a correct record;

(2) that the signing of the minutes of the meeting on 13 February be deferred until printed in the next Council Bound Minute Volume.

59. **Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations: RESOLVED:** To note that no questions, petitions or deputations were received under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rules 18,15 and 16 (Part 4B of the Constitution) respectively.

60. **Summer Edition of Harrow People:** The Panel had received drafts of the Summer edition of Harrow People by email but not all members had been able to access it. Therefore the Chair allowed the Panel time to examine the paper copy prior to its discussion. The Panel requested that in future the size of the electronic files be reduced prior to circulation and a note be sent in the Members' post informing the Panel that the files were now available via email. Consideration was then given to each page of the summer edition of Harrow People. The Panel noted minor changes to content, layout and design. Major changes were discussed as set out below: -

**Front Cover:** The Panel noted they liked the presentation of the cover, in particular the flash that drew attention to the special health supplement. The Chair however expressed concern that the cover showed little corporate identity. It was agreed that the wording 'The official magazine for Harrow' above the title be re-phrased to read 'The official magazine for Harrow Council'. It was suggested that the Harrow crest be displayed on the cover but it was subsequently agreed that this was unnecessary since it appeared on page 3 of the magazine.

**Page 3:** The Panel agreed that the telephone numbers displayed should be more specific for the education and environment section and it was agreed that environmental health, social services and planning numbers be added to the list of useful numbers. It was resolved that the list of telephone numbers be re-ordered in relation to their popularity rather than alphabetically. The Communications and Publications Manager advised that she would consult with the Council's switchboard operators in order to ascertain which numbers were requested most frequently by members of the public. The Panel agreed that the telephone list needed to be re-designed and made more of a feature.

**Page 4:** The Chair questioned the choice of photos that had been selected for the New Harrow Project article and enquired whether the 'before' and 'after' photos relating to street scene maintenance, which the Head of Contract Services had used at a presentation to Members of the Council, could be used instead. A Member of the Panel asked that the captions on photos and references in the article specify an exact location. Another Member expressed concern that the New Harrow Project was mentioned too often in the summer edition. However, other Members felt that since residents were interested in the New Harrow Project and the Council had invested a large percentage of its budget into the Project, it was a good topic for Harrow People to cover.

Another Member felt that whilst the New Harrow Project was a credible topic it overshadowed the health supplement, which had been agreed at the last meeting of the Panel to be the focus of the summer issue. The Chair suggested that this problem could be overcome by moving the health supplement forward in the magazine. The Communications and Publications Manager advised that the health supplement had initially been moved to the centre of the magazine, as the main feature within Harrow People.

**Page 5:** The Panel agreed that the Leaders' Column include a reference to the health supplement, as the summer edition was to be publicised as a health issue.

**Page 7:** A Member asked that the last paragraph of the Council Tax article be clarified. Another Member requested that information regarding Council Tax benefits be included within the article, as many people did not know which benefits they are entitled to. The Panel agreed that a feature detailing this type of information would be considered for a future edition of Harrow People.

**Page 10:** The Chair requested that relevant photos be included in the 'Playground Buddies' article.

**Page 18:** A Member drew attention to the ambiguity of the answers on the 'Your Comments' page. It was felt that there was again an overemphasis on the New Harrow Project in the replies. The Panel agreed that the answers had been badly phrased and agreed that they be reviewed by the Communications and Publications Manager prior to publication.

**Page 21:** The Panel agreed that the opening page of the health supplement required more impact and a more positive lead on a health issue. It was agreed that the smoking article be exchanged with the school fruit article. A Member questioned the focus on teenage pregnancies and requested that information relating to the number of conceptions be added to the article, as well as the actual number of births, in order for a more accurate picture of the problem of teenage pregnancies in Harrow to be realised. The Panel agreed that subsequent editions of Harrow People would feature articles on health, e.g. alcohol abuse could be examined in the next edition.

**Page 30:** The Panel criticised the question strip at the edge of the page. It was agreed that it be removed from the summer edition, increased in size and included in the next edition of Harrow People. The Panel also agreed that the article itself did not emphasise all the different aspects and dimensions of Scrutiny nor did it highlight specific issues that Scrutiny was dealing with. Members agreed that the title of the article be revised and the article be changed to reflect the numerous scrutiny reviews currently being undertaken. The Chair advised that it was important that the feature detailed the role of Scrutiny in relation to Cabinet. It was agreed that the article needed to be made more interesting and engaging for members of the public. The Chair requested that she and the Vice-chair review a copy of the changes made to this article prior to publication.

**Page 32:** A Member of the Panel criticised the 'Judging our Performance' article. Responding, the Communications and Publications Manager highlighted that this section was intended to give an overview of the Council's performance and was formerly the Best Value supplement; a separate publication normally printed in the Harrow Observer. The Chair reiterated that Members had previously agreed that, due to budget reasons, this would be included in Harrow People. It was agreed that the Best Value review be illustrated as a supplement to the magazine by giving it a new title: Best Value Performance Review, Performance Plan.

**Page 33:** It was agreed that the Communications and Publications Manager would review the language and style of this section. It was agreed that this section be moved further back in the magazine and swapped with the 'Helping Hand for Parents' article.

A Member of the Panel suggested a 'Where Your Money Goes' article for a future edition of Harrow People to highlight exactly what the Council spends its budget on. Members agreed that this would be a good article to incorporate into a subsequent edition of Harrow People.

**RESOLVED:** That the draft copy of the summer edition of Harrow People be approved, as now amended.

61. **Advertising on Harrow Live:** The Panel received a verbal update from the Communications and Publications Manager in relation to advertising on the Council's web site 'Harrow Live'. It was reported that advertising could be included on 'Harrow Live' with a disclaimer. Members were additionally informed that there were both positive and negative aspects of advertising on 'Harrow Live' and that officers were currently examining the effects of advertising on the web site and weighing up the options.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the Communications and Publications Manager report back to the Members in relation to progress in this area at the next meeting of the Panel;

(2) that the verbal update of the Communications and Publications Manager be noted.

62. **Update on Councillors' Laptops and the Intranet and the Member's e-newsletter:** The Panel received an update on intranet access for Members. It was reported that access to the Council's Intranet web site was available to all members. However, Members may need to have the software on their laptops updated either by bringing the laptops into the IT Department or via an IT Officer visiting the Council at their home.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That information relating to Councillors accessing the Intranet from their laptops be included in the next Members' e-newsletter;

(2) that the verbal update of the Communications and Publications Manager be noted.

63. **Progress Report on the Council's Corporate Identity:** The Communications and Publications Manager advised Members that Cabinet would be receiving a report in relation to the new corporate identity of the Council at its meeting in April. The Chair advised that the report would state that the new corporate identity had the backing of the Panel and confirmed that it now had cross-party support.

The Panel agreed that the new Harrow Logo should be simple and bold and that there would be no pictures/symbols accompanying the logo.

**RESOLVED:** That the verbal update of the Communications and Publications Manager be noted.

[Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.35 pm, closed at 9.26 pm]

(Signed) MARIE-LOUISE NOLAN  
Chair