

# Briefing for members

## Transportation in Harrow

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This is one of a number of briefings prepared by the Scrutiny Unit to assist new members in developing their skills and knowledge base for their roles on the Sustainable Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

The briefing is divided into two sections. The first lists national and regional transport developments. The second lists developments specific to Harrow.

### Nationally and regionally

Nationally, the direction of transport strategy in England and Wales is controlled by the Department for Transport, of which the Highways Agency is an executive agency. They are responsible, nationwide, for road planning, railways (principally through the drafting of Route Utilisation Strategies, which make assessments on timetables and services). They are also responsible for road safety.

In London, much of the DfT's responsibility has been devolved to the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Mayor in particular, who is responsible for the maintenance of primary routes through the capital (TfL Street Management) buses (TfL Buses) the underground (LUL) and, increasingly, commissioning for rail services (TfL London Rail).

There are a number of key regional transport initiatives which have the potential to impact upon Harrow and its residents.

**Crossrail Line 1** – this scheme now has the necessary powers for construction, and building work will commence within the next two years. It will link Ealing Broadway (and Heathrow) in the west with Abbey Wood, Stratford and beyond in the east through a deep-level twin tunnel running from Paddington to the Isle of Dogs, with intermediate stations at Bond Street, Tottenham Court Road, Farringdon, Liverpool Street and Whitechapel. Economic impacts for the entirety of London will be significant.

**West London Tram** – this scheme will run from Uxbridge to Shepherd's Bush. It runs through Hillingdon and as such Harrow has not been directly involved in its implementation, but residents in the west and south of the borough may be affected by it. It is proposed for the future that it may be extended through Bayswater and Oxford Street to intersect with the proposed Cross River Tram at Holborn.

**Silverlink reconfiguration/relet** – the Mayor will acquire direct commissioning control over this service in November 2007. In the short term this will lead to steps being taken to integrate the line into the rest of the TfL operated network – introduction of Oyster pre-pay at all stations, ticket gates, and increased numbers of station staff. It looks likely that this may lead in coming years to a significant alteration to services on the Watford dc line north of Queen's Park. The current preferred option is for the Bakerloo line to be extended to Watford Junction, and for metro services between Watford and Euston to be withdrawn (Bakerloo services would run from Watford to Elephant and Castle, diverging from the National Rail alignment north of Queen's

Park)<sup>1</sup>. This would lead to an increase in service frequency for residents in Headstone Lane and Hatch End, but the lack of a through service to Euston would inconvenience passengers in Kenton.

**Crossrail Line 3** – this would be a long-term (post-2020) project allowing fast, through services from Harrow and Wealdstone to Waterloo and beyond (most likely following an alignment towards Guildford) via Euston (the current Euston Station redevelopment plans will probably take it into account). No proposals or feasibility work has been carried out, but the Mayor has stated<sup>2</sup> that he is in favour of such a scheme given the significant benefits it would allow.

**BCV upgrade** – Metronet is soon to embark on a station modernisation and train replacement programme for the Bakerloo, Central and Victoria lines. The timescales are, unfortunately, very long. It is anticipated that new trains will be delivered for the Bakerloo in 2019, with final station modernisations being completed in 2020. By 2019 the current rolling stock will be 52 years old.

**SSL upgrade** – new trains are being introduced on the Metropolitan line in 2009. They will be equipped with an air-cooling system. Station modernisation works have been proposed for Harrow on the Hill, Sudbury and North Harrow stations as part of the Transport Local Implementation Plan. Line reconfiguration may mean that that eastern section of the Hammersmith and City Line is reintegrated into the Metropolitan Line by 2010/2011.

**i-Bus** – TfL Buses' new bus information system will be built around the existing Countdown system already available at many stops. GPS technology will be used to provide more precise locational information to passengers (at bus stops, on mobile phones and on the internet) and technology will be installed in buses to provide an announcement of the name of the next stop (similar to the system already in operation on the tube). This will be rolled out over the entire bus network over the next couple of years.

## **Local developments**

In March 2006, Harrow's Transport Local Implementation Plan was passed to the sub-committee, after a significant delay caused by Transport for London. This document sets out how Harrow plans to implement the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS).

Changes are now expected to be made to the draft LIP to take TfL's comments into account, as well as comments made by members of the public when the report initially went out for consultation in 2005.

The LIP itself sets out the direction for council policy on transport until 2010/11. Detailed information can be found in the briefing pack being made available to members, but in broad terms the "strategic objectives" for transportation in Harrow are:

- To improve personal accessibility to places, goods and services by improving sustainable forms of travel, particularly the reliability, frequency and quality of public transport.
- To make sustainable means of travel more attractive in terms of time, cost and quality relative to the car.
- To reduce traffic congestion in the longer term and make essential car journeys easier.
- To reduce the need to travel, particularly by car.
- To improve the distribution of goods and services.

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<sup>1</sup> Stations south of Queen's Park on the Watford DC will be served by a 4tph service to Camden Road via Primrose Hill. The London RUS suggests that fast services (either MK or Tring-bound) stop at Queen's Park to allow through transfer to local commuters from stations on the Watford DC through to Euston).

<sup>2</sup> At a meeting of the ALG in September 2004.

- To ensure people are aware of the implications of their travel choices.
- To encourage walking and cycling as part of health education.
- To ensure a better balance on the streets in residential areas and local centres between social activities and motorised traffic.
- To reduce air pollution and noise from all forms of transport including cars, buses, vans and heavy lorries.
- To ensure that new development is less dependent on non-sustainable forms and transport and contributes positively to supporting sustainable forms of travel.
- To avoid any increase in road capacity for general use.
- To improve the safety and security of all travel modes.
- To ensure that all forms of transport recognise the particular needs of those with mobility problems.
- To ensure the effective enforcement of all regulations and measures identified as necessary to deliver the Strategy.

More information is provided in the briefing pack available from the Scrutiny Officer. Members should bear in mind that the LIP is still, for the moment, in draft form.

Parking in Stanmore – new Members should be made aware of this issue, which is due to be reported for an update to the Sub-Committee in the autumn.

In 1999, a s106 agreement (see planning information) was drafted, and subsequently agreed between the council and Sainsbury's, who wished to build a superstore in Stanmore. Sainsbury's would pay the council £300,000, to be put towards renovating the existing multi-storey car park. The money had to be used within five years. It was later discovered that the multi-storey car park had significant structural problems, and that repairs would cost more than £1 million – the decision was taken to demolish it. However, Sainsbury have insisted that the money be repaid, as the original agreement related to renovation of the existing structure. The money will be paid back shortly. Plans to convert the site into a ground-level car park are further complicated by the fact that closure plans to effect this may result in the eventual closing down of the nearby Lidl store,

Congestion – the council has been looking at congestion as part of the LIP. Main routes in the borough are maintained either by the Highways Agency or TfL. Proposals have been made that Harrow should be a pilot for a local congestion charging scheme. This would operate in the town centre.

Reducing traffic congestion is a “cross cutting” target which has been agreed as part of the Local Area Agreement between the Harrow Strategic Partnership, the Government and the Council.

The “core network” and local bus services – up until relatively recently (and reflected in the borough's LIP draft) Harrow was intending to establish a “core network” of important local (radial) bus services, to which particular consideration was to be given in terms of funding, planning and support. References to the core network have however been removed in the final version of the LIP, as it diverges with TfL's current approach to bus services, which emphasises main link routes rather than local transport.

Residents have expressed concern over the withdrawal of bus services in certain parts of the borough. The 350 direct service to Watford Junction has been withdrawn, although service along Headstone Lane has been maintained through the permanent diversion of other routes.

Controlled parking zones and road calming – the council is obliged to consult with local people on the placement of CPZs and on the implementation of certain traffic management and road calming measures. The Traffic and Transportation case study element of 2005/06's Overview and Scrutiny Committee Hear/Say Review of Community Engagement made a number of recommendations on how the council might make the consultation process more transparent, and increase levels of responses.

Perceived inadequacy of some consultations have, in the past, led to certain decisions on traffic schemes having been called in. It is possible that in some cases this is a reflection of the controversial nature of the schemes themselves rather than particular flaws in the process. It should also be noted that many traffic schemes are “mandated” by TfL.