

Harrow Council is getting better

Harrow Council  
Corporate Plan 2009/10 – 2011/12



# Harrow Council Corporate Plan 2009 - 12

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Foreword</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Vision and Corporate Priorities</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Flagship Actions</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Participation</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Internal actions</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Other actions for the year to come</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Harrow's achievements – reflections on 2007/08</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Risk Register</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Statement on Contracts</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Revenue Budget Summary</b>	<b>34</b>

## Foreword – by the Leader of the Council

2008/09 was a year of contrasts. The Council has continued to make significant progress in improving service standards in many areas but, at the same time, our plans for renewing some of our buildings have been delayed by the credit crunch

This is the last year in which the Council will receive an annual assessment under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. This is a complex formula which gives a rating out of four to each local authority based on a range of judgements across all of its services. While the outcome of the Direction of Travel statement is embargoed until the beginning of March, we are expecting confirmation of our steady improvement. We will add the details when we are able.

On another measure of performance, undertaken independently by the accountants PWC, the Council improved from 66<sup>th</sup> to 37<sup>th</sup> best performing higher tier council in England and from 17<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> best performing in London. This scale of improvement reflects other external judgements such as maintaining the rating of good for Children's Services with some aspects rated as outstanding and improving

our rating for both Adults Services and Value for Money.

Of course, while these national judgements are important to us, they are not nearly as important as the view that you, our residents, take of our services. This is now measured by a Government controlled survey called the Place Survey. The initial data from this test of public opinion will be with the Council before the end of January with full results some time in February. We expect the survey to reflect concern about the economy and to set us the task of improving services without significantly increasing expenditure.

We will seek to do this through greater efficiency, and particularly through closer working with our partners – the police, health services and the voluntary and community sector. Partnership working will be the key focus of the new assessment regime known as the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

The impact of the credit crunch and the slow down in the economy generally has been felt in Harrow, not least in the effect it has had on our plans to renew some of our public buildings and facilities. Most notably, the planned replacement of our aging Leisure Centre was to have been financed by the sale of surplus land for residential

development. In the current market, it is very difficult to sell such land at all, never mind at the values needed to fund the new leisure centre. As a result, the replacement of the centre has been deferred and other schemes such as refreshing aspects of the town centre have been scaled back. The need for these schemes remains and I hope that they can be revived when the economy picks up.

For our part, we are focused on working hard to provide good value local services. We know that money is tight at the moment but we are spending your money wisely on services that help to make your life better.

The council has reduced the number of priorities it will concentrate on for the coming year, reflecting customer feedback on those that are most important. We are making Harrow better, cleaner and safer, supporting vulnerable people and building stronger communities. This is underpinned by providing jargon-free council services to all our residents for excellent value for money. We want you to see your council as one of the best in London so we are planning to make improvements in every area of our work, listen to your views and report back on what we achieve.

*David Ashton - Leader of Harrow Council*

# The Corporate Plan

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

- The draft vision for the future of the borough on which public consultation is taking place through February and March 2009
- the Council's vision, which is a long-term statement about the organisation;
- a set of corporate priorities for the next year 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 significant projects that the Council will undertake in 2009/2010 to improve the way in which it works while Service Improvement Plans set out where each service is and what it intends to do in the coming year. This Corporate Plan contains highlights from both.

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 before the beginning of the period that it describes.

The Council's corporate priorities for 2009/10 were proposed after a detailed review of the Council's performance, policies and the outcome of public surveys. The proposals were then the subject of consultation with the Residents' Panel, a group of 1,200 local people who are representative of the whole population, and through a dialogue promoted in association with the Harrow Times. The draft priorities were endorsed by these consultations.

# Vision and Corporate Priorities

The draft Sustainable Community Strategy for Harrow looks at the sort of place the borough should be by 2020. The draft Strategy covers a range of issues and it sets out aspirations for each of them. Overall, its direction can be summed up as:

By 2020, Harrow will be recognised for:

- Integrated and co-ordinated quality services, many of which focus on preventing problems from arising, especially for vulnerable groups, and all of which put users in control, offering access and choice;
- Environmental and community sustainability, because we actively manage our impact on the environment and have supported inclusive communities which provide the jobs, homes, education, healthcare, transport and other services all citizens need.
- Improving the quality of life, by reducing inequalities, empowering the community voice and promoting respect and becoming the safest borough in London.

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.

The Council has adopted the following corporate priorities for the next year:

1. Deliver cleaner and safer streets,
2. Improve support for vulnerable people,
3. Building stronger communities.

# Flagship Actions for 2009-2010 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-

<b>1. Deliver cleaner and safer streets</b>		
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Flagship Action</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
1.1	Keep our streets cleaner.  Councillor Susan Hall John Edwards	We will improve our street cleaning performance to 88% clean from the current 86% clean.
1.2	Increase our recycling rate.  Councillor Susan Hall John Edwards	Reach 50% recycling and composting rate in a least one month in 2009/2010.
1.3	Add 'Days of Action' to the 'Weeks of Action' programme.  Councillor Susan Hall John Edwards	Extend the Weeks of Action concept by adding 8 'Days of Action'.

<b>1. Deliver cleaner and safer streets</b>		
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Flagship Action</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
1.4	Prepare a town centre design guide to promote further the future development of Harrow town centre.  Councillor Marilyn Ashton Andrew Trehern	Complete design guide for public consultation by October 2009.
1.5	Complete the renewal of the Council's vehicle fleet.  Councillor Susan Hall John Edwards	New fleet to reduce CO2 emissions.
1.6	Prepare a Supplementary Planning Document on conversion of houses to flats.  Councillor Marilyn Ashton Andrew Trehern	Document to be prepared by December 2009.
<b>2. Improve support for vulnerable people</b>		
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Flagship Action</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
2.1	Supporting social care users to be in control of the services they receive.  Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane Paul Najsarek	500 social care clients to be in control of their support by 31 March 2010 compared with 100 at 1 January 2009.

<b>2. Improve support for vulnerable people</b>		
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Flagship Action</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
2.2	Opening three new neighbourhood resource centres.  Councillor Barry MacLeod-Cullinane Paul Najsarek	Centres to be open by July 2009.
2.3	Provide the first purpose-built extra care housing for older people in Harrow.  Councillor Barry MacLeod-Cullinane Paul Najsarek	Start on site by July 2009; management agreements to be in place by the end of 2009.
2.4	Delivering units of affordable housing.  Councillor Barry MacLeod-Cullinane Paul Najsarek	219 (gross) units of affordable housing by 31 March 2010.
2.5	Provide more suitable accommodation for households in housing need.  Councillor Barry MacLeod-Cullinane Paul Najsarek	No families with children in bed and breakfast accommodation for longer than six weeks.
2.6	Improve the attainment of two key target groups by Summer 2010 (Black African and White pupils in receipt of free school meals).  Councillor Anjana Patel Paul Clark	Key Stage 2 attainment improved by 3% for target group by 2010 GCSE attainment improved by 5% for target group by 2010.



<b>3. Build stronger communities</b>		
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Flagship Action</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
3.1	<p>Launch a new Resident's Welcome Pack.</p> <p>Councillor Chris Mote Javed Khan</p>	All Harrow new arrivals to receive a Welcome Pack from June 2009.
3.2	<p>Develop a planning brief for the Council car park in Stanmore District Centre.</p> <p>Councillor Marilyn Ashton Andrew Trehern</p>	Planning brief to be completed by March 2010.
3.3	<p>Children's centres delivering a range of health and education services to children under 5 and their families within the local community.</p> <p>Councillor Christine Bednell Paul Clark</p>	<p>9 children's centres fully operational by summer 2009.</p> <p>7 further children's centres underway by Spring 2010.</p>
3.4	<p>Free swimming for all, under 16s and over 60s all year round.</p> <p>Councillor Chris Mote Javed Khan</p>	Free access to be in place from April 2009.

3. Build stronger communities		
Ref	Flagship Action	Measurement
3.5	<p>Every school a healthy school delivering a health and fitness programme that will enhance the well being of children and young people in Harrow.</p> <p>Councillor Anjana Patel Paul Clark</p>	<p>95% of schools achieving Healthy Schools Standard by Spring 2010. All schools ensuring approximately 2 hours of sport a week (within timetabling restrictions) and access to a wide range of sport through the extended school clusters.</p>
3.6	<p>Establish a Harrow Youth Website.</p> <p>Councillor Christine Bednell Paul Clark</p>	<p>Launch website in the Summer 2009 and achieve at least 3,000 hits a quarter. Publish at least two editions of That Magazine.</p>

# Organisation

The Council has continued to refine its structure to help to deliver its objectives. The new structure comprises five corporate directorates of:

Adults' & Housing Services  
Children's Services  
Community & Environment Services  
Finance  
Place Shaping  
Legal and Governance  
plus a Chief Executive's Department.

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, Environmental Health and Highways.

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

The new Corporate Directorate of Place Shaping brings together the Council planning and property portfolio functions and has responsibility for regeneration strategy and projects. This Directorate has only just been established.

The Chief Executive's Department provides front line services such as Access Harrow. It also supports the Council through legal and governance services, Human Resources, Scrutiny, Policy and Partnerships and Communications.

The Legal & Governance Services Department is responsible for the Council's legal practice, elections, registrars, cemeteries administration & land charges, and it supports the decision making process, the Mayoralty and councillors.

## 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. This provision was used to review the Council's decisions in relation to West Lodge School.

*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.* The Council's Planning Committee, which typically meets on a monthly basis, considers the significant planning applications submitted to the Council. Planning Committees are public meetings and full details of committee agendas are published on the Council's website, together with details of all other current planning applications. Applicants and objectors are able to speak at planning committee meetings. There is a duty planner service located within Access Harrow.

*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 the Administration's programme, and progress towards achieving it. The Council has now held 8 question time events, some at the Civic Centre and others in various parts of the Borough, and, in the coming year, will hold a further 3.

*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 7 surveys have now been completed. The Council expects to send out four more in 2009/10.

*Young People:* The Council supports the involvement of young people in setting the agenda for the future through the Youth Council and holding elections to the UK Youth Parliament. Young people have also attended and asked questions at Cabinet.

*Reputation Tracker.* The Council will, every four months, conduct a telephone survey of a representative sample of 500 residents chosen at random. This will monitor more closely public opinion on overall satisfaction and with services.

*Community calls to action.* From April 2009, there will be additional powers for residents collectively to request a review of policies and decisions.

*Open Budget Panel.* There has been continuing involvement of some of the residents who formed the Open Budget Panel some four years ago. These individuals have contributed to the standing scrutiny review of the Council's budget.

## **Internal actions to achieve better service outcomes**

Work to enable the Council to deliver better services more efficiently and effectively is included in the Service Improvement Plans of all Directorates. Much of this work is, however, also collated into a Council Improvement Programme which demonstrates how we are addressing corporate and common functions that contribute to the Council's overall performance. The key themes and outcomes of this work programme are summarised below:

1. **Vision and Priorities:** The need to develop and embed a clearer long-term vision and a set of key priorities that guide investment in services and lead to clear outcomes.

The Council has refined the planning, budgeting and performance management framework to streamline its service planning processes and this has produced a shorter, more focused and strategic set of priorities for 2009-2010.

2. **Organisational Structures:** The Council has continued to refine its structure to be better placed to deliver its priorities, most significantly by creating a Place Shaping Directorate to pursue major regeneration projects.

Workforce strategies have been prepared to ensure that the Council has staff with the necessary skills to deliver the services the public want and need. A revised personal assessment and development framework linked to competencies has been developed and will be rolled out in 2009.

3. **Finances:** This work stream includes managing the council's money more effectively through improved budget monitoring and management, managing its debt more effectively, improving the management of raising income, improve the Council's and Partnerships' ability to manage risks and improving value for money on purchasing. It also includes ensuring that the benefits envisaged from investments in service enhancements are achieved.

4. **Investment in people:** A Management Development Programme has been devised and is being delivered to all middle managers across the Council's services to support a consistency of understanding and approach. A first line managers' development programme is being prepared and plans are under discussion for a development programme to support elected members.

A review of the Council's spending on learning and development is underway together with the development of a new procurement framework.

5 **Work Life balance:** A staff well-being programme has been launched and a flexible benefits package will be available from April 2009.

6 **Performance Management:** The Council has adopted a performance management framework and is working with its managers to ensure that it is effective in improving outcomes.

7. **Organisational Culture:** The Council has adopted new values set out below and is developing a programme to embed them within the organisation:

- **Customer First** We are focused on and have invested in improving the lives of our customers, going the extra mile to resolve their issues and empowering them to take responsibility for their own decisions.
- **Respect** so we treat each other with courtesy and regard, earning respect through working with others to engender trust.
- **Engaged Communication** that's why we listen, actively placing a premium on engaging in conversations that bring people together, allowing curiosity and interest in areas other than their own.
- **Actively 'one Council'** we collaborate, not blame, because we believe the 'sum of the parts' is more powerful than its individual parts.
- **Taking responsibility** we always deliver what we say we will, empowering and challenging each other to enhance performance and behaviour.
- **Energise and improve** while distinguishing ourselves by taking actions that innovate and improve.

8. **Communications:** The Council's current Communications Plan is being delivered in line with the Local Government Association's Reputation campaign. The improved coverage of the Council is being monitored to ensure that the new standards are maintained.

9. **First Impressions:** Physical alterations to Access Harrow to improve the access have been completed and we are on track to answer 90% of calls within 30 seconds.

## Other actions for the year to come

Although our Corporate Priorities are the areas of activity on which we will concentrate our greatest attention and effort, this does not mean that other activities are not important. In this section of the plan, we set out a selection of some of the major plans and projects that the Council will be undertaking in 2009/10.

### Adults and Housing

Modernising Day Opportunities for all service users. We will be reviewing with service users the design of day care services and making agreed changes where possible.

Involving service users and families. We will be involving service users in the recruitment of social care staff.

Supporting People to live at home including people with a complex range of needs. We will increase the help we give to people to live at home to move towards the outer London average. We will ensure that 75% of the people helped to live at home receive an annual review of their needs.

Improve the safeguarding of all groups. We will incorporate mechanisms to ensure that service user experience and views are incorporated in our Good Practice Guide and Review of Policy and Procedures.



Increase employment opportunities for people with physical disabilities, mental health issues and learning disabilities. We will review and revise support arrangements in consultation with users to help more people find and retain employment.

Implement corporate customer care standards in housing. We will ensure that our services to our customers adhere to the Council's customer care standards.

### **Chief Executive's Department**

Support the change to the new Comprehensive Area Assessment process. We will ensure that the Council and its partners are ready for the new assessment process which will be run for the first time in 2009.

Service Transition into Access Harrow. We will bring further services into Access Harrow offering a more comprehensive service to residents.

Resolve more issues at first contact. We will review with colleagues in Environmental Services the processes for resolving customer issues so that more contacts regarding refuse and waste can be resolved at first contact.

Communications. We will deliver at least 8 issues of Harrow People, the community magazine, as well as continuing to publicise the Council's activities. We will also deliver marketing campaigns aimed at informing residents about initiatives such as Weeks of Action as well as activities for young people and encouraging well being amongst adults.

### **Children's Services**

Continue to deliver a multi-agency approach to safeguarding Harrow's children and young people.

Reduce permanent and fixed term exclusions from schools. We will work with schools around behaviour and continue to support the Rapid Intervention Team.

Improve attendance at the worst performing schools. We will implement the Welfare call telephone system, and serve and enforce fixed penalty notices for persistent absence.

Extended Schools. By April 2010, we will ensure that all schools are offering support to Children and Families outside the normal hours and that these services improve learning.

Development of a Children's Trust. We will establish a Children's Trust by September 2009 which will ensure that all agencies' resources are used in a co-ordinated way to maximise improved outcomes for children.

Deliver School re-organisation. We will manage the process, including consultation and statutory notices, to reorganise schools so that they are in line with the national agenda.

Children Looked After. We will improve the educational attainment of Children Looked After through the appointment of virtual head teachers, and independent visitors.

## **Communities and Environment**

Trees, Flowers and Weeds. We will plant an additional 500 street trees. We will sign up members of the public as volunteers to help to maintain at least 20 flower and shrub beds. At the same time, we will establish a Weed Control Team to help keep the borough looking neat and tidy. Finally, we will be making a major investment in the borough's allotments to make them easier to use and more attractive.

Tackling grot. We will expand our Environmental Control Team, to enable us to deal with additional grot spots in the borough.

Safety. We will add a further 6 cameras to the borough's CCTV network, work more closely with the Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams and install more alley gates to increase security and deter fly-tipping.

Wired. We will be installing free Wifi access at Gayton Library.

## **Finance**

Through the development of the medium term financial strategy, eliminate the funding gaps in future years. We will deliver a balanced budget for 2009/2010, ensure resources are aligned with priorities and ensure that all savings are clearly identified and achievable.

Embed a culture of financial management, responsibility and accountability and improve the budget monitoring process. We will ensure all budget holders understand their role and comply with financial regulations, provide financial management training and ensure that there is a consistent approach across the council.

Collect monies due. We will achieve a collective council tax and business rate collection rate of 98.5%.

## **Place Shaping**

Progress the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and related Policy Documents.

Coordinate the Council's and Partners' response to the economic downturn, to ensure that our residents and business communities are supported during this difficult time.

Begin planning for the relocation of the Civic Centre with partners, to promote further integration of service delivery for our community.

Work with partners and the Audit Commission to complete the inspection of Regeneration Services.

Assuming approval by the Learning and Skills Council, work with Harrow College to facilitate delivery of the new College.

Prepare a planning brief to help revitalise Wealdstone District Centre.

Support the West House Trust in opening the centre for community, education, arts and exhibition use.

# Harrow's achievements – reflections on 2008/09

## 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 2008/09 Flagship Actions.

- **Place Survey.** A new Government designed survey took place between September and December 2008. The initial results have just been received and, although they need more work, some trends can already be discerned. Overall, your concerns are similar to those reported in previous surveys and include road and pavement repairs, traffic congestion, clean streets and the level of crime. Despite these concerns, more than 70% of you are very or fairly satisfied with Harrow as a place to live.

The initial results suggest that more than 40% of adults living in Harrow volunteer in some form to help others, more than 60% think that people from different backgrounds get on well together and more than 55% think that they have been treated fairly and with respect by local public services.

- **Local Area Agreement.** The partnership has concluded a new Local Area Agreement (LAA) with Government covering a wide range of services and requiring closer joint working between partners. At the same time, the original LAA is ending with the prospect of earning a significant amount of reward grant for the Partnership.

## 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 4,400 people received Community Care Services in their own home during the year;  
Around 340 people received Meals on Wheels on a continuing basis;  
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;

### Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

Harrow's first JSNA has been completed and has highlighted the following information:

- Data for Harrow suggests that whilst there is a net inward migration of adults and younger people from different ethnic groups, the outward migration consists mainly of older white people;
- There has been a disproportionately high increase in the number of older people and adults living alone. This can magnify isolation and impact on health and well-being;
- Poorer health is experienced by Asians aged over 50, particularly women, and there is evidence of earlier onset of symptoms of aging;
- Black people in Harrow are over-represented in mental health services, in line with national trends;
- Black and minority ethnic groups have specific health issues e.g. higher prevalence of certain diseases and health conditions, access to services and maintenance of healthy lifestyles. Cultural practices that may be conducive to good health need to be reinforced e.g. aspects of diet, impact of smoking and drinking;
- Refugees and asylum-seekers, and potentially increasing numbers of new migrants, pose challenges in meeting needs for education, training, housing, employment and culturally sensitive services.

There is a need to work in innovative ways to meet the challenge of budget constraints, offer choice and control to residents in health, housing and social care services. This will include greater support for carers and self-funders, engagement with service users and working in partnership with the voluntary and community sector.

**Plan to reduce temporary accommodation.** We have developed a plan to reduce the use of temporary accommodation. By the end of the year, we will also have completed a new tenants' handbook and implemented revised and improved customer care standards.

**Direct Payments.** The policy of putting service users in control of their own care arrangements through the Direct Payments Scheme has continued with 100 additional service users taking advantage of the scheme in the financial year.

**Joint Assessments.** Joint assessments with the Primary Care Trust now take place as needed based on the needs of individuals.

**Neighbourhood Resource Centres.** Three new Neighbourhood Resource Centres have been progressed and are expected to open in July 2009. The centres at Christchurch, Kenmore and Vaughan will offer day support for people with severe learning difficulties as well as acting as a base for staff providing outreach support and a facility for cultural and educational activities, meetings and other gatherings.

**Carers strategy.** A new strategy has been adopted and training for frontline staff has taken place.

	Flagship Actions from 2008/09	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
3.1	Provide breaks for carers through substitute care or by offering the person cared for a short-term placement.	On Track	We will provide 13,500 breaks for carers of adults and children.
3.2	Give people more control over their own lives by extending direct payments to more of those who are eligible.	Completed	Target of 100 users met by December 2008.
3.3	Speed up routine housing repairs.		The Council has had to put on hold non-urgent housing repairs since October due to the number and cost of urgent repairs and other factors. This means that this Flagship Action could not be fulfilled.

## Children's Services

**Service Statistics:** 29,000 pupils attend Harrow's 53 primary schools, 10 high schools and 4 special schools;  
A total of 825 children and young people up to the age of 18 were receiving a service from social care on 30 September 2008;  
There are 85 private, voluntary and independent pre-school groups providing 2,364 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 their families/relatives;  
16% of school children are entitled to free school meals.

### Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

Harrow's first JSNA has been completed and has highlighted the following information:

- 33% of households have dependent children;
- 6% of households are lone parents;
- There are 3000 refugee and asylum seeker children in Harrow;
- Youth crime has increased significantly between 2004 and 2007;
- More young people are victims of crime than perpetrators;
- Key stage results are better than London and national averages.

Ofsted Annual Performance Assessment. The assessment, which was undertaken in October, rated Children's Services overall as good with two aspects being outstanding. The assessment noted the very good and comprehensive consultation undertaken with a wide range of young people which leads to a high level of participation in decision making and service planning. Effective youth crime prevention and anti-social behaviour strategies involving all partner agencies have demonstrated an impact through a reduction in first time offending and re-offending rates to a level below that of similar councils. The assessment also noted that the proportion of young people not in education, employment or

training continued to fall and is now very low in comparison with similar councils. It also highlighted the progress made through the Harrow Collegiate to deliver the 14-19 curriculum and a broad range of vocational opportunities.

**More Carers.** We have increased the number and diversity of foster carers in the borough and implemented a training programme for them.

**Achievement.** A project involving 30 schools concentrated on increasing the level of achievement of Black pupils. This project has been successfully concluded and has been succeeded by a similar project focussing on white working class students called 'Narrowing the Gap'.

**Extended Schools.** So far, 50% of first and middle schools and 30% of high schools are meeting the full core offer for extended schools. We expect that all schools will be in this position by 2010.

**School Re-organisation.** Preparatory and consultative work has been undertaken in anticipation of re-organising schools in line with the national agenda with pupils transferring from primary schools to secondary schools at the end of year 7. A decision to implement the planned re-organisation was taken in January 2009.

	Flagship Actions from 2008/09	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
1.8	Fight bullying and abuse by rolling out the Miss Dorothy Dot Com programme to all primary schools.	Completed	All primary schools are now accessing the programme. Secondary schools can access the programme 'Watch over me'.
3.4	Provide a domestic setting for contact between Children looked after and their parents.	Completed	Fully operational.
4.1	Design and build the new Whitmore High School with dual use leisure and arts facilities.	On Track	Construction commenced in the summer 2008 with completion due in 2010.
4.2	Establish provision for children on the autistic spectrum in mainstream primary schools.	On Track	Construction of necessary accommodation underway to be completed in January 2010.



	Flagship Actions from 2008/09	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
4.3	Challenge under-achievement in specific groups of children through targeted action.	Completed	15 schools completed the project and a further 15 have joined. Evaluation of Black Pupils Achievement Pilot evaluated.
5.5	Open a further 4 children's centres to provide access to a wide range of advice, support and health care services.	On Track	Will be completed by April 2009 with 7 handed over by October 2008.
5.6	Develop the Youth Parliament to become more involved in the Council's work.	Completed	Young people now more involved in decision-making in Harrow e.g. in recruitment of all staff in children's services and in writing documents and publications.

## Community and Environment Services

**Service Statistics:** In 2008/09, the Directorate supported the police to cut the amount of crime by 500 incidents; worked with the Police to ensure that robbery has fallen by 40% and muggings are down by 500 offences; reduced anti-social behaviour amongst young people by issuing 17 ASBOs; seized 13,000 illegal DVDs; inspected and checked 450 pubs, clubs and restaurants as well 200 off-licences; increased the amount of rubbish recycled by 1,500 tonnes; created 13,000 tonnes of compost from recycled food waste; cleaned up £170k worth of flytipping, emptied 1,099 litter bins as well as maintaining and cleaning 100 miles of footpaths and 285 miles of roads; enabled 600 affordable homes to be built, and renovated 331 council homes;

provided 2,143 off-street car park spaces and 878 on streets;  
turned round 3,700 planning applications ;  
handled a million visits to our sports and leisure facilities; and  
loaned 2 million books, CDs and DVDs from our libraries.

**Volunteering.** The level of volunteering in the Borough is increasing partly through the Council's One 4 One programme of employee volunteering. This not only provides additional voluntary effort for the community but improves mutual understanding between the Council and the voluntary and community sector.

**Community Celebrations.** A successful Under One Sky festival was held in the summer and a passport to Culture Scheme was delivered.

**Recycling.** The target of recycling 40% of household waste by 2010 has already been exceeded and has reached 42%, which is the second best result in London and includes the best performance in London in composting green waste.

**Cleaner Streets.** We have re-organised our street cleansing operation by increasing by 30 the number of sweepers employed around the town centre and stations.

**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 strategy was passed by Cabinet early in 2009.

**Back to work.** We have secured external funding (£400,000) to help people in targeted areas back to work.

	Flagship Actions from 2008/09	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
1.1	Make Harrow's streets cleaner.	On Track	A new cleansing methodology is being implemented and a Blitz team is being created. On track to recruit 30 additional staff. It is expected to see improvement in Q3.
1.2	Jointly fund with Metropolitan Police additional Police Officers in Harrow Town Centre.	Completed	Officers in post and working.
1.3	Improve the traffic flow at Petts Hill by building a new and wider railway bridge.	On Track	Bridge works successfully completed. Highway improvements planned.
1.4	Extend recycling so that people who live in flats can take part.	Project removed	The Council has not progressed this scheme. Distribution of anticipated funding from a London wide pot of money of £84 million has been delayed so the Council has not been in a position to fund the changes needed.
1.5	Bring about significant improvements in Community Safety and Cleanliness through 6 'Weeks of Action' campaigns across Harrow.	Completed	The measure was that the weeks of action should take place and at least 50% of residents of the areas concerned felt that the Weeks of Action had improved their area. 70% of people felt that their Week of Action had improved their area.

	Flagship Actions from 2008/09	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
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 the Council).	Completed	Borough-wide Alcohol Exclusion Zone in place.
1.7	Tackle environmental crime and reduce fly-tipping, graffiti and litter through the work of a new Envirocrime Team.	Completed	Envirocrime Team in Place.
2.1	Help to secure the development of the new Harrow College buildings and the Town Centre Post Office site, subject to planning consent.	On Track	<p>Planning permission for the new College was granted in January 2009.</p> <p>Planning Committee will consider Dandara's Application for the old Post Office site in March 2009.</p>
2.2	Help to secure re-development of the Gayton Road site, subject to planning consent.	Project removed	Project removed from the current programme due to the economic climate.
2.3	Give a 'facelift' to St Anns Road.	On Track	Work commenced in February 2009 to improve paving and street furniture.
2.4	Help to secure the re-development of the Travis Perkins site, subject to planning consent.		Planning permission has been refused for this site. The applicant has lodged an Appeal with the Planning Inspectorate.
5.3	Improve the service for library users.	Completed	New Library Management System in place in December 2008; 1 self service kiosk in a library in place by December 2008.

	Flagship Action from 2008/09		What has been achieved to date
6.1	Develop new and clearer support arrangements for the voluntary and community sector.	On Track	Scrutiny review complete and implementation group response being developed.
6.2	Promote new and existing cultural activities to encourage participation from all communities in Harrow.	Complete	5% increase in residents' participation in cultural activities as measured by local attendance data.
6.3	Launch a Community and Cultural calendar, celebrating Harrow's mix of cultures and faiths.	Complete	Community and Cultural calendar launched and established as an annual publication.
6.4	Promote and celebrate community volunteering and establish a Volunteer Awards event.	Complete	The first Harrow Heroes awards held in 2008 and established as an annual event.

## Finance

**Service Statistics:** Revenues are responsible for the billing and collection of both Council Tax and Business Rates; from about 90,000 properties in total. This results in annual collection of around £107m in Council Tax and over than £49m in Business Rates;  
 Parking deals with 25,000 informal representations a year, 10,000 formal representations, 900 appeals and 15,000 warrants. They also issue and renew around 8,000 permits for residents, businesses and doctors;  
 The Housing Benefits Team handles an annual caseload of 17,000;  
 The Insurance Team processes 600 claims a year from motor, property and liability cases.

**Budget Management.** We have closely managed the 2008-09 budget to ensure that the Council maintains the medium term financial strategy which eliminates funding gaps including making the planned contribution to reserves.

**Procurement.** We have made a series of quick wins through improving procurement to save £500,000 over three years.

**Effective IT Strategy.** We have reviewed and amended the Council's IT Strategy to ensure that it is fit for purpose and supports the Council's objectives and we have begun implementation.

**Collection.** We are currently ahead of the anticipated profile for the collection of both Council Tax and National Non-Domestic rates. Significant improvements have been made in the collection of sundry debt.

**Payroll and pensions.** These services raised and validated more than 135,000 employment related transactions – receiving pension contributions, paying pensions and paying staff.

**Audit and Risk Management** High standards have been maintained in both of these services.

**Payments.** We have significantly improved the process of making payments to our suppliers.

	Flagship Action from 2008/09	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
5.4	Develop a budget strategy to ensure that the Council lives within its means while protecting services.	Complete	The Council achieved a balanced budget which included investment in priority services and a necessary contribution to balances.

## Chief Executive's Department

**Service Statistics:** Since opening in 2006, Access Harrow has served over 100,000 visitors and handles more than 75,000 enquires a month;  
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).

**Comparative Performance.** Nationally, in an assessment undertaken by PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Harrow's ranking has moved up from 66<sup>th</sup> to 37<sup>th</sup> best performing upper tier authority and from 17<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> best performing council in London. This makes Harrow one of the most improved councils.

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

**Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).** Preparatory work, including responses to consultation documents, has been successfully undertaken and has put the Council in a position to respond to CAA requests for information and assessments in a complete and timely fashion.

**New Local Area Agreement.** A new and more extensive Local Area Agreement has been negotiated with Government and signed off by the partners and services who will deliver the improved performance that it envisages.

**Communications.** 6 issues of Harrow People will have been produced in 2008/09 plus an additional special issue in October 2008. A residents' survey found 81% of readers felt that the magazine was informative.

**Consultation.** A Corporate Consultation Strategy was agreed to co-ordinate the council's consultation efforts, apply uniformly high standards and ensure that the maximum value is derived from the data collected.

**Scrutiny.** A key achievement has been the review of the council's relationship with the voluntary and community sector which saw Scrutiny spearhead a major improvement proposal for the authority.

**Access Harrow.** A survey established that 64% of calls to the Contact centre are resolved at first contact.

**Web and Intranet Development.** The refreshed website is proving a very effective transaction channel and future monitoring of the effectiveness of this avenue will centre on the use made of web-based forms.

**Staff and Member Development.** A Manager Development Programme has been devised and rolled out to all middle managers. A front line managers' development programme will begin soon and all members have access to a coach to help identify their Personal Development Plans.

**CREATE Values.** A new set of corporate values has been developed to support organisational competencies and underpin cultural change.

	Flagship Actions from 2008/09	Current Status	What has been achieved to date
5.1	Improve our communications so that the residents know what the Council is doing and why.	Completed	7 issues of Harrow People produced. 81% of readers said it was informative.
5.2	Improve access to our services through our contact centre.	On Track	Latest statistic show that telephone answering and waiting times at Access Harrow are very close to the annual target and with recent service improvements it is expected that the target will be exceeded by March 2009.



## **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. Cabinet reports now include a section on risk.

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 2009-2010**

	2008-2009 Original Budget £000	2009-2010 Original Budget £000
<b>Local Demand - Borough Services</b>		
Adults and Housing	63,918	64,596
Children's	38,172	38,962
Community and Environment	46,594	47,857
Place Shaping	2,881	3,011
Legal and Governance	1,997	2,215
Assistant Chief Executive	3,212	3,389
Corporate Finance	19,210	19,986
<b>Total Directorate Budgets</b>	<b>175,984</b>	<b>180,026</b>
Inflation and Corporate items	4,973	4,212
Capital Financing adjustments	-6,972	-6,329
Interest on Balances	-3,135	-185
<b>Total – Baseline</b>	<b>170,850</b>	<b>177,724</b>
Capitalisation	-590	-390
Contribution to Balances	1,000	500
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>171,260</b>	<b>177,834</b>
Contribution re Collection Fund Deficit b/f	1,365	-300
National Non-Domestic rate (NNDR)	-57,670	-54,261
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	-8,028	-12,524
Area Based Grant	-8,423	-8,996
<b>Local Demand on Collection Fund</b>	<b>98,504</b>	<b>101,753</b>
<b>Funds / Balances</b>		
Balances Brought Forward	2,154	4,031
Adjustment to Balances	1,000	500
Balances Carried Forward	<b>3,154</b>	<b>4,531</b>
<b>Council Tax for Band D Equivalent</b>		
Harrow (£)	<b>1,152.55</b>	<b>1,186.55</b>
<u>Increase</u>		
Harrow (%)	<b>2.95%</b>	<b>2.95%</b>
<b>Taxbase</b>	<b>85,466</b>	<b>85,755</b>

