

Meeting:	<b>CABINET</b>
Date:	Thursday, 18 June 2009
Subject:	<b>Place Shaping Directorate – Prospectus 2009/10</b>
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Andrew Trehern, Corporate Director Place Shaping
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor David Ashton, Leader of the Council Councillor Marilyn Ashton, Portfolio Holder Planning Development & Enterprise Councillor Tony Ferrari, Portfolio Holder Major Contracts and Property
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Place Shaping Prospectus

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

This report sets out the initial prospectus for the new Place Shaping Directorate.

### **Recommendation:**

That the Place Shaping Directorate prospectus 2009/10 be endorsed.

### **Reason: (For recommendation)**

The Place Shaping Strategic prospectus has been compiled to provide an overview of the drivers for, and the Council's response to, the Place Shaping Agenda.

The Community Strategy sets out the LAA vision for the future of Harrow. Place Shaping activities have a key role in shaping that future. This document is intended to provide a platform for future discussion and in particular coordination of activities across both the public and private sectors, which will ensure that Harrow remains a great place to live, to work in, to learn in, do business in and to visit.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Background**

The Community Strategy was adopted in April 2009 around six themes;-

- Economic Development in Harrow
- Every Harrow Child
- Health, Well being and Independence
- Improving Harrow's Environment
- Harrow's Culture, Communities and Identity
- The Future of Public Services and Democracy in Harrow

Harrow Council, as a key partner responsible for delivering the Community Strategy has created the Place Shaping Directorate. The Directorate has been formed around the Council's Planning Service and Corporate Estate Division, to help achieve a broad range of ambitious objectives over the short, medium and long terms that reflect key aspirations and ambitions of the Harrow Strategic Partnership, as set out in the community strategy.

The core services to be provided by the Directorate include Development Management, Building Control, Local Development Framework, Design and Conservation, Economic Development, Research, and Corporate Estate.

Additionally, Place Shaping is charged with establishing the coordination and collaboration necessary to ensure that development in Harrow, in particular development of social and economic infrastructure is delivered in an appropriate holistic way.

This prospectus provides the outline direction for the Directorate's service plans, and will form part of a suite of documents that will comprise the service plan. The Local Development Framework Core Strategy, to be prepared by the Place shaping Directorate, will provide the long term spatial vision and an implementation plan for the borough, to support delivery of the community strategy.

### **What is Place Shaping?**

Place Shaping has been defined by the Government as, "the creative use of powers and influence to promote the general well being of a community and its citizens".

Place Shaping is therefore the responsibility of the local Council, as strategic leader and place shaper, but also all local partners in the public, voluntary and business sectors. It is about creating attractive, prosperous, vibrant, safe and strong communities, where people want to live, work, learn, do business in and visit.

### **Place Shaping Activities**

Harrow enjoys an enviable reputation for good quality housing, excellent schools and a range of high quality open spaces, a historic environment, and an attractive and well established suburban character, with excellent public transport links. We are also one of the safest Boroughs in London.

However our Town Centre in particular is facing ever increasing competition, and needs to attract much needed investment to avoid the threat of decline. Other local and district centres also need to improve, and develop new roles, if they are to remain the hub of neighbourhoods and communities. Additionally, there is a critical requirement to provide much needed new housing and to ensure that the Borough's social infrastructure is developed to provide sufficient capacity to meet our residents' needs and expectations in the future.

The prospectus provides an overview of the way in which the Directorate's capabilities and legislative responsibilities will be aligned to deliver key parts of the Council and community aspirations for the Borough as set out in the community strategy.

The Flagship Actions and Corporate Priorities are already translated into a series of projects that are being led by Place Shaping in 2009/10. These are focused on planning for the much needed development of our Town Centre and district shopping centres to secure their vitality and viability over the long term, whilst other projects are intended to protect and enhance the pleasant suburban character of many of our residential streets.

## **Capabilities**

The Place Shaping Directorate contains the Council's statutory functions in respect of the following:

- Development Management
- Enforcement
- Spatial Planning
- Regeneration
- Infrastructure funding (via S106)
- Building Regulations
- Economic Development
- Business support via Business Connect
- Property and Estate Management

These functions are delivered by way of a team of specialist and support staff encompassing professions including:

- Transportation
- Chartered Surveyors
- Engineers in Building control
- Chartered town Planners
- Architects
- Arboriculturalists
- Building Conservation specialists
- Landscape Architects

Of the six key themes in the Community Strategy, the capabilities and statutory responsibilities of the Place Shaping Directorate mean that it is ideally placed to take a leading role in the delivery of the Economic Development theme and to work with the Environment Services Department to ensure coordinated delivery of Improving Harrow's Environment theme. Additionally Place Shaping will play a complementary role to other departments on the remaining four themes; Every Harrow Child, Health Wellbeing and Independence, Culture, Communities and Identity and the future of public services and democracy

The Directorate has already, through the development of a suite of strategic objectives within the core strategy, outlined how it will support the community strategy vision by:

- Ensure development meets the needs of all residents and businesses, without compromising the well-being of future generations.
- Locate development where it will enable local residents to access jobs and key services in a sustainable manner.
- Promote community safety in the design of new developments.
- Ensure all residents have a choice of good quality and affordable housing and in particular larger affordable family housing.
- Promote walking and cycling and access to reliable public transport.
- Ensure the greenbelt, parks and open spaces are accessible to all.
- Ensure new developments are of a high quality design and enhance the built and public realm (particularly in and around Harrow Town Centre).
- Ensure global sustainability initiatives are integrated into all developments.

Development of the Council's property assets, to ensure that facilities are available in the right place, to meet future customer and service requirements, is another fundamental element of Place Shaping role.

However, development of the Council's property assets will increasingly be undertaken in partnership with other public sector agencies, in particular the PCT and the Police. Asset development will be undertaken to ensure that community and social assets are provided to meet local customer needs and expectations, thereby helping to improve the sustainability of these local communities, whilst delivering substantial efficiency, cost and quality gains, from joined up public services.

Key to the above objective will be the Building Schools for the Future Programme, development of the Primary Care Trust's Health Centres and the development of a new Civic Centre.

The Harrow Strategic Partnership will be critical to the delivery and realisation of our ambitious plans for Harrow. The creation of the Place Shaping Directorate is part of Harrow Councils response to the delivery of the community strategy and the realisation of all partners' vision for the future of the borough. The Directorate's management team will be responsible not only for defined flagship projects on behalf of Harrow Council (listed below) but also the management of the resources of the directorate to optimise the delivery capability of the Council and its partners and to ensure that members are able properly to participate in the evolution of projects and strategies, such as the LDF, to effect delivery.

## Options Considered

Projects delivered to date and those that will be delivered in the future have all included an options appraisal work stream.

The Flagship Actions and Corporate Priorities for 2009/10 have been developed utilising a high level options process.

- Flagship Actions Publish a Town Centre Design Guide to help secure the inward investment required to enhance the range of facilities within our Town Centre and improve the quality of development
- Prepare a Planning brief for the Stanmore District Centre car park to help secure the long term vitality of this important district centre
- Adopt a House Conversions supplementary planning document to help retain the suburban character and charm of Harrow's residential streets

## Corporate Priority Projects

- Progress the Local Development Framework, Core Strategy and related planning documents
- Publish Wealdstone District Centre Planning Brief to help secure development of this district centre such that the much needed regeneration activity can be encouraged
- Coordinated the Council's and Partner's response to the economic down turn to support our resident and business communities
- Support the West House Trust to open the refurbished building for community use.
- Begin planning for the relocation for the Civic Centre with partners, to promote further integration of service delivery for our community
- Assuming approval by the Learning Skills Councils, continue to work with Harrow College to facilitate delivery of the new campus.

## Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## Performance Issues

Key performance measures relevant to the Place Shaping agenda include:-

NI154 – Net Additional Homes Provided – to ensure delivery of approximately 5,000 new homes over the next ten years, to exceed the allocated target.

NI157 – Processing of Planning Applications – to retain upper quartile performance

NI170 – Previously Developed Land that has been Vacant or Derelict for more than five years – continuing the approach to date such that development on Greenfield sites is minimised

NI197 – Improved Local Biodiversity (LAA) – to achieve objectives set out within the BAP

NI146 – Adults with Learning Difficulties in Employment (LAA) – 36 residents were supported in 2009. Target for 2009/10 to be agreed with GOL

NI152 – Working Age People on out of Work Benefit (LAA) – achieve 1% reduction is a target which has been agreed previously. The economic difficulties will result in this target being missed. Discussions with GOL will determine revised target and focus for activities.

## Environmental Impact

Place Shaping will drive the future sustainable development of the Borough, and the maintenance and enhancement of cohesive communities, and will set the pattern for development in Harrow over the next 20-30 years.

The developments which will be delivered through the Place Shaping Programme will enable substantial improvements in sustainability and environmental performance which would otherwise not be realised.

## Risk Management Implications

Projects delivered to date and those that will be delivered in the future have all included a risk management appraisal and monitoring work stream.

There are no additional work risks which would be created as a result of the adoption of this strategic framework. In fact the more structured approach to be used to enable delivery of the major developments programme will significantly improve the effectiveness of the risk management process.

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Steve Tingle



on behalf of the  
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 8 June 2009

Name: Jessica Farmer



on behalf of the  
Monitoring Officer

Date: 8 June 2009

## Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: Liz Defries



on behalf of the  
Divisional Director  
(Partnership Development  
& Performance)

Date: 8 June 2009

## Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: Andrew Baker



on behalf of the  
Divisional Director  
(Environmental Services)

Date: 8 June 2009

## Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

Andrew Trehern, Corporate Director Place Shaping

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Background Papers:

None