



HARROW PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 March 2009

(1) Present:

Harrow Strategic Partnership Board Members:

Councillor David Ashton (Chairman)	Leader; Strategy, Partnership and Finance Portfolio Holder	Harrow Council
Councillor Susan Hall	Deputy Leader, Environment and Community Safety Portfolio Holder	Harrow Council
Councillor Paul Osborn	Performance, Communication and Corporate Services Portfolio Holder	Harrow Council
Councillor Bill Stephenson	Leader of the Labour Group	Harrow Council
Councillor Phillip O'Dell	Deputy Leader of the Labour Group	Harrow Council
Dr Gillian Schiller	Chairman	Harrow Primary Care Trust
Howard Bluston	Representative	North West London Chamber of Commerce
Malcolm Parr	Representative	Harrow in Business
Mike Coker	Representative	Voluntary and Community Sector
Yvonne Lee	Representative	Voluntary and Community Sector
Jacqui Mace	Representative	Further Education Sector
Ann Groves	Chairman	Older People's Reference Group
John Vaughan	Representative	Central and North West London Mental Health Trust
Paul Clark	Corporate Director, Children's Services	Children and Young People Partnership
John Edwards	Divisional Director, Environmental Services	Sustainable Development and Enterprise Management Group
Javed Khan	Director of Community and Cultural Services	Community Cohesion Management Group
Richard Walton	Borough Commander, Harrow Police	Safer Harrow Management Group

(2) Also Present:

Michael Lockwood	Chief Executive	Harrow Council
Andrew Bland	Director of Commissioning	Harrow Primary Care Trust
Allen Pluck	Chief Executive	Harrow in Business
Sara Brattan	Locality Manager (West London)	Government Office for London
Annette Furley	CAA Lead	Audit Commission
Nick O'Reilly	Harrow Borough Commander	London Fire Brigade

(3) The following Harrow Council Officers attended:

Mark Gillett	Divisional Director, Commissioning and Partnerships, Children's and Adults	Harrow Council
Andrew Hadfield	Head of Communications	Harrow Council
Mike Howes	Service Manager, Policy and Partnership Service	Harrow Council
Trina Taylor	Senior Policy Officer, Policy and Partnership Service	Harrow Council

Apologies were received from:

Neil Tornes (Representative, Large Employers' Network), Professor Simon Jarvis (Representative, University of Westminster), Abs Malik (Representative, Learning and Skills Council), Julia Smith (Chairman, Harrow Association of Voluntary Service), Anne Whitehead (Co-chair, Community Cohesion Management Group) and Jasvant Lall who will be attending future meetings in place of Janet Matthews (Representative, Job Centre Plus).

ACTION

1. Attendance by Substitute Members/Apologies for Absence:

AGREED: To (1) note the attendance of Andrew Bland, Director of Commissioning at Harrow Primary Care Trust (PCT), as substitute member for Sarah Crowther, Chief Executive of the PCT; and

(2) note the apologies received (as set out above).

2. Declarations of Interest:

AGREED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Partnership Board members in relation to the business to be transacted at this meeting.

3. Appointment of Deputy Chair:

AGREED: That Dr Gillian Schiller be appointed Deputy Chair until the end of the 2009/10 Municipal Year.

4. Minutes:

AGREED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2008 of the Harrow Strategic Partnership Board, being the predecessor body to this, be taken as read and signed as a correct record, subject to the amendment of the attendance list to show that Councillor Phillip O'Dell was present.

5. Matters Arising:

- (i) Minute 170 – Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)
It was noted that it had previously been agreed that Annette Furley, CAA Lead from the Audit Commission, would give a presentation to

this meeting. Ms Furley indicated that she would address the meeting during agenda item 12, "The Area Assessment".

(ii) Minute 176 – Pump Priming Grant Awards

As previously agreed, the Service Manager (Policy and Partnerships) confirmed that a report on this matter would be submitted to a future meeting of the Board.

MH

6. Community Cohesion in Harrow:

The Board was shown a brief video introduced by Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, which explored what was meant by community cohesion, who the relevant stakeholders were, how it linked with other agencies, and how it could be mainstreamed. It highlighted that community cohesion was the responsibility of everyone who delivered services and everyone in the community, not just the Council.

The Director of Community and Cultural Services and the Head of Communications, Harrow Council, introduced a joint report which summarised the findings of some research commissioned by the Council, in the light of recent MORI surveys suggesting a reduction in cohesion in the Borough, to identify the underlying factors affecting the perception of community cohesion. The report also provided an overview of a proposed campaign aimed at improving community cohesion. Board members' comments on the research findings, and endorsement of the proposed campaign, were sought.

There was concern as to whether the economic downturn would have an impact on community cohesion. The Director of Community and Cultural Services confirmed that cohesion tended to suffer during recessions, but hate crime levels were being monitored and so far were not showing a significant increase. It was also noted that this was a Council campaign, and the extent of partner involvement was queried; the need to ensure a consistent message across all partners was highlighted. The meeting was advised that the steering group on this issue included representatives from a range of partners, with the exception of the business community, from whom representation would be sought, and officers were talking to police, voluntary and community sector and PCT colleagues about how to ensure the campaign's message was spread across the borough.

JK, AP

Board members made a number of comments on the proposed campaign, as follows:

- there was disappointment that the campaign focused solely on residents and did not include businesses;
- the campaign should celebrate similarities between communities;
- it was felt that the campaign took a good approach and was very positive, but focused primarily on cohesion between people from different ethnic communities. There also needed to be cohesion between different generations, and between affluence and deprivation;
- there was some uncertainty as to whom the campaign's message was aimed at;
- some members felt that there was a lack of connection between the

campaign and some of the issues identified in the research, such as the importance of language. It was suggested that a campaign around the issue of language would not be difficult to mount and could be very valuable;

- there was a need to give consideration as to how the campaign would reach socially excluded groups; and
- the further education sector, not just schools, was very effective at bringing together people of different cultures and age groups.

Officers undertook to take the comments into consideration.

AH

AGREED: That (1) the comments set out above be noted; and

(2) the Community Cohesion Marketing Campaign be endorsed and supported.

All to note

7. Scrutiny Review of 'Delivering a Strengthened Voluntary and Community Sector for Harrow' - Final Report:

The Board considered a reference from the meeting of Harrow Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 December 2008, which set out the final report of the scrutiny review of the Council's support for the voluntary and community sector.

The Director of Community and Cultural Services, Harrow Council, reported that the Council had now reviewed the 22 recommendations arising from the scrutiny review report in detail. Of the recommendations, 17 were agreed, 1 was not agreed and 4 would be developed further as part of the development of a robust third sector strategy to be submitted to Cabinet in autumn 2009.

The report was welcomed. There was concern, however, that there appeared to be an omission from the report, in terms of the role of elected Members in engaging with the voluntary and community sector. Voluntary organisations were unclear as to whether there had been a change in policy and Councillors were no longer nominated to voluntary sector organisations. In response, it was advised that there had not been a change in policy. It was agreed that this issue be looked into.

JK

Board members were pleased that the recommendations were being looked at carefully but were concerned that implementation should not be unnecessarily delayed, and there was disappointment at the lack of engagement with the voluntary and community sector in taking the recommendations forward. In response, it was advised that there had been broad agreement with the voluntary and community sector, but that it was also appropriate for the Council itself to now consider the implications of the review. There was also a request to engage with the business community on this. A Board member additionally advised that one of the issues not included in the final report had been the lack of allowances or expenses for attending Council meetings such as this, scrutiny or grants panel meetings, which resulted in voluntary sector representatives being out of pocket. In response, it was agreed that the issue regarding expenses be looked into, and the Council's commitment to moving the review forward in a timely way and in partnership was re-emphasised.

JK

All to note

AGREED: That the report of the scrutiny review be noted.

8. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Update:

The Board received a report of the Corporate Director of Adults and Housing, Harrow Council, which advised of the production, in line with new statutory requirements, of a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The JSNA was intended as a strategic tool which identified the health and well-being needs and inequalities of a local population, to inform more effective and targeted service provision across agencies.

It was noted that one of the groups identified by the JSNA as likely to have needs requiring further investigation was people who funded their own care provision (self-funders). Board members were concerned that there should be adequate support for this group, for example in providing advice on legal issues related to employing a carer. The meeting was advised that partners were looking at how self-funders could be provided with better information and support, and that any safeguarding investigations relating to residential provision already included self-funders.

With regard to the need for further analysis of the prescription of anti-depressants, there was particular concern about the self-employed in the current economic climate. It was advised that the JSNA had been put together prior to the economic downturn, and it was acknowledged that further work would be required to keep the document up-to-date.

AGREED: That the development and progress of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment be noted.

All to note

9. Primary and Community Care Strategy 2008/9 - 2012/13:

The Board considered the Primary and Community Care Strategy for 2008/9 to 2012/13, which set out Harrow PCT's vision for primary and community care over the next five years. The strategy described current services, set out a case for change, identified key areas for development and outlined the model for delivery.

A number of detailed questions were asked and answered relating to the extent to which geographical or racial differences were a factor in certain health inequalities, the balance between acute and preventative services, and the PCT's openness to commissioning services from the voluntary sector.

Board members supported and commended the strategy, and were impressed with its depth, but were of the view that it was rather introspective. There was little mention of the voluntary sector or of the role of carers, and the need to recognise the importance of health checks for carers in reducing the call on acute services was highlighted. The need for the PCT to show leadership in the partnership with the voluntary sector had been demonstrated by losing a previous opportunity to obtain demonstrator site funding from the Department of Health. The awarding of grants to voluntary sector organisations had been fraught. The Director of Commissioning, Harrow PCT, undertook to take the comments on board.

AB

It was also suggested that documents such as the strategy should be

All to note

circulated among partner organisations at a senior level while still in draft.

AGREED: That the report be noted.

All to note

10. Sustainable Community Strategy:

The Board received a draft report of the Assistant Chief Executive, Harrow Council, which would be considered by the Council's Cabinet meeting on 26 March 2009 and which set out the draft Sustainable Community Strategy for adoption. The results of the consultation on the strategy and a further draft of the strategy which had been amended to take account of the outcomes of the consultation had been circulated on a supplemental agenda. The strategy set out a vision for the future of Harrow to 2020 which would inform the planning processes of all partners.

Officers were congratulated on the production of the strategy. It was noted that there had been 2 summits of residents to inform the strategy, one of which had not been very well attended. Officers confirmed that lessons had been learnt with regard to publicity for the events.

A Board member stated that a lot of work had been done around business incubation, but there was no reference to it in the strategy. Officers undertook to look into this.

MH, TT

Board members were requested to forward any other detailed comments on the strategy to the Service Manager (Policy and Partnerships) as soon as possible.

AGREED: That (1) the report be noted; and

(2) any detailed comments on the strategy be forwarded to the Service Manager (Policy and Partnerships), Harrow Council, as soon as possible.

All to note

11. Local Area Agreement Refresh:

The Board considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive, Harrow Council, which advised of changes to some of the indicators in the Local Area Agreement based on new available data or changes to the indicator's definition.

At the meeting, it was advised that two further targets had been agreed since the report had been written: NI13 relating to migrants' English language skills, for which the baseline was 71% and there was a target increase of 6% over 3 years, and NI198 relating to the mode of travel to school, for which the target was a 3% decrease but the baseline had yet to be agreed. There were also corrections to 2 targets in the report: NI11 had target of 45.5%, and NI140 referred to the fair treatment of local services, not to the percentage of people from different backgrounds getting on well together. NI115 (substance misuse by young people) was now being recommended to be included into the local section of the agreement as the 2008/09 result was already much better than the national average. This would mean the required target for 2010/11 would be very stretching, and this could not be justified as an improvement priority for the amount of resources required.

There was concern as to whether the economic downturn would reduce

the number of migrants and so affect performance against NI13, but it was advised that the indicator was based on the number of people successfully completing a language course, not the number enrolling.

AGREED: That the proposed changes in the Harrow Local Area Agreement be agreed.

All to note

12. The Area Assessment:

The Service Manager (Policy and Partnerships), Harrow Council, reported on the structure and requirements of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). The Partnership had agreed to develop a self evaluation which would be submitted to the Audit Commission, and which would provide the basis for a partnership development programme to improve performance and delivery of outcomes. The first draft of the programme would be produced in early summer.

Annette Furley, CAA Lead from the Audit Commission, advised that CAA went live from 1 April 2009 but that dialogue and the collection of information had already started. In June or July, she would come back to the Partnership to advise of potential flags, and in September she would bring back the draft area assessment. The Partnership would have the opportunity to respond, and the final area assessment would then be published on the Audit Commission's website. There would be no surprises in the results, however, as there would be on-going dialogue throughout.

It was noted that there was a strong emphasis on engagement and involvement of communities. Ms Furley advised that she had a strong background in community engagement and would be happy to share her experience. In addition, good practice guidance on engagement had recently been produced.

AGREED: That the above be noted.

All to note

13. Any Other Urgent Business:

(i) Consultation on Stroke and Major Trauma Services

Board members' attention was drawn to the Healthcare for London consultation on proposals for stroke and trauma services. Harrow PCT had organised a roadshow at the Civic Centre on 24 March 2009 between 2pm and 8pm, and all were invited to attend. The proposals for stroke services included the creation of a state-of-the-art stroke care centre at Northwick Park Hospital, while the proposals for major trauma care included 3- or 4-centre options.

All to note

(ii) Partnership Response to the Economic Downturn

It was suggested that the Partnership Board should take a lead in addressing the problems caused by the economic downturn locally, and that at its next meeting the Board consider establishing a working group to identify ways to help residents and businesses and to promote these.

MH

(iii) Agreement in Principle – Bangladesh Olympics Association

The Director of Community and Cultural Services, Harrow Council,

was pleased to announce the signing of an Agreement in Principle by the Bangladesh Olympics Association, which would see Bangladeshi athletes use the facilities of a range of public and private sector partners in the Borough.

All to note

(iv) Smoke-Free Homes

Board members' attention was drawn to the PCT's campaign to increase the number of smoke-free homes, by getting Harrow residents to sign up on the PCT website to a gold, silver or bronze promise on keeping their homes smoke-free.

All to note

[Note: The Meeting, having commenced at 6.05 pm, closed at 8.10 pm]