

Meeting:	Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Date:	5 th July 2006
Subject:	Partnership Working in Harrow and Harrow Strategic Partnership
Responsible Officer:	Director of People, Performance and Policy
Contact Officer:	Mike Howes 020 8420 9637
Portfolio Holder:	Deputy Leader, Business Development
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Public

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

The Strengthen Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee is requested to note:

1. The benefits of Partnership Working
2. The lead taken on Partnership Working by Harrow Strategic Partnership
3. The Local Area Agreement (LAA) which was an outcome of Partnership Working

Reason for report

- To emphasize the opportunities that Partnership Working offers and to update Members on the LAA, its operation and issues within the agreement still to be negotiated with Government Office for London (GOL).

Benefits

- Partnership Working helps to bring a coordinated approach to deal with difficult and long-term issues utilizing the knowledge, skills and resources of the various partner organisations.
- Partnership Working facilitates identifying common aims between organisations
- Harrow Strategic Partnership was eligible to enter into a Local Area Agreement with the Government
- LAA's are a new way of striking a deal between central Government, local authorities and major local delivery partners in an area. The LAA has been a vehicle for the council and our partners to negotiate clear targets and outcomes for Harrow with central government. The council and our partners will benefit from less ring-fenced funding, less red tape and more flexibility in working to delivery of the priorities for Harrow identified in the agreement.
- The LAA attracts a maximum Pump Priming Grant of £961,900.
- If the stretched targets are achieved at the end of the three years of the agreement, maximum Performance Reward grant (PRG) of £6,337,575 will be paid.

Cost of Proposals

- Partnership Working entails the investment of staff time to achieve agreements with Partners on work programmes rather than in trying to reconcile programmes commissioned in isolation. The Council's costs for the LAA are funded from the PPG.

Risks

- Failure to consider this report will mean that the Sub-Committee may not be fully aware of the benefits and costs of partnership working and the substantive work programme that is the LAA that has been developed by the Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP), the Council's most formal Partnership Working arrangement

Implications if recommendations rejected

- No direct implications from rejection of this report.

Section 2: Report

2.1 The basis of Partnership

In the most basic sense, the almost every function that the Council undertakes is progressed through a form of partnership working. Partnerships between employees, between teams, services and Directorates are the Council's basic service delivery model. Even where services seem to be delivered by a single individual, they are usually the product of a partnership between that individual and a range of support services providing IT or telephones, information, income or payments, procurement, accountancy or HR. These relationships can be considered to be partnerships because, for the most part, they are not brought and sold services in the way that transactions between individuals and, for example, their supermarket are. The individuals and teams whose work ultimately produces a service to the public are collaborating which establishes a different class of relationship from that of a vendor and purchaser.

The advantages of the partnership model derive from the stability of the working arrangements where everyone involved gains a greater understanding of the service being delivered and, when it works well, tailors their input to be the most positive contribution possible. The disadvantages tie service providers to particular contributors who may not share the same aspirations, standards, timescales and culture.

2.2 Harrow Strategic Partnership

The partnership working model exemplified in the delivery of Council services has been expanded to include other public service providers in Harrow, both formally and informally. The formal structure involves the Council, the Police and the Primary Care Trust, the higher education sector and also local business interests and the local voluntary and community sector. These organisations have come together to form Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP). The Strategic Partnership also built on some bilateral partnerships that already existed, such as the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, and built them into the partnership working structure.

The Partnership developed the Community Strategy in 2004, which sets out a vision for the future of Harrow and which informs the development of strategies and ways of working for each of the members of the partnership. The Community Strategy is currently being refreshed and will in future contain details of some of the activities being undertaken by partner organisations that help progress stated partnership objectives.

Partnership working often identifies common aims, produces work programmes that are coordinated, makes better use of resources, and minimizes that difficulties that arise from different organisations having competing and complementary responsibilities in the same geographical and sometimes policy areas. Partnership working is the method of producing joined up government and is now enshrined in the inspection regimes to which local authorities are answerable. Indeed, partnership working will be one of the key areas that will be considered when Harrow Council undergoes its Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) in November 2006.

The members of the HSP are strongly committed to both the concept and reality of partnership working. A recent survey of members found strong support for the propositions that the HSP had a clear vision and strategy; contains organisations committed to improving their services; is organized and operates in a clear way and has plans to involve diverse and excluded groups. The survey also identified areas of HSP activity where more attention is needed including providing an effective street to partner organisations' strategies; reflecting the views of all sections of the community; and developing sound joint financial management systems. The Survey results have identified priorities for future work to develop the HSP.

2.3 The Local Area Agreement

The most tangible outcome of formal Partnership Working through the HSP is the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The agreement sets out demanding targets across a wide range of issues concerning children and young people, health, older people, the environment, the economy and building a safer and stronger community within Harrow. These targets have been negotiated with Government and therefore reflect local circumstances, current performance and aspirations rather than the uniform targets set for all local authorities, Police services or the NHS. It came into operation on 1 April 2006.

The LAA has allowed Harrow Council and our partners increased freedoms and flexibilities to find local solutions to local problems and to prioritise spending to achieve the outcomes identifies in the LAA.

The agreement is made up of outcomes, indicators and targets aimed at delivering a better quality of life for people in Harrow through improving performance on the priorities set in the LAA. The priorities have been grouped around 4 blocks: Children and Young People, Safer and Stronger Communities, Healthier Communities and Older People, and Economic Development and Enterprise. Harrow has also included issues that cut across all 4 blocks (for example transport, capacity building, and culture and sport).

The LAA has two types of indicators:

1. Stretched indicators that attract the Performance Reward Grant on achievement of the stretched targets identified
2. Non-stretched indicators.

There are 12 proposed stretched targets in the agreement:

Children and Young People's Block Reward Element - Target 1

Improved health of babies during first year of life

Indicator by which performance will be measured

- (i) Rates of exclusive breastfeeding at six weeks
- (ii) Breastfeeding initiation rates

Reward Element – Target 2

Reducing school exclusions and improving attendance

Indicator by which performance will be measured

1. Reduction in number of exclusions in Harrow LA area
 - a. Reduction of permanent exclusions
 - b. Reduction of fixed period exclusions
2. Improved attendance at 25% worst performing schools (primary and secondary) in Harrow LA are with regard to attendance
 - a. Primary schools
 - b. Secondary schools

Safer and Stronger Communities Block

Reward Element – Target 3

Reduce the fear of crime amongst the population of Harrow

Indicator by which performance will be measured

Proportion of adults saying that they are in fear of being a victim of crime

Reward Element – Target 4

To improve people's perception of Anti-Social Behaviour and how it affects them

Indicator by which performance will be measured

% of residents who consider suite of ASB as a 'fairly' or 'very big' problem.

Reward Element – Target 5

Reduce the level of Non-Residential burglary in the borough

Indicator by which performance will be measured

Level of Non-Residential burglaries in the Borough

Reward Element – Target 6

A Harrow community that feels a strong sense of cohesion - ***Still in negotiation as at 20th June 2006***

Indicator by which performance will be measured

Proportion of adults who say that people from different backgrounds get on well in their neighbourhood (measured by residents responding to 'strongly agree' and 'tend to agree')

Reward Element – Target 7

Empowering people to become involved in their community through Volunteering - ***Still in negotiation as at 20th June 2006***

Indicator by which performance will be measured

Number of adults volunteering in Harrow:

- (i) Number of socially excluded adult volunteers in Harrow
- (ii) Number of other adult volunteers in Harrow

**Healthier Communities and Older People Block
Reward Element – Target 8**

Reducing the level of residential burglary where the victim is over 75 years of age

Indicator by which performance will be measured

Number of residential burglary where victim is over 75 years

Reward Element – Target 9

Decrease harm from smoking and second hand smoke and reduce the number of adults smoking

Indicator by which performance will be measured

- (i) Number of homes in Harrow that sign up to be 'smokefree'
- (ii) Number of 4-week smoking quitters who attended the NHS smoking Service

**Economic Development and Enterprise Block
Reward Element – Target 10**

Improving the skills base of Harrow and the employability of residents

Indicator by which performance will be measured

- (i) Average point score per pupil at level 2

Reward Element – Target 11

Improving the life chances of young people

Indicator by which performance will be measured

Percentage of young people age 16-18 who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) in Harrow LA area.

Cross Cutting

Reward Element – Target 12 - *Still in negotiation as at 20th June 2006*

To change the modal share of journeys to Grimsdyke School away from private car, in particular, to increase walking among school children and thereby increase their personal health and fitness.

Indicator by which performance will be measured

Proportion of journeys made to school by foot, as measured by local survey.

Harrow has reached agreement with GOL on 9 of the 12 stretched targets in the agreement. The stretched targets not agreed are:

1. Volunteering
2. Community Cohesion
3. Traffic Congestion.

Payment of Pump Priming Grant and Reward Grant

Harrow will receive a pump-priming grant following the sign off of the LAA. This is a maximum of £961,900. Harrow will receive payment for the relative proportion of the total pump-priming grant that equates to the total amount of stretched targets agreed before 1 April 2006. Therefore Harrow will receive 75% of the maximum pump priming grant payable. The remaining 25% will be payable in year 2, on the successful negotiation of the remaining stretched targets. GOL have indicated that the remaining three stretched targets need to be negotiated by 30 June 2006. If Harrow is successful in the achievement of its stretched targets at the end of the three-year period of the agreement it will receive a maximum Performance Reward Grant (PRG) of £6,337,575.

Performance Management of the Local Area Agreement

The HSP is in the process of establishing, with the assistance of its contract with Capita, a performance management framework to ensure that its strategies and plans are moving in the right direction and make a difference to the lives of local people. This performance management framework is based on a 'Balanced Scorecard'. This scorecard particularly focuses on the targets in the LAA and reports to the HSP will be quarterly. The implementation of a performance management framework will help track the achievement of the stretched targets in the LAA, thereby maximizing the opportunity to achieve the full PRG available.

2.4 Conclusions

The Local Area Agreement demonstrates the benefits of the partnership approach where the resources and skills of various organisations within Harrow are being harnessed to produce an improved quality of life for local people.

2.5 Options Considered

Given the statutory nature of some of the Partnerships in which the Council has to participate, some level of partnership working has to be adopted.

2.6 Financial Implications

The Council's costs for the LAA are funded from the PPG.

2.7 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

2.8 Equalities Impact

The Harrow Community Strategy 2004:

- Seeks to engage the local community and reflects their needs and aspirations
- Co-ordinates the actions of agencies in the HSP to meet community needs
- Aims to develop and support cohesive communities
- Aims to achieve improvements which are sustainable.

All of these underlying principles work together to promote greater equality within Harrow. The principles in the Community Strategy will form the foundations of which the LAA will be based.

2.9 Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 considerations

Partnership working is the basis on which the Council progresses its contribution to reducing crime and disorder and promotes community safety and reassurance. Safer Harrow is incorporated into Harrow Strategic Partnership and community safety issues inform the development of the Community Strategy and partnership work programmes.

Section 3: Supporting Information/ Background Documents

There are no appendices to this report.

The Harrow Community Strategy is available on request

The 2004-05 annual report of the Harrow Strategic Partnership is available on request

The Harrow Strategic Partnership members' induction handbook is available on request

The expression of interest to negotiate a LAA is available on request

The final LAA is available on request (137 pages).