

Harrow Ambition Plan – 2019

Foreword

I am proud to live in Harrow, a place of strong and vibrant communities with strong local identities.

Over the past few years Harrow has been hit hard by government austerity. In the four years from 2015/16 to 2020/21, we have had to find £83 million to balance our budget – our direct government grant has been reduced by 97%. We were already a low-funded council and these stark cuts have forced us to take some difficult decisions.

As a Labour council, we have not shied away from these challenges. In order to increase our income, we have become more business-like, embarking on a significant commercialisation agenda and we have pooled resources with other local authorities to becoming a leader in shared services. We are recognised for being at the forefront of innovation – with our Youth Offending Team moving from troubled to outstanding, our schools good or outstanding. Our children's services are rated 'Good' by Ofsted, putting us in the top 25% of councils across the country for performance of this fundamental service; a remarkable achievement in these circumstances. We have witnessed major changes within our adult's services to meet our responsibilities of the Social Care Act. We have also changed the way we operate as an organisation so that we are now both more effective and more efficient.

Sadly this hard work is not enough to make up the shortfall caused by the government austerity agenda. As I said above, our financial situation is perilous. In setting the budget for the next financial year, we faced a budget gap of £17 million and we face a further £23 million black hole over the following two years. These are serious times.

As is the case across the country, homelessness and rough sleeping are on the rise in our borough, 32% of children living in Harrow are living in poverty. We are also seeing increasing demand for adult social care, in part because people are unable to access NHS services. The Young Harrow Foundation recently did some important work looking at issues facing young people and found that 20% say they need mental health support or know someone who does. This all puts additional pressure on council resources, at a time when our budget continues to shrink.

In response to these various needs, the government has offered occasional one-offs to paper over the cracks. But the nature of these one-offs means that it is impossible to make long-term spending commitments to deliver some of the preventative work that would really benefit residents. I would suggest that this is not a grown-up way of funding local government, and the recent announcement that deprivation will be removed from the funding formula is immoral.

We have also continued to play our part in fostering growth of the local economy. The investment pot of £1.1 million from Business Rates Retention is going to support residents in accessing online services. In addition, we are investing £480,000 to enhance the skills of low paid, low skilled and self-employed residents in the borough. Recently we won the award for Best Small Business Friendly Borough for our work in this area. Harrow shopping centres are thriving, with record investment in the local economy, businesses, housing and facilities.

We are maintaining our ambitious regeneration and homebuilding agenda. I was particularly pleased that we had secured £32 million from the London Mayor which will help us build more than 600 council homes. This will be of great benefit to people in our borough and is something that we can be very proud of.

As the leader of Harrow Council my vision for Harrow is not just for the 185,000 bins to be collected each week, clean streets, pavements and verges maintained; it's for a place that all residents feel proud of, feel safe and want to live – where the council has a strong reputation in supporting those most in need and delivering services well. When they are struggling they know we will at least try to help.

I would like to sincerely thank Harrow council staff, our partners across the public sector and all of the charities and volunteers who through sheer hard work and determination are ensuring that we can still deliver key services across Harrow and ensure we don't end up in the same position as Northamptonshire Council who are being forced to deliver only minimal statutory services.

I know that our residents understand the pressure the council is under, as we understand the difficulties that many in our borough are facing. My commitment to you is to be your ally. Despite the unrelenting austerity, we will not give up fighting for all our residents, supporting those most in need and continuing to improve our borough for all.

Graham Henson
Leader

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1. Executive Summary – Plan on a Page

Harrow is a forward looking borough, a place with a strong, proud and diverse cultural identity that is tolerant, compassionate and fair. Despite the challenging financial circumstances we find ourselves in, we are driven to put Harrow at the forefront of innovation, constantly striving to improve how we deliver public services. This plan sets out a clear set of priorities and outcomes which together with continued effective management of our resources will mean we will be able to continue to make a difference to the lives and well-being of all who live, work and study in Harrow.

Our priorities for Harrow are:

- 1) Building a Better Harrow
 - Create a thriving modern, inclusive and vibrant Harrow that people can be proud to call home
 - Increase the supply of genuinely affordable and quality housing for Harrow residents
 - Ensure every Harrow child has a school place
 - Keep Harrow clean
 - More people are actively engaged in sporting, artistic and cultural activities in ways that improve physical and mental health and community cohesion
- 2) Supporting Those Most in Need
 - Reduce levels of homelessness in the borough
 - Empower residents to maintain their well-being and independence
 - Children and young people are given the opportunities to have the best start in life and families can thrive
 - Reduce the gap in life expectancy in the borough
- 3) Protecting Vital Public Services
 - Harrow has a transport infrastructure that supports economic growth, improves accessibility and supports healthy lifestyles
 - Healthcare services meet the needs of Harrow residents
 - Everyone has access to high quality education
 - A strong and resourceful community sector, able to come together to deal with local issues
 - Harrow continues to be one of the safest boroughs in London
- 4) Delivering a Strong local Economy for All
 - A strong, vibrant local economy where local businesses and thrive and grow
 - Reduce levels of in-work poverty and improve people's job opportunities
 - Harrow is a place where people and businesses invest
- 5) Modernising Harrow Council
 - Deliver excellent value for money services
 - Reduce the borough's carbon footprint
 - Use technology and innovation to modernise how the Council works, improving access to digital services

Attached to this plan is an annex that details the key projects and initiatives we will undertake to deliver against these priorities and the progress we have made against each of them to date.

2. Context

Cuts to Government Grant

Harrow has seen its main source of central government grant funding - the Revenue Support Grant reduce by 97% over a 7 year period, reducing the grant from £52m in 2013/14 to £1.566m by 2019/20. In addition to the £50m reduction in government grant, the Council has also had to fund inflationary pressures (pay and non- pay) and the cost of capital investment on initiatives including highways maintenance and the acquisition of properties to alleviate homelessness, totalling £22m. The cost of funding the continued demand pressures on front line services adds a further £56m, taking the total budget shortfall to find over the seven year period to £128m. The Revenue Budget 2019/20 continues to show budget gaps to achieve a balanced budget in forthcoming years of £13.4m in 2020/21 and £9.3m in 2021/22.

One of the Lowest Funded Councils in London

Harrow Council is one of the lowest funded councils in London. In 2015/16 Harrow's revenue spending power per head was £159 (or 17.3%) lower than the London average which ranked Harrow 26th out of 32 London Boroughs. A similar comparison with the England average shows Harrow's revenue spending power per head was £127 (or 14.3%) below average and ranked Harrow 105th out of 120 local authorities. The revenue spending power per head analysis was updated and concluded that Harrow's core spending power per head in 2019/20 is estimated to be £170 lower than the London average and £75 lower than the rest of England average. Harrow's Housing Revenue Account was in a unique position as one of only two in London at its borrowing cap. However the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) has recently lifted this cap for new build schemes only, which, combined with the Council's successful bid for £32m grant funding from GLA, and pending approval of £10m grant funding from the Housing Infrastructure Fund ("HIF") will enable hundreds of additional homes to be built in the borough.

A Prudent Borough

Harrow has long been financially prudent and has not overspent in at least 11 years. We have one of the lowest levels of reserves (money held for unexpected events or emergencies) in London at £17m, we also believe spending reserves is not a responsible way to offset lost revenue so we do not use reserves to contribute to the budget which has meant a lot of difficult decisions have already been taken whilst shielding front line services such as adult and children's social care as much as we can. Despite this, we continue to deliver:

- Economic Growth, i.e. working with the West London Alliance Economic Prosperity Board to support business growth, employment and skills improvements. The strategic investment pot from the Business Rates Retention pilot is investing £1.1m into extending the high speed public broadband infrastructure, which will support residents in accessing online services. Further to this, we are investing £480k in the skills of low paid, low skilled and self-employed residents in the borough. We have been recognised for our work in this area by winning the award for the Best Small Business Friendly Borough.
- New housing, we have set out a major regeneration programme in order to maximise use of Council owned sites, to support sustainable housing growth in line with the London Plan.
- A 'Good' Ofsted in February 2017 and in comparison to other Councils we offer good services, at a low cost.
- Council Tax collection levels in excess of 97%.

- Commercialised services, looking at innovative ways that we can generate income, by supplying quality services to residents, whilst not endangering local business in the private sector, e.g. trade waste, training academy and Garden Services. We are also a leader in shared services, working with a number of Councils to make significant efficiencies for front line and back office services, e.g. Legal, Special Needs Transport and depot services, and have marketed ourselves successfully as a major film location and for commercial events in our parks.
- Digitalising our services, for example 87% of customer transactions are carried out online.
- Actively bidding for external monies, where they clearly support local priorities. We have secured £500,000 worth of investment from the Home Office to help fund early intervention services for young people at risk of joining gangs and becoming involved in youth violence, £1.5m to help support economic growth locally and were recently granted £32 million by City Hall to build 614 new council homes, a sign of how well regarded we are in spite of the challenges of austerity.

2.1. The Council's Budget

Net Controllable Revenue Budget	Budget 2019/20 £000	Description of service
Resources & Commercial		
Council contribution to freedom passes scheme	10,158	Every resident should have their independence. This funding allows our older residents and those with a disability to have access to the independence and better quality of life that free travel across Harrow and London can ensure.
The Council's call centre, main reception and website administration costs	4,116	Residents want to contact the authority in a number of different ways. This funding supports those channels of communication, so that residents can contact the council in the way that is most convenient for them, whether it is online or over the phone. We want to ensure that we are accessible to residents, especially those most vulnerable and who do not have access to the Internet, offering a timely response.
Support for revenues and residents benefit claims	2,280	This funding provides assistance to those residents in need with benefit claims, helping them access the support they need and offering a timely response.
Resources	20,865	Provision of good frontline services relies on strong back office functions, including Legal, HR, procurement and IT support. This budget ensures a high quality support function for the Council.
Community		
Keeping Harrow clean & green	14,444	The council undertakes street cleaning, grounds maintenance, collection of refuse, recycling, food and garden waste to all residential properties within the borough, including collecting and preventing fly-tipping, managing and maintaining parks, maintaining highway verges, licensing and preventing Anti-Social Behaviour. This budget includes investing in neighbourhood facilities and pro-active action to stop our streets becoming dirty in the first place. The council is determined to make Harrow clean again - which means intelligence-led street cleansing to ensure that those areas that require high frequency cleaning receive it; picking up your bins on time; and finding and fining those who blight our borough with litter and fly-tips. We are renewing our street lighting to more efficient and cost effective ones, monitoring and maintaining all the road surfaces in the borough and taking the initiative to reduce road accidents.
Promoting culture and sports in the Borough	455	Libraries, leisure and cultural facilities are important to us and our residents and they form an essential part of our plan to build a better Harrow. This money maintains our well used and popular libraries, as well as other leisure and cultural facilities in the borough.
Housing General Fund	3,829	The Council has a duty to ensure all our residents have somewhere to live. This money is spent providing temporary accommodation for residents and families in need. This also goes towards housing vulnerable residents, who, for example, are fleeing domestic violence.

Economic Development & Research	710	The council team that works with local businesses and employers to create hundreds of jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities, particularly for our young people. They also bid for grants from Government to support businesses and regenerate town centres in the borough. We want our local businesses to be successful and able to reach their full potential with access to more commercial workspaces and the ability to employ local people in the many jobs they are able to create. It is this team that is one of the reasons we were awarded the best small business friendly borough in London.
Planning Services	218	As a Planning Authority, the Service processes planning applications and enforces planning standards across the borough.
People - Adults and Public Health Services		
Support for Adults and Children with a disability and older people.	55,553	We spend millions of pounds on caring for older residents, and those with a disability. This covers thousands of residents in the borough and includes day care centres, overnight respite care and home visits by support workers, as well as residential care for the most complex needs. Our support helps give our residents, dignity, independence and support for their carers and family.
Quality Assurance & strategic management services	1,704	We want to ensure our residents receive the care they deserve. This is the money we spend on safeguarding to ensure that the care our residents receive in the borough - including in private care centres - adheres to the highest standard of care, and strategic management to ensure we have appropriate services in place to meet the needs of our residents.
People - Public Health Services		
Public Health	(1,867)	The Public Health grant support statutory duties such as NHS Health Checks, Health Visiting and Sexual Health, in addition to supporting non statutory duties such as drug misuse prevention and wider health improvement activities, to ensure the general health and wellbeing of the local population.
People - Children's Services		
Children & Young People's Services	25,511	We provide valuable support to families and young people across the borough. This includes Children's Centres to support young families and social workers to work with our most vulnerable children and families. We want our youngest and most vulnerable children to have access to key services that will help reduce child poverty and give them the best start in life. This also includes adoption and fostering services.
Education Services	7,080	The Council is very proud of its schools and the quality of education provided in the borough as we remain one of the top boroughs in the country in terms of education results. We are keen to offer the appropriate support services for vulnerable children, such as education services for children in care or with special educational needs.
Total Service Budgets	145,056	

2.2. Our Harrow, Our Community

Population: Harrow's resident population is estimated to be 248,900¹. Over the past year Harrow's population is estimated to have increased by just 0.07 per cent. Over the past decade the borough's population has increased by around 9.9 per cent (22,480) which ranks Harrow 25th out of 33 in London. The 2017 Mid-Year Estimates indicate a population density of 49.3 persons per hectare (pph) in Harrow², which is above the Outer London average density of 42 pph.

Age: A fifth of Harrow's residents are under 16. 63.7% of Harrow's population are of working age (16 to 64) and 15.4% of Harrow's residents are 65 or older: this compares to 11.8% in London overall and 18% nationally³. As with most areas in the country, the proportion of older people in Harrow continues to increase. In 2001 around 30,000 of Harrow's residents were aged 65 and over, so numbers have increased by over 8,400 or 28% since then. It is expected that the number of residents aged 65 plus will increase by 41% and those aged 85 plus could increase by over 67% by 2031. It is also expected that the number of children (0-15) will also increase by 14% during the 10 year period between 2014 – 2024⁴.

Disability: 9.6% of Harrow's working age population classified themselves as disabled, a total of 23,900 people⁵. 5,510 individuals, 2.2% of the total population, receive Disability Living Allowance⁶.

Pregnancy and Maternity: In 2017 there were 3,695 live births to mothers living in Harrow, representing 14.8 live births per 1000 population, higher than the London rate of 14.3⁷. For women under the age of 18, the birth rate was 3.7 per 1000 population which is in line with the London average of 3.8 and lower than the UK average of 5.7.⁸

Race (Ethnicity): in 2011, 30% (73,830) of Harrow's residents were White British, ranking Harrow fourth lowest nationally. This population group has fallen by 28.5 per cent in Harrow over the decade. Harrow has one of the most ethnically diverse populations nationally. 69% of Harrow's residents are from minority ethnic groups. Harrow has the fourth highest proportion of residents from minority ethnic groups⁹. 26.4% of Harrow's residents are of Indian origin, the largest minority ethnic group in the borough, followed by Kenyans and Sri Lankans. Harrow is home to the largest Sri Lankan born community in the country. 8.2% of residents are 'White Other', up from 4.5% in 2001¹⁰.

In 2015/16 Harrow recorded its 2nd highest levels of migration in a decade signifying a significant change in population make-up since the 2011 census¹¹, although it currently looks as though the level of international migration may have peaked. The top three nationalities of these most recent arrivals are Romanian, Indian and Polish. The top 5 most recorded community languages in Harrow are: English, Gujarati, Tamil, Romanian, Polish and there are over 155 languages spoken in Harrow schools.

Religion or Belief: Religious affiliation is high in Harrow, with Harrow having the 2nd lowest number of residents who stated that they have no religion. The Greater London Authority (GLA) Diversity Indices rank Harrow as second for religious diversity in London. In the 2011

¹ Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2017 Mid-Year Estimates, published June 2018

² The London Borough of Harrow covers an area of 5,046 hectares

³ ONS, 2017 Mid-Year Estimates

⁴ 2017-2032, ONS, 2014 Sub-National Population Projections

⁵ Oct 2018 NOMIS, Jul 2017 - Jun 2018, ONS, Annual Population Survey

⁶ May 2018, ONS/DWP. Rates calculated using the ONS 2017 Mid-Year Estimates

⁷ ONS, Birth Summary Tables, England and Wales 2017

⁸ ONS, Births by mothers' usual area of residence in the UK 2016

⁹ ONS, 2011 Census

¹⁰ ONS, 2011 Census

¹¹ ONS, 2016 Mid-Year Estimates

Census, Christianity was identified as Harrow's most common religion with 37% of followers (59% nationally). This represents an overall fall of 8.8% since 2001. Hinduism is Harrow's second most common religion and ranking highest nationally. Harrow has the highest proportion of Hindus, Jains and members of the Unification Church in London and the second highest for Zoroastrianism. At 10,538 Harrow has the third highest proportion of people who identify themselves as Jewish in London (4.7 %). There has been a 100% increase in the number of people identifying as Muslims in Harrow, from 14,915 in 2001 to 29,880 (12.5%) in 2011. Islam is London's second most common religion and Harrow's third¹².

Gender/Sex: – 49.9% of the population are male and 50.1% are female¹³.

Sexual Orientation: In 2017 it is estimated that 2.7% of the London population identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT), which would equate to approximately 6,720 of our residents¹⁴. Organisations such as Stonewall believe the true figure to be higher. People aged 16 to 24 were most likely to identify as LGBT in 2016 (4.1%).

Marriage, Civic Partnerships and Same Sex Marriage: 54% of Harrow residents are married, the highest level in London. As of 31st December 2016, there have been 142 Civil Partnerships in Harrow, 19 of which have been converted to marriage. There have been 32 same sex marriages in Harrow since inception on 29th March 2014.

¹² ONS, 2011 Census

¹³ ONS, 2017 Mid-Year Estimates

¹⁴ ONS Annual Population Survey, October 2016 to September 2017

3. The Council's Priorities

3.1. Build a Better Harrow

- ***Create a thriving, modern, inclusive and vibrant Harrow that people can be proud to call home***
- ***Increase the supply of genuinely affordable and quality housing for Harrow residents***
- ***Ensure every Harrow child has a school place***
- ***Keep Harrow clean***
- ***More people are actively engaged in sporting, artistic and cultural activities in ways that improve physical and mental health and community cohesion***

- Regeneration

We have over £1.75bn of public and private investment lined up to deliver thousands of genuinely affordable homes, new local facilities, schools, GP practices and an improved entertainment, cultural and leisure offer. Our Regeneration Strategy is centred on three key council-owned sites: Poets Corner, Byron Quarter and Wealdstone; and a range of other private developments across the borough. The regeneration strategy, as with any long term strategy, should be reviewed on a regular basis throughout its lifespan to ensure it remains up to date and relevant, especially given changes to the economy and the impact this has on construction and labour costs. So, we are in the process of reviewing the programme four years on from when the Regeneration Strategy was first presented to Cabinet. We want to make sure that all Harrow residents feel the benefit of regeneration in the borough. We appreciate that regeneration can bring with it extra disruption during the building works, so we will continue to talk to residents about what improvements they would like to see in their area and how we could use the money we receive from regeneration sites to invest in communities.

- Harrow Homes for Harrow People

Housing supply (especially in the private rented sector) and affordability (particularly for those on low to moderate incomes) are two of the biggest issues we face as a borough. Harrow has the second lowest proportion of social housing stock in London, about 9,000 homes of which 4759 are Council owned properties. 4,179 council homes have been sold under Right to Buy and private rents have increased faster than wages. So, Harrow Council has started to build the first new council houses in a generation. Harrow will be building thousands of new homes over the next 8 years of which between 700-1300 will be affordable houses which in line with the Mayor's Homes for Londoners Programme will include: London Affordable Rent for people on low incomes; London Living Rent for people on average incomes save for a deposit for their first home; and shared ownership for people who cannot afford the open market. We want to do whatever we can to make sure that Harrow residents are able to live in the new homes being built by making sure these homes go on sale to Harrow residents first and they are not just bought as empty financial assets.

- School Places

Along with the rest of London, Harrow has experienced an increase in demand for school places, due to a higher birth rate and internal and

international migration. Since 2008 we have opened five new schools, expanded 27 primary schools and created an additional 150 Special Educational Needs places. Our current 2020 projections show we are able to continue to offer every Harrow child a school place.

- Keep Harrow Clean

We know that the quality and cleanliness of the local environment is really important to residents. Latest recycling figures (Q1 2018/19) show a recycling rate of 42% for Harrow. This is up by 6 percentage points from the previous quarter (36%) and 2 percentage points lower than the corresponding quarter last year (44%). In terms how we compare against other London boroughs, we are in the top quartile of participating London boroughs. However, there has also been an increase of approximately 900 tonnes (or 4.6%) of residual waste produced by households. In order to meet our 50% target we are developing a new Recycling and Reuse plan; rolling out food waste recycling in flats and trying to get a better understanding of why the amount of residual waste varies so much between households in the borough. In Harrow there are also more than a thousand reports of fly-tips a month, two thirds of which involve household waste, although fridges, washing machines, beds and mattresses are also seen regularly. We will continue to focus on improving street cleaning across the borough, and tackling fly-tipping hotspots with a pro-active zero-tolerance approach.

- Sports and Cultural Offer

As part of our regeneration plans we also want to make sure we deliver a good cultural, leisure and night-time economy offer that is well used by all residents. In Harrow 1 in 3 adults and 20% of children over 10 years of age are obese. Levels of physical activity amongst young people drop off with age and physical inactivity and social isolation are also contributory factors to dementia as people get older. Given Harrow has the highest prevalence of type 2 diabetes in London, we want to increase the number of people being active and engaged in sporting, artistic and cultural activities to improve mental and physical health, social isolation and improve community cohesion (between generations, ethnicities and faiths). Alongside the Arts Centre and Headstone Manor, our district and town centres and the new Wealdstone Square will provide venues for street entertainment, celebrations, festivals, parades and exhibition space.

3.2. Supporting those Most in Need

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Reduce levels of homelessness in the borough</i>● <i>Empower residents to maintain their well-being and independence</i>● <i>Children and young people are given the opportunities to have the best start in life and families can thrive</i>● <i>Reduce the gap in life expectancy in the borough</i> |
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- Homelessness

Harrow has witnessed a rise in homelessness over the last five years due to a combination of loss of private rented accommodation and Government welfare reforms. There are approximately 1880 applicants on the housing register and over 1,000 families in temporary accommodation, around 2/3^{rds} of

which is leased from private landlords, increasingly outside of Harrow. In the 12 months to December 2018 there were 215 households accepted as being eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need. The number of households in emergency B&B accommodation has decreased from a peak of 307 families in June 2016 to 204 households in December 2018. This was seven times the number accepted in 2009/10. It is a priority of the Council to reduce the levels of homelessness and bring down the length of time families have to stay in emergency bed and breakfast accommodation through a combination of a property purchase programme to buy 100 new properties and actively working with private landlords. We are also concerned about the risk of people transferring onto Universal Credit falling into rent arrears and losing their home and we want to address the issue of overcrowding. Harrow has seen a 72% increase in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) applications over the last four years, and a 376% increase in reports of suspected HMO in the same period. We will work to tackle rogue and irresponsible landlords to make sure everyone is able to live in a quality home.

- Adult Social Care

Adult social care provides support to those with a disability, long-term illness, older people and unpaid carers. Social care currently helps over 7,500 people. The numbers of people who might need care and support in the future is expected to rise significantly. In line with most areas in the country, Harrow has an aging population, and compared to other London boroughs it has one of the highest proportions of older residents aged 65 and over. It is expected that the number of residents aged 65 plus in the borough will increase by 41% and those aged 85 plus could increase by 67% by 2031. Therefore, the numbers of people living with dementia, a learning disability or poor mental health will all increase and with it demand for health and social care services also rises. Over the past three years, demand at the “front door” of adult social care from new clients that required a substantial response has increased by 27%. Therefore, prioritising an emphasis on keeping people independent or regaining their independence after injury or illness takes on even greater significance. In Harrow we are delivering a new adult social care offer –Resilient Communities – based around empowering citizens to maintain their well-being and independence, strengthening support networks within their families and communities; enabling them to be stronger, healthier, more resilient and less reliant on formal social care services.

Adult Social Care and Housing are also working together to explore ways of increasing the supply of Extra Care Housing for Older People in the borough. Affordable housing options designed for older people including the incorporation of dementia friendly features, are limited in Harrow, leading to some older people living in homes that do not match their needs and others being placed in residential or nursing care or remaining in hospital longer than necessary. Increasing the amount of extra care housing provides an alternative to more costly domiciliary care and residential care which are not always the most appropriate or cost effective approaches to meet needs and maintain health and wellbeing.

- Children and Families

Families are at the heart of our communities and we want to make sure that Harrow is a place where families can thrive, so we are proud that in 2017 Children's services in Harrow were rated 'Good' by Ofsted placing them in the top 25% of the country; in 2018 our Children's Centre hubs worked with over 7,800 families; there was a 58.3% take up of two-year-old funded nursery places and 86% for three- and four-year-olds. Our overall Children in Need rate dropped for the first time in three years after an increasing trend. However, half of children flagged as "in need" by social services have suffered or witnessed domestic violence and our children with child protection plans continues to increase from 21.9 children per 10,000 in 2012/13 to 40.1 today, mirroring a trend nationally in increased demand for children's social care services. Ensuring children and young people have access to services that will give them the best start in life and keep them safe from violence, vulnerability and exploitation lies at the heart of the role of the local authority and we will continue to prioritise our efforts in this area as well as in the prevention of offending and re-offending and anti-social behaviour. We believe this is best achieved through collaborative working to develop a robust preventative framework between all council services – the Together with Families Programme, Youth Offer, Violence, Vulnerability & Exploitation and Youth Offending Teams, the Safer Harrow Partnership, Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

- Health and Wellbeing

Life expectancy in Harrow for both men and women at 82.5 years and 85.9 years respectively is higher than the national averages, but the gap between those in affluent areas and those in deprived areas within the borough is also increasing. Men in the most affluent parts of Harrow can expect to live 6.7 years longer than those in the most deprived. Similarly women in the most affluent parts of Harrow live 3.7 years longer than their deprived counterparts. Poverty is a major influence on people's health, quality of life and life expectancy. Approximately 30,000 of Harrow's residents are experiencing income deprivation, with childcare and housing two of the costs that take the biggest toll on families' budgets. Taking into account housing costs, 31% of children were deemed to be living in poverty in Harrow in 2018. Two-thirds (64 per cent) of children growing up in poverty live in a family where at least one member works. Our efforts therefore to increase the number of genuinely affordable houses, raise people's skills levels so they can secure better employment, offer outstanding early years childcare, provide debt advice and reduce fuel poverty by improving the condition of our council houses and helping people reduce their energy bills, are key not just for the economy but also people's health and well-being.

Harrow also has the highest prevalence of diabetes in London which is a major cause of stroke, blindness, kidney failure and premature death. There are a number of reasons for Harrow's high prevalence, including a high percentage of residents from Asian and Afro-Caribbean backgrounds, obesity rates and a large percentage of people above the age of 75. The situation is expected to get worse unless residents are supported to make lifestyle changes.

One-in-four adults and one-in-ten children experience mental illness during their lifetime, and according to the 'This is Harrow' Young People's needs

analysis, there are also surprisingly high numbers of young people self-harming and experiencing suicidal thoughts in the borough. There is a link between improved mental health and wellbeing and better outcomes for people of all ages and backgrounds, including: physical health life expectancy; educational achievement; employment rates and productivity. So we launched Harrow Horizons in 2017, a service run by Barnardo's in partnership with the council and CCG, to provide support for more than 1,000 infants, primary school pupils and teenagers in the borough each year and we will continue to work with Thrive LDN, the Young Harrow Foundation and Voluntary and Community sector organisations to try and improve the mental health and wellbeing of all our residents and work to ensure those residents with mental health conditions can access employment.

3.3. Preserving Vital Public Services

- ***Harrow has a transport infrastructure that supports economic growth, improves accessibility and supports healthy lifestyles***
- ***Healthcare services meet the needs of Harrow residents***
- ***Everyone has access to high quality education***
- ***A strong and resourceful community sector, able to come together to deal with local issues***
- ***Harrow continues to be one of the safest boroughs in London***

- Transport

Whilst the Mayor has said fares will be frozen until 2020 we continue to work with TFL around bus services, accessibility improvements for all stations, especially step free access at Harrow on the Hill and TFL's plans to build new houses on land they own in the borough. We are also developing our own plan in Harrow for how we intend to implement the Mayor's Transport Strategy, which aims for 80% of all trips in London to be made on foot, by cycle or using public transport by 2041 (Harrow is currently at 48%) and ensure that transport supports sustainable growth and regeneration, improves the environment, supports healthy lifestyles and improves road safety. We will also develop a cycling strategy to improve cycling across the borough and invest in cycle lanes and electric vehicle charging points. Harrow also needs to make sure its voice is heard regarding the expansion of Heathrow Airport and the impact this might have on air quality in the borough.

- Health

Big changes are starting to take place in Health as a result of the new NHS 10 year plan. A possible next step is that this area of the capital will apply to become an integrated care system. That could happen as early as April 2019. There's already a lot of joint health and care working across west London and such a move would serve to formalise these arrangements and embed the efficiencies that our cooperation is already delivering. We're also working closely with hospitals and foundation trusts in the area to promote joint working and better understand the role of all agencies in adult social care integration. Northwick Park has received its second consecutive 'requires improvement' rating from the Care Quality Commission in 2018. On behalf of our residents it is important we scrutinise the hospital's improvement plans and as part of the regeneration programme we are engaged in discussions about GP provision in the borough and where this would be best located.

- Schools

Harrow is very proud of its schools and the quality of education provided in the borough as we remain one of the top boroughs in the country for education results. 95% of Harrow schools are judged by Ofsted to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. Our primary schools rank in the top 5% nationally for key stage 2 results in reading, writing and maths and our secondary schools rank 20th out of 150 local authorities (top 13%) for the average 'attainment 8' score and 22nd (top 14%) for pupils achieving a grade 5 or above. 98.7% of 16-18 year olds are in education, employment or training. However, schools are also facing ever increasing financial pressures, making it harder for them to accommodate as many requests to help children with special needs as they might want to.

- Voluntary and Community Sector

Over the last four years the Council's relationship with the Voluntary and Community Sector has changed significantly, moving from one of funder and commissioner to enabling partner. The Council and sector are committed to making Harrow home to a resourceful and collaborative voluntary and community sector which works alongside the public and private sectors to meet local needs and deliver the best outcomes for residents. Together we will be developing a shared leadership role, collaborating and co-producing the new adult social care model – resilient communities; maximising the opportunity to leverage social value from the procurement of goods and services; make more effective use of local assets and develop a more co-ordinated approach to attracting additional external resource into the borough.

- Police and community safety

Despite overall crime levels in London and Harrow increasing, Harrow continues to have the lowest crime rate in London and is generally seen as place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. But the recent upsurge of 'gang activity and youth violence' in Harrow is a concern for everyone, especially young people. This comes at the same time as the police have lost just short of 200 police officers from the borough's streets. The merger of Harrow, Barnet and Brent Basic Command Units should bring with it opportunities for greater collaboration and efficiencies, but we also need to make sure it doesn't impact negatively on response times for Harrow residents. Through our Safer Harrow partnership we are working with the Police and a range of other statutory and voluntary and community based organisations to keep Harrow as one of the safest boroughs in London and improve community cohesion. The Council's Community Safety Strategy maintains a clear commitment to tackling high volume crime such as burglary and ASB, and high harm crime such as youth violence, domestic abuse and drug and alcohol misuse.

3.4. A Strong Local Economy for All

- ***A strong, vibrant local economy where local businesses and thrive and grow***
- ***Reduced levels of in-work poverty and improve people's job opportunities***
- ***Harrow is a place where people and businesses invest***

- Business Growth

We want our local businesses to be successful and reach their full potential with access to more commercial workspace and the ability to employ local people in the many jobs they are able to create. Nearly a third of our working age residents are self-employed and creative industries are a key growth sector in Harrow's economy. Over the last four years we have supported over 3110 businesses. This year we want to continue to foster growth in the local economy; attract new businesses into the borough and make it easier for them to work with the council as they establish themselves. We will work with businesses to bring up standards, enable them to tender for work locally and benefit from the regeneration programme. We will work with our partners across West London to take advantage of the opportunities from the devolution to London of business rates and skills funding.

- Jobs, Skills and low pay

Employment levels in Harrow are generally good and Harrow has seen a reduction in unemployment – currently 1.4% – and the number of long term unemployed claimants. However, we know that low wages and skills levels are key concerns for residents as they lead to in-work poverty and people's inability to afford to live in the borough. Approx. 30,000 of Harrow's residents are experiencing income deprivation and over a fifth are in low paid jobs. Wages paid in Harrow workplaces average £575/wk for full-time workers whereas the London average is £713. In part this relates to the business composition of the borough, with small businesses paying less than larger companies and in part due to a significant number of residents having low skills, for example poor language skills are a major barrier to progressing in the workplace. 28.5 % of Harrow's residents have a foreign first language and 1% of Harrow residents are unable to speak English at all, compared to 0.6% for London and a national figure of 0.3%. We would like all our residents to have the opportunity to improve their skills and have the opportunity to get a good job. We will use our regeneration programme to create 3,000 new jobs and apprenticeships and continue our Adult Community Learning and employment programmes that so far have helped over 1000 people into work, over 500 young people into jobs and apprenticeships and over 4500 people improve their language and IT skills.

- Inward Investment

Together with our neighbouring boroughs in West London we have agreed a shared Vision for Growth in West London - using our combined weight to secure funding to boost skills and productivity, increase housing supply, improve orbital transport connections and promote West London as a place to invest and set up business. Capital West London has been launched to promote inward investment, business trade and retention and headquarter relocations to West London. As part of the business rate retention pilot, Harrow has secured £1.5m to invest in super-fast wi-fi in public buildings and skills initiatives and we continue to secure funding from external sources to implement a range of schemes to support businesses from public realm and shop front improvements to the creation of artists' studios and funding of new public squares. We will also use Social Value to make sure that our contractors invest in Harrow.

3.5. Modernising Harrow Council

- ***Deliver excellent value for money services***
- ***Reduce the borough's carbon footprint***
- ***Use technology and innovation to modernise how the Council works, improving access to digital services***

○ Efficiencies and Commercialisation

Harrow is a low-cost, high performing borough with costs in the lower quartile. It is important that we maintain this position and continue to ensure we are as lean and efficient as possible, providing the best value for money services that we are able to. As government grant to Harrow reduces by 97%, it is also important that we explore opportunities to earn income to contribute to our medium term financial strategy. Commercialisation is a positive agenda for Harrow as it provides for the profits to be re-invested back into those services most valued by our residents and off-set some of the reduction in grant from Government that we are facing. But it is also inherently risky. So far eight new commercial ventures have been approved including the cookery school, MOT testing and trade waste. We are also; generating income from advertising on the Council's website and our magazine – Harrow People; securing external sponsorship for events such as Harrow's Heroes; have invested in a commercial property portfolio, have received housing for rental in exchange for council land and are building new houses for rent. We have also introduced a range of shared services.

○ Environmental Sustainability

The Council's footprint consists of 20,453.27 tonnes of CO₂ emissions from 463 sites including 60 state Schools and Academies across the borough. In total for all the Council's buildings including schools and street lighting our annual energy bills are between £5 million to £5.5 million, depending on the global energy prices, weather conditions and our energy saving activities and investments. Heating our homes accounts for 66% of carbon emissions in Harrow. Our new Climate Change strategy for 2018 – 2023 identifies key priorities to reduce the borough's environmental impact, improve the energy performance and reduce emissions from the council's buildings, estate and schools and raise awareness of key sustainability, environmentally friendly and energy efficiency options amongst Harrow residents and businesses.

○ Technology & Digital

In an era of constrained budgets, making the most of digital technology is essential. It can drive efficiency and deliver value for money in a multitude of ways. The experience residents have when they contact the council is very important to us. We are moving services online, making it easier for residents to contact us or transact with the council at a time that suits them. Over 89% of all enquiries to the council are now handled online and further enhancements will be made during the year to the Council's website, the MyHarrow Account and online services for environmental health, bookings and payments. However, we are also conscious that not everyone can transact online so we are developing a programme of activity with community groups, the voluntary sector and adult community learning to improve people's IT skills and will be increasing capacity in the One Stop Shop and

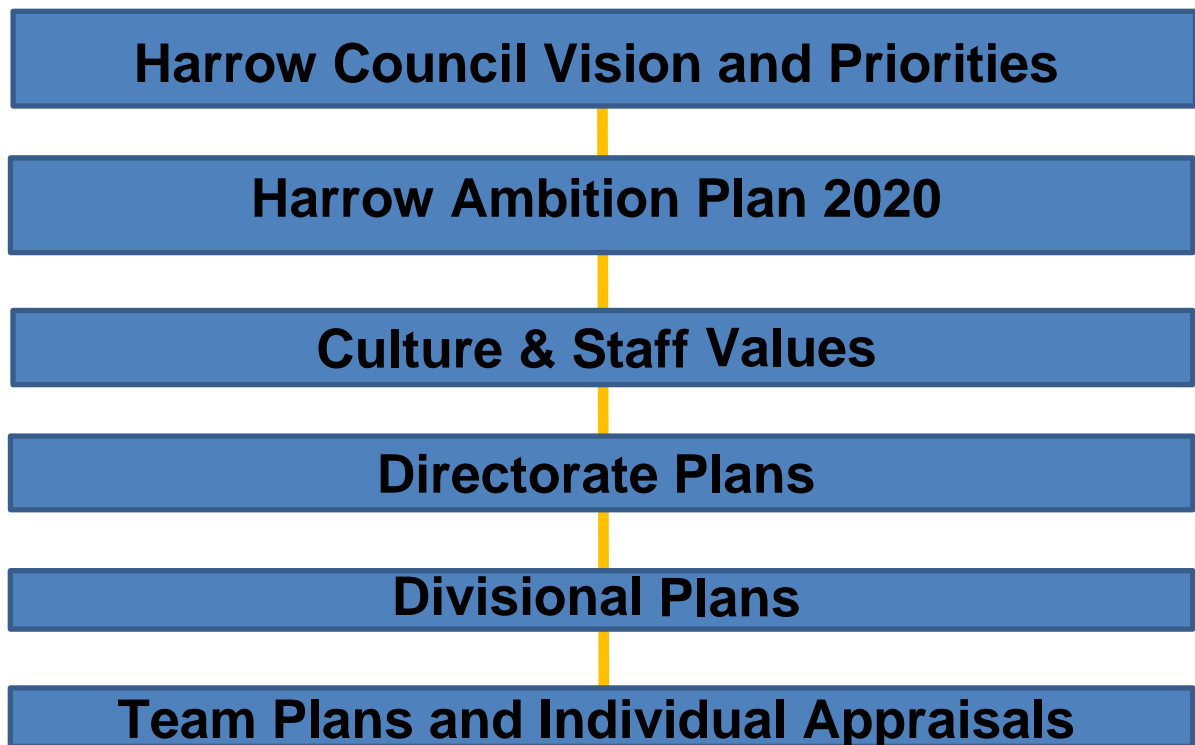
making capacity available in libraries to provide face-to-face support for those who really need it.

4. The Council

Harrow, as judged by our corporate peer review in 2016, is a well-run council. Since the Peer Review, we continue to ensure we do not lose sight of the fundamentals that underpin what we do.

Council Golden Thread

How it all fits together



4.1. Our Staff

Harrow is very lucky to have a committed and passionate workforce, without which we could not do what we do. We will continue to support our staff to work together with each other, partners and residents to deliver the best outcomes to residents, whilst responding to the complex challenges we face. We want to be an employer of choice with a diverse workforce that embodies our values and behaviours and who:

- Are committed to delivering the best outcomes for Harrow residents
- Are 'can do'
- Collaborate
- Put the customer at the centre of their thinking
- Demonstrate increased cost consciousness
- Are risk aware not risk averse
- Look for opportunities to do things differently

One of the Council's equality objectives is to develop an inclusive workforce that feels valued, respected and reflects our community. We have therefore signed up to Stonewall's workplace equalities index to ensure we support staff who identify as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, or transgender; we are working to improve working conditions and access to services for disabled members of staff and residents and have signed the Time2Change pledge and work with the Thrive initiative in London to reduce the stigma of mental health in the workplace. We will also need to ensure that we utilise technology to support our staff to work as efficiently as possible, through our commitment to mobile and flex for example. We will also ensure that each member of staff has an annual appraisal, access to a programme of training and professional development and appropriate contact and supervision with their line manager. Knowing what our staff actually think about working for Harrow is important ahead of the scale of change that we face. Therefore in 2019 we will undertake a staff survey which will aim to baseline employee engagement, change readiness, motivation and happiness.

The consistency of management approach is key to a successful and productive workforce. We will therefore ensure that internal communications are as effective as possible; that new members of staff are able to clearly understand the Council's Golden Thread, via effective induction and completion of the basic mandatory training. We expect our managers to do the basics of good management well. This includes effective budget management; good consultation and staff engagement; sickness absence monitoring; performance management; ability to understand service users' needs and assess any equality implications and, where appropriate, effective contract management. We will also be reviewing our corporate project management processes this year to agree a common standard and framework to be used across the Council. The Council has expertise in all of these areas and it will be important that this support is accessible to all to ensure high quality management.

4.2. Our Corporate Values

Our values have been developed by our staff and they are the foundation for the behaviours that will shape the way we work with each other and our partners and the way in which we deliver our services. Our values and behaviours are:

Be Courageous	Do it Together	Make it Happen
<p>It means I will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge the status quo and be ready to step up and accept a challenge • Make brave decisions to achieve success – be risk aware not risk averse • Look for ways to do things differently • Be conscious of my actions and take responsibility for the outcomes • Look for opportunities to learn and develop • Trust myself to have a go – change starts with me • Learn from failure, accept and act on feedback 	<p>It means I will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seek the views of others and share knowledge • Break down silos • Think 'Us' not 'I' • Build effective relationships across the organisation • Treat everyone with respect and value diversity • Involve all stakeholders. Think through the issues and impact, engaging with all those affected or impacted • Put myself in others' shoes 	<p>It means I will –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be positive • See things through • Be agile and quick to act • Act with confidence • Take initiative, be proactive and less reactive • Be outcomes-focused • Stop when it's not working • Know what to do and have the conviction to do it
<p>When I work with others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give and earn trust • Challenge others and be open to challenge back • Stop and review. Have the courage to speak up when it's not working, seek out solutions to achieve success 	<p>When I work with others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate honestly • Tackle problems together • Praise the work of others, acknowledge contribution • Value the views of others – my colleagues and my customers • Show I care • Celebrate success • Establish clear roles and responsibilities 	<p>When I work with others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take responsibility – don't pass the buck • Be clear about expectations • Agree clear outcomes • Have a common purpose • Support others' enthusiasm

Our leadership commitments set out how the Senior Management Team of the Council will support the workforce to embody our values in order to deliver our corporate plan.

The Senior Management of the Council is made up of the Council’s Directors and Divisional Directors, led by the Chief Executive Sean Harriss.

Who we are:

Chief Executive:	Sean Harriss
Corporate Director Community:	Paul Walker
Interim Corporate Director People:	Paul Hewitt
Corporate Director Resources & Commercial:	Vacant
Director of Finance	Dawn Calvert
Director of Legal & Governance	Hugh Peart
Interim Director Adult Social Services	Visva Sathasivam
Director Public Health	Carole Furlong

As leaders we will:

1. Be Courageous	2. Do it Together	3. Make it Happen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage freedom within a framework • Provide the framework and guidance for others to perform • Set clear expectations and outcomes • Take ownership and work to prevent a blame culture • Be ambitious about what’s possible, inspiring others to ‘Think Big’ • Have high expectations of others • Hold others to account • Review performance regularly • Be authentic • Deliver on my 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be visible, have a presence with our teams and across the organisation • Drive collaboration with others who share the same outcome • Actively seek the views of the customer • Listen to others opinions to inform decision making • Engage, not just communicate • Move from ‘them’ and ‘they’ to ‘us’ and ‘we’ • Listen and ask, don’t tell • Involve members • Adapt my style to support people to deliver results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give responsibilities to others, let go of control • Remove barriers. Enable others to be more effective • Be decisive • Trust staff to work on the basis of results not tasks • Make the process for change faster and more dynamic • Articulate clearly what success looks like • Celebrate and encourage innovation • Set and review priorities

<p>promises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build on experience and adapt. Plan, review, do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a coaching environment, mentoring and developing others• Openly share my knowledge and experience	
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