

1. Introduction

1.1 The Year Ahead Statement brings together the trends in Government thinking and guidance, intelligence and data that the Council can access about London and Harrow, highlights relevant local policies and Council performance and adds in the outcomes of surveys of public opinion.

1.2 This process of developing the Statement offers the opportunity to review the Council's corporate priorities and is organised around the thinking about the future that emerged from a Majority Group Away Day held in July 2008. The proposed priorities are clearer and more focussed than those for 2008/09 which in turn were an improvement on the set for the previous year.

1.3 The Integrated Planning Framework, which was adopted by Cabinet on 19th July 2007, regards the Year Ahead Statement as the document that initiates service planning. The Framework requires the Council to prepare a draft Corporate Plan for consideration at Cabinet in December alongside the draft Budget. For this target date to be achieved for both the plan and the budget, services will need to consider their priorities and the financial consequences that they imply in the light of the corporate priorities set out in this document.

2. National Policy

2.1 The Local Government White Paper declared the Government's ambition to create strong, safe and prosperous communities throughout England through a new settlement between central government, local government and citizens.

2.2 Central Government recognised that a tailored approach to improvement needs for each locality, which are focussed on outcomes, is going to be more effective in delivering their national priorities.

2.3 The creation of Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA) means the way some things happen locally will change. CAA will put comprehensive and independent assessments about local services in the hands of citizens, service users and tax payers. Combining the perspectives of the inspectorates, CAA will provide a joint assessment of outcomes for people in an area and a forward look at prospects for sustainable improvement.

2.4 Local Area Agreements provide a basis for taking the next steps in the improvement of public services – in community safety, healthcare and well being, children's services, environment and beyond. They reflect real prioritisation and greater co-ordination at a local level.

2.5 Delivering these improvements in the face of considerable environmental, economic and social challenges, rising public expectations and slowed growth in public spending will require new levels of efficiency, innovation and improvement. It will involve councils and their local partners in taking a wider governing role in their localities, leading the changes in behaviours that are needed to address key local challenges such as economic development, public health, climate change and social cohesion.

2.6 It will be important to engage and work closely with our partners and our community across our proposed priorities for next year

3. Regional Policy

3.1 London is growing at a rate not seen for many decades, which in turn brings social, environmental and economic challenges. In London there are growing disparities in wealth, health and quality of life. There are serious problems of poor air quality and noise pollution and there is a need to step up to the challenges of a changing climate. London must also remain internationally competitive to provide prosperity for all parts of the city, and all Londoners.

3.2 The Mayor of London published his 'direction of travel' document, "Planning for a better London", which sets out key areas that will be addressed over his term. The key themes are:

- All Londoners should have the homes, opportunities and services they need;
- London's businesses should have the opportunities they need to grow, to have access to markets and to attract the skilled workers they require;
- London's environment must improve and we must step up our efforts to tackle climate change
- London's distinctive character, its diverse neighbourhoods and unique heritage must be cherished and protected;
- All Londoners should be able to share in their city's success, feel safe in their neighbourhoods, and enjoy an improving quality of life

3.3 The regional focus on maintaining economic growth and providing opportunities for businesses to grow will be supported through improving the town centre. The improvement of the town centre will also help towards delivering our local housing targets and the regional housing ambitions.

3.4 Polarisation between rich and poor is far more marked in London than elsewhere and the implications of such a divide are serious. Poverty rates are particularly high for some minority ethnic groups, and with half the entire minority ethnic population of Great Britain living in the capital, income inequality in London has a strong ethnic dimension. London has the highest rate of poverty for children of any region of the UK, and rates of poverty for working age adults and pensioners are also high by comparison with national averages. London councils support more than 30,400 residents in local authority, voluntary and private residential care homes; the majority (60 per cent) live in outer London.

3.5 A strategic challenge for London will be to address long-term public health issues, the implication of an ageing and growing population and its distribution and inequalities. Harrow's priority to improve support for vulnerable people highlights and focuses the responsibility of the whole council to work towards meeting this strategic challenge.

4. Understanding London Life

4.1 Capital Ambition commissioned a report to seek to Understand London Life.

4.2 The report highlighted the inverse relationship between satisfaction and the level of deprivation in the area. There is a clear trend towards higher satisfaction with Inner London than Outer London. Of all the factors examined, the average income in each neighborhood has the strongest relationships with how people feel about their area.

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4.3 While Londoners enjoy the diversity of London, and over eight in ten say the mix of people in the city is one of the best things about it, they may not always enjoy living cheek by jowl with different people. Those parts of London experiencing the greatest rate of change often have lower ratings.

4.4 Overall satisfaction with London Boroughs has risen over the last three years with inner London Boroughs showing higher and rising levels of satisfaction in contrast to the lower and static levels across outer London. Highly visible services are often used by residents to make overall judgments about authorities. Services like refuse collection and recycling have seen the most marked improvements across inner London and these Boroughs continue to outperform outer London Boroughs on street cleaning, parks and open spaces and museums and galleries.

4.5 The fourth and last in a series of Quality of Life Surveys for Harrow was undertaken in 2008. This has enabled a number of medium term trends in residents' attitudes to be identified. Over the last 4 years there has been significant improvement in reducing fear of crime and improving confidence in community safety, which has been maintained over the last year. However there are still areas in need of improvement, in particular, public confidence in key liveability services. Satisfaction with street cleaning has consistently fallen over the last four years. The introduction of changes to the collections cycles and some of the challenges faced in implementing them may have been a major driver in this.

4.6 The greatest shift in opinion is in relation to which issues are in need of improvement locally. Road and pavement repairs remain residents' top priority for improvement in their local area; however this year clean streets have overtaken crime levels as second highest concern. Concern about anti social behaviour has not seen the same downward trend as fear of crime, remaining broadly stable over the last three years when questions on this topic were first included. The current LAA stretch targets on community safety are also showing a drop in performance with an increasing number of crimes reported in non residential burglaries (not meeting target) and residential burglaries where victim is over 75 years old (currently still on target). Crime remains as residents' third top priority in the 2008 Quality of Life Survey for improving after roads and pavements and street cleaning.

4.7 Harrow's vision is to be one of the best London Boroughs by 2012. To be able to achieve this it will be important to address the key livability issues that drive customer satisfaction. These include the delivery of cleaner streets and keeping crime low.

4.8 Over the last 4 years there has been a drop in the number of residents who are positive about the extent to which people from different backgrounds get on well in their neighbourhood. There has been an increase in those who have no firm view rather than in those who feel people from different backgrounds do not get on well together so progress could be made through informing residents about the initiatives that are taking place.

4.9 As one of the most diverse boroughs in London, managing cohesion and the social consequences of immigration, the diversity of nationality, ethnicity and faith will continue to be a challenge for Harrow. The corporate priority of building stronger communities recognises this challenge and works towards addressing it

5. Local Policy

5.1 In June 2008 the Secretary of State formally agreed Harrow's new Local Area Agreement (LAA). The LAA is a three year agreement which sets out the priority outcomes for partners and sets a clear direction of travel. The LAA is the delivery arm of Harrow's Sustainable Community Strategy which is a broad, high level strategic document that describes the aspirations for the future that are shared by partners, residents and local organisations. The key themes of the Local Area Agreement include:

- Environmental Sustainability
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Health and Wellbeing
- Achieve Economic Prosperity
- Educate and Achieve

5.2 Our corporate priorities should reflect the council led LAA aspirations and priorities where Council action is most appropriate.

Priority 1

Better Streets

There are three strands to this priority bringing together different aspects of improving the quality of the built environment through cleaner streets, infrastructure improvements (particularly in the town centre) and keeping crime low.

This is a priority because

- The cleanliness of streets is fundamental to customer satisfaction and the Council's reputation
- Competition from nearby town centres is significant, and increasing
- Despite being a low crime borough, crime is still the third most frequently mentioned concern of local residents

Deliver cleaner streets

Overview

Cleaning our streets is the Council function that is experienced by the greatest proportion of our residents. The standard to which this function is performed is often considered to be the hallmark of the quality of a local authority.

The standard of street cleaning in Harrow has varied over the last few years. The financial problems facing the Council in 2006/07 and 2007/08 required large savings to be found from all services including street cleaning. However, in 2008/09, the Council has been able to invest in its priorities and especially in street cleaning where more than £1.2m of additional resources were made available. These additional resources were provided to a service that was already improving and our annual performance report identified a reduction of 3.3% in the proportion of streets that were below an acceptable standard of cleanliness.

What Harrow needs to address:

Satisfaction with street cleaning continues to decline. There is inevitably a lag between investment and improved performance and this is demonstrated by satisfaction levels which continue to decline despite improved performance. The MORI data, showing the neighbourhoods with the most concern about the levels of cleanliness, may allow targeted intervention to drive improved satisfaction.

Experience elsewhere in London suggests that high profile cleanliness campaigns around landmark and gateway sites can improve the reputation of services very quickly, especially when supported by increasing the amount and quality of information provided to residents.

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Local Policy

The Council made a substantial investment in street cleansing in the 2007/08 budget as well as increasing support for “Weeks of Action” which address environmental issues amongst others.

To improve performance and help deliver cleaner streets, service delivery patterns have been reviewed to take into account mechanical sweeping capability. Additional resources will also be focused on the town centre, shopping areas and known litter spots.

To ensure effective use of resources, the frequency and structure of cleaning residential roads has been reviewed. Each ward has been given a cleanliness rating to ensure that those areas in need of more cleansing are prioritised over cleaner areas. Each ward has been analysed by total road length and topography to ensure that work cycles are equalised and that effective management information is available.

LAA Targets

- Improved street and environmental cleanliness (i.e. levels of [a] litter, [b] detritus, [c] graffiti, and [d] fly posting)

Value for money – Environment

The Value for money data compares Harrow's spending and performance on certain services with our nearest statistical neighbours.

BV89 Street cleaning cost/head (7th highest)
% satisfaction with standards of cleanliness (15th highest)

The costs of street cleaning are relatively high (although lower in comparison with others than last year) compared with the degree to which the service satisfies local residents.

BV199a Street cleaning cost/head (7th highest)
Relevant land with substantial deposits (5th highest)

Street cleaning costs are relatively high compared with the standard of cleanliness produced

Performance

BVPI 199b % of streets and land below standard – graffiti

2006/07	target 2007/08	Outcome 2007/08
8	15	(-)

BVPI 199a % of streets and land below standard – litter and detritus

2006/07	target 2007/08	Outcome 2007/08
34	25	30.7 (↑)

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Performance improved over the last 12 months while public regard for the service continued to fall.

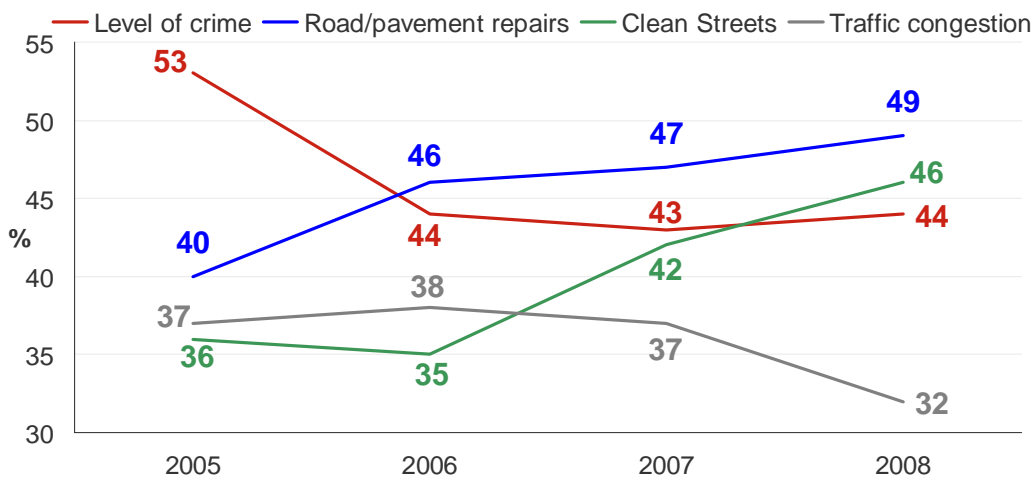
Ipsos-MORI Quality of Life Survey - Environment

Residents were asked whether services have got better or worse over the last three years: their answers are given as a net score for services getting better so a score of +20 means that 20 more people out of every hundred thought the service concerned was getting better than those who thought it was getting worse. **In all cases, an arrow pointing upwards ↑, indicates improved ratings while one pointing downwards ↓, indicates worsening ratings.**

Before looking at the detailed figures, the illustration below shows the top priorities for improvement identified by residents over the last four surveys. The cleanliness of streets has risen steeply over the last two surveys from fourth to second place while concern about crime has fallen from an isolated first place four years ago to third place now.

Street scene services have become residents' top priority

Q Thinking about your local area, which of the things below, if any, do you think most need improving? **TOP 4 MENTIONS**



Base: All valid responses, Harrow residents aged 18+

Ipsos MORI



The Quality of Life Survey outcomes in relation to clean streets were:

- -34 think that the cleanliness of streets has improved over the last three years (-19 in 2007; +3 in 2006 and +5 in 2005) (↓15)
- -21 think that the service of keeping public land clear of litter and refuse has improved over the last three years (-12 in 2007; +15 in 2006; and +12 in 2005) (↓11)

Improve the Town Centre

Overview

Although one of London's largest shopping centres and the most important employment location in the borough, Harrow town centre is not fulfilling its potential as a Metropolitan Centre. The range and choice of shops is limited, there is an absence of civic and cultural facilities, the evening economy caters for a narrow age group and the public realm is outdated and uninspiring. The town centre does, however, have excellent public transport links, it lies close to some of Harrow's best known heritage assets and there are a number of sites with considerable development potential.

Over the last 4-5 years the Council has been working to bring forward development, taking a lead role in promoting development opportunities, particularly around Harrow on the Hill station, and using its own land assets to facilitate change.

There is a Council investment programme beginning in 2008/09 to refresh the townscape.

What Harrow needs to address:

Other town centres in the sub region have benefited from more recent investment and there is a danger that Harrow Town Centre may enter a spiral of decline without proactive vision and leadership for redevelopment.

It remains to be seen what effect the credit crunch will have on the implementation of current planning applications or the scale and timing of future development. It is almost certain, however, that some existing schemes will be delayed, which not only affects the pace of change in Harrow but also the scope to raise additional funding through S106 contributions.

National Policy

Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres

The Government's key objective for town centres is to promote their vitality and viability by:

- planning for the growth and development of existing centres;
- promoting and enhancing existing centres, by focusing development in such centres and
- encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all.

These objectives are underpinned by the Government's aims to

- enhance consumer choice by making provision for a range of shopping, leisure and local services, which allow genuine choice to meet the needs of the entire community, and particularly socially-excluded groups;
- support efficient, competitive and innovative retail, leisure, tourism and other sectors, with improving productivity; and
- improve accessibility, ensuring that existing or new development is, or will be, accessible and well-served by a choice of means of transport.

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Local Policy

Harrow is one of 9 metropolitan centres providing the services envisaged in the Planning Policy Statement. However, rents in Harrow are below those in Watford and Brent Cross which indicates that there is higher demand for retail units in those other locations. This has been recognised by the Council, in making the regeneration of the Town Centre a priority.

In particular, this priority is being taken forward through the Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Preferred Options which was the subject of public consultation until 25th July. The Core Strategy Options both involve significant additional development – housing and commercial – in the Harrow Central Growth Corridor which includes the Town Centre as a major focus. The Council is also preparing a Supplementary Planning Document for the Town Centre.

Substantial improvements to the built environment in the Town Centre will begin to be implemented early in 2009.

A Business Improvement District is being established in the town centre so that businesses can contribute to and direct additional improvements.

LAA Target

- Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)

Ipsos-MORI Quality of Life Survey – Town Centre

Good shopping facilities were seen as the seventh most important element that the mix of things that make an area a good place to live but as only the 13th most in need of improving in Harrow which suggests that people do not see improvements in the standard and variety of

shopping facilities in the Borough as particularly important. There has been remarkably little change in public opinion over the last three years with consistently more people reporting that shopping facilities had improved over the previous three years (22% 2008; 21% 2007; and 21% 2006) compared with those who said that they had got worse (20% 2008; 19% 2007; and 18% 2006).

Keep crime low

Overview

Since 2005, Harrow residents' perceptions regarding crime and community safety have seen a substantial shift. Fear of crime is down and the proportions who say they live in a "high crime" area have fallen. This shift largely took place between 2005 and 2007 and these improving results have largely been maintained, although fear of crime has crept up slightly again in 2008.

The council, in partnership with our key partners, has held three priority weeks of action so far in 2008/09. Each campaign has involved a wide range of Council staff, the Police and other agencies and has concentrated on improving cleanliness and the visibility of policing. Follow-up actions have also been programmed to ensure the improvements are sustained. Three further campaigns for other parts of the Borough have been scheduled and planned for the remainder of the year. A new police contingent for the town centre has recently been funded jointly by the Council and Harrow Police. This will provide six constables, a sergeant and two Police and Community Support Officers and help address residents concern of crime in the town centre.

What Harrow needs to address:

As Harrow continues to be a low crime borough, action here needs to foster a belief in the borough's comparative safety. The presence of the Council joint-funded Town Centre officers and the continued support for Borough-Beat contribute to visible policing together with the impact of the weeks of action. Joining up some of the Council's and the Police communications messages and channels may also help. Ensuring that notes from Safer Neighbourhood Team meetings with residents are available to ward Councillors to promote Prosperity Action Team spending on community safety infrastructure improvements would also demonstrate joint working.

There is a strong correlation between those who feel informed about how anti-social behaviour is being tackled and their confidence in the Police and the local authority, with people being up to twice as confident if they feel well informed. Joining up the Council's and Police communication activities about anti-social behaviour could be instrumental in continuing to reduce the fear of crime.

National Policy – Crime

The Government has a number of priorities in relation to crime including the Prevention of Violent Extremism, the Respect Agenda and Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime. In recent months, growing concern at the level of knife crime has prompted changing policing priorities.

Local Policy - Crime

Harrow remains a very low crime borough in comparison with the rest of London. The roll out of Safer Neighbourhood Teams, together with better publicity for crime initiatives, has seen a substantial fall in the fear of crime and the joint weeks of action campaigns have also helped.

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The Council has agreed the introduction of a Controlled Drinking Zone across the whole borough to help bring down rates of alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour. The zone commenced on the 1st August 2008.

LAA Targets

- Repeat incidents of domestic violence
- Perceptions of anti-social behaviour
- Number of residential burglary where victim is over 75 years
- Reduction in the number of non-residential burglary in the borough

Performance - Crime

BVPI 127a Violent offences committed per 1,000 population

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outcome 2007/08
17.9	-	15.2 (↑)

BVPI 127b Robberies recorded per 1,000 population

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outcome 2007/08
3.6	3.2	2.5 (↑)

This has been the top Police priority and significant resources have been devoted to reducing robbery in line with Met policy. The outcome represents the largest reduction – 30.6% - in London.

BVPI 126 Domestic Burglaries per 1,000 households

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outcome 2007/08
15.8	15.4	18.2 (↓)

The latter part of 2007/08 saw a significant spike in burglary which is now the subject of targeted intervention by the Police.

BVPI 128 Vehicle crime recorded per 1,000 population

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outcome 2007/08
12.4	9.3	10.8 (↑)

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Ipsos-MORI Quality of Life Survey - Crime

In relation to crime and anti-social behaviour -

Category of ASB	2003 - % who think this is a problem	2005- % who think this is a problem	2006 -% who think this is a problem	2007 --% who think this is a problem	2008 --% who think this is a problem
Vandalism, graffiti, damage to cars and property	+36	-4	-17	-8	-6 (↓2)
Rubbish and litter lying around	+22	-10	-7	+3	+18 (↓15)
Teenagers hanging around	+14	-10	+13	-9	-6 (↓3)
People using or dealing drugs	+27	-11	-15	-12	-14 (↑2)
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	+1	-19	-38	-24	-14 (↓10)
People being attacked because of their skin colour, ethnicity or religion	+3	-40	Question not asked	-46	-54 (↑8)
Abandoned or burnt out cars	-2	-62	-66	-70	-66 (↓4)
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	-57	-63	-60	-62	-62 (-)
People sleeping rough	-44	-68	Question not asked	-73	-68 (↓5)

The biggest increase in concern relates to rubbish and litter lying around. Here, residents who have lived in the area for more than 20 years have a particular concern as do residents from Central Harrow, and South Harrow and Rayners Lane. In respect of South Harrow and Rayners Lane, this represents a particularly large shift in attitude from 2007 with those reporting litter to be a big problem increasing from 49% to 71%. By contrast, there has been a reduction in the proportion reporting litter to be a problem in West Harrow and Harrow on the Hill from 66% to 58%

Other Mori data

- +40 think that the crime levels have increased in their local area over the last three years (+44 in 2007; +48 in 2006 and +54 in 2005) (↑4)
- +42% feel safe in the area that they live (+47 in 2007; +40 in 2006 and +38 in 2005) (↓5)
- +44 feel safe in their home alone after dark (+49 in 2007; +43 in 2006 and +40 in 2005) (↓5)
- -26 feel safe walking alone after dark in the area where they live (-19 in 2007; -26 in 2006 and -30 in 2005) (↓7)
- +55 feel safe in their street (+54 in 2007; +47 in 2006) (↑1)
- +50 feel safe near their local school (+51 in 2007; +42 in 2006) (↓1)
- +34 feel safe in their local town centre (+36 in 2007; +32 in 2006) (↓2)
- +16 feel safe on public transport (+18 in 2007; +20 in 2006) (↓2)

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- -6 feel safe in their local park (-2 in 2007; -15 in 2006) (↓4)
- 39% think that they live in a medium crime area (41% in 2007; 39% in 2006) (↓2) 42% in a low crime area (42% in 2007; 38% in 2006) (-) and 7% in a high crime area (6% in 2007; 9% in 2006) (↓1)
- Overall, -32 think that anti-social behaviour has got better (- 34 in 2007; -27 in 2006) (↑2)
- Crime received 1 percentage point more concern as an issue that most needed improving in the 2008 Quality of Life survey compared with the 2007 survey.

Priority 2

Improve support for vulnerable people

This is a priority because

- A year ago adult services was rated as 1 star with uncertain prospects and also underwent a challenging learning and disability inspection
- There has been rapid improvement in adult social care in the past year and the capacity of the service has been strengthened
- Adult Services needs to remain a priority in order for the borough to sustain it's focus on improvement
- Quality of life and safety of vulnerable people is the responsibility of the whole Council. Sustaining this priority ensures all Council departments focus on this area.
- Children's trusts are local-area partnership arrangements for bringing together key agencies. We will be building on the already recognised excellent partnership work to continue improving our services for children, young people and their families.

Overview

Over the last year Adult Services has built strong foundations (managed within budget, secured new investments, resolved debts with the PCT, strengthened partnerships, improved key improvement indicators and ran a major programme of user engagement).

Rapid improvement in the service has taken place e.g. increase in the number of direct payments, achieving waiting time targets and an increase in carers' services.

The Council's cabinet also agreed a major transformation programme for the future of this service in May 2008. This programme has been titled Your Future Our Future by the users of the service.

Three years ago Children Services set a vision for the development of Children's Services in Harrow with an ambition to move from satisfactory to good and from good to outstanding. At the time of the JAR in 2006, we were deemed to be satisfactory overall with many good or outstanding features. Last years APA (2007) confirmed our progress as good overall and indicated that the structures and systems were in place for us to deliver excellent services to children and young people in Harrow.

What Harrow needs to address:

The Transformation Programme – 'Your Future, Our Future' needs to be implemented.

The high performance of children's services needs to be sustained and improved through the introduction of a Children's Trust to add a formal governance structure.

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The Council needs to continue to ensure children who are vulnerable remain actively engaged and outcomes are informed by the views of children and their families. The new 3-year Children and Young People's Plan (2009-2012), will focus on improved outcomes for all children and young people in Harrow.

The Council needs to continue to improve inter-agency working through The Children's Trust which will provide a tighter set of arrangements and more specific roles and responsibilities. This will provide formality and structure to the existing good partnership practices in place. This will help us to move from aligned budgets to pooling of budgets, enhanced joint commissioning of services and continue to drive multi agency working. This formal framework for strategic planning, resource allocation and accountabilities will result in the continuation of multi agency owned outcomes

The new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) will focus on the strength of strategic partnership working in delivering outcomes and, as such, will help build on the existing foundations to achieve more effective cooperation and integration within the children's trust and other partnerships.

National Policy

“Our Health, Our Care, Our Say” White Paper, in particular includes:

- Modernisation of Day Care opportunities with more engagement of partner agencies
- Self-Directed Care
- Empowerment and Engagement
- Individualised Budgets
- Wellbeing & Prevention

These policy initiatives are aimed at maximising choice, control and independence so that people in need of support will:

- use self-assessment or person-centred planning to determine how their needs can best be met
- have available to them a choice of agencies, whether statutory, private or voluntary sector agencies, from which to select or directly purchase services.

Local Policy

Adult Care Transformation Programme Plan

The programme is presented as 7 programme areas. The areas are as follows:

- Continuous service improvement
- Developing accommodation
- Developing self directed support
- Well being, early intervention, and community engagement
- Effective working
- People, partnerships and capacity building
- Maximising Financial Resources

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Development of Children Trust arrangements.

LAA Targets

- People supported to live independently through social services
- Carers receiving needs assessments or reviews and a specific carer's service or advice and information
- Social Care clients receiving Self Directed Support (Direct Payments and Individual Budgets)
- Adults with learning disabilities in employment
- Adults in contact with secondary mental health services in settled accommodation
- Stability of placements of children looked after: length of placement
- Core assessments for children's social care that were carried out within 35 working days of their commencement
- Effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health services
- Substance misuse by young people
- Children in care – to increase proportion achieving level 4+ in English at Key Stage 2
- Children in care – to increase proportion achieving level 4+ in maths at Key Stage 2
- Children in care - to increase proportion achieving 5 A*-C grades at GCSE and equiv incl. GCSE English and Maths
- Number of drug users recorded as being in effective treatment
- Substance misuse by young people

Value for money:

Harrow has an average (versus outer London) number of admissions to residential care for over 65s and we have improved our position versus outer London on our spend per head 18+ on adult social services but the lowest percentage of equipment delivered within 7 days of assessment.

Harrow has an upper quartile spend per head on services for adults (16 – 64) with physical disabilities but the admissions of clients to residential or nursing accommodation are the second lowest amongst our nearest neighbours. Our new LAA indicator, people supported to live independently through social services are on target.

As residential care is generally considered to be the most expensive form of intervention, the low numbers using this form of service make the overall costs per head seem to be high.

While there are a very high number of outcomes recorded from participation in youth work at a very competitive unit cost, for the level of investment, a comparatively low number of these outcomes are accredited towards a local or national award.

Performance

The ratio of the percentage of those young people looked after on 1 April in their 17th year (age 16) who were engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19 to the percentage of young people in the population who were so engaged at age 19

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outturn 2007/08
0.87	0.95	0.87 (-)

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Performance is in the top national band and in line with statistical neighbours. 17/21 care leavers were in education, training or employment.

Percentage of child protection cases due for review in the year that were reviewed

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outturn 2007/08
96.2	100	98 (↑)

Children Looked After adopted during the year as a percentage of those who, at 31 March, had been looked after for 6 months or more

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outturn 2007/08
2.7	8	14.3 (↑)

Stability of placements of Children Looked After by reference to the percentage looked after on 31 March with three or more placements in the year

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outturn 2007/08
13.8	12	10.21 (↑)

Percentage of new older clients for whom the waiting time for assessment was acceptable

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outturn 2007/08
85	90	88.1 (↑)

Percentage of clients receiving all services in care packages within four weeks of completion of assessment

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outturn 2007/08
83.3	85	92.0 (↑)

Number of adults and older people receiving Direct Payments, per 100,000 population aged 18 or over

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outturn 2007/08
70	100	124 (↑)

Number of households receiving intensive home care per 1,000 population aged 65 or over

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outturn 2007/08
13.4	12	7.53 (↓)

Number of older people helped to live at home per 1,000 population aged 65 or over

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outturn 2007/08
69.2	80.5	73.12 (↑)

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Percentage of items of equipment delivered within 7 working days

2006/07	Target 2007/08	Outturn 2007/08
84.4	90	82 (↓)

Ipsos-Mori Quality of Life

- +17 are satisfied with personal social services provided by the Council (+11 in 2007; +16 in 2006; and +16 in 2005) (↑6)
- +12 think that good access to health and social care is provided for those in need (+11 in 2007; +15 in 2006; and +18 in 2005) (↑1)
- Respondents are evenly divided over whether their part of Harrow will be an area with good health and social services for older people in 5 years time (-3 in 2007; +7 in 2006; and +10 in 2005) (↑3)
- Respondents are evenly divided over whether their part of Harrow will be an area with good support services for those caring for adult family members in five years time (-3 in 2007; +3 in 2006; and +6 in 2005) (↑3)
- +3 think that their part of Harrow will be an area with good health and social care services for people with physical/sensory disabilities in 5 years time (+2 in 2007; +8 in 2006; and +8 in 2005) (↑1)

Priority 3

Build stronger communities

This is a priority because

- The percentage of people who think that their local neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together has declined for the fourth year in succession.
- We need to provide services that met the differing needs of our community
- Tension is created where people do not feel that they are part of the 'system' and do not feel that they have the opportunity to express their views, be heard or be able to influence

Overview

Social and cultural cohesion is measured through surveys which collect information about how the community perceives people get on together.

Many factors that impact on community cohesion are outside of our control, e.g. migration and deprivation. However targeted activities can help mitigate against these factors. Harrow has a history of community cohesion events, for example, activities identified in the Cultural Calendar, Under One Sky and Community Connects programmes. Alongside these activities, there are a range of sports and cultural events which provide opportunities for people of different backgrounds to come together. Additionally the voluntary and community sector in Harrow organises a range of cohesion activities during the year.

What Harrow needs to address:

The most distinctive aspect of Harrow is the diversity of its population. The current projection suggests that 49.9% of the population is now white British. The population includes people from at least 137 different countries and, based upon the seven religions listed in the standard tables from the census, Harrow has the highest level of religious diversity of any local authority in England and Wales. This gives Harrow both a fascinating range of experience, cultures and skills but also challenges around communication and cohesion.

Currently, (June 2008) 48% of Harrow residents agree or strongly agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local neighbourhood and 21% disagree. This is a fall of 1 percentage point in the numbers agreeing to the proposition since 2007 and 7 percentage points compared with 2005. There is a stretch target of reaching 61% by 2009.

Year Ahead Statement

Harrow received resources from the first tranche of the Preventing Violent Extremism Fund which was distributed to boroughs which exceeded a threshold of 5% Muslim population. The Council continues to receive resources from this fund and to develop programmes supporting community cohesion.

Residents on the whole do not think that there is a strong sense of community locally. However, the majority do feel some sense of belonging to their local neighbourhood and around half feel that their community can collectively have an impact on local decision-making. Approximately half of residents agree that there is respect for ethnic difference and that people from different backgrounds get on well together in Harrow.

As well as strengthening bonding within communities and bridging between different groups in the community, special attention needs to be paid to new Harrow groups who are seldom heard.

National Policy

The Green Paper “Unlocking the talent of our communities” published earlier in the year has recently been succeeded by a White Paper “Communities in control: real people, real power.” The White Paper is divided into seven chapters covering:

- being an active citizen and volunteer
- finding information in a usable form
- having your say and influencing decisions
- holding decision makers to account
- getting redress when things go wrong and making sure that the lessons are learnt
- standing for office and
- running local services.

The White Paper proposes that Councils will have a duty to promote democracy. The Duty to Involve will be extended to other agencies including the Police. It will become easier to transfer assets to local community groups. There are proposals for a Community Infrastructure Levy (along the lines of section 106) with local people having a say in how the receipts are used. Local people could also be involved in commissioning services and providing services through Community Contracts and a community pledge bank. Other initiatives include further encouragement for elected Mayors, participatory budgeting and incentives for voting.

Local Policy

The Council adopted a Community Development Strategy in 2007 which is a framework for cross-sectoral community development work and projects that ensures the needs of all Harrow’s diverse community are a fundamental tenet of service delivery. In partnership with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and other agencies, it is intended to focus on how the skills, awareness, knowledge and experience of the community can be harnessed and utilised in order to build a stronger foundation for community development and cohesion in the borough.

The 2006-2009 LAA includes stretch targets on community cohesion and volunteering while the new LAA 2008-2011 continues these targets and adds targets about Migrants’ English

Year Ahead Statement

Language Skills, the environment for the third sector and building resilience to violent extremism. The Strategic Partnership is part funding a Community Connects programme this year and an associated communications campaign to address performance of the cohesion indicator.

There is an on-going Scrutiny Review of the Council's relationship with and support for the voluntary and community sector

LAA Targets

- Building resilience to violent extremism
- Environment for a thriving third sector
- Engagement in the Arts
- Adult participation in sport
- % of people who believe that people from different background get on well together in their local area
- Migrants English Language skills and knowledge
- Participation in regular volunteering

Performance

Number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population

2006/07 outturn	Target 2007/08	Outturn 2007/08
165.89	170	140.26(-)

Percentage of racial incidents which resulted in action

2006/07 outturn	Target 2007/08	Outturn 2007/08
99.72	99	100 (↑1)

Ipsos-MORI Quality of Life Survey

- +33 say people from different backgrounds get on well together here (+36 in 2007; +37 in 2006 and +39 in 2005) (↓3)
- -10 say that there is strong sense of community in their local area (-10 in 2007; -7 in 2006 and -12 in 2005) (-)
- -28 feel that they can personally influence decisions of public bodies locally (-30 in 2007; -28 in 2006 and -24 in 2005) (↑2)
- +27 feel that by working together people in my neighbourhood can influence decisions that affect the area (+24 in 2007; +26 in 2006 and +32 in 2005) (↑3)
- -10 say that they get involved in decisions affecting their area (- 8 in 2007; -15 in 2006 and -20 in 2005) (↓2)
- +39 think that this is a place where residents respect ethnic differences between people (+43 in 2007; +42 in 2006 and +43 in 2005) (↓4)
- +36 agree that people in their neighbourhood are willing to help their neighbours (+41 in 2007) (↓5)
- +28 feel that they belong to their neighbourhood (+34 in 2007; +31 in 2006; +32 in 2005) (↓6)
- +15 feel that they belong to Harrow (+18 in 2007; +22 in 2006; +21 in 2005) (↓3)

Year Ahead Statement

- 21% of the adult population report that they volunteered for 2 hours or more a week in 2008 (19% in 2007; 20% in 2006) (↑2)
- -54 think that people being attacked because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion is a problem in their local area (-46 in 2007; -40 in 2006) (↑8)

While the Quality of Life Survey results are disappointing in relation to the headline community cohesion results, the very good result from the previous BVPP Survey undertaken towards the end of 2006 showed Harrow as above the average for both Inner and Outer London. This score is used by Government to determine that community cohesion in Harrow is good and that the Council is not eligible for any additional funding to support community cohesion work.

The main difference between the BVPP and the Quality of Life surveys is that the latter gives a “Neither agree nor disagree” option whereas the BVPP survey did not. This suggests that when a survey requires people to agree or disagree with the proposition, they tend to opt for a positive view of cohesion but not with a survey with a “don’t know/not sure” option. With this in mind, the Strategic Partnership has provided funding for more cohesion activity in the four wards with the lowest cohesion scores in the 2007 survey and for an associated publicity campaign.