



## **Members' Induction Pack 2006**

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## URBAN LIVING DIRECTORATE

### ***Vision:***

*“Making Harrow a great place to live, work and visit”*

### **What we do (using our workforce of over 1,300 employees)**

Urban Living brings together a wide range of services relating to the build and natural environment - improving the quality of life and enhancing the “liveability” of our borough.

Our focus is putting the needs of our customers at the heart of everything we do. Listed below are our services helping us to achieve this aim:

#### ▪ Public Realm Services

- Work in partnership to improve ‘liveability’, including the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Improve access to services for the increasingly diverse community
- Maintain and clean streets, parks and countryside, through “strategic area working” by multi-skilled teams
- Manage 567 hectares of parks, open spaces and countryside, effectively and environmentally sustainably
- Collect waste from households, commercial premises and recycling collection centres and the Civic Amenity Site; transfer residual waste to the West London Waste Authority for disposal, and recyclable and compostable materials to reprocessors

#### ▪ Housing Services

- Prevent homelessness by recognising its likely causes
- Provide housing whether choice-based permanent, temporary (including homeless hostels) or through private sector initiatives
- Manage effectively the Council’s approx 5,100 tenanted and 1,100 leasehold residential properties
- Deliver decent homes and a good living environment for all tenants by ensuring that all Harrow’s council homes achieve the Decent Homes Standard by 2010
- Develop Housing strategy by undertaking research, analysing data, consulting and communicating and setting targets to include delivering decent homes and a good living environment for all residents in Harrow
- Work in partnership with Housing Associations, developers, the Housing Corporation and other West London boroughs to provide affordable housing to meet identified housing needs in a sustainable way
- Make best use of housing resources, such as empty homes, by working in partnership with private landlords and housing associations

#### ▪ Community Safety Services

- Implement all statutory requirements to maintain and improve food safety in food premises and the health and safety at work of employees where Harrow is the enforcing authority. Commission the Trading Standards Service in partnership with Brent
  - Improve liveability and Quality of Life through environmental protection activities including, proactive Envirocrime enforcement, contaminated land, air quality, animal welfare, pest control and statutory nuisances and by promoting and enforcing high standards in private sector rented housing, to address key liveability, quality of life and anti-social behaviour priorities based on best practice
  - Enforce all on-street and off-street parking regulations and moving traffic contraventions (using CCTV), including penalty charge notice processing
  - Discharge the Council's statutory licensing and registration functions and ensure an effective implementation of the Liquor Licensing functions and emerging Gambling Legislation.
  - Implement, develop and monitor the Safer Harrow Partnership's Crime, Disorder and Drugs Strategy 2005 – 2008 through the crime reduction action plans and activities including Anti Social Behaviour, Drug Action, CCTV and partnership working with the Police and statutory agencies
- Public Realm Infrastructure
    - Provide the businesses and citizens of Harrow with a professional, quality engineering service that meets their needs in improving and maintaining the public realm
    - Provide a cost efficient engineering service to Harrow Council and other organisations that covers highways, highway structures, lighting and drainage
    - Safeguard the environment and take action to minimise our environmental impact through our Environmental Management System
    - Provide a transport planning, traffic and parking management service
    - Provide a road safety education and training service
    - Provide a highway network management service
- Planning & Development Services
    - Take a proactive lead role in influencing and delivering the future shape of Harrow. This will be achieved by addressing the well-being and aspirations of all in the community with objectives, policies and a vision, clearly based on the Community Strategy and the achievement of sustainable communities
    - Carry out the statutory requirements of Harrow Council as the Local Authority to control building and development standards by: determining planning applications and appeals; enforcing breaches of planning control; managing Building Regulation applications; enforcing the Building Regulations and associated legislation
    - Make the planning process more concise, more flexible and more reactive to local circumstances and customers' needs. The Group will provide an up-to-date development plan for Harrow as a basis for: sound policy advice; effective research and monitoring of development; practical proposals for implementation; providing a range of design and conservation

services, that support the other planning functions and deliver projects that improve or restore the local environment

- Improve private sector housing stock primarily by making grants to vulnerable homeowners, for safety in houses in multiple occupation, for disabled facilities or to bring empty homes back into use. The HART team also delivers a significant programme to reduce CO2 emissions, promote energy efficiency, and tackle affordable Warmth; delivers the 'Safehome' project and the Home Improvement agency 'Staying Put' to assist vulnerable homeowners

▪ Property & Facilities Services

- Repair, replace and improve existing building components to protect the value of the Council's entire property portfolio except housing
- Manage Civic Centre and the communications within it; administer contracts for external supply of services (including energy procurement); survey the Council's building stock and prepare of asset management information and maintenance backlog schedules
- Give valuation and general professional advice on the management of the Council's £540m operational corporate property portfolio, commercial property within the Housing Revenue Account and Right to Buy
- Provide sound and safe buildings in the Council's operational corporate property portfolio (excluding Housing), enabling the continuing provision of services to the community
- Manage effectively the Council's £26m non-operational property portfolio so as to maximise the value of, and revenue received from, these assets and minimise the liabilities
- Provide a comprehensive building and architectural design and advice service to all Executive Directorates, especially Urban Living (particularly the housing service) and People First (particularly education and social care)

▪ Research & Vitality

- Lead the data research function for Urban Living and the Council in order to influence strategic priorities and their implementation
- Take the main role in developing strategy, service planning and policy development for Urban Living e.g. Equalities and ICT
- Ensure that performance management drives forward standards in Urban Living
- Take the lead in ensuring a proactive approach to partnership development for Urban Living, including consultation processes
- Ensure effective programme management is in place
- Coordinate the drive for area-based provision of services

▪ Business Support Services

- Provide business support for all services in Urban Living
- Coordinate staff development across the Executive Directorate
- Provide the first contact for all issues concerning Area Services and manage a reception desk at the Civic Centre (much of this role will transfer to First Contact under the Business Transformation Partnership during 2006-07)

- Coordinate the inputting and collation of all Urban Living performance management data
- Provide Meals-on-Wheels, meals to some schools and day centres, and cater for the staff restaurant and council functions
- Provide special needs transport to schools and day centres
- Manage the Depot facilities on behalf of Council departments, contractors and tenants
- Ensure that Urban Living complies with corporate requirements for providing data and adhering to Council-wide processes
- Improve the awareness of residents, employees and members of what Urban Living is doing to improve quality of life and make Harrow cleaner, greener and safer
- Improve communication between residents, staff, businesses and the Council

In addition, Urban Living Finance – although based in the Business Development Executive Directorate – provides Urban Living with professional support and guidance in all finance matters.

## **Our contribution to Harrow Council's corporate priorities**

- Strengthening Harrow's Communities: we are responding to the communities' needs by tackling issues including better access to Council services and building community relations.
- Putting Harrow on the map: we are raising the borough's profile on the national stage by improving the quality and efficiency of our services, developing regional partnerships, accessing funding and improving the attractiveness of Harrow for tourists.
- Valuing Harrow's customers: we are improving Council services and customer relations, with extensive consultation so that we really understand our customers' priorities.
- Impact through partnerships: working with other governmental and non-governmental organisations in the London region, we can be much more effective in improving performance indicators, revitalising local areas, and creating a cleaner, safer borough, than if we tried to act alone.
- Harrow – a true learning community: providing easy access to learning for the whole community – not least to our own staff.

Underpinning these five corporate priorities, we focus on being a more business-like organisation by improving our efficiency so that we can continue to deliver improved services at lower cost.

We emphasise sustainability – community, environmental and economic - in all we do. Examples include our core neighbourhood renewal strategy, designed to ensure social inclusion and sustainable communities, and our bio-diversity action plan aimed at providing high standards of bio-diversity throughout the work of the executive directorate.

## **We have a large number of customers ...**

- All 207,000 residents, 84,000 households, 72 schools and 8,000 businesses in Harrow;
- Users of Harrow's parks, open spaces and countryside;

- Organisations which use Council facilities, and visitors to Harrow;
- Government bodies for which we are the local delivery agency or interface, these include Health & Safety Executive, Food Standards Agency, Environment Agency and Ordnance Survey;
- Statutory and non-statutory partners, such as Harrow Strategic Partnership, Safer Harrow, voluntary organisations and community groups;
- Internal and external clients who commission our services; these include People First, private developers and estate companies;
- Organisers of events in the public realm.

### **... and other key stakeholders**

- The Council, the Council Tax payers and businesses;
- Government and funding agencies (ODPM, DEFRA, IDeA, Government Office for London, Greater London Authority, Mayor of London, Association of London Government, Transport for London (TfL), London Bridges Group, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Primary Care Trust, Health Protection Agency)
- Metropolitan Police, London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, Probation Service
- West London Waste Disposal Authority
- Adjacent boroughs
- Utility companies – electricity, gas, water and sewage
- Transport operators and Network Rail
- Harrow Council for Racial Equality

### **What we did in 2005-06**

- Particular achievements and successes in 2005 included:
  - customer satisfaction with Public Realm Services on the up, according to MORI survey and our own customer satisfaction surveys
  - hitting Harrow's waste recycling target, unlike many other London Boroughs
  - a successful Housing Options Appraisal with nearly 90% of tenants voting to keep the Council as their landlord
  - fully implementing the Licensing Act, with all license applications processed within statutory timescales
  - making good progress in the delivery of the Property Services capital programme
  - delivering excellent work in the Planning Services team, as a result of which ODPM has confirmed that Harrow will no longer be a Planning Standards Authority
  - playing a key part in the success of the Queen's visit, the VE/VJ Day celebrations and the Under One Sky event

### **The key drivers that will affect us over the next three years**

- Key external and local developments for Urban Living include the effects of:
  - London Olympics, Terminal 5 and Crossrail
  - the Business Transformation Project (BTP)
 and delivering:
  - the Public Realm Infrastructure capital programme
  - the Public Realm Infrastructure maintenance purchasing project
  - the Urban Living organisation structure

- Area-based working and Area Management
- a good CPA assessment in 2006-07

### **Some of our projects 2006-09**

- New CCTV control roomful implementation of enforcement options in Clean neighbourhoods and Environment Act
- Introduce Alcohol Control Zone for whole of Borough
- Street Lighting Renewal programme
- Clarendon Road street scene renewal
- Bus priority programme
- Petts Hill bridge improvement
- Increase recycling by consolidating recycling of plastic bottles and expanding recycling scheme to flats
- Raise parks to Green Flag Standard
- Expand provision of public toilets
- Recycling incentive scheme
- Allotment site modernisation
- Regeneration options for Mill Farm Close and Grange Farm Close
- Reduce temp accommodation to achieve ODPM target
- Computerised asset management system – SAP Real Estate
- Development of two £100m partnerships, one focusing on our Public Realm Infrastructure and one on the maintenance of our buildings.

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DIRECTORATE

### Aim and Vision:

“To ensure that the Council as a whole is contributing towards its corporate priorities in its service provision and raising Harrow’s profile and prominence in West London and London as a whole.”

### **WHAT WE DO**

The Chief Executive’s Directorate has an over arching role in advising and supporting the Chief Executive in the day to day running of the organisation

The services provide a variety of communication, corporate governance, strategic planning, legal and democratic services to the other three executive directorates, members and external clients.

To deliver these services, the Directorate is divided into four departments:

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

#### ➤ Marketing and Public Relations

Handle all media enquiries and press releases;  
Publish the Harrow People magazine that is sent to all households in the borough;  
Provide practical support and expertise to executive directorates on consultations leaflets, posters etc;  
Is responsible for the content of the council’s website and intranet.

#### ➤ Tourism

In conjunction with Strategic Planning work to promote Harrow and its attractions as a Tourist Centre.

#### ➤ Mayors Office

Promotes the borough as well as having legal responsibilities within the Council.



## **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

### ➤ Corporate Governance

Provides advice and training on probity, standards, procedures and protocols to both Members and the council's employees.

### ➤ Electoral Services

Administers the local, general and European elections.

## **LEGAL SERVICES**

### ➤ Legal Practice

Provides legal advice and support services to:

Internal clients, Members and the other three Executive Directorates;  
External clients including partners and schools.

### ➤ Democratic Services

Facilitate and service the Authority's core democratic function;  
Supports Member level meetings;  
Advise Members and the Executive Directorates on the requirements of the Constitution;  
Produce minutes and agendas, and generally manage meetings of the Council;  
Provides advice on procedural and constitutional matters.

### ➤ Registrars

Registers births, deaths, marriages and citizenships;  
Receive notice of marriages, and conduct marriage ceremonies and civil partnerships;  
Issue authority for marriages and provide advice;  
Provide a Nationality Checking Service to assist those applying for Citizenship.

### ➤ Land Charges

Provide information in relation to property purchase;  
Manage the Council's deeds;  
Organise the sealing of Council documents.

### ➤ Business Services Unit

Is responsible for the budgets across the whole of the Chief Executive's Directorate;

Provides financial advice and office administration support.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Provides functions in relation to:

Key Strategic Sites that are major development opportunities within the Borough where the Authority wants to ensure its own strategic objectives are delivered through the development.

Town Centre Regeneration that involves realising the Council's aim that Harrow should be the premier Town Centre in North West London.

Regeneration and Economic Development that is intended to deliver the physical and social regeneration of the Borough through developing the local economy and improving the physical infrastructure.

Town Centre Management ensures that Harrow's position as a Metropolitan Centre in London is maintained and its profile raised through promotion and partnership.

West London Strategic Planning and Economic Development which involves raising West London's profile and undertaking and co-ordinating work for the Sub-Region on behalf of the West London Alliance.

## **SOME KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2005/06**

- Ensured that the council's publications were available and understood by all communities;
- Raised Harrow's profile by putting in place a Tourism and Marketing strategy;
- Promoted Harrow across London and the regions to ensure that it is known as an Authority achieving good results;
- Administered the general election;
- Communicated with the community so that they are aware (a) of their entitlement to vote and (b) the marriage laws
- Provided a nationality checking service for citizenship applicants;
- Improved facilities making Harrow's Register Office and the borough a desirable place to marry thereby raising its profile in North West London;
- Adopted a Town Centre strategy;
- Raised the profile of West London as a whole thereby improving the profile of Harrow;
- Developed effective links with potential partners in the delivery of Harrow's town centre regeneration.

## **FUTURE PROJECTS**

Projects over the next 3 years include:

- Publishing an A-Z guide to the Council for the public;

- Redeveloping the communications strategy to include BTP;
- Reviewing the Council's Constitution;
- Developing training for members;
- Developing specific training for new members of Development Control Committee, Personnel Appeals Panel and Licensing Panel;
- Reviewing areas for improvement to maintain Lexcel accreditations;
- Preparing a 3-year Harrow Town Centre Management Strategy;
- Assisting Businesses to set up Harrow Business against Crime Partnership;
- Implementing Wealdstone & Marlborough Forum (Neighbourhood Renewal Pilot);
- Developing and implementing regeneration proposals for Harrow Town Centre;
- Identifying potential sites and prepare development brief for Hindu School;
- Proactively manage partnerships e.g.: Refugees into Jobs;
- Plan for the future of surplus land at Kodak;
- Developing a Business Incubator Centre proposals at Kodak;
- Establishing an Olympics Working Party and Work Programme to ensure Harrow contributes and benefits fully from 2012.

# **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE DIRECTORATE**

## **OUR VISION**

- To deliver a high performing organisation and provide high quality, cost effective services to all of our customers and to develop these services through innovation and focusing on the needs of the customer
- To support Harrow's Corporate Priorities through the services we deliver

## **WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO**

The Business Development Directorate has responsibility for management of the council's human, ICT, financial and corporate policy and planning resource. The newly created directorate continues to ensure that the council can maintain a strong position on financial management, proper planning on deployment of human resources, developing the framework for performance management across the Council, development of robust diversity and equality processes, development of the council's scrutiny functions and strategic partnership, together with ensuring that the Revenues and Benefits service maximise income collection and benefits take up.

The directorate is also responsible for the management of a strategic partnership with Capita (called the Business Transformation Partnership or BTP), which aims to further the transformation of Harrow over the next ten years.

Business Development has the pivotal role of driving organisational change and service improvements for the Council. Through the effective alignment of systems, culture and human resource activities, all the people who work for the authority are supported to achieve the Council's overall priorities and goals. In its strategic leadership role, the directorate will facilitate improvements in the Council's CPA rating, overall customer satisfaction and community cohesion with the context of sound performance and financial management, policy formulation and implementation, people management and support of members in their decision-making.

Through joint working with the other directorates and the facilitation of partnership working through Harrow Strategic Partnership, the directorate will bring about a sharper customer focus to the authority. Business Development comprises four directorates: Financial & Business Strategy; People, Policy & Performance; Business Transformation Partnership (BTP) and Business Services. Through the BTP we are establishing a number of joined-up service areas tailored to the needs of customers and staff. These will be seen in the initial three projects for BTP.

First we will transform how customers interact with the council through the much-improved day-to-day operation of First Contact. Second in the ERP project (enterprise resource planning) we will develop a seamless back office function using SAP software. And third in the MIS project (management information systems) we will give managers the informational tools to use and analyse real-time data so they can improve departmental performance and staff motivation.

As these new services roll out, Business Development is responsible for delivering training to staff – from frontline employers to Group Managers – in order for them to fully use the new systems. Business Development continues to take the lead on Flexible Working including Home and Mobile Working and is the sponsor for a Corporate Management Information Project that will further act as a catalyst for Business Transformation.

Our Corporate role also includes the Corporate Counter Fraud Team responsible for the prevention, detection and prosecution of Fraud

## **OUR STAFFING PROFILE**

The Business Development Executive Directorate employs approximately 395 staff across the four directorates. There are also approximately 60 staff from Capita. The majority of our diverse workforce are based at the Civic Centre. Our workforce is made up of approximately 26% Asian, 10% black, 4% mixed race, 55% white, and 5% other. Our employees are 67% female and 33% male. 5.5% of our employees have declared a disability.

## **OUR CUSTOMERS**

- ❑ All Council staff and applicants for employment with the Council
- ❑ Trade Unions and Staff in Partner organisations
- ❑ Harrow's diverse communities
- ❑ Elected Members, Executive Directors, Directors, Managers and Team Leaders
- ❑ Local Taxpayers and Local Businesses
- ❑ Vulnerable people in receipt of benefits and services financially assessed.
- ❑ Harrow Strategic Partnership, Voluntary Organisations and Community Groups

## **OUR OTHER STAKEHOLDERS INCLUDE**

- ❑ Schools and Governing Bodies, Learning and Skills Council
- ❑ Audit Commission and External Auditors, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)
- ❑ Department of Works & Pension, Department for Education & Skills, Department of Health
- ❑ HM Treasury, Other Inspectorates e.g. Benefits Fraud Inspectorate
- ❑ Community Groups and Council Tax Payers
- ❑ Business Transformation Partner
- ❑ Cabinet, Community and voluntary organisations
- ❑ Association of London Government / Local Government Association
- ❑ Government Office for London, Greater London Authority and West London Partnership
- ❑ Capita, our partner in the BTP

## **OUR KEY DRIVERS FOR 2006 - 2009 ARE**

### **External /National**

- ❑ E-Government Agenda
- ❑ Equality Bill
- ❑ Health & Safety Executive Legislation
- ❑ Regionalisation

### **Internal/Local**

- ❑ Community Engagement
- ❑ Reputation Management
- ❑ Industrial Relations
- ❑ Business Transformation

- Children's Act
- Government's Area Based Agenda
- Developments of Partnership Working
- Personalisation and Choice Agenda
- Development of CPA Inspection Regime
- Lyons Enquiry
- Changes to Levels of External Funding
- National Joint Council
- External Macroeconomic pressures
- Pension Reforms
- Demographic changes
- Civil Contingencies Act
- External Threats
- Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- Partnership
- Harrow Strategic Partnership
- Development of Local Businesses
- 14-19 Curriculum Development
- Workforce Capacity
- Community Learning
- Value for Money
- Emergency Planning
- HOST Project
- Elections in May 2006
- Use of Resources
- Corporate Priorities
- Local Area Agreement

## **WHAT WE DID IN 2005-2006**

Business Development as a directorate was created in mid 2005, with the merger of the former Business Connections and Organisational Development directorates. The merger was achieved seamlessly as a result of previous extensive work undertaken in both directorates as a part of the Middle Management Review.

Notable successes have been:

- Development of corporate procurement team and roll out of corporate contracts
- Development of e-auctions and roll out of purchase cards
- First council in country to run open budget process
- First local authority in country to submit annual teachers' return
- Developed risk management strategy
- Developed community engagement strategy
- Success in application for LAA
- Developed and introduced Individual Performance Appraisal & Development
- Achieved IIP status for directorate and completed and ran first phase of Harrow Rules
- Maintained top quartile collection performance for NNDR and Council Tax
- Improved Benefits take up and embedded joint visits with Department of Works & Pension
- Significantly improved performance in Housing Benefits and Council Tax (now rated best in London)
- Won Benefits Service of Year Award 2005 and hosted Ministerial visit
- Successfully negotiated 10 year Strategic Partnership with Capita
- Partnership projects now underway
- Established a Corporate Counter Fraud Team
- Prepared for the introduction of First Contact and design of Blueprint
- Prepared for the introduction of ERP/SAP and helped design Blueprint
- Achieved additional income to our residents in excess of £1 million

### **SOME OF OUR OBJECTIVES FOR 2006-2009**

- Deliver BTP projects of First Contact, ERP and MIS including the launch of the new Access Harrow customer contact service at the Civic Centre and the launch

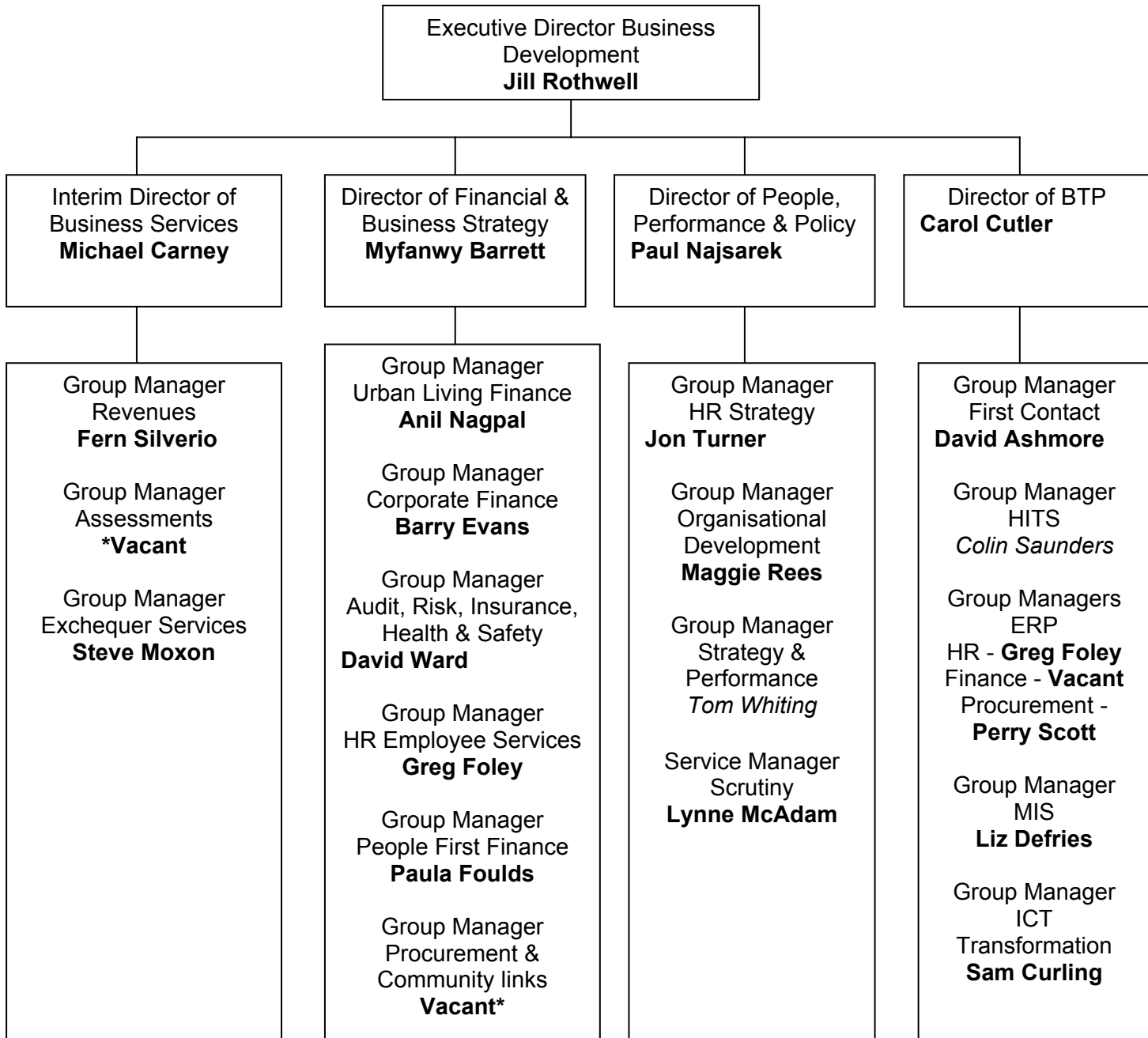
of new SAP software which will support back office and information systems for staff and managers.

- ❑ Establish Corporate Accounts Payable
- ❑ Promote and lead Council's new Community Engagement approach after strategy launch
- ❑ Embed best practice business processes, as follows:
  - Robust performance management, including development and monitoring of scorecards, IPADs etc
  - Service planning
  - Programme management
  - Emergency planning/business continuity planning
  - Risk management
  - Financial reporting and management
- ❑ Enable Council to improve its delivery of Value For Money to residents (provide supporting analysis and programme focus)
- ❑ Manage impact of pension reforms
- ❑ Management and workforce development through Harrow Corporate University
- ❑ Promote Equality and Diversity agenda across the Council
- ❑ Improve performance and cohesion of the Harrow Strategic Partnership, building on the Local Area Agreement
- ❑ Manage successful delivery of a score of 3 for Corporate Assessment in November 2006
- ❑ HITS transformation
- ❑ Maintain Benefits score of 4

#### **SOME OF OUR PROJECTS FOR 2006-2009 ARE**

- ❑ The three initial Business Transformation Projects
  - First Contact
  - Management Information Systems
  - Enterprise Resource Planning
- ❑ Development of Value for Money methodologies
- ❑ Preparation for Corporate Assessment/Joint Area Reviews
- ❑ Development of Human Resources functions
- ❑ Implementation of Local Area Agreement
- ❑ Development of Policy function
- ❑ Enterprise wide Content Management Systems
- ❑ Develop Flexible working

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE CHART





**CHIEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTORATE  
STRUCTURE CHART**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
JOYCE MARKHAM  
ext. 2183

Director of Legal  
Services  
Hugh Peart  
ext 2287

Director of Corporate  
Governance  
John Robinson  
ext. 7649

Director of Strategic  
Planning  
Graham Jones  
ext. 5317

Head of  
Communication  
Peter Brown  
ext. 2857

Group Manager (People  
First)  
Helen White  
ext. 5242

Group Manager (Corporate  
Services)  
Jill Travers  
Ext. 7628

Group Manager (Urban  
Living)  
Jessica Farmer (Interim)  
David Merson  
Ext 5232

Service Manager  
(Democratic Services)  
Claire Vincent  
ext. 2637

Business Services Manger  
Ian Whittington  
ext. 2417

Superintendent Registrar  
(Births Deaths & Marriages)  
Ben Bergonzi  
ext. 2106

Local Land Charges  
Manager  
Frank Baxter  
Ext. 3213

Senior Professional  
Jo Portillo  
ext. 2284

Acting Senior Professional  
Elaine McEachron  
ext. 5414

Electoral Services  
Manager  
Paul Libreri  
ext 2097

Senior Professional  
(Partnership and Liaison)  
Claire Codling  
ext. 5399

Senior Professional  
(Strategic Planning)  
Phil Greenwood  
Ext. 2166

Town Centre Manager  
Linda Arlidge  
020 8863 9066

Service Manager  
(Communications)  
James Savours)  
ext. 2850

Service Manager  
(Publications)  
Kate O'Malley  
ext. 5267

Service Manager  
(Marketing)  
Claire McGill  
Ext. 3025

Service Manager  
(Mayoral and Civic)  
Liz Ball  
Ext 2232

## **C. PROTOCOL ON COUNCILLOR-OFFICER RELATIONS**

**This protocol forms part of the local framework for standards of behaviour approved by the Standards Committee. Monitoring of compliance with this protocol is the responsibility of the Standards Committee, the Monitoring Officer and the Head of Paid Service.**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The relationship between Councillors and officers is essential to the successful working of the Council. This relationship within the authority is characterised by mutual respect, informality and trust. Councillors and officers should feel free to speak to each other openly and honestly. The purpose of this protocol is to help Councillors and officers perform effectively by giving guidance on their respective roles and expectations and on their relationship with each other.
- 1.2 Guiding all aspects of relationship between Councillors and officers should be the seven principles of public life as stated by the Nolan committee on standards of conduct in local government (i.e. selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, leadership).
- 1.3 The Protocol must be read and operated in the context of any relevant legislation and national and local codes of conduct and any relevant Council procedures.

### **2. The roles of Councillors and officers**

- 2.1 Councillors are responsible to the electorate and serve as long as their term of office lasts. Officers are responsible to the authority and carry out the Councils work under the direction of the Council, Executive and Committees.

#### **2.2 Councillors:**

Elected Councillors are responsible for:

- (a) Giving political leadership
- (b) Initiating and determining the policy of the authority
- (c) Acting as advocates for their constituents
- (d) Democratic accountability for the delivery of council services
- (e) The scrutiny of council services
- (f) The promotion of partnership working

- 2.3 It is not the role of Councillors to involve themselves in the day to day management of the authority's services
- 2.4 Councillors of the Executive, chairs and vice chairs have additional responsibilities. These responsibilities will result in increased expectations and relationships with officers that are more complex. Such Councillors must still respect the impartiality of officers and must not ask them to undertake work of a party political nature or compromise their position with other Councillors or other officers.

## **2.5 Officers**

Officers are responsible for:

- (a) Providing professional advice and information to Councillors in developing and implementing policy and in decision-making;
- (b) Implementing decisions of Councillors;
- (c) Day to day administration of the authority;
- (d) Managerial and operational decisions taken within the Councils scheme of delegation;
- (e) Information to and consultation with local people about council services.

The Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer have responsibilities in law over and above their obligations to the Council and its Councillors, and which they must be allowed to discharge.

- 2.6 Councillors and officers will wish to discuss policy issues and officers will require political guidance in preparing proposals. When officers prepare reports for Councillor decision they have a duty to give advice in accordance with their professional expertise and own professional codes of conduct. In some situations officers will be under a duty to submit a report on a particular matter. Officers expect to have their professional integrity respected and not to be influenced or required to reduce options, withhold information or make recommendations to the Executive or a Committee, which they cannot support professionally.

## **3. Working relationships**

### **3.1 Councillors can expect the following from officers:**

- (a) a commitment to the authority as a whole and not to any political group;
- (b) perform their duties effectively and efficiently;
- (c) a working partnership;
- (d) an understanding of respective roles and pressures;
- (e) timely responses to enquiries and complaints;
- (f) impartial professional advice;
- (g) regular and up to date information on matters which are appropriate and relevant to their needs;

- (h) awareness of and sensitivity to the political environment;
- (i) courtesy and appropriate confidentiality;
- (j) training and development in order to carry out their role effectively;
- (k) that employees will not use their relationship with Councillors to advance their personal interests to influence decisions improperly;
- (l) compliance with the officer code of conduct;
- (m) support for the role of councillors as the local representatives of the authority, within any scheme for Councillor support approved by the authority.

### **3.2 Officers can expect the following from Councillors:**

- (a) a working partnership;
- (b) an understanding of respective roles and pressures;
- (c) political leadership and direction;
- (d) courtesy and appropriate confidentiality;
- (e) not to be subject to bullying or put under undue pressure;
- (f) not to use their position or relationship with officers to advance their personal interests or to influence decisions improperly;
- (g) compliance with the Councillor Code of Conduct.

3.3 Mutual trust and respect between Councillors and officers is essential, but gives rise to two contrasting requirements. On the one hand close personal familiarity can damage the relationship and prove embarrassing to other Councillors and officers, but on the other hand, Councillors must bear in mind that officers cannot respond to personal criticism in the same way that other Councillors can, and should temper their remarks accordingly. This is particularly important when Councillors are dealing with less senior staff.

3.4 The normal conduct of business will mean that Councillors may deal directly with some staff below senior level. These dealings will be conducted according to the principles outlined in this protocol and any difficulties should be reported to the relevant **Director**, ~~Head of Service~~.

3.5 Councillors should bear in mind that unless there is an on-going relationship with a particular member of staff, for example in relation to a case or application they are dealing with, Councillors are expected to deal in the first instance with the Chief Executive, Directors, and Heads of Service and their deputies. This is because:

- (a) Chief and senior officers are in a better position to provide authoritative information or advice;
- (b) They need to be aware of any questions or complaints raised by Councillors;
- (c) They are able to respond to Councillors requests, for example by making a judgement as to whether action may be taken under officers' delegated authority; and
- (d) They are able to investigate and deal with any shortcomings there might be at the point of service delivery

In addition, this avoids the possibility of junior staff being 'intimidated' or even 'bullied' by over-enthusiastic Members.

#### **4. At meetings**

- 4.1 Officers and Councillors will most frequently come into contact with each other at the various meetings held to conduct Council business, and at partnership, area and other consultative bodies. The respective roles of Councillors and officers may vary according to the purpose of the meeting and therefore their relationship to each other will also vary. There are some basic rules that will apply in all situations.
- 4.2 At all times Councillors and officers will show respect to one another. Although Councillors are entitled to question officers at meetings they must avoid personal attacks on officers and ensure that criticism is constructive and well founded. Officers will expect to have the opportunity to explain what appears to be an inconsistency.
- 4.3 Wherever a public meeting is organised to consider a local issue, all the members representing the wards affected should, as a matter of course, be invited to attend the meeting. Similarly when the Council undertakes any form of consultative exercise on a local issue, the ward Councillors should be notified at the outset of the exercise.

#### **5. Working with Political Groups**

- 5.1 Political groups have an important role to play in the development of policy and the political management of the authority. Whilst the operation of the political groups must be supported by the authority, it is important that the officer corps remain politically neutral, and avoid being identified with any political group.
- 5.2 Officers will give advice and information to any councillor or group of councillors on the Executive or Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.3 If the resource implications of providing information are considerable, the Leaders of the political groups and the Chief Executive will discuss and agree what information will be provided by officers.
- 5.4 Officer advice and analysis will be made available to the main minority party, for example in relation to preparation of amendments to the budget prior to the annual ratemaking meeting of the Council. Where the main minority party requests significant work by officers that is likely to disrupt other essential work, the Chief Executive will be advised and will decide whether the officer resources can be committed.

**Reports:**

- 5.5 Political groups may request the Chief Executive or a **Executive** Director to prepare written reports on matters relating to the authority for consideration by the group.
- 5.6 Officer reports will be factual and may identify options with the merits or otherwise of these. Reports will not deal with any political implications of the matter or any options set out and recommendations will not be made to a political group.
- 5.7 Where a report is prepared for a political group, the Chief Executive will advise all other groups that the report has been prepared and will provide a copy to any group on request.

**Officer attendance:**

- 5.8 Any political group may request the Chief Executive or an **Executive** Director to attend a meeting of the group to advise on any matter relating to the Authority.
- 5.9 The Chief Executive or **Executive** Director may arrange for the attendance of a representative in his/her stead, or may decline to attend or provide representation where he/she believes that the particular issue is of such a political nature that it would be inappropriate to attend.
- 5.10 Officer advice will be factual and may identify options with the merits or otherwise of these. Advice will not deal with any political implications of the matter or any option.
- 5.11 Where an officer attends a political group, the Chief Executive will advise all other groups that the officer has attended and the subject on which he/she has advised.
- 5.12 Officers will respect the confidentiality of any matter that they hear in the course of attending a political group meeting.

## **6. Working with Overview and Scrutiny**

- 6.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committees have the power to require Executive Councillors and officers to appear before them and answer questions. Harrow's Constitution states that officer attendance should be by the Chief Executive, **Executive** Director or **Director** ~~Head of Service~~, but that they may, if appropriate arrange for other staff to attend meetings to assist.
- 6.2 The Council has agreed that there will be no formal separation of officer support between the Executive and Scrutiny functions. The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that staffing support is adequate. It is not anticipated that officers will be faced with conflicts of interest in having to serve both Executive and Scrutiny, but

should any problems arise, they should be raised with the Chief Executive.

**Further information about Councillor and officer involvement in Overview and Scrutiny can be found in the Protocols on Overview and Scrutiny.**

## **7. Officer appointments**

- 7.1 Appointments at Chief Officer, **Executive** Director and **Director** ~~Head of Service~~ level are made by a Councillor level selection committee or panel. All other appointments are made at officer level, other than employees working in the political group offices, where the **Chief Executive** may invite a relevant Councillor to join the interview panel and to participate in the selection process.
- 7.2 Staffing matters (including discipline, training, setting and monitoring performance) are dealt with by the relevant managers, though the relevant Executive Councillor may agree the performance targets in the case of chief officers.
- 7.3 Councillors wishing to comment on an individual officer's performance and/or deficiencies are usually expected to raise the matter with the relevant service director in the first instance.

7.4 Specific provisions apply in relation to disciplinary action against the three Statutory officers (Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer, Chief Finance Officer) (see Officer Employment Procedure Rules in Part 4H of the Constitution).





# **MEMBERS HANDBOOK**

**MAY 2006**

# INTRODUCTION

The aim of this booklet is to provide an overview of the administrative arrangements designed to help you fulfil your role as a Councillor. It cannot hope to give you the answer to every question you may have, but if you feel we have missed something important please let us know so that we can include it in the next edition of this booklet.

## SECRETARIAL SUPPORT

The political Group Offices are located on the first floor of the Civic Centre. The Group offices provide the following support to Members:

- Typing, faxing and photocopying
- Receiving incoming telephone calls on behalf of Councillors
- Initiating correspondence on behalf of Councillors

There is also a photocopying machine in room 135 on the first floor for Members to use for Council business. This machine operates by keying in a code number. The respective party codes may be obtained from the group secretariats.

By law, secretarial services, photocopying, telephones and other resources must not be used for work of a party political nature. The service is not provided for any form of Ward, Party work or electioneering or on behalf of any other body.

### GROUP OFFICE CONTACT NUMBERS:

**Conservative Group Office**, Room 107, Civic Centre

Tel: 020 8424 1236 (or x2236), 020 8424 1942 (or x2942), 020 8424 1852 (or x2852)

**Labour Group Office, Room 102 Civic Centre**

Tel: 020 8424 1897 (or x2897), 020 8424 1337 (or x2337)

**Liberal Democrat Group Office**, Room 112 Civic Centre

Tel: 020 8424 1998 (or x2998), 020 8424 1404 (or x2404)

## MAIL BOXES

Democratic Services provide, for those Councillors who need it, a black secure mailbox for the delivery of Council mail. If you would like to use this facility please phone Linda Bradford/Angela Pedersen in Democratic Services on 020 8424 1263/1277 who will arrange for you to have a mailbox installed.

## COUNCILLORS POST/GREEN POSTAL BAGS

Democratic Services will provide you with three Green Postal Bags for the delivery and return of any Council mail to and from your home address.

Council mail may also be posted through the letterbox at the **First Floor Reception** at any time. Please keep all three Green Bags in circulation, as using envelopes can be costly.

Delivery of Council mail will be by Council courier in the 'green bag' three times per week, on **Tuesday AM, Thursday AM and Friday PM**. All Council Committee papers and other correspondence to Members are sent through this system. Post is also distributed at Council/Committee meetings. The Green Bag may also be used by Members to return mail to the Council. Additional deliveries may be arranged where necessary (Your Group Office can provide a charge code for this service). The green bags are often very bulky and if as a result the mail cannot be posted a green slip will be posted indicating the mail will be returned to the Civic Centre and sent out on the next delivery day. On Fridays undelivered mail will be left at main reception for collection by the relevant Councillor.

## **CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS/RECYCLING WASTE**

Democratic Services provide a collection service for all waste Agenda/Council papers and will issue you with white confidential waste bags as required. When the bag is full please inform Linda Bradford or Angela Pedersen in Democratic Services on 020 8424 1263/1277, who will arrange for its collection during a mail delivery.

Brown recycling sacks are also provided in all Group Offices for recycling non-confidential paper.

## **FEMALE MEMBERS CLOAKROOM FACILITIES**

There is a Lady Members Cloakroom facility on the first floor with a digital keypad security lock. The code for the keypad is C1627. Twenty lockers can be found within the washroom and to obtain your locker key please contact Linda Bradford/Angela Pedersen at the First Floor Reception.

## **MEMBERS' LIBRARY**

There is a small library for Members' use situated on the First Floor, Civic Centre, Room 114. Documents for **viewing only** are kept and must not be removed from the library. Democratic Services also have a range of monthly Journals. A desk and telephone (ext. 2931) are also provided for your use.

## **MEMBERS' PARTICULARS**

Upon your election you will be given a yellow form headed **Members' Particulars**. This form is **Urgent** and should be completed and returned in full immediately to Linda Bradford/Angela Pedersen in Democratic Services (First floor reception). The information on this form is used to complete the Democratic Services database for

address labels and contact lists for Council officers and members of the public. Please remember to tell us if any of these details change.

You will also receive two forms that are urgently required by the Council Payroll Office so that you can be paid your allowances. The two forms are a request for your personal details, including banking details and a P46 form to be completed for the Tax Office. Please return both of these forms to Payroll Office (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor South Wing, Civic Centre) as soon as you can.

## **ID CARDS/CAR PARKING PASSES/ACCESS CONTROL CARDS**

Two passes, one for access to the Civic Centre offices and one to gain entry to a Car Park, will be issued at the 'Members' Welcome Evening. Alternatively, they can be issued via your Group Office.

## **MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES**

The Council adopts a Scheme for the payment of allowances to Councillors each year before 31st March. The Scheme may be changed at any time. (See the full Members' Allowances Scheme in Part 6 of the Constitution for current rates of allowances.)

All Councillors are paid a Basic Allowance, which includes an amount calculated to cover in-borough travel. Those Councillors with particular additional responsibilities (e.g. Chairs of Committees, Portfolio Holders) also receive a Special Responsibility Allowance. After you have completed the relevant forms, these allowances will be paid automatically without a claim being made. Councillors may forgo their allowances. If you wish to forgo your allowances, please contact Kate Boulter (Democratic Services, 020 8424 1269) for an 'opt out' form.

If you have to travel outside the borough on Council business, you can claim for travel and subsistence (see the full Members' Allowances Scheme in Part 6 of the Constitution for approved duties).

Councillors with dependent relatives may also claim for the costs of requiring a hired in alternative carer. The allowance is subject to a maximum level and is not payable if the alternative carer is a member of your family. (See the full Members' Allowances Scheme in Part 6 of the Constitution for approved duties for which allowances can be claimed) An example form and conditions are included at the end of this pack.

Claim forms for travel and subsistence and the Carers allowances are available from **Kate Boulter, Democratic Services Room 139 or Tel: 020 8424 1269 (or x2269).**

If you need to claim for one of these allowances, do so promptly and in any event within 2 months of the duty for which the allowance is being claimed. The timetable for submission of claims is as follows:

CLAIMS PERIOD	CLAIM FORMS TO BE RETURNED TO <b>CORPORATE SERVICES</b> BY
MAY	To be confirmed
JUNE	To be confirmed
JULY	To be confirmed
AUGUST	To be confirmed
SEPTEMBER	To be confirmed
OCTOBER	To be confirmed
NOVEMBER	To be confirmed
DECEMBER	To be confirmed
JANUARY	To be confirmed
FEBRUARY	To be confirmed
MARCH	To be confirmed
APRIL	To be confirmed

**Note: Basic and In-Borough Travel and Subsistence Allowances, together with any payment for a Special Responsibility Allowance is paid currently without any requirement to claim.**

You will be paid your allowances by credit transfer direct to your bank account on 25<sup>th</sup> of each month or the preceding working day if this falls on a weekend or bank holiday. A payslip will be delivered to you via the Councillors' post system before payday.

## **YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS A MEMBER**

As a Councillor you have many rights (for example, to information) and responsibilities (for example, to declare your interests). Information about these issues can be found as follows:

<b>Information about.....</b>	<b>Where can I find it?</b>
Access to Information/Agendas and reports	Council Constitution Part 4 and special briefings/guidance notes (how to request a particular agenda is covered later in this guide)
Members' Interests/Register of Interests	Information pack issued with induction material
Code of Conduct	Constitution and guidance from the standards committee
Procedures at Meetings	Constitution Part 4
Dispensations	Guidance from the Standards Committee

## **DEALING WITH THE MEDIA**

The Council's Communications Unit deals with media queries relating to the Council. If an enquiry requires a comment/statement from a Member or Portfolio Holder a Communications Officer will contact the Member concerned. Any media queries that have political connotations will be referred directly to the relevant group office.

## **REFRESHMENTS**

Tea and coffee is provided at approximately 9.00pm for Councillors at evening Council, Cabinet and Development Control meetings (but not generally at subsidiary body meetings e.g. Panels, etc). In addition, Councillors can order a cold meal if coming to a meeting straight from work (you will have to pay for this). Details of this service are available from the Catering Manager (020 8424 1062 or Ext. 2062).

## **IT EQUIPMENT AND TELEPHONES**

A guide to the availability and rules relating to Councillors use of Council provided IT equipment and telephones will be provided to you separately.

## **WARD SURGERIES**

Ward surgeries are arranged by your political party.

## **USE OF COUNCIL ROOMS**

There are six Committee Rooms that can be booked by Councillors without charge, but **only** for meetings for business directly related to their work as a Councillor. Room bookings for party political meetings must be handled through the political group office. Room bookings for private purposes can be made and will be charged at the usual rate. Further details on room bookings and the associated costs are available

from Linda Bradford/Angela Pedersen in Democratic Services on 020 8424 1263/1277.

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES**

All Departments operate their own complaints procedures. Whilst the procedures are similar the nature of the services being dealt with are very varied and some require slightly different arrangements. The relevant Director or Head of Service can provide further information.

## **THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES SECTION**

The Democratic Services Section is part of the Legal Services Department. The section provides an effective system of administration to assist the making and implementation of decisions by the Council, Cabinet and other Committees and Panels through the preparation and despatch of agendas and the minuting of meetings. It is the section's responsibility to ensure that all decisions of the Council, Executive and associated bodies are accurately recorded and published and that the officers responsible are advised of the action required to be implemented.

The list of Democratic Services officers set out below shows who you should contact for further information about a particular Member level body. For assistance on any query about Council, Executive or Committee procedures, standing orders or the law relating to local authority meetings, please feel free to contact the relevant Democratic Services officer. An organisation chart for the Section is also attached (to follow).

## **TIMETABLING OF MEETINGS**

A function of the Corporate Governance section is to arrange the scheduling of Member level meetings. Before the beginning of each Municipal Year, Cabinet approves a calendar of meetings for the forthcoming Municipal Year. It is inevitable that dates of meetings will sometimes have to be changed. As there are often more meetings than dates available there are frequently two or more meetings taking place on the same evening. While efforts are made to avoid Councillors being "double booked", this does sometimes occur where memberships overlap. To help deal with this, reserve Councillors are appointed for all committee meetings, except Cabinet (see Procedure rules for Committees in Part 4 of the Constitution).

The timetable seeks to avoid meetings being held on a Friday and on days on which religious festivals may obviate a Member's attendance.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF AGENDAS**

Agendas for Committees will automatically be sent to all the members of that Committee. A Councillor may receive agenda papers for meetings for which he or she is not a member. Soon after the membership of all Member level bodies has been determined by Council and Cabinet, a questionnaire will be given to all Councillors asking them to indicate which papers they would like to receive. Some restraint is requested not just because of cost but also because you may find you cannot read it all. The request can be changed at any time by telling a member of the Democratic Services Section. All agendas and minutes will also be available on the Council's intranet and internet sites.

A weekly list of all meetings is sent to all Members at the end of the preceding week. This will be inclusive of all formal Member level meetings. It also enables Members to know of those meetings that meet on an ad hoc basis and for which there is no programme of dates.

**Preparation of agendas and despatch of reports are co-ordinated by the Democratic Services Section. In accordance with statutory requirements, all agendas for meetings open to the public will be circulated at least 5 clear working days before a meeting. Supplemental agendas may be issued after that date.**

## **MINUTES/DECISION NOTES**

Officers in Democratic Services prepare minutes of all Member-level meetings. No transcript of the deliberations of meetings is taken. The primary purpose of the minutes is to record the decisions taken. A brief preamble is usually all that accompanies the recorded decision.

The results of votes taken are not recorded but any Councillor wishing to have a record in the formal minutes of his or her decision can request this. A request for such a record to be noted in the minutes must be made at the time that the decision is made.

Draft minutes are shown to the Chair for information. The Director of Legal Services retains responsibility for their accuracy.

Where the power to take the decision rests with the parent body, then the Committee or subsidiary body will make a recommendation to that body. This will normally be accompanied by a longer and more comprehensive preamble to assist the parent body to consider the recommendation. Recommendations to a parent body are always set out in the first part of the minutes and are followed by the minutes.

The Minutes of Council and Committees are published on a monthly basis in the 'Council, Cabinet and Committee Minutes Volume,' which is circulated to all Members.

Decisions made at Cabinet meetings and by individual portfolio holders will be published when appropriate, to allow the effective operation of the call-in procedure (see Part 4F of the Constitution).

A minor correction to the minutes, if not contentious, can be agreed by the committee/panel at the next meeting.

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS**

Your Standards Pack sets out your responsibilities in relation to your Standards of behaviour and when you must declare an interest. If you have to declare an interest at a meeting, you should first declare whether it is a personal or prejudicial interest and then declare the nature of that interest so that both can be recorded in the minutes.

**This list is subject to change during May/June 2006**



**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER CONTACT FOR THE COUNCIL'S  
MEMBER LEVEL COMMITTEES**

<b>1. COUNCIL</b>	
<b>2. CABINET</b>	
<p>Best Value Advisory Panel          Better Government for Older People Panel          Budget Review Working Group          Education Admissions and Awards Advisory Panel          Grants Advisory Panel          Harrow Business Consultative Panel          Housing Improvement Options Advisory Panel          New Harrow Project Panel          Publications Advisory Panel          South Harrow Study Panel          Strategic Planning Advisory Panel          Supporting People Panel          Town Centre Project Panel          Traffic Advisory Panel          Wealdstone Regeneration Panel</p>	
<b>3. CONSULTATIVE FORUMS</b>	
<p>Community Consultative Forum          Education Consultative Forum          Employees' Consultative Forum          Harrow Admissions Forum          Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum</p>	
<b>4. AUDIT COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>5. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>6. LICENSING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE</b>	
<p>Chief Officer Appointments Panel          Early Retirement Sub-Committee          Education Awards Appeals Panel          Licensing Panel          NNDR Discretionary Rate Relief Appeals Panel          Pension Fund Investments Panel          Personnel Appeals Panel          Social Services Appeals Panel</p>	
<b>7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	

	<p>Environment and Economy Scrutiny Sub-Committee  Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee  Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee  Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee  Call-in Sub-Committee</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>9.</b>	STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	
<b>10.</b>	<b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b>	
	Member Development Panel	
<b>11.</b>	<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	
	<p>Education Appeals Panel  Harrow on the Hill Forum  Harrow Strategic Partnership Board  Harrow Strategic Partnership Executive  Harrow Town Centre Steering Group  Open Budget Steering Group  Trading Standards Consortium  Harrow Police and Community Consultative Group  Independent Custody Visitors Panel</p>	

KEY

**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICERS**

Claire Vincent Democratic and Practice Manager Room 115a	Tel: 020 8424 1637 Email: <a href="mailto:claire.vincent@harrow.gov.uk">claire.vincent@harrow.gov.uk</a>
Alison Brooker Room 147	Tel: 020 8424 1266 Email: <a href="mailto:alison.brooker@harrow.gov.uk">alison.brooker@harrow.gov.uk</a>
Michelle Fernandes Room 143	Tel: 020 8424 1542 Email: <a href="mailto:michelle.fernandes@harrow.gov.uk">michelle.fernandes@harrow.gov.uk</a>
Daksha Ghelani Room 145	Tel: 020 8424 1881 Email: <a href="mailto:daksha.ghelani@harrow.gov.uk">daksha.ghelani@harrow.gov.uk</a>
Kate Boulter Room 139	Tel: 020 8424 1269 Email: <a href="mailto:kate.boulter@harrow.gov.uk">kate.boulter@harrow.gov.uk</a>
Laura Kell Room 143	Tel: 020 8424 1265 Email: <a href="mailto:laura.kell@harrow.gov.uk">laura.kell@harrow.gov.uk</a>
Zoe Crane Room 139	Tel: 020 8424 1883 Email: <a href="mailto:zoe.crane@harrow.gov.uk">zoe.crane@harrow.gov.uk</a>
Nick Wale Room 143	Tel: 020 8424 1323 Email: <a href="mailto:nick.wale@harrow.gov.uk">nick.wale@harrow.gov.uk</a>
Sam Challis Room 145	Tel: 020 8424 1785 Email: <a href="mailto:sam.challis@harrow.gov.uk">sam.challis@harrow.gov.uk</a>
James Chamberlain Room 139	Tel: 020 8424 1264 Email: <a href="mailto:james.chamberlain@harrow.gov.uk">james.chamberlain@harrow.gov.uk</a>
<b><u>Administration</u> (Education Appeals/Members' Post Dispatch)</b>	
Linda Bradford First floor reception	Tel: 020 8424 1263 Email: <a href="mailto:linda.bradford@harrow.gov.uk">linda.bradford@harrow.gov.uk</a>
Angela Pedersen First floor reception	Tel: 020 8424 1277 Email: <a href="mailto:angela.pederson@harrow.gov.uk">angela.pederson@harrow.gov.uk</a>

COUNCILLOR.....

Name of Dependent(s) .....

Relationship to Dependent(s) .....

Approved Duty	Date	Length of Duty (To nearest ½ hour)	Meeting of Unpredictable Length <i>(If note 3 overleaf applies, please state carer's contracted hours; for daytime quasi- judicial meeting state officer's estimate of length)</i>	Number of Hours Claimed	Amount Claimed £	Is Claim for Specialist/ Profession al Care Yes/No	Signature of Carer Confirming Details of Care Provided & Receipt of Payment Indicated

**Declaration:** I have read the Conditions of the Scheme printed on the reverse of this form and declare that to enable me to perform the above Approved Duty/Duties it was necessary to provide care for the dependent relative(s) named.

Signed .....

Date .....

**[An invoice is also needed to claim for specialist, professional care.]**

**This form, duly signed should be sent to Lorna Pitt, Corporate & IT Services, Room L28.**

## CONDITIONS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE CARERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME

1. The allowance shall be payable only for the following approved duties.
  - A meeting of the executive.
  - A meeting of the committee of the executive.
  - A meeting of the authority.
  - A meeting of a committee or sub-committee of the authority.
  - A meeting of some other body to which the authority make appointments or nominations, or
  - A meeting of a committee or sub-committee of a body to which the authority make appointments or nominations.
  - A meeting which has both been authorised by the authority, a committee, or sub-committee of the authority or a joint committee of the authority and one or more other authorities, or a sub-committee of a joint committee and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited (if the authority is divided into several political groups) or to which two or more councillors have been invited (if the authority is not divided into political groups).
  - A meeting of a local authority association of which the authority is a member.
  - Duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in pursuance of any standing order requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened.
  - Duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises.
  - Duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with arrangements made by the authority for the attendance of pupils at a school approved for the purposes of section 342 of the Education Act 1996.
2.
  - (i) The maximum basic rate of payment to be £2.50 per half hour for the duration of the approved duty being the duration of the meeting and the Members' reasonable travelling time, together with the carers' reasonable travelling time [except where the employment of a professional carer is required for a specialist need in which case (ii) below applies].
  - (ii) Where a professional carer is required to meet a specialist need (e.g., a nurse for an elderly person) then actual costs will be paid **on receipt of an invoice.**
3. Where the length of a meeting cannot be predicted and payment to the carer is necessarily contractually committed, payment of up to four hours will be made. (For small quasi-judicial bodies, payment of up to eight hours for daytime meetings, based upon the lead officer's estimation of the time required for the meeting, will be made).
4. In addition, the reasonable travelling expenses of the person taking care of the dependent shall be reimbursed either at the appropriate public transport rate or, in cases

of urgency or where no public transport is available, the amount of any taxi fare actually paid.

5. The allowance is not to be paid where the carer is a member of the Member's household.
6. Members are required to specify the name of and their relationship to the dependent and **a receipt** confirming that the carer has received the payment **must be submitted**.

(Incorporated into Members' Allowance Scheme 10.5.2001).

# **A. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCILLORS**

This Code has been prepared and adopted by Harrow Council in accordance with Section 51 of the Local Government Act 2000. The parts of the text printed in bold comprise the mandatory provisions prescribed by the Secretary of State under Section 50 of the Local Government Act 2000. The rest of the text comprises additional text approved by the Council.

Every Councillor, including members of the Executive, as well as any co-opted member, must sign an undertaking to comply with the authority's Code. Any person may then make a written complaint to the Standards Board that a member has acted in breach of the authority's code. This will secure the investigation of the complaint, which may lead to sanctions being applied to the member by a Case Tribunal (overseen by the National Standards Board) or, where the Secretary of State provides by regulations, by the authority's Standards Committee.

## **PART 1**

### **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This Code defines the standards of conduct which will be required of all members of the authority in carrying out their duties, and in their relationships with the Council and the Council's officers.
- 1.2 All Councillors are required on accepting office to sign a declaration that they will comply with the Code.
- 1.3 The Code represents the standard against which the public, their fellow Councillors, the Standards Board and the authority's Standards Committee will judge Councillors' conduct. The local ombudsman may also regard a breach of the Code as incompatible with good administration, and may make a finding of maladministration by the authority in these circumstances.
- 1.4 Each member should make sure that he/she is familiar with the requirements for personal conduct set by the law and by the authority's Constitution, and the guidance contained in this Code. He/she should regularly review his/her personal circumstances with this in mind, particularly when those circumstances change. If in any doubt, he/she should seek advice from the authority's Monitoring Officer. In the end, however, the decision and the responsibility are those of the member.
- 1.5 **A member must observe the authority's code of conduct wherever he/she:**
  - (a) **conducts the business of the authority;**
  - (b) **conducts the business of the office to which he/she has been elected or appointed; or**



**(c) acts as a representative of the authority,**

**and references to a member's official capacity shall be construed accordingly.**

**1.6 This Code shall not, apart from paragraphs 4 and 5 below, have effect in relation to the activities of a member undertaken other than in an official capacity.**

**1.7 Where a member acts as a representative of the authority:**

**(a) on another relevant authority, he/she must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority's code of conduct; or**

**(b) on any other body, he/she must, when acting for that other body, comply with the authority's code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.**

**1.8 In this code, "member" includes a co-opted member of an authority.**

## **2. General Obligations**

**2.1 Every member has an over-riding duty as a Councillor to the whole local community and to act in the public interest.**

**2.2 Members have a special duty to their ward constituents, including those who did not vote for them.**

**2.3 Both Councillors and officers are servants of the public, and they are indispensable to one another. But their responsibilities are distinct. Councillors are responsible to the electorate and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. Officers are responsible to the Council. Their job is to give advice to Councillors and the Council, and to carry out the Council's work under the direction and control of the Council, their committees and sub-committees.**

**2.4 A member must:**

**(a) promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person;**

**(b) treat others with respect; and**

**(c) not do anything which compromises or which is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the authority.**

## **3. Confidentiality**

3.1 As a Councillor or a committee or sub-committee member, members necessarily acquire much information that has not yet been made public and is still confidential. It is a breach of trust to impart this information to others.

**3.2 A member must not:**

- (a) **disclose information given to him/her in confidence by anyone, or information acquired which he/she believes is of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorised to give it, or unless he/she is required by law to do so; nor**
- (b) **prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.**

3.3 For the purposes of the Code of Conduct, confidential information means:

- (a) information furnished to the Council by a Government Department upon terms (however expressed) which forbid the disclosure of the information to the public; and
- (b) information, the disclosure of which to the public is prohibited by order of a court.

4. Bringing the Authority into Disrepute

**4.1 A member must not in his/her official capacity, or any other circumstance, conduct himself/herself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing his/her office or authority into disrepute.**

4.2 In this context, acting or causing the authority to act:

- (a) unlawfully;
- (b) in such a manner as would give rise to a finding of maladministration;
- (c) in breach of any undertaking which the authority has given;
- (d) for the advantage of any particular person or interest rather than in the public interest.

5. Impartiality

**5.1 A member must not in his/her official capacity, or any other circumstance, use his/her position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for him or herself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage.**

6. Use of Council Facilities

**6.1 A member must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of the authority:**

- (a) **act in accordance with the authority's requirements; and**

- (b) ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the authority or of the office to which the member has been elected or appointed.**

6.2 You should always make sure that any facilities (such as transport, stationery, or secretarial services) provided by the authority for your use in your duties as a councillor or a committee, sub-committee member or member of the executive are used strictly for those duties and for no other purpose, except where the authority has specifically permitted limited private use in circumstances which do not cause significant additional cost to the authority.

## 7. Dealings with the Council

7.1 A member may have dealings with the Council on a personal level, for instance as a council tax payer, as a tenant, or as an applicant for a grant or a planning permission. A member should never seek or accept preferential treatment in those dealings because of his/her position as a councillor or a committee or sub-committee member or a member of the Executive. He/she should also avoid placing himself/herself in a position that could lead the public to think that he/she is receiving preferential treatment: for instance, by being in substantial arrears to the Council, or by using his his/her position to discuss a planning application personally with officers when other members of the public would not have the opportunity to do so. Likewise, a member should never use his/her position as a councillor or a committee or sub-committee member or a member of the Executive to seek preferential treatment for friends or relatives, or any firm of body with which he/she is personally connected.

## 8. Decision-Making

**8.1 A member must when reaching decisions -**

- (a) have regard to any relevant advice provided to him/her by:**
  - (i) the authority's Monitoring Officer acting in pursuance of his/her duties under section 5(2) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989; and**
  - (ii) the authority's Chief Finance Officer acting in pursuance of his/her duties under section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, and**
- (b) give the reasons for those decisions in accordance with the authority's requirements and any statutory requirements in relation to the taking of an executive decision.**

8.2 A member should when reaching decisions -

- (i) not act or cause the authority to act unlawfully, in such a manner as would give rise to a finding of maladministration, in breach of any undertaking to the Court which the authority has given, or for the advantage of any particular person or interest rather than in the public interest;
- (ii) have regard to the authority's obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998;
- (iii) take into account all material information of which he/she is aware and then take the decision on its merits and in the public interest;

In paragraph (b) above and in paragraph 11(3) below, "executive decision" is to be construed in accordance with any regulations made by the Secretary of State under Section 22 of the Local Government Act 2000.

## 9. Reporting Breaches

- 9.1 A member must, if he/she becomes aware of any conduct by another member which he reasonably believes involves a failure to comply with the authority's code of conduct, make a written allegation to that effect to the Standards Board for England as soon as it is practicable for him/her to do so.**
- 9.2 The Member must also copy the initial letter to the Standards Board for England, to the Council's Monitoring Officer.
- 9.3 If a Member is concerned that the conduct of another Member may constitute a failure to comply with the authority's code of conduct, he/she should approach the Council's Monitoring Officer for advice.

## PART 2

### INTERESTS

## 10. Personal Interests

- 10.1 A member must regard himself as having a personal interest in any matter if the matter relates to an interest in respect of which notification must be given under paragraphs 16.1 and 16.2 below, or if a decision upon it might reasonably be regarded as affecting to a greater extent than other council taxpayers, ratepayers, or inhabitants of the authority's area, the well-being or financial position of himself/herself, a relative or a friend or:**
- (a) any employment or business carried on by such persons;
  - (b) any person who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;
  - (c) any corporate body in which such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £5,000; or

- (d) any body listed in sub-paragraphs (a) to (e) of paragraph 16.2 below in which such persons hold a position of general control or management.

**10.2 In this paragraph:**

- (a) 'relative' means a spouse, partner, parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, step-son, step-daughter, child of a partner, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, or the spouse or partner of any of the preceding persons; and
- (b) 'partner' in sub-paragraph 10.2(a) above means a member of a couple who live together.

## **11. Disclosure of Personal Interests**

- 11.1 A member with a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.**
- 11.2 Decision-making by a single executive member is a matter of particular sensitivity, and where a member has a personal interest in a matter on which he/she may take a decision, even if it is not a prejudicial interest, he/she should wherever possible refer the matter to the Executive for a collective decision.
- 11.3 Subject to paragraph 14.1(b) below, a member with a personal interest in any matter who has made an executive decision in relation to that matter must ensure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of that interest.**

## **12. Prejudicial Interests**

- 12.1 Subject to paragraph 12.2 below, a member with a personal interest in a matter also has a prejudicial interest in that matter if the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgement of the public interest.**
- 12.2 A member may regard himself/herself as not having a prejudicial interest in a matter if that matter relates to:
- (a) another relevant authority of which he/she is a member;
  - (b) another public authority in which he/she holds a position of general control or management;
  - (c) a body to which he/she has been appointed or nominated by the authority as its representative;
  - (d) the housing functions of the authority where the member holds a tenancy or lease with a relevant authority, provided that he/she does not have arrears of rent with that relevant authority of more than two months, and provided that those functions do not relate particularly to the member's tenancy or lease;
  - (e) the functions of the authority in respect of school meals, transport and travelling expenses, where the member is a guardian or parent of a child in full time education, unless it relates particularly to the school which the child attends;
  - (f) the functions of the authority in respect of statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where the member is in receipt of, or is entitled to the receipt of such pay from a relevant authority; and

- (g) the functions of the authority in respect of an allowance or payment made under sections 173 to 176 of the Local Government Act 1972 or section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

### **13. Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

**13.1** For the purposes of this Part, a member must if he/she is involved in the consideration of a matter at a meeting of an overview and scrutiny committee of the authority or a sub-committee of such a committee, regard him/herself as having a personal and a prejudicial interest if that consideration relates to a decision made, or action taken, by another of the authority's:

- (a) committees or sub-committees; or
  - (b) joint committees or joint sub-committees,
- of which he/she may also be a member.

**13.2** But sub-paragraph 13.1 above shall not apply if that member attends that meeting for the purpose of answering questions or otherwise giving evidence relating to that decision or action.

### **14. Participation in Relation to Disclosed Interests**

**14.1** Subject to paragraph 14.2 below, a member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must -

- (a) withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting is being held whenever it becomes apparent that the matter is being considered at that meeting, unless he/she has obtained a dispensation from the authority's standards committee;
- (b) not exercise executive functions in relation to that matter; and
- (c) not seek improperly to influence a decision about that matter.

**14.2** A member with a prejudicial interest may, unless that interest is of a financial nature, and unless it is an interest of the type described in paragraph 13 above, participate in a meeting of the authority's -

- (a) overview and scrutiny committees; and
- (b) joint or area committees,

to the extent that such committees are not exercising functions of the authority or its executive.

**14.3** In deciding whether to continue to participate, a member should never do anything as a councillor which he/she could not justify to the public. A member's conduct, and what the public believes about a member's conduct, will affect the reputation of the authority, and of the party if the member belongs to one.

- 14.4 It is not enough to avoid actual impropriety. A member should at all times avoid any occasion for suspicion and any appearance of improper conduct.
- 14.5 If a member is in any doubt as to whether they should continue to participate in any matter, they should
- (a) consider whether a member of the public - if he or she knew all the facts - would reasonably think that your personal interest was so important that your decision on the matter would be affected by it. If he or she would think that your judgement would be affected, then it is likely that you have a prejudicial interest; and/or
  - (b) take advice from the Chair of the Council and/or from the Monitoring Officer at an early stage as to whether the situation permits continued participation.
- 14.6 **For the purposes of this Part, “meeting” means any meeting of -**
- (a) the authority;**
  - (b) the executive of the authority; or**
  - (c) any of the authority’s or its executive’s committees, sub-committees, joint committees, joint sub-committees, or area committees.**

15. Membership of Committees and Sub-Committees

- 15.1 **You, or some firm or body with which you are personally connected, may have professional, business or other personal interests within the area for which the Council are responsible. Such interests may be substantial and closely related to the work of one or more of the Council’s committees or sub-committees. For example, the firm or body may be concerned with planning, development, land, council housing, personnel matters or the letting of contracts for supplies, services or works. You should not seek, or accept, membership of any such committee or sub-committee if that would involve you in disclosing an interest so often that you could be of little value to the committee or sub-committee, or if it would be likely to weaken public confidence in the duty of the committee or sub-committee to work solely in the general public interest.**

### PART 3

#### THE REGISTER OF MEMBERS’ INTERESTS

16. Registration of Financial and Other Interests

- 16.1 **Within 28 days of the provisions of an authority’s code of conduct being adopted or applied to that authority or within 28 days of his election or appointment to office (if that is later), a member must register his or her financial interests in the authority’s register maintained under section 81(1) of the Local Government Act 2000 by providing written notification to the authority’s Monitoring Officer of:**



- (a) any employment or business carried on by him/her;
- (b) the name of the person who employs or has appointed him/her, the name of any firm in which he/she is a partner, and the name of any company for which he/she is a remunerated director;
- (c) the name of any person, other than a relevant authority, who has made a payment to him/her in respect of his election or any expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his duties;
- (d) *the name of any corporate body which has a place of business or land in the authority's area, and in which the member has a beneficial interest in a class of securities of that body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body;*
- (e) a description of any contract for goods, services or works made between the authority and him/herself or a firm in which he/she is a partner, a company of which he/she is a remunerated director, or a body of the description specified in sub-paragraph (d) above;
- (f) the address or other description (sufficient to identify the location) of any land in which he/she has a beneficial interest and which is in the area of the authority;
- (g) the address or other description (sufficient to identify the location) of any land where the landlord is the authority and the tenant is a firm in which he/she is a partner, a company of which he/she is a remunerated director, or a body of the description specified in sub-paragraph (d) above; and
- (h) the address or other description (sufficient to identify the location) of any land in the authority's area in which he/she has a licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy for 28 days or longer.

**16.2 Within 28 days of the provisions of the authority's code of conduct being adopted or applied to that authority or within 28 days of his or her election or appointment to office (if that is later), a member must register his or her other interests in the authority's register maintained under section 81(1) of the Local Government Act 2000 by providing written notification to the authority's Monitoring Officer of his or her membership of or position of general control or management in any -**

- (a) body to which he/she has been appointed or nominated by the authority as its representative;
- (b) public authority or body exercising functions of a public nature;
- (b) company, industrial and provident society, charity, or body directed to charitable purposes;
- (d) body whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy; and

**(e) trade union or professional association.**

**16.3 A member must within 28 days of becoming aware of any change to the interests specified under paragraph 16.1 or 16.2 above, provide written notification to the authority's Monitoring Officer of that change.**

	<b>ACRONYM</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
1.	BID	Business Improvement District
2.	BME	Black & Minority Ethnic
3.	BS	Business Services
4.	BTP	Business Transformation Partnership
5.	BVPI	Best Value Performance Indicator
6.	BVPP	Best Value Performance Plan
7.	CMT	Corporate Management Team
8.	CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
9.	CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
10.	CRM	Customer Relationship Management
11.	CYPMG	Children & Young People's Management Group
12.	DfES	Department for Education & Schools
13.	DIP	Document Image Processing
14.	DR	Disaster Recovery
15.	DWP	Department of Works & Pension
16.	ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
17.	FBS	Financial & Business Strategy
18.	FC	First Contact
19.	GIS	Geographical Information Systems
20.	H & S	Health & Safety
21.	HB	Housing Benefit
22.	HCU	Harrow Corporate University
23.	HMRC	Her Majesty Revenues & Customs
24.	HOST	Harrow Online Social care Technology
25.	HR	Human Resources
26.	HSE	Health & Safety Executive
27.	HSP	Harrow Strategic Partnership
28.	ICT/IT	Information & Communication Technology/information Technology
29.	IDEA	Improvement and Development Agency

	<b>ACRONYM</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
30.	IPAD	Individual Performance Appraisal & Development
31.	IR	Industrial Relations
32.	KPI	Key Performance Indicator
33.	LA	Local Authority
34.	LAA	Local Area Agreement
35.	LABGI	Local Authority Business Growth Incentives Scheme
36.	LG	Local Government
37.	LGPS	Local Government Pension Scheme
38.	LPG	Local Property Gazetteer
39.	LPSA	Local Public Service Agreement
40.	LSC	Learning & Skills Council
41.	MIS	Management Information System
42.	MMR	Middle Management Review
43.	NJC	National Joint Council
44.	NNDR	National Non-Domestic Rates
45.	OD	Organisational Development
46.	ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
47.	PCT	Primary Care Trust
48.	PI	Performance Indicator
49.	PPP	People, Policy and Performance
50.	SPR	Strategic Performance Report
51.	TfL	Transport for London
52.	TUPE	Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981
53.	VFM	Value For Money
54.	WLA	West London Alliance



Briefing Note 1  
Local Government Finance

The briefing paper gives a broad overview of the Local Government Finance Regime covering the following areas.

Spending Review  
Local Government Finance Settlement  
Balance of Funding Review and Lyons  
Gershon Efficiency Savings  
Prudential Code  
Local Authority Business Growth Incentives Scheme (LABGI)

1. Spending Review

The Government undertakes a rolling review of public spending every 2 years and covering a 3-year period. Reviews were undertaken in 2000, 2002, 2004 and a further review was due in 2006 but has been deferred to 2007 pending the findings of the Lyons review. Whilst the Spending Review indicates the total funding for LA services it does not give allocations down to individual Councils.

Key Themes included in SR2004 were:

- Real growth in spend across Government Departments including Local Government increasing by 2.7% p.a. on average over 3 years.
- *Efficiency drive (Gershon review) generating 2.5% efficiency savings per year*
- *Continuing reform agenda, e.g. Public Service Agreements and Local Area Agreements*

2. Local Government Finance Settlement

**2.1. Timetable.** The timetable for the Local Government settlement has been for a provisional announcement in November / early December each year. This follows a period of consultation on the formula to be used and data issues running from March until the autumn. A final announcement is then made at the end of January taking account of any representations made on the provisional settlement. In practice changes between provisional and final have tended to mainly involve correcting data problems and be relatively small.

**2.2. Formula Grant.**

From 2006-2007 the Government has introduced a new 4-block model. This comprises the following elements.

**2.2.1. Relative Needs Formula (RNF)** The RNFs are mathematical formulae that include information on the population, social structure and other characteristics of each authority.

These are intended to reflect the different characteristics of authorities that give rise to a need to spend. They are contentious and are the focus of lobbying to change the distribution of grant between authorities.

**2.2.2. Relative Resource Amount.** This is a negative figure and takes account of the fact that areas that can raise more income locally require less support from Government to provide services. The negative Relative Resource Amount is balanced against the positive proportion calculated for each authority by the Relative Needs Amount. It is based upon Council Tax base per head.

**2.2.3. Central Allocation.** This is a per capita allocation to authorities.

**2.2.4. Floor Damping.** The addition of the 3 blocks gives the authority's grant entitlement before damping. In order to ensure that each authority's budget position is manageable the Government ensures that authorities have a minimum increase in grant. For authorities with Education and social services responsibilities the minimum increase in 2006-2007 is 2% and in 2007-2008 is 2.7%. This is paid for by scaling back the grant of those authorities with increases above the floor. Harrow is on the floor in both years and receives the minimum increases.

2.2.5. In practice the important elements of the new system are the RNFs, because they affect the distribution between authorities and damping. RNFs are important because they affect the underlying distribution between authorities. Damping is important because they guarantee at least a minimum increase in grant each year. They also limit the maximum gain in each year so that if Harrow's underlying increase in 2006-2007 had been above the floor, 84% would have been scaled back.

The Government has moved to this method of presenting Formula Grant in order to move the focus from the totals for individual services to the total amount for the authority. Harrow's Formula Grant for 2006-2007 is £58.7m and £60.3m in 2007-2008. There is no equivalent of the Formula Spending Shares (FSS) used in the previous system. Whilst RNFs perform a similar role they are not expressed in cash terms and cannot be used in the same way.

**2.3. Three year Settlements.** In order to provide more certainty for planning the Government is moving to three-year settlements. The 2006-2007 settlement was accompanied by provisional figures for 2007-2008. The government does not anticipate making changes to the provisional figures. From 2008-2009 the Government settlements will be set for three years at a time, in line with the Spending Review timetable. It is likely that there will be little or no change to Formula Grant during the 3-year period.

**2.4. Settlement Working Group (SWG).** Each year the Local Authority associations together with professional groups and Government officials examine grant distribution issues. It is anticipated that SWG will continue to meet during 2006-2007, however the move to multi year settlements must inevitably change the way the group functions. It is likely that the focus of work will become longer term as the system moves to 3-year settlements and there is unlikely to be significant change in 2007-2008. The next year where significant change is likely to take place is 2008-2009.

## **2.5. Capping**

The Government has reserve powers to cap authorities where it regards Council Tax increases as excessive and 9 authorities were capped in 2005-2006. For 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 the

government has not published capping criteria but has indicated that authorities should increase Council tax by less than 5% in each year.

## **2.6. Dedicated Schools Grant**

From 2006-2007 Schools expenditure has been taken out of the RSG system and replaced with a ring fenced specific grant. In 2006-2007 this is £118.6m, i.e. more than double the formula Grant received.

## **3. Balance of Funding and Lyons**

In July 2004, the Government commissioned Sir Michael Lyons to undertake an independent inquiry to consider the case for changes to the present system of local government funding in England and make recommendations, including on the reform of council tax. In September 2005 the Government announced an extension to the Inquiry's terms of reference to cover questions relating to the function of local government and its future role as well as how it is funded. At the same time the revaluation of Council Tax due in 2007 was cancelled. An interim report was published in December 2005 which summarised Sir Michael's work so far and initiating a consultation on his expanded remit on local government role and functions. The final report is now due at the end of 2006.

3.1. Interim report. The interim report endorsed Council tax as the main local government tax. It was less conclusive about a range of other issues including

- Gearing. Council Tax provides only 25% of revenue expenditure on average.
- Fairness. Meeting the criticism that council tax is unfair.
- Complexity. The high degree of public confusion around local government funding and what council tax pays for.
- Council Tax benefit. Take up of benefit, low savings limit threshold.
- Revaluation. Council Tax bands not reviewed since the start of the system.
- Reform options. Extra Council Tax bands, regional banding.
- Other Taxes. Local income Tax, tourist taxes, payroll taxes etc.
- Returning business rates to local authorities.
- Land taxation
- Equalisation

## **4. Gershon Review**

The results of Sir Peter Gershon's review of efficiency in the public sector were published with and incorporated into Spending Review 2004. Local authorities are expected to make 2.5% efficiency gains p.a. over the period 2005-2006 to 2007-2008 i.e. 7.5% in all of which at least half must be cashable. The balance can be from measurable improvements in performance for the same resources. Cuts in service and increases in charges do not count.

The ways that it is anticipated that efficiencies will be achieved are as follows

Improved Procurement

The implementation of E-Government

Improved People Management

Authorities are required to say at the beginning of each year how they anticipate meeting the target, and report actual performance at the end of the year. Actual performance is subject to review by the council's auditors.

In 2005-2006 Harrow's estimated Gershon Efficiencies were £3.9m. These were planned to be achieved in a number of different areas, although the main areas were improved procurement and early savings in the implementation of the Business Transformation Project.

## 5. Local Government Act 2003 and Prudential Code

- LGA 2003 made substantial changes to Local Government Finance, the most significant of which were
  - *A new capital finance system (The Prudential Code)*
  - *The introduction of Business Improvement Districts and the Local Authority Business Growth Incentives Scheme*

## 6. Prudential Code

6.1. The Prudential Code came into effect from 2004-2005 and replaces the previous system of Government prescribed capital controls. It gives local authorities new powers to borrow to fund capital expenditure where it is prudent to do so. The key objectives of the Prudential Code are that capital investment plans must be affordable, prudent, sustainable, and follow good practice.

6.2. Local Authorities set their own borrowing limits taking into account a number of indicators and factors. Central Government has retained a reserve power to limit borrowing.

6.3. The Section 151 Officer (Myfanwy Barrett) is responsible for recommending the Prudential Indicators to annual meetings of the Council. The Council then sets the borrowing limits under which the authority will operate. The Code is linked to the development of the Medium Term Budget Strategy.

6.4. Issues which must be considered in planning capital expenditure are:

- Affordability, e.g. implications for the Council Tax
- Prudence, e.g. risks associated with borrowing
- Sustainability, e.g. implications for external borrowing
- Stewardship of Assets, e.g. Asset Management Plans
- Service Objectives, e.g. Strategic planning for the Council

## 7. Local Authority Business Growth Incentives Scheme (LABGI)

In order to encourage economic development the government has introduced the Local Authority Business Growth Incentives Scheme (LABGI). This allows authorities to keep a proportion of the growth in Business Rates above a historic base. Nationally this is worth £114m. For 2005-2006 the proportion was 70% and for Harrow the base is -0.7%. In practice Harrow's RV declined by 2.2% and so no grant was payable. It is currently anticipated that no grant will be payable again in 2006-2007.

## 8. Further Information.

This paper provides an overview of Local government finance only. Further information is available in CIPFA's Councillors' Guide to Local Government Finance, a copy of which is available in the Group Offices. Information in respect of particular aspects of the Local



Government Finance System can be obtained by contacting Steve Tingle (Senior Professional, Financial Policy and Projects).



### *Briefing Note 3*

## *Managing the Media*

### **What makes local newspapers tick?**

Journalists see themselves as independent guardians of democracy. They often see themselves as representing “oppressed” members of the public fighting against mighty corporations or “government machines” (and yes, in Harrow’s case that can often mean us). It is not a newspaper’s job to promote the council.

The best we can ask from our local newspapers is for reporting that is fair and accurate. The way to secure that is to provide factual information to journalists together with relevant background.

There are two sides to every story and journalists are trained to recognise that. If we are asked for a reaction they already have the “facts” as they see them of one side of the story. All they require from us are the facts from our side and the background to reaching the decision we have made.

### **Why do they get things wrong?**

There is less investment in local papers now than there was in the past. This means fewer reporters writing the same number of stories – and inevitably mistakes creep in. Often, reporters no longer have the time to get the bottom of issues. There is more pressure to produce copy quickly and less time to devote to really understanding an issue. We can help ensure articles are accurate and in context, by providing factual information to journalists together with relevant background.

### **The benefits of establishing a good relationship with the local press**

Local journalists rely on public figures like councillors to keep them informed of what is going on in the community, what local people are concerned about, and to explain issues to them.

Councillors are a key contact for journalists. A good working relationship can be beneficial to both sides. The Harrow Observer divides its reporters into patches, so there is a specific reporter for Roxeth, West Harrow, Harrow Weald etc.

If they regard you as a helpful and useful contact, they are more likely to listen to you, take what you say seriously, and stress your point of view prominently in any article.

They are also less likely to write something negative which jeopardises the relationship with a contact. The old maxim '*don't bite the hand that feeds you*' is something local journalists forget at their peril!

### Interviews: Some dos and don'ts...

- **Give yourself time to prepare.** Journalists are always in a hurry, but don't be pressured into responding immediately. Don't be afraid to say "Can I phone you back in ½ hour?" This will give time to get your facts straight and think about your **key messages**.
- **Be clear on what you are being asked to comment on**, and get the journalist to spell out, point by point, any criticism that has been levelled at you or your position on an issue. A good journalist should do this anyway.
- **Establish some ground rules at the beginning of the conversation.** You may want to say "can I talk you round the subject first" and then if the reporter wants a quote, give it at the end. Local journalists will probably accept this, and it gives you extra time to get your thoughts straight. This is less advisable if you are dealing with national journalists.
- **Beware of off the record**, it means different things to different people. You might say something "off the record" and find yourself still quoted as a "A council insider said this week..." or "A Labour/Tory/Lib Dem councillor said..." Remember, the most fail-safe method is to assume that anything you say may be used in an article. If you don't want a piece of information to appear in the paper don't say it. "Anything you say will be used in evidence against you".
- **Be firm** with the reporter and don't get tricked into agreeing to something you don't necessarily agree with. Repeat your key points and leave the journalist in no doubt as to what your point of view is.
- Think, how will this read in print? **Try not to become too emotional.** Journalists will instinctively pick up and use the most over the top quote.
- **Avoid local government jargon** and complex language – speak in plain English. "CPA" is understood by everyone involved in local government, but means nothing to most of the public. If you use words like Best Value, medium term budget strategy, make sure you explain them.
- **Avoid waffle and spin** – over-the-top comment makes journalists cynical towards you and leads them to thinking you have something to hide.

### **What if it all goes wrong?**

Remember, today's newspaper wraps tomorrow's fish and chips. Is it really worth kicking up a fuss? Is it actually in your interest to drag the story out another week? Or is dignified silence better? After all, people have short memories.

If it is serious and you feel misrepresented, you are entitled to right of reply. A letter to the editor is perhaps the best as long as you stick to the word limit, they should print it unedited.

Whatever you choose, always make known to the reporter/editor you are unhappy. It will make them think more carefully next time about upsetting you!

### **How do I get things in the paper?**

Build good contacts and get some favours in the bank.

Do not assume that you will be contacted about a particular issue. If you want to comment on something you know is "live", it is your responsibility to phone the reporter and offer a quote.

Be persistent. Just because an article doesn't go in one week doesn't mean the paper is not interested. The paper may have already been full up. Nagging and pestering does work.

Use the Communications Unit for advice.

### **What about deadlines?**

Local newspapers are generally filled up from the back, so there will be earlier deadlines, as early as Thursday or Friday, for articles going on pages further back. Generally, both the Observer and Times are putting the final touches to the papers on a Tuesday afternoon, so don't expect that something will be included that week – unless it is earth shattering - if you call on a Tuesday afternoon. Wednesday afternoons and Thursdays are quieter days, so reporters will have more time to chat to you.

### **How to write a press release.**

Journalists receive hundreds of press releases each week. Most of them end up in the bin. A news editor will probably just glance at a press release for a few seconds. It is crucial a press release is punchy, attention grabbing, and contains all the relevant information for the journalist to write the story.

#### **1) Think about your angle and what makes the story 'news'.**

If your event is noteworthy or unusual in some way, this will generally mean it is newsworthy too. For example, a school collecting bottle tops to raise money would not be much of a story.

But if the schoolchildren were building a model of the Taj Mahal out of bottle tops, then it might make a more interesting story.

If a story needs selling too hard, it's not worth selling at all. Avoid over the top language and spin. Be objective.

Do your research – look at the publication, is there a special section where your article would fit in? If so you can tailor your press release to suit this section.

## **2) Agonise over the first paragraph**

You only have a few seconds to grab the journalist's attention. So make your first paragraph as strong as possible. It should sum up the entire story. Try to include all the essential information in the first paragraph, answering the five "W's" who? what? where? when? and why?

## **3) Include a quote**

Reported speech brings a story to life and is essential in news stories. Write the quote in a natural style, to sound like speech, rather than too formal or jargony.

## **4) Avoid jargon at all costs.**

Phrases like CPA, Best Value, and medium term budget strategy mean very little to the public (and that includes journalists), and using them without explanation will probably ensure the press release ends up in the bin. Imagine your press release's audience is your next door neighbour/grandmother. If you have to use technical words and phrases, explain them.

## **5) Do the journalists' work for them**

Find out facts relevant to the story. If your press release is about a campaign to cut air pollution, an obvious fact the journalist will want to know is how many deaths per year air pollution causes? It is even better if there are figures for how many people in Harrow die each year from air pollution.

## **6) Photo opportunities**

Is there photo opportunity? Papers love human interest stories and the opportunity to take an off-beat or cuddly picture. An appeal for more school crossing wardens may make an odd paragraph – a picture of half a dozen children holding up banners saying "Please Help Us Cross the Road Safely" will have more impact and more likelihood of success.

## **7) Offer follow up interviews with experts/members of the public**

Journalists like talking to 'real' people and are cynical of things that appear too "local governmenty" Can you get a member of the public to talk to the reporter? Don't forget to include contact numbers

Below are two examples of a press release about a genuine news story involving Harrow Council, one good, one bad.

Version 1.

Harrow Council

Press Release

**Date:** 17 March 2003

**Contact:** James Savours

**Tel:** 020 8424 7504

**Email:** [james.savours@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:james.savours@harrow.gov.uk)

**Ref:** 2671

ROTTING MEAT SEIZED FROM PINNER COMPANY

Environmental Health officers from Harrow Council seized 19 tonnes of rotting meat from a food distribution company in Pinner on Tuesday 17 March.

The meat, which included chicken carcasses, beef and shellfish, was seized from M&J Distributions, a food distribution company that rents buildings at Pinner Park Farm, George V Avenue, Pinner.

The meat was held in a 40ft "reefer container". The freezer compartment of the container had failed, and consequently the meat had started to putrefy.

Environmental Health officers were alerted following complaints about the smell and liquid seeping from the container from other businesses located nearby.

After inspecting the meat at around 2pm, Harrow's Environmental Health food safety team applied to Harrow Magistrates' Court for a court order condemning the meat as unfit for consumption. The team then arranged for it to be safely transferred to a special incineration site in Hertfordshire, where it was destroyed. It is believed that the meat had been allowed to rot for a number of weeks.

Marion Smith, Harrow Council's food safety team leader said: "As you can imagine, the smell from 19 tonnes of putrefied meat was appalling. We have no reason to believe that the owner of the company intended to sell the meat on, but unfit food must be removed from the food chain to ensure public safety.

"This meat clearly posed a risk to health, and it simply could not have been left there. If it had found its way into the food chain the consequences to public health could have been dire."

The food business is now liable for the costs of the disposal of the unfit food, estimated at £2,000.

**ends**

**Notes to editors:**

**Harrow Council's Environmental Health food safety team has a responsibility to ensure that the quality of food and the conditions under which it is kept meet the highest possible standards and pose no risk to public health. The team inspects premises, investigate food complaints and run food hygiene training**

**courses. It makes around 1,000 inspections of restaurants, shops, and food distribution companies every year.**

Interviews with members of the food safety team are available on request.

Pictures of the inspection team examining the meat are also available. Please call James Savours on 020 8424 7504.

Version 2

Harrow Council  
Press Release

**Date:** 17 March 2003

**Contact:** James Savours

**Tel:** 020 8424 7504

**Email:** [james.savours@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:james.savours@harrow.gov.uk)

**Ref:** 2671

1994 FOOD ACT (AMENDED): ACTION BY HARROW ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT

Harrow Council's Environmental Health food safety team has a responsibility to ensure that the quality of food and the conditions under which it is kept meet the highest possible standards and pose no risk to public health.

On Tuesday 17 March at M&J Distributions, a food distributions company that rents premises in Pinner Park Farm, George V Avenue, Pinner, environmental health officers from Harrow Council made an inspection of a quantity of meat and following the inspection applied for a court order of condemnation, which was promptly granted by Harrow Magistrates' Court.

Under the 1994 Food Act (amended), the council took control of the unfit meat and ensured its proper disposal, ensuring it did not enter the food chain.

Marion Smith said: "Under the council's environmental health enforcement plan Harrow places a high strategic priority on ensuring public health is maintained."

Ends

Pictures are available

**Tel 020 8424 1295**

Published by the Communications Unit

Fax 020 8424 1966





## Charter on Member Development

In 2003 Harrow Council confirmed its commitment to elected member development as outlined by the IdeA charter by striving towards

- A Member development programme which ensures that members can fulfil their responsibilities to the local community and provide clear leadership and effective scrutiny of local council functions. This may be done in conjunction with the IdeA or other component agencies
- All Members made aware of the training and development opportunities available
- An internal process to identify individual needs, which involves Members
- Individual Learning Accounts for Members which provide a minimum of five days training and development each year to meet the vision of the authority
- Adequate resources to meet the objectives of the training and development from both internal and external resources
- An assessment of how we can assist those with family responsibilities in terms of suitable allowances and support
- A willingness to subject the programme to external scrutiny to check its effectiveness and to share information and good practice with other councils and agencies
- An opportunity each year to examine the way that we conduct our business and the commitments we place on elected Members so that those with family and work commitments can come forward to serve their community.



## Programme

Venue- Council Chamber, Committee Rooms 1, 2

<i>Member Welcome Evening 8 May 2006</i>				
<b>Time</b>	<b>Group A</b>	<b>Group B</b>	<b>Group C</b>	<b>Group D</b>
6.30-7.00	Arrivals, Refreshments and Robe Fitting in Members' Lounge			
7.00-7.15	Chief Executive Introductions in the Council Chamber			
7.15-7.30	Code of Conduct John Robinson Committee Rm 2	Photos	IT Issues Colin Saunders Committee Rm 1	Exhibitions
7.30-7.45	Exhibitions	IT Issues Colin Saunders Committee Rm 1	Photos	Code of Conduct John Robinson Committee Rm 2
7.45-8.15	Refreshments and Networking in Members' Lounge			
8.15-8.30	IT Issues Colin Saunders Committee Rm 1	Code of Conduct John Robinson Committee Rm 2	Exhibitions	Photos
8.30-8.45	Photos	Exhibitions	Code of Conduct John Robinson Committee Rm 2	IT Issues Colin Saunders Committee Rm 1



### **Tours' Programme 16 May 2006**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Session**

1.00-1.15pm	Refreshments
1.15-3.15	Tour of Borough
3.15-3.30	Refreshments
3.30-4.30	Civic Centre and Hits Tour

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Session**

6.00-6.15pm	Refreshments
6.15-8.15	Tour of Borough
8.15-8.30	Refreshments
8.30-9.30	Civic Centre and Hits Tour



## Programme

Venue- Committee Rooms 1 & 2

### Session 1

*You, The Council And The Community 18 May 2006*

Time	Topic	Panel
5.00-5.20	Members' Role in Scrutiny	Paul Najsarek & Lynne McAdam
5.20-5.40	Community Leadership, LAA & Borough Demographics	Paul Najsarek
<b>Refreshments in Members' Lounge</b>		
6.00-6.20	Constitution, Code of Conduct, Role of Cabinet, Standards Committee & Outside Bodies	John Robinson and Hugh Peart
6.20-6.40	Members' FAQ	Member

### Session 2

Time	Topic	Panel
7.00-7.20	Members' Role in Scrutiny	Paul Najsarek & Lynne McAdam
7.20-7.40	Community Leadership, LAA & Borough Demographics	Paul Najsarek
<b>Refreshments in Members' Lounge</b>		
8.00-8.20	Constitution, Code of Conduct, Role of Cabinet, Standards Committee & Outside Bodies	John Robinson and Hugh Peart
8.20-8.40	Members' FAQ	Member



