

Meeting:	Sustainable Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Date:	25 September 2006
Subject:	Review of Demography and Demographic Change – Preliminary Planning Information
Responsible Officer:	Paul Najsarek, Director, People Performance and Policy
Contact Officer:	Ed Hammond, Scrutiny Officer
Portfolio Holder:	Business Development
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Part I

## **Section 1: Summary**

### **Decision Required**

- 1) That members should be chosen to participate in this four-year review programme.
- 2) That the project be fully planned and scoped.
- 3) That the review group report back with a final scope in November prior to the commencement of the gathering of evidence.

### **Reason for report**

This report seeks approval for the scoping of a four-year review project into demographic change in the borough, following an “in principle” decision to carry out the project at the sub-committee’s last meeting in July.

## **Benefits**

Approval of the recommendations will allow the scope to be presented to members before Christmas, with a view to reporting back on completion of the first project by the beginning of the 2007/08 municipal year.

## **Cost of Proposals**

There are no defined costs associated with the scoping process other than officer and member time and resources.

## **Risks**

- 1) That the timescale allowed will not be sufficient to deliver a scope by the next meeting. This is not a significant risk, and planning is well underway to ensure that this does not occur.
- 2) That the project will duplicate work being done elsewhere in the council with respect to development of vitality profiles, community engagement and further enhancement of geographic information systems (GIS). Again, steps will be taken as part of the scoping process to ensure that this does not happen.

## **Implications if recommendations rejected**

- 1) The sub-committee will be unable to approve a scope for this project until next year, stalling the process for between two to three months.
- 2) The sub-committee will risk losing an opportunity to have an effect upon an important area of policy development.

## **Section 2: Report**

### **2.1 Brief History**

Immediately after the Borough Elections in May 2006, Cllr Romain as chairman of the newly-constituted Sustainable Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Sub-Committee suggested that the sub-committee undertake a long-term project examining the impact upon the borough of demographic change.

At their first meeting in July, the sub-committee agreed to carry out a review into demography. This report provides further information on how the project might be carried out, and the scoping process.

## 2.2 Background Information

Harrow is now one of only a handful of local authorities in the country with the majority of ethnic minority residents (around 51%, according to the 2001 census). This presents unique challenges not only for the council but for other public, private and voluntary bodies delivering services to Harrow's residents.

The borough needs to be able to respond to this demographic change. There are several stages to identifying what this response might be, involving a wide range of possible stakeholders.

- **Mapping** - The first step of this process is to analyse the nature of the change that is happening, and to extrapolate from that, and from regional and national policies and trends, what this will hold for the future.
- **Partnership working** - Subsequently, services and organisations need to begin to address how they will respond to these changing circumstances. Demographic change obviously has implications for the relationships between the NHS and the council, joint work between the council and the Department for Work and Pensions and pressures on demand-led budgets.
- **The wider community** - the issues are wider than just those which relate to how the council does business with its partners. It relates to community involvement, how the council facilitates relationships between different cultural and ethnic groups, how the nature of private enterprise in the borough will change as demographic trends are played out, and where demands will lie for services now and five, ten and twenty years down the line.

These are just some of the issues that might be considered as part of a review of demographic change. A full list of potential issues is provided at Appendix 1, along with a more detailed submission relating to that first project.

## 2.3 Consultation

Not relevant at this stage.

## 2.4 Financial Implications

This report is not seeking additional financial resources.

## 2.5 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

2.6 Equalities Impact

None specific to this report.

2.7 Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Considerations

None specific to this report.

**Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents**

Appendix 1: Detailed submission on first project and four-year programme

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **DETAILED SUBMISSION ON FIRST PROJECT AND FOUR YEAR PROGRAMME**

#### First project

As outlined in the main body of the report, it is suggested that the first project might involve a mapping exercise as a significant element.

The purpose would be to identify to what extent the council is aware of changing demographics, through systems such as GIS and the census. This would probably be a preliminary exercise. This could include historical data – eg, changes to demographic profile since the 1980s.

Best practice information could be taken from the borough's "nearest neighbours", and examples could be drawn from the private sector to examine how other organisations across the country are grappling with the issue at the moment.

This information would provide a springboard for discussion of the more substantive topics listed below, and a useful evidence based for the council in the planning of its services more generally.

#### Four year programme

Subsequent projects would depend upon timescales and a detailed prioritisation exercise, but the following are suggested as initial thoughts.

- Services for those with English as a second language – this would probably link in with work already done on this subject as part of the Community Engagement review in 2005/06, making it suitable for "light touch" study.
- Changes to household sizes (for example, increases both in single-person families and extended families of arriving immigrants).
- Changes in employment (shifts to service industries) – the shift away from manufacturing to the service sector (reflecting national demographic trends).
- Affluence and social mobility – the extent to which Harrow's residents move through social strata and are able effectively to make the most of what opportunities are available for them.
- Business support – profile of SME businesses in the borough, links in with the economic development strategy etc.
- Cultural nodes and relationships between them – the extent to which Harrow's different communities mix to form a more homogenous, single Harrow "community" – how different communities communicate with one another on a formal (ie community groups) and informal (individual people, neighbours on streets) level, and if and how the council should facilitate these developing relationships.

Members will be invited to discuss this list.

### Scoping

The scoping process, as outlined in the main body of the report, will be carried out over October. The intention is to hold several scoping meetings over the course of late September and October to agree a formal scope for the first project and a formal programme for the rest of the four-year period.

### Timescales

For the moment, no proposal is being made as to how projects will be divided over the entire project. However, members may want to consider and discuss this. It is unlikely that the project could be successfully delivered through four in depth reviews, since this would be inflexible and limit the potential of the sub-committee to deliver research into unrelated topics. What is more likely is that a combination of in-depth reviews, light touch reviews and challenge panels will be most appropriate.

The scoping process will set out the likely timetable for these reviews, and this will be submitted along with other information at the meeting in November.