

Harrow Strategic Partnership Board

13th May 2008

Functions and Governance of the Partnership

Background

1. This paper proposes revised governance arrangements for the Partnership that reflect the changing nature of the new Local Area Agreement, the closer partnership working developing in Harrow and demanded by the new Comprehensive Area Assessment and the outcomes of the Peer review of the Partnership undertaken at the end of last year.
2. The new Local Area Agreement (LAA), that will be signed in June 2008, and its associated financial arrangements prompted a review of the governance of Harrow Strategic Partnership. In addition, the feedback from the IDeA Peer Review of the Council and the Partnership encouraged that a radical review of the functions and scope of the Partnership – rather than just its structures - should be undertaken. In undertaking this work, the opportunity has been taken to look at other partnership relationships, to examine how the best use can be made of these arrangements to the mutual benefits of the participants, and further discussions have been held with the IDeA Review Co-ordinator.

New LAA

3. The new LAA will comprise 35 indicators drawn from the 198 National Indicator Set and a further 16 (17 from 2009) education related targets. All of these will have negotiated stretch targets and are expected to contribute to the level of reward grant earned by the Partnership. The detail of the reward regime has yet to be announced but early indications are that an average of £2.2m will be available to each authority. This means that the range of activity that attracts reward funding is very much broader than the current LAA with its 12 stretch targets and more Council and Partner service areas will be involved in delivering these targets. Performance management arrangements will need to be correspondingly enhanced.
4. The new LAA does not bring with it any pump-priming funding but, instead, 39 existing and previously ring-fenced funding streams will be rolled up into the Area Based Grant to be spent entirely at local discretion. The sums involved are £8.366m in 2008/09, £12.731m in 2009/10 and £12.492m in 2010/11. The Council has the final say on how Area Based Grant should be used but the Partnership, being responsible for achieving the LAA targets, will need to influence that decision.

Role for the Partnership

5. The Peer Review called for a fundamental rethink of the role and purpose of the Partnership. It is perhaps fair to characterise the formal meetings of the HSP Board and Executive as being dominated by the LAA. While this is clearly an important issue, it tends to

drive out discussion of other matters of common interest and the Partnership is less effective as a vehicle for strategic leadership in the Borough than it could be. Structural and governance proposals should therefore utilise the potential of partnerships to meet individual partners' and multi-partner strategic objectives, provide better value for money and streamline service delivery.

6. The CAA will include an Annual Area Risk Assessment, probably looking at the following key questions:

- Do the organisations in the borough promote effective working across partners to make better use of the available resources?
- Do partners work together to maximise the use of their assets for the benefit of local communities?
- Is there a clear vision and strong leadership to enable partnerships to make better use of available resources?
- How well does the partnership understand and assess the needs of its communities, now and in the future?
- Does it use this understanding to inform its local priorities?
- Does the partnership organise itself and ensure it has the capacity to deliver these priorities?
- Has it secure and effective arrangements to identify and manage the risks to achieving successful outcomes?
- Are improved outcomes likely to be achieved?
- Is data shared, and managed and used jointly?

To be able to deal effectively with these questions, the Partnership needs to have a wider agenda and to be better connected to the priorities of its constituent organisations, particularly those in the public sector. It needs to be a vehicle for brokering supportive joint working on issues that cross organisational boundaries in much the same way as several of the management groups successfully operate.

Other drivers for change

7. There has been criticism that the membership of the partnership is not representative of the Borough and its residents. The Board and the Executive are largely composed of representatives of constituent organisations who are chosen for their role or knowledge rather than their gender, age or ethnicity. The make up of both the Board and the Executive currently does not reflect the demographic profile of the borough.

8. There is also a likelihood that the new LAA will include a stretch target measuring whether there is an environment in which the third sector is thriving. A more open, transparent and participatory partnership structure could contribute to creating such an environment.

Proposals

9. The challenge is to create a more representative and transparent structure which is also capable of addressing a more complex and demanding agenda. The recommended way forward involves expanding the membership of the Partnership body which would have oversight of issues such as the refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the development and delivery of the LAA. The proposal is represented in a structure chart on page 4 of this paper.

10. At the same time, it is proposed to create a Local Public Service Board (LPSB). This would be a non-statutory body that could be characterised as the “Group Board” for Harrow’s public services, each of which continues to operate independently. It would exist within the Partnership family and be accountable to the Harrow Strategic Partnership. The LPSB would be responsible for developing a shared agenda for Harrow, deliver joint outcomes and transformational change. The Board would address issues including

Synergy

- Joint data, intelligence, forecasting and performance management
- Buildings and estates – co-location, management and maintenance
- Procurement
- Shared Services
- Communications, consultation and engagement
- Border resolution – both between organisations in Harrow and between Harrow and neighbours
- The Sustainable Communities Act

Business Planning

- Financial Planning
- External Funding
- Support for the voluntary and community sector
- Comprehensive Area Assessment

Major Projects

- Local Development Framework
- Delivering the Local Area Agreement
- Delivering the Sustainable Community Plan
- Recommending to the Council how to allocate Area Based Grant
- Other significant partnership delivery projects such as drugs strategy and community development strategy.

Specimen work programmes for the LPSB are attached.

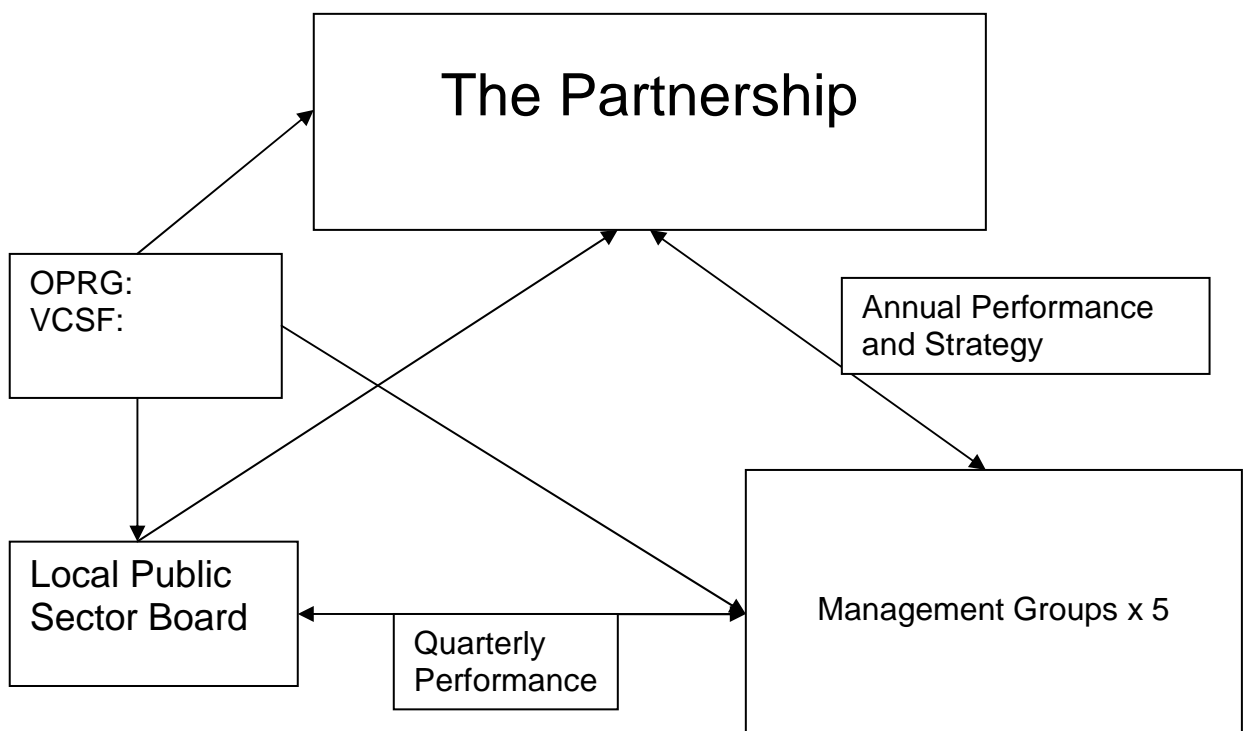
11. The LPSB would comprise the Chief Executives or lead officers of the main public service organisations including the Council, the PCT, the Police, the Fire Service, Further and Higher Education interests, the Learning and Skills Council, Job Centre Plus and the Voluntary and Community Sector via their main Umbrella Group. It would meet perhaps every 6 to 8 weeks, at least in the first year. It is expected that where the Board decides that there is merit in pursuing an initiative, a task and finish cross-organisational group would be formed to research and recommend a course of action.

12. Overseeing the work of the Local Public Service Board would be the Partnership itself. This would have the key role of encouraging community leadership, supporting new initiatives and helping to ensure the effective delivery of services. It would renew the Sustainable Community Plan and sign off the Local Area Agreement including changes made at the annual refresh. It would also consider how relevant national policy initiatives should be taken forward locally. The Partnership would meet two or three times a year in public to receive reports from the thematic management groups on progress against the LAA and the Sustainable Community Plan but would also hold more participatory and engaging events. These would include a

Summit on at least an annual basis. The proposed membership of the Partnership is set out in the appendix to this paper.

13. The existing Management Groups would continue to be the drivers for the delivery of the new LAA and of the medium term ambitions in the Sustainable Community Plan. However, it might be timely for the Management Groups themselves to review their structure and membership to ensure that they are representative and equipped to tackle the new LAA and the wider emerging partnership agenda. In any event, they should be augmented by the relevant Councillor portfolio holders or their portfolio assistants attending regularly where this does not already happen. It would be sensible for Management Groups also to take responsibility for monitoring progress for relevant indicators from the new National Indicator Set which are progressed through partnership action, even where these are not formally part of the new LAA. Similarly, the existing Reference Groups would also continue to ensure that the Partnership had direct access to the views of their particular constituencies.

14. Revised governance arrangements for the Partnership need to be put into place as soon as possible and need to include a detailed constitution. If the arrangements outlines in this report are approved, a detailed constitution and terms of reference will be developed in time for the next meeting of the Board.



Existing Partnership Board Membership

Leader of the Council*
Deputy Leader of the Council*
Leader of the main Minority Group*
Deputy Leader of the main Minority Group*
Chair Harrow PCT
Member of the MPA
Representative of Harrow Chamber of
Commerce
Representative of North West London
Chamber of Commerce
Representative of Harrow in Business Board
Representative of Kodak Limited
Voluntary and Community Sector
Representatives x 4
Representative of University of Westminster
Representative of Stanmore College
Representative of North West London
Hospital Trust
Chief Executive, Harrow Council
Borough Commander, Harrow Police
Further Education Representative
Chief Executive, Harrow in Business
Chief Executive, Harrow PCT
Chief Executive, Harrow Association of
Voluntary Service

23 Members

* Places allocated in line with proportionality
rules

Proposed Partnership Membership 2008/09

Leader of the Council*
Partnership portfolio holder*
Leader of the Opposition*
Deputy Leader of the Opposition*
Chair, Harrow PCT
Member of the MPA
Representative x2, Chamber of Commerce
Representative, Harrow in Business
Representative, Kodak Limited
Representative x4, Voluntary and
Community Sector
Representative University of Westminster
Representative x2, Further Education
Representative of Harrow Primary School
Head Teachers
Representative of Harrow High School Head
Teachers
Chair Older People's Reference Group
Representative, Learning and Skills Council
Representative, Job Centre Plus
Representative, North West London
Hospital Trust
Representative, Central and North West
London Mental Health Trust
Representative of the Harrow RSL Group
Representative, London Probation Board
Chief Executive, Harrow Council
Borough Commander, Harrow Police
Borough Commander, London Fire Service
Chief Executive, Harrow PCT
Chief Executive, HAVS
Chief Executive, HCRE
Representative of the LINK
Representative x2, Harrow Youth
Parliament
Representative x2, Harrow Interfaith Forum
Representative, Harrow Federation of
Tenants and Residents Associations
Representative x5, Management Groups
Representative, Government Office for
London

44 Members

Draft Specimen Work Programme for the LPSB in 2008/09

May

Joint intelligence unit
Joining up consultation arrangements
Comprehensive Area Assessment – how it works and what it means
A co-ordinated approach to equalities
Public Health Report – partnership response

July

Local Development Framework – implications of results of consultation on strategic options
Implementation of the LAA
Community Development opportunities for cross working
Year Ahead Statement
Third Sector Review and support from partners
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
Place Survey

September

Proposals for the Civic Centre site and other co-location opportunities
Sustainable Communities Act – ideas for changing delivery bodies
Draft Refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy
Area Based Grant and the LAA

November

Partners' budgets – implications, pooling and aligning
External funding opportunities
Town Centre plans
LAA performance to date
Partner contributions to community tension indicators
Comprehensive Area Assessment – risk assessment

January

Shared Services - back office functions and procurement
LAA Refresh
West London Alliance – potential for wider partnerships
Partners' priorities for next year
Place Shaping – vision and actions
Annual strategic crime assessment