

Annexe C – Summary of consultations

Consultations

1. In recent years there has been extensive debate and consultation among key stakeholders in Harrow about developing post-16 provision in Harrow's high schools. There is broad agreement to the vision and plans that have been developed, and strong support has been forthcoming from the London West Learning and Skills Council and from the government at ministerial level.
2. The School Organisation Debate in 2003 confirmed a consensus view amongst stakeholders to increase post-16 opportunities in Harrow. Since then, representations have been made to the Department for Education and Skills for the necessary capital to develop provision. A 14-19 Stakeholder Survey was undertaken in 2004. Harrow partners have collaborated to develop a strategic vision, and a number of initiatives have contributed to the development of the Harrow Sixth Form Collegiate proposals.
3. The Harrow 14-19 Strategy was developed with the full involvement of all the key partners, and was approved by them in early 2006. Harrow's bid was scrutinised by a stakeholder panel that endorsed the educational case.
4. In February 2006 a consultation occurred prior to the publishing of statutory notices. This consultation occurred between 10 February and 24 February 2006 because of the LSC requirement for the statutory notices to be published by the end of February 2006.
5. On 10 February a consultation document was mailed to all interested parties, including: all Harrow schools and schools in adjoining areas that may be affected by the proposals; neighbouring Local Education Authorities; school communities, including parents and teachers, via the letters to schools; appropriate diocesan authorities; local Learning and Skills Councils; and a wide range of other interested parties. The cover letter informed recipients that there would be a further opportunity to comment formally, once the Statutory Notices were published as planned on 28 February 2006, for six weeks until 11 April 2006.
6. On 28 February 2006 a letter was sent to all interested parties enclosing a copy of the statutory notice. The letter stated that the statutory notices are published for six weeks and any representations must be sent to Harrow Council by 11 April 2006. The interested parties sent the letter included: all Harrow Schools; neighbouring Local Education Authorities, with the request that the letter be forwarded to any schools in their area that they considered may be affected by the proposals; appropriate diocesan authorities; local Learning and Skills Councils; colleges in Harrow and neighbouring areas; and other local organisations.
7. On 25 June 2007, a letter was sent to interested parties. This letter advised interested parties it was planned that Harrow Cabinet will be asked to determine the statutory proposals at its meeting on 20 September 2007. The letter also stated that the planned date of implementation will be from 1 September 2008 (rather than 1 September 2007 as stated on the statutory notices). Recipients were advised that any comments at this stage could be sent by Friday 3 August 2007, and would be summarised in an annexe to the Cabinet report.

List of written comments received

8. Letter dated 21 February 2006 to the Director of Strategic Services from the Chair of the Governing Body of Nower Hill High School, expressing the support of the Governing Body for the establishment of the Collegiate and the change of age range for the High Schools to 12-18.
9. Letter dated 21 February 2006 to the Director of Strategic Services from the Headteacher of Nower Hill High School, expressing the full support of the Nower Hill High community for the development of the Collegiate and the publication of statutory notices.
10. Letter dated 22 February 2006 to the Director of Strategic Services from the Headteacher and Chair of Governors of Haydon School stating that the consultation is being conducted to an unreasonably short timescale and that comment is therefore cursory in nature. Comment was made that: the paper consults on proposals for September 2007 whilst referring to Central Consortium being established for 2006; a picture is painted of the introduction of a large number of very small sixth forms with students being required to travel between sites in order to access a broad and balanced curriculum; the new provision is likely to be AS/A2 rather than the type needed to address Level 1-2 students that would reduce the numbers not in education, employment or training.
11. Letter dated 23 February 2006 to the Director of Strategic Services from the Headteacher of Bishop Ramsey Church of England School stating the Governing Body is minded to raise its objection to the proposal. The reasons stated for the objection were: in their view there is already ample provision of Level 3 courses in the local area; the level of 16-18 participation amongst Harrow students is already the highest in the London West area at 85%; it would be a misuse of public funds to invest in Harrow which would add to a provision which is already sufficient.
12. Email dated 1 March 2006 to the Director of Strategic Services from the Acting Services to Schools Director, London Borough of Ealing, commenting that it would have been helpful to have had much earlier notice of this proposal and requesting information about a number of points. A letter was sent on 7 March 2006 responding to the points raised in the email.
13. Letter dated 12 March 2006 from some Athelstone Road residents to the Clerk to the Harrow School Organisation Committee expressing concerns about the impact on local residents of extending current provision at Salvatorian College to include a sixth form. Concerns stated included: limited parking during the day; increased traffic and congestion; litter and noise in the street; impact on the security of residents. This letter was sent in response to the statutory notice displayed by the Society of the Divine Saviour on the gates of Salvatorian College. The letter was acknowledged to the authors by Democratic Services on 31 March 2006, stating the letter will be treated as a formal objection to the statutory notice and a copy was forwarded to the school to formally respond in advance of the meeting.

The Headteacher of Salvatorian College wrote to the authors on 2 May 2006 to reassure them that the plans did not encompass provision for Sixth Formers on site at the College, and offered to meet with them. A meeting was held on 19 May 2006, the outcome of which was confirmed by a resident in a letter dated 22 May 2006 to the Headteacher

On 24 May 2007, the Headteacher of Salvatorian College wrote to the authors advising them it was planned that Harrow Cabinet will decide about the statutory notice at its meeting on 21 June 2007. The letter sought to clarify with the authors at this point whether they wish

their objection to remain registered, or whether they wish to withdraw their objection. The Headteacher repeated his assurances in relation to the concerns the residents had raised, which he hoped addressed their concerns sufficiently, and offered to meet with them again to share information about the proposed Sixth Form and answer any questions they might have. On 25 June 2007 Salvatorian College received a telephone call from one of the signatories speaking on behalf of the residents confirming that their concerns had been fully addressed.

14. Letter dated 16 March 2006 to the Director of Strategic Services from Rachel Davies, Principal of Uxbridge College, stating no objection to the proposal and asking for comments in the letter to be considered. Rachel Davies did not believe the expansion in Harrow will have any dramatic impact on Uxbridge College provision, because their aim is to reduce the figure of 16-18 year olds in Hillingdon not participating in education. Points raised covered: choices; economies of scale; information and guidance; appropriate provision; the demand of vocational courses; collegiality. The Director of Strategic Services replied on 5 April 2006 acknowledging the letter and responding to the points raised.
15. Email dated 28 March 2006 from Kate Williams, Chair of Hatch End High School Governing Body, stating that governors will obviously be in favour of the proposals going ahead, and raising points about the involvement of governors in the governance of the collegiate and in the planning. Acknowledged by the Director of Strategic Services on 28 March 2006.
16. Letter dated 6 April 2006 to the Director of Strategic Services (received on 27 April 2006) from Hillingdon Association of Secondary Heads (HASH). The letter was written in response to the letter from the Director of Strategic Services dated 10 February 2006 which supplied a consultation paper. HASH would support an initiative which genuinely opens up the range of courses that are available to learners, and especially where this is focussed on level 1 and two provision. However, HASH states it is not supportive of provision which allows Harrow secondary schools to offer the usual 'A' level subjects which can be found on the curriculum of most school 6th forms because there is no shortage of supply of such places in the London West LSC area already. Information was requested about how the 1000 new places will be constituted. Concern was expressed about the potential destabilising of other providers who have incurred the expenditure necessary to establish and maintain a sufficient provision to cater for students resident in Harrow, and the lack of acknowledgement of this in the proposals. HASH considers the number of 16-19 year old young people that fall into the NEET category is overplayed, and that it is not necessary to set up a collegiate in order to target this aspect of the problem. HASH considers wasteful duplication of 'A' level provision is likely to be re-introduced into the system at the very time when 14-19 national policy suggests that we should be moving in the other direction. HASH is totally opposed to an expansion of places in traditional 'A' level subjects, which it considers is not a priority. HASH concludes by stating it welcomes some aspects of the proposed collegiate, whilst being very firmly opposed to others.

The cover letter dated 27 April 2006 requested the letter be recorded as their final rejection letter. The Director of Strategic Services replied on 9 May 2006 and stated he would seek advice on this point about the letter being recorded as their final rejection letter. It was decided that all comments received, including this letter, should be reported to the Decision Maker.

17. Letter dated 7 April 2006 to the Director of Strategic Services from Elizabeth Rushton, Principal of West Herts College, welcoming the broadening of choice and entitlement for young people in the Harrow area. Elizabeth Rushton expressed concern that young people and their parents continue to receive appropriate information regarding the full range of options available to them at the end of Year 11. The Director of Strategic Services replied on 12 April 2006 acknowledging the letter and responding to the points raised. Elizabeth Rushton responded on 20 April 2006 thanking the Director of Strategic Services for his considered response, which is very much appreciated.
18. A letter dated 17 May 2006 to the Chief Executive of the Learning and Skills Council in Coventry from the Hillingdon Corporate Director of Education, Youth and Leisure was copied to the Director of Children's Services and received by him on 22 May 2006. This letter registered to the Chief Executive of the Learning and Skills Council Hillingdon's strong objection, and stated Hillingdon Members are extremely concerned about the impact on schools in Hillingdon.
19. Letter dated 6 June 2007 to the Director of Strategic Services from Elizabeth Rushton, Principal of West Herts College welcoming the broadening of local choice and entitlement for young people in the Harrow area, and expressing concern that appropriate information, advice and guidance is maintained to ensure that the choice of good vocational opportunities for young people in the Harrow area is not diminished. The Director of Strategic Services replied on 11 June 2007 acknowledging the letter and responding to the point raised.
20. Letter dated 9 July 2007 to the Director of Strategic Services from the Headteacher of Bishop Ramsey Church of England School stating concern that the proposal will lead to a duplication of resources and will contribute to an over capacity in the provision of post 16 education particularly of level 3 courses. The Headteacher does not consider this would be beneficial for the efficient provision of education of young people in the area and would like to register objection to the proposal. The Director of Strategic Services replied on 16 July 2007 responding to the concern raised.
21. Letter dated 12 July 2007 to the Director of Strategic Services from the Director of Children, Schools & Families of Hertfordshire County Council stating thanks for being kept up to date with Harrow Council's proposals for a Sixth Form Collegiate and wishing Harrow well in implementing these proposals. The letter notes with interest the consultation document which was received in February of last year, and confirms that the authority has been kept fully informed both of these proposals and the rationale which underpins them, and does not feel the need to comment further.
22. Letter dated 18 July 2007 to the Director of Strategic Services from the Headteacher of Haydon School stating that he cannot support the scheme in its current form. The letter states that as Headteacher of a very successful school with a sixth form that admits a significant number of Harrow students, he is not convinced that Harrow's scheme does anything other than to duplicate already existing provision nor does it address the needs of post-16 students for whom the traditional A-level curriculum is inappropriate.
23. Letter dated 19 July 2007 to the Director of Strategic Services from the Headteacher of Northwood School registering objection to the proposal because she does not consider it would be beneficial for the efficient provision of education of young people in the area. The

letter states that as a Headteacher of a successful school in a neighbouring authority she is concerned that Harrow's proposal will lead to a duplication of resources and will contribute to an over capacity in the provision of post-16 education particularly of level 3 courses.

24. Letter dated 14 August 2007 to the Director of Strategic Services from the Director of Education: Diocese of London Board for Schools stating he is glad things are moving forward in what he hopes is a positive climate. The Director of Education: Diocese of London comments that with only one Church of England primary school in Harrow and no secondary school, the Diocesan Board for Schools would welcome any opportunity to become involved in the provision of secondary education in Harrow.

Response to comments

25. Short period of formal consultation

It is recognised that the formal consultation period prior to the publishing of the statutory notices on 28 February 2006 was short. However, extensive and wide-ranging consultations had occurred over a considerable period of time (see sections 1-6 above), and a comprehensive mailing of the consultation document occurred. A further extensive mailing occurred when the statutory notices were published, and all interested parties were advised about the representation period following the publishing of statutory notices. The timescale for the formal consultation had to conform to the requirement set by the LSC for the statutory notices to be published by the end of February 2006.

On 25 June 2007, a letter was sent to interested parties using the same comprehensive mailing as previously including: all Harrow schools and schools in adjoining areas that may be affected by the proposals; neighbouring Local Education Authorities; appropriate diocesan authorities; local Learning and Skills Councils; colleges in Harrow and neighbouring areas; and other local organisations. This letter advised interested parties it was planned that Harrow Cabinet will be asked to determine the statutory proposals at its meeting on 13 September 2007. The letter also stated that the planned date of implementation will be from 1 September 2008 (rather than 1 September 2007 as stated on the statutory notices). Recipients were advised that any comments at this stage could be sent by Friday 3 August 2007.

The letter sent on 25 June 2007 informed all recipients that the Harrow Education Consultative Forum will consider the proposals at its meeting on 13 September 2007, and will be able to advise Cabinet. The constitution of the Harrow Education Consultative Forum allows for petitions and deputations to be made should any interested party wish to take this opportunity. Cabinet will then be asked to determine the proposals at its meeting on 20 September 2007. Any comments received in response to the letter will be made available to these committees, along with all the other comments received, and will be summarised in an annexe to the reports together with officer response.

Extensive consultation has occurred, and comprehensive efforts have been made to inform interested parties of Harrow's proposals. All written comments received are being reported to the Education Consultative Forum and to Cabinet.

26. Choice and Information, Advice and Guidance

Choice for individual learners will be increased significantly by Harrow's proposals. This conforms with stated Government policy, and with the wishes of stakeholders in Harrow.

Schools and colleges within the Collegiate are committed to ensuring that the range of choices, including out borough, will continue to be supported by impartial information, advice and guidance. The formal movement across all providers will help stimulate the expectation that all students staying-on to 19 is the norm.

During the framing of Harrow's bid, the London West Learning and Skills Council advised that providers in neighbouring areas had expressed some concern that Harrow schools are excluding their offer to young people. Harrow partners have been able to address this concern, and Harrow's proposals include measures to assure quality in information, advice and guidance to young people and their parents/carers. The initial feedback from London West Learning and Skills Council was that Harrow's proposals concerning learner choice fully meet their criteria.

27. Vocational provision and those Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET)

Harrow's proposal will concentrate on meeting the needs of the most disadvantaged learners, and on further developing the vocational offer. The strategy is for vocational provision in high schools to develop over time with the support of the colleges. At present schools in Harrow have some experience of vocational work within their individual specialist designations, and two schools have been awarded additional vocational specialisms. Collegiate planning will involve the development of all 14 specialist diploma lines at levels 1, 2 and 3 by 2010 with all partners working together. This will be a unique opportunity to lay the foundations for provision of vocational pathways from 14-19 to be delivered across all 13 institutions. This in turn will lead to the development of level 3 vocational courses in schools by 2010 as is already indicated in vocational take-up and planning at levels 1 and 2 pre-16. Harrow Skills Centre is proving to be a popular and effective provision, and plans are in hand to expand the offer available to learners. Harrow Collegiate has been given approval by the Department for Children, Schools and Families to deliver the new Creative & Media Diploma from September 2008.

The proposal acknowledges that school may not always be the best provision for those who have found the system challenging, and there will be a continued demand for Level 1 and 2 courses at both Stanmore and Harrow Colleges, and at St Dominic's Sixth Form College, as well as other providers.

28. Value for money

Integral to the collegiate vision is the importance of delivering a learner entitlement through efficient use of resources. Robust decision-making processes and careful co-ordination across the collegiate will eliminate unnecessary duplication of courses and specialist accommodation, thus ensuring a comprehensive curriculum offer and a range of progression opportunities that give excellent value for money.

Efficient use of resources to ensure viable and sustainable provision will be promoted by careful coordination and decision-making at the centre of the collegiate. A memorandum of agreement that formalises commitment to the aims of the collegiate will be developed building on the trust established between institutions.

29. Impact on existing providers

Harrow's proposal recognises that additional provision may have an impact on existing providers. Harrow colleges will continue to provide Level 3 education, including AS/A2.

However, to complement the changes associated with schools, all three colleges are planning to introduce more vocational work at levels 1 and 2, with progression through to level 3, and to provide more places for young people at levels 1 and 2. Harrow colleges already recruit from neighbouring areas, and will use the opportunity to vary their curriculum offer to help meet overall London targets for participation of 16-18 year olds.

In relation to schools currently recruiting students from Harrow, the additional places proposed do not equate to the total of Harrow's young people receiving their education outside Harrow. It is the London West Learning and Skills Council view that in an area like Hillingdon, with lower post-16 participation, providers can help raise levels of participation in Hillingdon by proper targeting of any additional capacity. Data about Hillingdon Sixth Forms suggests there has not been a significant effect on Hillingdon Sixth Forms during 2006-2007, the first year of the franchise arrangement in the Central Consortium. Hillingdon Sixth Form Pupils in September 2005 totaled 3,216, and in September 2006 totaled 3,267. These figures suggest that there is unlikely to be a significant level of impact on existing providers in Hillingdon. The Principal of Uxbridge College does not believe the expansion in Harrow will have any dramatic impact on Uxbridge College provision, because their aim is to reduce the figure of 16-18 year olds in Hillingdon not participating in education.