

How far have we come,  
how far to go?

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# The Council's Vision

To be recognised as one of the  
best London Councils by 2012

# Vision and Priorities

- We have established a clear vision for the Council supported by measurable Flagship Actions through which we are held to account
- Our priorities are informed by wide ranging consultation to identify what is important to Harrow People
- We have increasingly focussed on the issues of most importance to local people reducing priorities from 11 to 6 and proposing 3 for 2009/10:
  - Better Streets – supported by 90.4% of the Residents' Panel
  - Improving support for vulnerable people – 80.2%
  - Building stronger communities – 57.2%
- The Staff Survey showed that the Council's vision and priorities are recognised throughout the organisation

# Organisational Structure

- We have changed the organisational structure to increase the capacity of the senior management structure
- The structure includes a Corporate Director of Place Shaping and an Assistant Chief Executive
- A new role of Director of Customer Services has been created to respond to the Access to Services inspection and developing a consistent approach customer access

# Sound Finance

- Funding gaps of £35m have been closed in the last two years
- Reserves have more than doubled to £3m
- Effective financial management led to an underspend in 2007/08 of £4.7m
- Investment has been directed to key service priorities such as Streetscene and Customer Service
- Investment of £6.1m to meet rising costs in public realm and social care

# Evidence of Improvement

- Children's Services is rated as a 3 out of 4 service
- Our Benefits Service maintained its 4 out of 4 rating and was designated 'excellent' in 12 of the 13 categories
- Our Adults Learning Service achieved a level 2 – the only Council provider in the country to achieve this level
- Our Housing Service is expected to improve to 3 out of 4

# Aspirations for Improvement

- We are hopeful that our Use of Resources score will improve to 3 out of 4
- We also hope that Children's and Benefits Services will achieve or retain 4 out of 4
- Our Adults Service hopes to improve its Direction of Travel score from 'Uncertain prospects' to 'Promising capacity to improve'
- Overall, our hope is that the Council's Direction of Travel score will improve from 'Improving adequately'

# PWC Report

- Nationally Harrow's ranking has moved up from 66<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> best performing upper tier authority
- Harrow's ranking has moved up from 17<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> best performing Council in London
- This makes Harrow the second most improved Council both in London and nationally against 150 other upper tier Councils in 2007/08
- **This is the highest ranking Harrow has ever had**



# PWC Report

- Overall, 57% of the indicators improved between 2006/07 and 2007/08
- Overall 50% of indicators improved relative to the performance of other Councils
- Benefits, Planning, Community Safety, Transport are now ranked among the top 5 services in their category in London
- Harrow recognises these are the initial signs of improvement and is the start of our journey to deliver our 2012 vision.
- The Council is aware of the further challenges it faces, particularly around customer satisfaction, financial standing and aspects of Adults Social Care

# Service Improvements

- 30 additional street sweepers in the town centre and around railway stations
- The proportion of Harrow's young people not in education, employment or training is now 2.7% - amongst the lowest in the country
- Employee volunteering in the borough is increasing through our One 4 One scheme
- Recycling and composting performance is at 42% - amongst the best in London – following the introduction of our blue bin service
- Satisfaction with adult social care reached 92% for equipment; 95% for homecare and 98% for meals

# Service Improvements

- Adoptions of looked after children has increased from 2.7 to 14.3 as a % of those looked after for 6 months or more
- The percentage of homes made decent within the year improved from 6.3% to 36.9% during the year
- The level of direct payments to service users has also doubled to 124 per 100,000.
- Five children's centres are now open and a further 11 will open in the next 2 years.

# Where we go next

- **Improving Residents' Satisfaction**
  - Improving Communications
  - Improving Street Scene
  - Improving Customer Services
- **Accelerating Service Improvement**
- **Improving our Partnerships**

# Summary

We believe that over the last 30 months, the Council has acquired a new sense of direction and the confidence to achieve the demanding service improvements needed to become one of the best London Councils by 2012