

Investing for the Future

Harrow Council

Corporate Plan 2008 - 11

Harrow: Cosmopolitan, Confident, Cohesive



Harrow Council Corporate Plan 2008 - 11

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Foreword – by the Leader of the Council

This promises to be an exciting year for Harrow. During this year, we expect to see the beginnings of the redevelopment of the Town Centre, with work starting on four major sites. At the same time, we will also begin our programme of investment to build a new Byron Leisure Centre in a remodelled family park.

We are able to make this investment despite continuing financial restrictions by utilising our assets in an innovative way so that new and improved facilities can be provided. We will continue this approach so that, wherever possible, needs can be met from modern and accessible premises. This includes opening four new Children's Centres and three Neighbourhood Resource Centres by March 2009.

As well as providing buildings for the future, the Council has been looking at the standard of the services it delivers. Much attention has already been given to performance improvement and this will continue to be a focus for the coming year. This forms a significant part of our Chief Executive's nine step improvement programme which was launched soon after he took up his post in April last year.

Our improving performance has been recognised in relation to Children's Services,

where a recent inspection awarded the Council three out of a possible four stars. An inspection of our Housing Benefits Service improved its already excellent rating and our Adult and Community Learning provision achieved the highest rating in the country for a service run by a local authority. To ensure that improvements continue, we commissioned an independent Peer Review undertaken by the Improvement and Development Agency. The review provided an encouraging picture of progress made in the last year as well as setting out some issues we will address in the coming year.

Much of the Peer Review concentrates on improvements within the Council, which are absolutely necessary to achieve better outcomes for service users. In particular, the Review urges the Council to build on the clear momentum for improvement that we have already established, and integrate our services better across the Council, and with our Partners, to increase satisfaction with public services in Harrow. We also need to improve our communications with residents and service users, as well as with our staff.

The Review has confirmed our focus that, for the first two years of this administration, we have been getting the Council's finances on a stable footing. We have achieved a challenging savings target by making the

organisation more efficient and effective so we could keep the Council Tax increase as low as possible. While we still have some way to go, we are well on the way to establishing good standards of public services and providing a helpful, efficient and responsive organisation.

The Borough continues to have the lowest crime rates in London, lower than average unemployment, high standards of education, and is a very good place to live and work. This is due to the contribution of a range of partners, not least the many voluntary and community organisations working in and for Harrow. The Council is beginning a fundamental review of our relationship with and support for community organisations to establish more effective support for them and the work that they do.

The work that the Council and its Partners undertakes does make a difference to the quality of life in Harrow but our success depends to a very great extent on you and the contribution that you make. Whether this is through increasing recycling and composting of household waste, through volunteering and by acting responsibly in public places, we can all help to make Harrow a place to be proud of.

Chris Mote - Leader of Harrow Council

Corporate Plan-2008-11draft v1

The Corporate Plan

This Corporate Plan sets out the Council's high level priorities and targets for the coming years. The Plan contains:

- the Council's vision, which is a long-term statement about the borough;
- a set of corporate priorities for the next three years listing what the council considers to be most important; and
- a number of flagship actions for the coming year which demonstrate what our corporate priorities mean in practice.

The flagship actions are practical examples of what our vision and corporate priorities mean, and against which the Council is happy to be judged. More detail about the Council's plans can be found in the Corporate Improvement Programme (CIP) and Service Improvement Plans. The CIP contains details of the 100 or so most significant projects that the Council will undertake in 2008/09 while Service Improvement Plans set out where each service is and what it intends to do in the coming year. This Corporate Plan contains the highlights from both.

This year, for the first time, the Corporate Plan has been developed as part of an integrated process with the Council's budget. The Plan sets out how the Council will use its resources and the budget shows how our resources support our priorities. This combined process has enabled us to prepare and publish our plan more than three months earlier than in previous years and before the beginning of the period that it describes. We believe that we are one of only a small number of Councils that manages to do this but that it is vital to effective service planning and delivery.

Vision and Corporate Priorities

The Council's vision is:

To be recognised as one of the best London Councils by 2012, in a borough that is cosmopolitan, confident and cohesive.

This vision is supported by more specific aspirations, as follows:

Our vision must be delivered with the commitment of our staff and partners. Together we will create

- A place with quality neighbourhoods with clean and safe streets
- A place where you can be proud of the Town Centre
- A place which promotes the well-being of its communities
- A place where the Council provides value for money services.

Within these aspirations, the Council has adopted the following corporate priorities for the next three years:

1. Deliver cleaner streets, better environmental services and keep crime low
2. Redevelop the Town centre
3. Improve the well-being of adults and children and the care of those who most need our help
4. Extend community use of schools while making education in Harrow even better
5. Improve the way we work for our residents
6. Develop communities where people from different backgrounds get on well together

Flagship Actions for 2008-2009 by corporate priority

In each case, flagship actions are related to a specific corporate priority. They are also linked to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder responsible and senior officers with whom they work, so there is clear accountability for the actions required.

These flagship actions are only part of the broad role and activities carried out by the Directorates, as summarised in the section below on Organisation.

We will carry out each of the following actions-

1. Deliver cleaner streets, better environmental services and keep crime low		
Ref	Flagship Action	Measurement
1.1	Make Harrow's streets cleaner. Councillor Susan Hall Andrew Trehern	Improve performance by 7% points against national indicator NI 195 improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of graffiti, litter, detritus and fly posting).
1.2	Jointly fund with Metropolitan Police, additional Police Officers in Harrow Town Centre. Councillor Susan Hall Andrew Trehern	Total number of officers to be 1 sergeant, 6 constables and 2 community support officers to be deployed in the Town Centre.
1.3	Improve the traffic flow at Petts Hill by building a new and wider railway bridge. Councillor Susan Hall Andrew Trehern	New bridge and 4 lane highway to be in place by March 2009.

1. Deliver cleaner streets, better environmental services and keep crime low		
Ref	Flagship Action	Measurement
1.4	Extend recycling so that people who live in flats can take part. Councillor Susan Hall Andrew Trehern	Provide a bin based collection service to 10,000 flats by March 2009.
1.5	Bring about significant improvements in Community safety and Cleanliness through 6 'Weeks of Action' campaigns across Harrow. Councillor Susan Hall Andrew Trehern	50% of people feel that their Week of Action has improved their area.
1.6	Bring down rates of alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour by setting an Alcohol Exclusion Zone across the whole borough (subject to consultation and approval by Council). Councillor Susan Hall Andrew Trehern	Impact to be monitored via alcohol related crime and disorder figures and through reduction in the Mori perceptions of alcohol-related anti-social behaviour by 3 percentage points.
1.7	Tackle environmental crime and reduce fly-tipping, graffiti and litter through the work of the new Envirocrime Team. Councillor Susan Hall Andrew Trehern	Achieve the Gold Standard on the Local Government Association's Reputation Campaign in relation to Grot Spots in Neighbourhoods and Protecting the Environment.

1. Deliver cleaner streets, better environmental services and keep crime low		
Ref	Flagship Action	Measurement
1.8	<p>Fight bullying and abuse by rolling out the Miss Dorothy Dot Com programme to all primary schools.</p> <p>Councillor Christine Bednell Paul Clark</p>	<p>All primary schools to have received training and be participating in the programme by March 2009.</p> <p>Ofsted to rate all participating schools as good or outstanding for Care, Guidance and Support.</p>

2 Redevelop the Town Centre		
Ref	Flagship Action	Measurement
2.1	<p>Help to secure development of the new Harrow College buildings and the Town Centre Post Office site, subject to planning consent.</p> <p>Councillor Marilyn Ashton Andrew Trehern</p>	<p>Construction to begin in October/November 2008.</p>
2.2	<p>Help to secure re-development of the Gayton Road site, subject to planning consent.</p> <p>Councillor Marilyn Ashton Andrew Trehern</p>	<p>Construction to begin by March 2009.</p>
2.3	<p>Give a 'facelift' to St Anns Road.</p> <p>Councillor Marilyn Ashton Andrew Trehern</p>	<p>By March 2009, transform the area between St Georges and Havelock Place through repaving, new lighting, seating and bins, additional trees, new ramps and steps at St Anns Centre.</p>

2 Redevelop the Town Centre		
Ref	Flagship Action	Measurement
2.4	<p>Help to secure the redevelopment of the Travis Perkins site, subject to planning consent.</p> <p>Councillor Marilyn Ashton Andrew Trehern</p>	Construction to begin in Autumn 2008.

3. Improve the well-being of adults and children and the care of those who most need our help		
Ref	Flagship Action	Measurement
3.1	<p>Provide breaks for carers through substitute carers or by offering the person cared for a short-term placement.</p> <p>Councillor Eric Silver Paul Najsarek</p>	Provide 13,500 breaks for carers of adults and children in 2008/09, an increase of 8% over the current year.
3.2	<p>Give people more control over their own lives by extending direct payments to more of those who are eligible.</p> <p>Councillor Eric Silver Paul Najsarek</p>	100 further social care service users to receive their own budget and arrange their own care compared to the 167 current users.
3.3	<p>Speed up routine housing repairs.</p> <p>Councillor Camilla Bath Paul Najsarek</p>	Reduce the average time to complete non-urgent housing repairs from 18 days by March 2009.

3. Improve the well-being of adults and children and the care of those who most need our help		
Ref	Flagship Action	Measurement
3.4	Provide a domestic setting for contact between Children Looked After and their parents. Councillor Janet Mote Paul Clark	35 Families and 50 children supported with a total of 50 contact sessions a week and 2,500 contact sessions in 2008/09.

4. Extend community use of schools while making education in Harrow even better		
Ref	Flagship Actions	Measurement
4.1	Design and build the new Whitmore High School with dual use leisure and arts facilities. Councillor Christine Bednell Paul Clark	The design of the project will be complete in early 2008/09. The existing buildings will be demolished and foundations for the new buildings will be laid by March 2009.
4.2	Establish provision for children on the autistic spectrum in mainstream primary schools. Councillor Christine Bednell Paul Clark	Two centres to be open by March 2009 meeting the needs of 16 children.
4.3	Challenge underachievement in specific groups of pupils through targeted action. Councillor Christine Bednell Paul Clark	As part of a three-year programme, the first element of which is the Black pupil achievement project to be implemented in 50% of schools by September 2008. The two subsequent elements will address the needs of other sectors of our community.

5 Improve the way we work for our residents		
Ref	Flagship Action	Measurement
5.1	<p>Improve our communications so that the residents know what the Council is doing and why.</p> <p>Councillor Paul Osborn Jill Rothwell</p>	<p>Produce 6 issues of Harrow People in 2008/09.</p> <p>Achieve a 75% approval rating from residents for the magazine by March 2009 and a 5% increase in the number of residents who feel informed by the Council by September 2008.</p>
5.2	<p>Improve access to services through our contact centre.</p> <p>Councillor Paul Osborn Jill Rothwell</p>	<p>Answer 90% of calls within 30 seconds by March 2009.</p> <p>Achieve an average waiting time in the One Stop Shop of 15 minutes by March 2009.</p> <p>Receive and process 500 electronic forms a month compared with current performance of 100 a month.</p>
5.3	<p>Improve the service for library users.</p> <p>Councillor Anjana Patel Andrew Trehern</p>	<p>Install and ensure operation of New Library Management System by December 2008</p> <p>Install at least 1 self service kiosk in a library by December 2008</p> <p>Increase the number of on-line transactions by 8% by March 2009</p>
5.4	<p>Develop a budget strategy to ensure that the Council lives within its means while protecting services.</p> <p>Councillor David Ashton Myfanwy Barrett</p>	<p>Eliminate overspends, meet income targets and increase efficiency to meet Gershon targets to protect funding for frontline services.</p>

5 Improve the way we work for our residents		
Ref	Flagship Action	Measurement
5.5	<p>Open a further 4 Children's Centres to provide access to a wide range of advice, support and health care services.</p> <p>Councillor Janet Mote Paul Clark</p>	<p>The 4 centres of Grange, Pinner Wood, Cedars and Kenmore open by March 2009.</p>
5.6	<p>Develop the Youth Parliament to become more involved in the Council's work</p> <p>Councillor Janet Mote Paul Clark</p>	<p>Introduction of shadow Youth Mayor and preparations made for election of Youth Mayor in Spring 2009.</p> <p>Invite members of the Youth Parliament to attend two Cabinet Meetings within the current council year.</p>

6. Develop communities where people from different backgrounds get on well together		
Ref	Flagship Action	Measurement
6.1	<p>Develop new and clearer support arrangements for the voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>Councillor Anjana Patel Andrew Trehern</p>	<p>Implementation of the revised funding arrangements in 2009/10 after consideration of the outcomes of the Scrutiny Review due in Autumn 2008.</p>

6. Develop communities where people from different backgrounds get on well together		
Ref	Flagship Action	Measurement
6.2	<p>Promote new and existing cultural activities to encourage participation from all communities in Harrow.</p> <p>Councillor Anjana Patel Andrew Trehern</p>	<p>At least a 5% increase in residents' participation in cultural activities as measured by local attendance data.</p>
6.3	<p>Launch a Community and Cultural calendar, celebrating Harrow's mix of cultures and faiths.</p> <p>Councillor Anjana Patel Andrew Trehern</p>	<p>Increase participation by at least 5% in key events and festivals supported by the council, as measured by local attendance data.</p>
6.4	<p>Promote and celebrate community volunteering and establish a Volunteer Awards event.</p> <p>Councillor Anjana Patel Andrew Trehern</p>	<p>Increase the number of people involved in volunteer activities by 5% by March 2009.</p> <p>Stage the Volunteer Awards Ceremony by December 2008.</p>

Organisation

In February 2007 a new slimmer organisational structure was agreed by the Council – with the aim of making the organisation fit for purpose, contributing to the Council’s savings plan, and enabling the Council to achieve its long term strategic vision. The new structure comprises five corporate directorates of:

- Adults’ & Housing Services
- Children’s Services
- Community & Environment Services
- Finance
- Strategy & Business Support

Restructuring was completed in the summer of 2007 and the new Directorates have bedded down and are now delivering the improvements envisaged. Further organisational refinements will continue to be made to ensure that the Council is in the best possible shape to deliver high quality and efficient services.

The Adults’ and Housing Services Directorate provides Adult Social Care services including support for people with physical or sensory impairments, mental health needs or learning disabilities. It also has responsibility for providing homes for homeless households, developing and implementing a strategy for all forms of housing in the borough and managing the Council’s housing stock.

The Children’s Services Directorate provides services for children in care, services to support families, Integrated Youth Support Services, the Youth Offending Team, Children’s Centres, the Local Authority’s Education functions and Early Years services.

The Community and Environment Services Directorate has a wide range of responsibilities stretching from Sports Centres and Libraries to Street Cleansing, Parks Management, Community Safety, Planning and Highways.

The Finance Directorate is responsible for financial strategy, financial management, procurement, audit, risk management, health and safety, payroll and pensions and IT.

The Strategy and Business Support Directorate provides front line services such as Access Harrow, Housing Benefit, Council Tax, Registrars and Electoral Registration. It also supports the Council through legal and governance services, Human Resources, Scrutiny, Policy and Partnerships and Communications.

Participation

The Council's decisions can be challenged and questioned by both individuals and organisations. Most decisions are made at meetings of the Council and Cabinet, which are open to the press and public. Some of the ways of participation include:

Public attendance at meeting. The time, place and subjects to be discussed are listed in agendas. They are available to press and public a week before meetings and copies are available at all Harrow libraries. Members of the public (including young people) are also included as members on various panels, scrutiny reviews and pilot schemes.

Deputations. Requests can be made to speak before meetings in a deputation. Written notice should be given in advance and requests must be signed by at least 10 people with a local interest.

Petitions. These can be presented to councillors, committees or full council.

Call-in. 150 members of the public, acting together, can 'call-in' an Executive decision, taken but not yet implemented, for further consideration by the call-in sub-committee which can refer the matter to the full council if they consider it contrary to the policy framework or not in accordance with the budget. We are one of only a handful of authorities to involve residents in this way.

Question time at public meetings. The council, cabinet, every committee and most panels make up to 15 minutes available for the public to ask questions. Questions are either answered there and then, or in writing within three working days of the meeting. Any Harrow resident or representative of a local organisation may ask a question at a meeting, plus one follow-up question. Questions need to be sent in writing three working days before the relevant meeting.

Councillors' Questions. A separate period is allocated at Cabinet and Council meetings for Councillors to ask questions. This promotes accountability, and enables Councillors to fulfil their role better without intruding on the time allocated for public questions.

Planning Applications. There is a separate procedure for representations by objectors and applicants at meetings of the Planning Committees.

Independently facilitated 'Question Time'. Regular question and answer sessions have been held throughout this administration, at which the public can hold the Cabinet to account for manifesto pledges, and progress towards achieving them. The Council has now held 6 question time events and, in the coming year, will hold a further 3 in various parts of the borough.

Residents' Panel. In the autumn of 2007, the Council re-established the Residents' Panel – a group of more than 1200 local people who are representative of the borough as a whole who have agreed to give the Council their views on a range of local issues. The first questionnaire was sent out in September 2007 and The Council expects to send out four more in 2008.

Young People: The Council supports the involvement of young people in setting the agenda for the future through the Youth Council, holding elections to the UK Youth Parliament and through the innovation of helping young people choose a Youth Mayor, which is planned for Spring 2009.

Internal actions to achieve better service outcomes.

The report of the Council's last Corporate Assessment was received in March 2007, just before the Council's Chief Executive took up his post. He proposed the following actions to address the issues flagged up in the Corporate Assessment and this section identifies the progress that has been made to date.

1. **Vision and Priorities:** The need to develop clearer long-term vision and a set of priorities to guide the allocation of resources and which lead to clear tangible actions.

In the last year, the Council has adopted a new vision and refined its vision statements and corporate priorities to provide a more focussed direction. The Council has run challenge panels to examine the service improvement plans for each corporate directorate to ensure that the Council concentrates on the aspects of service delivery that matter most to our residents. The Council has found room in a difficult budget for investment in priority services.

2. **Organisational Structures:** A redesigned Corporate Strategy Board and a redesigned management structure that would make a saving of 10% of management costs.

The officer management structure has been redesigned and a new Strategy Board established. Management costs have been reduced by 10%. There may be further structural refinements to respond to changing circumstances and in the light of experience.

3. **Finance:** Increased levels of financial effectiveness and savings of £16m delivered during 2007/08 and a further £10m identified for 2008/09 with minimal impact on services.

The Council's saving target for 2007/08 has been achieved and specific savings for 2008/09 have been identified. Work on issues such as income maximisation is underway to bring increased financial stability.

4. **Investment in people:** A leadership and management development programme for officers and members.

Management development programmes are now in place for senior officers and members. A new corporate induction programme for members and new staff have also been developed.

5. **Work Life balance:** A clear investment in the workforce with the launch of a series of well-being initiatives.

A number of staff benefits programmes have been and continue to be developed. A staff-volunteering scheme is being developed for 2008/09

6. **Performance Management:** Improved performance management processes that would provide clearer oversight of delivery and improvement; that would enhance the role of Members and that would consider a holistic agenda across performance indicators

In the last year, fundamental service reviews, Improvement Boards, Performance meetings and the Corporate Improvement programme have all been developed to concentrate attention on raising standards in respect of the most significant services

7. **Organisational Culture:** The development of a more positive and proactive culture that would encourage innovation and calculated risk taking

The staff awards scheme has been developed to recognise achievement of various kinds – effort, risk taking and customer care as well as more traditional successes such as external funding, national recognition and reaching preset standards.

8. **Communications:** improvements to both internal and external communications through the appointment of a new provider of Communications Services

A new contract for the provision of both internal and external communications is in the process of being let with specific targets for the production of Harrow People and specific campaigns. Success is measured against the proportion of

residents who say that they are well informed. The residents' panel has been re-established to gather local opinion on a range of issues and service user groups are to be established.

Internally, there is now an established programme of managers' and staff forums, Chief Executive's lunches, and newsletters.

9. **First Impressions:** Improvement to customer access and communication that would directly address challenges with levels of satisfaction

Access Harrow's accommodation, staff numbers, opening times, the number of services available on-line and the speed of telephone answering will all be improved in the coming year.

Harrow's achievements – reflections on 2007/08

Council

In looking at the Council's future plans, it is valuable to understand what has been achieved in the recent past. This context helps to assess whether the Council's future plans are realistic and whether trends support the projected improvements. The following pages show some service statistics to give a feel for the range of demand and examples of what was achieved last year. In particular, this section focuses on the Flagship Actions contained in the last Corporate Plan and shows what has been achieved to date. We will be publishing in the summer an edition of Harrow People with an end of year scorecard of our achievements against the 2007/08 Flagship Actions.

- **Overall performance indicator (PI) profile.**

The Audit Commission Direction of Travel Assessment from January 2008 rates the Council as "Improving adequately". The Commission has noted areas of particular improvement, including housing benefits and services for children and young people, but also flagged areas where the pace of improvement is slow, such as adult social care services and street cleaning. Performance in housing declined during the year.

The Commission recognised the value of the partnership work involving the Council and highlighted achievements in regeneration and community safety while identifying affordable housing and teenage pregnancies as challenges. The Council's clarified vision and priorities are supported, as is the leadership and investment programmes to strengthen the Council's capacity. Finally, the Commission drew attention to the continuing issue of the Council's financial standing.

- **IDeA Peer Review.** In December, the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) undertook a Peer Review. Peer Reviews are invited by local authorities to check on their progress, assess how they measure up to best practice and measure their capacity to improve. The review identified that the authority had suffered from significant capacity issues and a financial crisis. However, the review recognised that a clear improvement plan has now been established to deliver better outcomes for local people through improvements to the way in which the Council operates. They also recognised that there is a clear sense of momentum in the organisation and much greater stability. The progress made now needs to be embedded throughout the organisation.

Their review also identified the need to focus on improving customer satisfaction which is significantly below the London average, in part by addressing the fact that the Council operates too often in silos without cross service communication and co-operation. The Council's ambition to be one of the best Councils in London by 2012 will require step rather than incremental change.

The review also highlighted the advantage of considering the role and function of Harrow Strategic Partnership and identified opportunities to broaden and strengthen partnership working. While the Partnership is successfully pursuing the new Local Area Agreement, it has not taken a fundamental look at public service delivery across all of the local partners.

- **MORI survey findings 2007.** The June and July 2007 MORI Survey followed a very similar survey conducted in 2005 and 2006. The underlying message was that customer satisfaction levels had declined particularly in relation to some key environmental services.

- The headline figure for being very or fairly satisfied with life in Harrow is 66%, compared to 69% in 2006 and 67% in 2005.
 - The service which the public thought most needed improving was Road and Pavement repairs while crime, which two years ago was thought be most in need of improvement, attracted 13 percentage points less support, suggesting that crime reduction and visible local policing has reduced the fear of crime.
 - 46% are very or fairly satisfied with the way the council runs things, compared with 49% in 2006 and 54% in 2005
 - Other high priorities included levels of traffic congestion, clean streets and health services.
- **Local Area Agreement.** The partnership is entering the third and final year of its Local Area Agreement (LAA) with Government. Progress is satisfactory, with 10 of the 12 stretch indicators on track to earn reward grants. The Government has revised the form of LAAs and required that a new LAA is agreed by June 2008. Good progress was made in establishing local priorities with partners and via a summit for local groups.

Adults' and Housing Services

Service Statistics:

- More than 28,000 adults in Harrow suffer from a limiting long-term illness
- More than 19,000 adults in Harrow provide unpaid care to another person
- Around 4,500 people received Community Care Services in their own home during the year
- Around 450 people received Meals on Wheels
- 12,000 Harrow residents are connected to and receive the Helpline Service
- The proportion of population age 75+ is expected to increase by 13% by 2026

Health Partnership. A formal partnership arrangement, the first in London, has been agreed with Central and North West London Mental Health Trust to provide a framework within which the Harrow's Mental Health Services are delivered on a fully joined up and integrated basis.

Housing Strategy. The Government approved the Council's Housing Strategy, a plan that looks at all housing needs in the borough over the next three years as well as more narrowly at the Council's own housing stock and the demands made of its services such as support to homeless families.

Direct Payments. The policy of putting service users in control of their own care arrangements through the Direct Payments Scheme has continued with the support of a new team who manage all aspects of the setting up the scheme for new users. This has resulted in continuing growth in the number of service users utilising this scheme.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. Staff from Adults' and Housing Services, together with colleagues from across the Council and the PCT, are undertaking this assessment to better understand the range and scale of likely future needs so that service design and delivery can be planned properly.

Improved Care Homes. A programme of small but important capital improvements have been made at 21 residential and care homes across the borough such as redecoration, new baths, new carpets and landscaping of grounds.

Transition. Transition is the term used to describe the change from children's to adults' services that service users experience at 18. Work between the Directorates has developed practices to make this change as smooth as possible.

Domiciliary Services. Two new providers have been appointed following a re-tendering exercise resulting in improved efficiency.

	Flagship Action from 2007/08	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
1.5	By introducing assistive technology, using sensors discretely placed in people's homes linked to a Helpline service, we can promote greater independence for vulnerable people.	Completed	
5.1	Further modernise our home care services for adults in need so that they have greater control and choice over the way in which services are delivered e.g. by expanding our direct payments scheme.	On Track	Pilot to be evaluated in February 2008.

	Flagship Action from 2007/08	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
5.4	Use the resources of all agencies working with vulnerable adults to identify and prevent abuse, harm or exploitation.	On Track	Work is currently underway to update the policy guidance and improve the intranet/internet sites to improve access to information. Training sessions have been organised for new staff across a wide range of agencies; and work has commenced to review CRB checks in line with new guidance, including for services that are contracted out.
1.4	By 1 st July 2007, when our new partnership with Kier begins, our contractor will make time-specific appointments for inspecting damage and making repairs to the interior of Council houses and flats.		Up to the end of December 2007, 92.5% of appointments made were kept. Appointments now need to be made for a larger proportion of the works undertaken.

Children's Services

Service Statistics: 29,000 pupils attend Harrow's 53 primary schools, 10 high schools and 4 special schools
8,000 children attend play schemes during the school holidays
There are 60 private and/or voluntary pre-school groups providing places to 2 to 5 year olds across Harrow
73.7% of the compulsory school age population is from a minority ethnic group
About 700 children and young people are providing care for the families/relatives

Ofsted Annual Performance Assessment. The assessment, which was undertaken in October, graded both the overall effectiveness of children's services and the capacity to improve including the management of services for children and young people at level 3 out of 4 – an improvement over previous years. The assessment noted the good progress made in addressing the issues raised in the Joint Area Review the previous year. In particular, the assessment noted the advances made in relation to the "being healthy" outcomes for young people. Partnership working with both the Police and the voluntary sector has improved. Finally, there is evidence that, where further improvements are needed, the service has recognised this and is working to address weaknesses.

Extended Schools. 50% of schools are now offering the extended schools core offer.

Additional Pupil Referral Unit. A second pupil referral unit was opened at the Teachers' Centre offering an alternative to exclusion

Children's Trust. Services for Children provided by a range of agencies are co-ordinated through a Children's Trust arrangement under the auspices of the Children and Young people's Strategic Partnership.

Harrow Youth Achievement Awards. A Borough-wide scheme to recognise the achievements of young people.

Sixth Form Collegiate. All High Schools are now participating in providing the 6th form curriculum.

School Re-organisation. Preparatory work completed to be able to deliver school re-organisation so that Harrow schools are in line with the national agenda. Support is being sought from the Department for Children, Schools and Families to draw down Building Schools for the Future funding.

	Flagship Action from 2007/08	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
1.3	Initially, 18 school sites will provide affordable childcare before and after school and in school holidays. More will follow in future years.	Completed	
5.2	Increase the number of potential adoptive parents by employing a specialist service, Coram Family Services.	Completed	
5.3	Apply a particular focus on health in the teenage community, working with the Harrow Mayor's programme.	Completed	
6.1	Ensure Information, Advice and Guidance services meet the needs of our changing community.	Completed	
6.2	Open 4 Children's Centres to provide a wider range of services to children and their families.		Capital work on remaining Children's Centres - Kenmore Park, Cedars, Grange & Pinner Wood - set to start in February. All have plans in place to complete building work.
6.3	Recognise young people's achievements through the Youth Achievement Awards and accreditation.	Completed	
7.1	Open an additional pupil referral unit at our Teachers' Centre in Wealdstone to provide education and support for pupils at risk of exclusion.	Completed	

Community and Environment Services

Service Statistics: There are 1 million visits to our sports and leisure facilities annually
331 council homes were renovated in 2007/08
We loaned 2 million books, CDs and DVDs from our libraries
We dealt with 3,700 planning applications
We facilitated 600 affordable homes being built
We increased the amount of rubbish recycled by 1500 tonnes.

Community Development Strategy. A strategy to help communities to identify their needs and work together to achieve their aspirations has been developed. Voluntary and community organisations will be instrumental in undertaking much of this work and the work proposed for the coming year in reviewing the Council's relationship with these organisations is designed to ensure that they are supported properly.

Community Celebrations. A much expanded Under One Sky festival was held in the summer and a successful Black History Month programme was delivered.

Recycling. The target of recycling 40% of household waste by 2010 has already been exceeded, reducing landfill costs by £1.8m. Harrow is now the second best authority in London for recycling, a dramatic improvement from being in the bottom five 2 years ago.

Kier Partnership. The Council's partnership with Kier for buildings maintenance has led to repair targets being exceeded and the partnership responded impressively to the fire at Bentley Wood School to enable education to continue.

Climate Change. The Council has signed the Nottingham Declaration which commits us actively to tackle climate change in and work with others to reduce emissions country-wide. A climate change action plan is being developed for adoption by the end 2008.

Town Centre. As well as supporting, subject to planning consent, work on major sites in the town centre, the Council has completed consultation on a proposed programme of improvements to the public space and street furniture in the town centre which will begin to be implemented in 2008.

Bentley Priory. The Council has consulted on and approved planning guidance which will influence the future of this important historic site.

	Flagship Action from 2007/08	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
2.2	“Weeks of Action” with our partners, notably the Police, focusing on areas with particular challenges will be piloted with 3 planned from September.	Completed	
2.3	By 1st January, expand the monitoring of the borough’s CCTV network to 24 hours a day and create a dedicated enforcement team to reduce fly-tipping, graffiti, litter and wider environmental crime, in partnership with the Police.	On Track	CCTV control room refurbished. 24 hour operation begun. Envirocrime team to be operational from 1 st April 2008.
2.4	Implement the ‘Community Payback’ Scheme in partnership with the Probation Service to deal with environmental blight such as graffiti, fly tipping and overgrown areas. We expect a minimum of 3,000 hours to be devoted to improving the environment.	Completed	
2.5	Launch phase 2 of the Borough Beat initiative to double the number of council staff who are released to patrol Harrow as Special Constables in order to increase reassurance and provide a visible police presence.	Completed	
3.1	Become one of the top five London Boroughs for recycling by providing recycling for people who live in flats to help us reach 35% by the end of March 2008.	Completed	Harrow now second best in London.

	Flagship Action from 2007/08	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
3.2	Invest more than £200,000 in new playground facilities and activities for young people and toddlers at Roxeth Rec and Headstone Rec.		Work will begin on site in the current financial year.
3.3	Open Wealdstone High Street to traffic to assist local businesses and help regeneration.		Cabinet gave approval to proceed with the scheme at their meeting on 13 December. Target completion now May 2008.
3.4	By June 2007, give a blue bin to every household that can use one as part of our drive to improve recycling in a resident friendly way.	Completed	
3.5	Sign the 'Nottingham Declaration' regarding controlling emissions, reducing energy use and tackling climate change this summer and prepare a climate change action plan by March 2008.	On Track	Declaration signed and action plan to be adopted in the current year.
4.1	Open the refurbished Canons Park, including the restored walled garden, refurbished buildings and the opened up historic views.	Completed	
4.2	Secure the future of Bentley Priory by adopting supplementary planning guidance by the end of 2007.	Completed	
4.3	Through our 'Framework for the Future', develop a vision for Harrow. Consultation on the Local Development Framework core strategy will begin in 2007.	Changed timetable agreed by Government	New timetable approved by Government. Consultation on core strategy now due in May 2008.
7.2	Open the Kenton Learning Centre by October, providing access to community learning and skills.	Completed	
8.1	By early 2008, sign a contract to build a new Sports & Leisure Centre to replace the existing Byron Centre.		Overall project plan and cost implication now agreed at Cabinet, including the Hatch End Scheme.

	Flagship Action from 2007/08	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
8.2	Develop plans to open Prince Edwards Playing Fields 'Football Centre of Excellence' by early 2008.		Finalised subject to football foundation grant hearing and planning gain agreement
8.3	Develop plans for two further new sports centres.	See 8.1 above	
9.1	Transform the appearance of the town centre with redesigned pedestrian areas and street furniture. Agree the strategy in 2007 and begin work early in 2008.	On Track	Public consultation complete. Outline/detailed design to commence to enable start on site March 2008.
9.2	Begin work on the Gayton Road library and performing arts centre in early 2008.	Major amendment to project. New project on track	Major amendment to project. Cabinet decision 11/07 library temporary move to Garden House by April 2008.
9.3	Positively contribute to the successful development of Harrow College by, subject to planning permission, agreeing a necessary land swap.	On Track	Remodelled open space to be laid out as Metropolitan Open Land, to the satisfaction of the Council, under the terms of the land exchange agreement with Harrow College.
10.1	Transform the way we support the Voluntary and Community Sector through a radical rethink of the whole grants programme and support services.		Overview and Scrutiny committee have agreed to include in work programme.

	Flagship Action from 2007/08	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
10.3	Adopt a Community Development Strategy in 2007 to help communities come together, decide their needs and help to ensure that they are met.	Completed	

Finance

Budget Management. We have closely managed the 2007-08 budget to ensure we live within our means and contribute £1m to reserves as planned

Procurement. We have explored a range of procurement opportunities to secure value for money

Improve External Funding. We have developed an external funding strategy and secured significant amounts of new funding in 2007/08.

Effective IT Strategy. We have started work on our new IT Strategy and our disaster recovery arrangements

Risk Management. We have continued to make very good progress on audit, risk emergency planning and health and safety.

Insurance. We became one of the first boroughs to join the new insurance mutual for London local government.

	Flagship Action from 2007/08	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
11.3	Eliminate the predicted shortfall of £6.4m identified in the budget for 2008-09.	Completed	

Strategy and Business Support

Service Statistics: Since opening in 2006, Access Harrow has served over 100,000 visitors and answered more than 1 million telephone calls
Collections are responsible for the annual collection of around £100m in Council Tax from over 83,000 households and more than £45m in Business Rates from over 5,000 businesses
Assessments and Support Services handle an annual caseload of 16,500, which is equivalent to 1 in 5 households in the borough
Human Resources and Development provide services to more than 8,000 Harrow employees – managers and staff
Performance and Data Services provide management information systems support to all of the 67 state schools in the borough (29,000 pupils) and will be supporting the rollout of the national Contact Point system to cover every child in the borough (over 50,000).

Deliver Organisational Review. The headline re-organisation of the Council's management structure was supported by detailed strategic and human relations work which was completed on time to maximise the impact of savings.

Maintain IIP. The Directorate's Investors in People status was retained.

Contact Point. The Council has acted as one of the reference sites for the new national Child Protection data sharing IT system which will contain records of who to contact about individual children. The project has been successfully developed and data quality rated good.

Project Management. A simple but effective project management toolkit has been developed and key staff trained to help Council projects achieve their objectives on time and on budget.

Capital Ambition. Funding of over £500,000 from Capital Ambition was secured to support Project Management, the IDeA Peer Review and other developmental activities.

Scrutiny. The Scrutiny function has been reconfigured to produce a streamlined but effective system and a protocol for how the function works alongside the Executive has been prepared and largely agreed.

Web refresh. The Council's Internet site and its intranet presence have both been refreshed and content reviewed.

Access Harrow. The Council's contact centre, Access Harrow, was awarded Call Centre of the Year at the Good Communications Awards.

Benefits. The Housing Benefits Service maintained its maximum 4 star rating at a recent inspection and piloted Voice Risk Analysis technology to identify suspicious claims. The service was short-listed for the 2008 E-Government Award.

	Flagship Action from 2007/08	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
1.1	The Council's website will be redesigned to make it easier to find information, book services and pay bills.	Completed	
1.2	The Council's contact centre will increase the range of services it can deal with to provide a more comprehensive service to our customers.	Completed	
2.1	New state of the art technology will be introduced to help in our efforts to reduce benefit fraud.	Completed	
10.2	Develop a new Comprehensive Equalities Scheme to ensure that each of our services caters for the whole Harrow community.	Completed	
11.1	Review the Council's structures and identify ways of reducing management costs by 10%.	Completed	
11.2	Launch a Harrow Residents' Panel to increase residents' say.	Completed	

Our values

The way Council Members and officers work with each other, our customers and our partners is crucial to our success. Our values, which guide how we work as **one Council**, are:

- **Pride** – everyone is proud to work for us, celebrates our successes and avoids blaming.
- **Participation** – we are non-hierarchical, so our actions and decisions result from engaging our communities, customers and staff.
- **Performance** – we are focused on achieving the highest levels of performance to serve our customers.
- **Positive work** – we communicate openly and work to create a positive working and learning environment. We encourage innovation and risk-taking.
- **Partnership** – we are honest and build trust in our relationships.
- **Personal accountability** - we take responsibility for our actions and behaviour, we adopt a positive customer service attitude where it is our responsibility to guide customers through our organisation to find the information or service they want.

Risk Register

Harrow Council has a formal risk management process that it uses to manage opportunities and risks effectively. These are systematically identified and managed to ensure that objectives are met, and services to the community are improved. The risk management process used is in line with recommended best practice and involves the identification, analysis, prioritisation and monitoring of risks.

The council has identified its key strategic risks. A risk register and action plans are in place which are reviewed regularly. Detailed risk registers and action plans for each directorate have been developed, and all service plans include a risk register.

The Strategic Risk Register sits alongside the Corporate Plan, and highlights risks that may affect the ability of Harrow Council to achieve its corporate objectives. Risks are mitigated through the action plans in each service plan and through the Council's governance and assurance framework.

Statement on Contracts

The Council is aware of and certifies that, where applicable, it has complied with the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts and has followed the Government (DCLG, formerly ODPM) statutory guidance on 'Best Value and Performance Improvement: Handling of workforce matters in contracting.'

HARROW COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET SUMMARY 2008-2009

	2007-2008 Original Budget £000	2008-2009 Original Budget £000
Local Demand - Borough Services		
Adults and Housing	52,058	54,417
Children's	31,211	29,698
Community and Environment	41,303	43,306
Corporate Strategy	17,490	17,841
Corporate Finance	17,230	17,603
Total Directorate Budgets	159,292	162,865
Inflation and Corporate items	4,170	7,710
Capital Financing adjustments	(3,460)	(3,460)
Interest on Balances	(4,688)	(4,688)
Total – Baseline	155,314	162,427
Capitalisation	(1,240)	(590)
Contribution to Balances	1,000	1,000
Total Net Expenditure	155,074	162,837
Contribution re Collection Fund Deficit b/f	350	1,365
National Non-Domestic rate (NNDR)	(51,676)	(57,670)
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	(8,673)	(8,028)
Local Demand on Collection Fund	95,075	98,504
Funds / Balances		
Balances Brought Forward	1,354	2,154
Adjustment to Balances	800	1,000
Balances Carried Forward	2,154	3,154
Council Tax for Band D Equivalent		
Harrow (£)	1,119.50	1,152.55
<u>Increase</u>		
Harrow (%)	4.90%	2.95%
Taxbase	84,926	85,466