

**EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE HARROW PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING
ON 19 MARCH 2009**

ACTION

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.