

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	16 July 2009
Subject:	Integrated Planning 2010-11 to 2012-13
Key Decision:	Yes
Responsible Officer:	Myfanwy Barrett, Corporate Director of Finance Tom Whiting, Assistant Chief Executive
Portfolio Holder:	David Ashton, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnership and Finance Paul Osborn, Performance, Communication and Corporate Services Portfolio Holder
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Timetable Appendix 2 – Strategy for closing funding gaps Appendix 3 – Year Ahead Statement

SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report sets out the framework for the development of the new corporate plan and medium term financial strategy for 2010-11 to 2012-13.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet

- Note the timetable (Appendix 1)
- Approve the strategy for closing future funding gaps (Appendix 2)
- Approve the approach to consultation

REASON:

To promote effective medium term planning.

SECTION 2 – REPORT

Introduction

1. This report sets out the broad framework for the development of the new corporate plan and medium term financial strategy (MTFS) for 2010-11 to 2012-13.

Integrated Planning Framework

2. The Council operates an integrated planning framework. The framework is designed to ensure that the Corporate Plan, Directorate Service Improvements Plans and the medium term budget are developed in an integrated fashion. The use of key intelligence gathered through regular consultation with residents and our own information and data such as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Mosaic/Experion and the Vitality Profiles will contribute to the development of Council plans in 2010/11 to 2012-13.

Timetable

3. The timetable for producing the new corporate plan and MTFS for 2010-11 to 2012-13 is attached at Appendix 1. Members are asked to note the timetable.
More detailed guidance will be available to managers in July

Vision and Priorities

4. Cabinet approved the vision, corporate priorities and flagship actions for 2008-09 for the Council in February.
5. The agreed vision is to be recognised as one of the best London Councils by 2012. The Council's vision must be delivered with the commitment of our staff and partners specifically to:
 - Deliver cleaner and safer streets
 - Improve support for vulnerable people
 - Build stronger communities
6. The vision and priorities were reviewed by the Administration at its away day in May and will form a critical part of the development of the 2010-11 corporate plan. The away day reviewed the latest information on performance, finance and value for money, and delivery against 2008/09 priorities and Flagship Actions. Further information gathered through consultation, such as the 2008 residents panel was also considered, to

ensure that the priorities for 2009/10 (set out in the attached Year Ahead Statement) remained suitably focused and balanced and represented residents' own priorities for Council services.

The Year Ahead Statement

7. The Year Ahead Statement is a core element in the integrated planning framework. The Year Ahead Statement is a comprehensive document which sets out the vision and corporate priorities (as approved by the Administration's away day), the national and local policy framework, detailed performance and value for money data, and the financial position. It provides the context for the development of the 2010/13 Corporate Plan and service plans. The Year Ahead Statement also sets out the results from previous consultations articulating why the priorities are the priorities. It also sets out the process for consultation in 2009 through the Residents Panel.
8. The Year Ahead Statement is attached at appendix 3.

Financial Context

9. When the current MTFFS 2011-12 was approved in February the estimated funding gaps for 2010-11 and 2011-12 were £8.9m and £7.1m respectively. These figures take into account savings identified so far. The underlying funding gap is in the order of £10m - £12m a year. In the coming weeks these figures will be updated to reflect latest information and the MTFFS will be rolled forward to include 2012-13.
10. It should be stressed that funding gaps in future years move continually as the national, regional and local policy framework shifts and new information comes to light.
11. The key risks and opportunities affecting the funding gaps in future years are set out below:
 - Some of the issues that arose during the closure of the 2008-09 accounts have an ongoing impact
 - The assumptions about inflation will be reviewed
 - Technical assumptions relating to interest rates, collection performance, and capitalisation will be reviewed
 - The outlook for the next pension fund valuation and the likely impact on employer contributions will be assessed
 - The degree of risk in the MTFFS will be reviewed and this will inform decisions about reserves and provisions
 - The Comprehensive Spending Review that will set the level of Revenue Support Grant, Area Based Grant and other Grants from 2012-13
 - The current review of DSG being undertaken by the government
 - The ongoing impact of the recession

- The growth in demand for and cost/complexity of social care will be revisited
- Changes in the Council's responsibilities, such as the transfer of Learning and Skills Council funding, will be considered
- New developments at national level, for instance in relation to waste management and carbon trading, will be taken into account
- The impact of some of the Council's major development projects including Building Schools for the Future will be taken into account, particularly in light of the current economic climate
- Opportunities for efficiencies and savings will be considered

12. The position will be changing continually as new issues arise or existing issues are resolved.

Strategy for closing the funding gaps

13. The proposed strategy for closing future funding gaps is attached at Appendix 2. The strategy includes a number of strands and the overarching aim is to align resources with priorities.

14. The Council is developing a transformation programme which entails a more fundamental look at what is being delivered and how, and the scope for partnership working. The aim of this programme is to maintain improvements in performance whilst dealing with future funding gaps. It will have a medium to long term focus. In the meantime the Council's Efficiency and Improvement Board, which is chaired by the Corporate Director of Finance, will lead on the development of the efficiency programme and closing the 2010-11 funding gap.

15. An update on the strategy for closing the funding gaps will be presented to cabinet in October.

Comprehensive Area Assessment - Use of Resources

16. The Introduction of Comprehensive Area Assessments has resulted in changes to the way Use of Resources is assessed. The new regime is more demanding than that used previously. The Council's direction of travel in continuously improving its planning process has already taken account of some of these factors now set out within the Use of Resources criteria. This is being achieved through integrating existing processes and making the overall process more robust. Examples of improvements include the following:

- Improving the understanding of the cost base and the drivers of cost within the Council
- A greater level of financial modelling through scenario planning, moving beyond 2013 where appropriate
- Creating greater clarity between the commissioning of Council services and the meeting of corporate priorities

- Consideration of workforce planning challenges and opportunities in the delivery of service plans
- Incorporate the key improvement priorities identified through the Comprehensive Area Assessment self-assessment process
- Availability of benchmarking data for national indicators (which were new in 2008/9) will allow targets to be set for all these indicators

Improving the Process

17. Generally the 2009-10 planning round was very successful. In particular:

- The budget delivered £4.4m of investment in more focused priorities and flagship actions, despite the added pressure created by the economic climate.
- The budget was robust and prudent and delivered a Council Tax increase at less than 3%.
- Extensive consultation was undertaken on the corporate priorities with a range of stakeholders, including individual residents and the resident's panel.
- The budget was integrated with the corporate plan and both were approved in February
- There was effective engagement with cabinet and corporate directors throughout
- Reports were clear and well received

18. The following areas have been identified for improvement and change:

- The format of information to support growth and savings proposals will be more consistent and comprehensive, with a fuller impact assessment and a stronger link to the risk management framework (in particular how risk appetite is identified through proposals)
- Greater emphasis on target setting for key performance indicators which link to the delivery of priorities and Flagship Actions, and consideration of a more medium term target setting in line with our priorities and aspirations

Consultation

19. Following approval of the Year Ahead Statement, there will be general consultation on the Council's proposed vision and priorities as approved by the administration in May.

20. Specific consultation on service/policy issues will need to be planned for September/October where it is required. Any statutory consultation must be completed before any assumptions about the financial implications of the proposal are made in the budget.

21. The general consultation will include the Residents' panel, the Harrow Strategic Partnership and its reference groups, and the Business Connection.

22. This approach ensures that any matters arising from the consultation and challenge panels can be taken into account before the draft corporate plan and budget are produced and published in December.

23. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has established a standing review of the budget, designed to look at longer term issues, and a Finance and Performance Sub Committee which focuses on the in year position. Both of these will provide evidence to support a review of the draft corporate plan and budget in December by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. There may also be a further session in January if necessary.

24. The stakeholder meetings that take place after the draft corporate plan and budget have been published in December will be for information sharing rather than consultation.

Financial Implications

25. This report is about the development of the new MTFS and therefore financial issues are integral to the report.

Performance Issues

26. The Year Ahead Statement will support the medium term planning process by setting out the draft priorities and the evidence supporting these (including key areas of performance). Detailed performance information, which will include the setting of draft targets for future years, will form part of the Directorate Service Delivery Plans.

27. Improvements to the planning process highlighted in paragraph 17 should offer a more robust process for Members and Senior Officers to engage and agree the key performance targets for 2010-11 and beyond linked to resource allocation and the priorities set out in the Year Ahead Statement and the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Environmental Implications

28. There are no direct environmental implications. The implications of individual proposals will identify the impacts as relevant. As part of the Council's planning arrangements consideration should be given on how the use of natural resources (such as energy and water) could be more sustainably used.

Risk Management Implications

29. As part of the budget process, a separate risk register will be developed to support the decision on the reserves policy.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: ...Myfanwy Barrett	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chief Financial Officer
Date: ...6 July 2009		
Name: ...Hugh Peart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring Officer
Date: 6 July 2009		

Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name:.....Alex Dewsnap	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Divisional Director (Strategy and Improvement)
Date:6 July 2009		

Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name:.....John Edwards.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Divisional Director (Environmental Services)
Date: 6 July 2009.....		

SECTION 6 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

Contact: Myfanwy Barrett, Corporate Director of Finance, 020 8420 9269

Background Papers:

Report to Cabinet on the Medium Term Budget Strategy, February 2009

Appendix 1

Timetable for Planning Process

Activity	Meeting	Date
Review of vision and priorities	Conservative group meeting	May 2009
Year Ahead Statement approved	Cabinet	16 July 2009
Consultation on priorities		September/October
Consultation on specific policy/service decisions (if required)		September/October
Update on progress on MTFS	Cabinet	22 October 2009
Review of draft plans	Medium Term Financial and Service Plan Panels	October/November
Scrutiny of draft plans	Overview and Scrutiny	8 December
Draft Corporate Plan and MTFS approved	Cabinet	17 December 2009
Information meetings with Stakeholders	Various	January 2009
Final Corporate Plan and MTFS approved	Cabinet Council	11 February 2010 18 February 2010

Appendix 2

Strategy for Closing the Funding Gaps

Strand	Objectives
Priorities and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure resources are aligned to the new corporate priorities • Decide what is not a priority • Evaluate the scope for investment in priority areas
VFM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider whether the Council can reduce spending in areas where it does not provide good value for money at present • Consider whether the Council should conduct market testing in areas that have not been subject to any competitive or benchmarking process for some time • Challenge services which are provided on an internal trading basis
Efficiency Programme	<p>Make realistic assumptions about outcome of the efficiency programme in the medium term in financial terms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Property Review • Business Transformation Partnership • Service Reviews • Revenue Income Optimisation project • Procurement projects • WLA Shared Services programme
Capital Programme	<p>Review the capital programme to ensure that where relevant projects are delivering efficiency savings. Consider the impact of capital investment on the funding gap going forward.</p>
Directorate Plans	<p>Each Directorate to develop medium term plans for service transformation/improvement and identify scope for efficiencies.</p>
Technical Review	<p>The technical review will cover the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk, reserves and provisions • Capitalisation strategy • Collection fund target • Grant changes • Levies

Strand	Objectives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capital financing costs• Investment income• Concessionary fares

Introduction

The Year Ahead Statement reviews where the Council was at the end of 2008/09 in policy and performance terms, and reviews what can already be glimpsed of the policy landscape for 2010/11 to help the Council to set priorities for the next financial year.

Inevitably, the Statement looks more closely at improvement opportunities than at the Council's various success stories. While successes do need to be consolidated, built on and celebrated, the bulk of service planning is concentrated around new legislative or policy requirements or services that are not performing as well as they could or as well the Council would like. The Statement therefore paints a more cautious picture of the Council and its service than, for example, self-assessment documents.

What this document is used for

The priorities arrived at through the Year Ahead Statement progress drive the detailed service planning process that begins in late July and carries on through the autumn in parallel with the budget process. Details of what will be done will be included in those service plans. The priorities will also inform development of the Council's corporate plan

Recommendations

The Year Ahead Statement is organised around the existing priorities and offers the opportunity to confirm these as still relevant or to propose amendments. **The recommendation of this study of the relevance of these existing priorities is that they should remain in place for another year as still having scope for improving performance and still being fundamental to the Council's and local residents' view of the main issues that need to be progressed to make Harrow a better place.** This would give the Council priorities for 2010/11 of:

Delivering cleaner and safer streets
Improving support for vulnerable people and
Building stronger communities

In 2008, the Residents' Panel endorsed these priorities with 91%, 80% and 57% respectively

The draft priorities agreed by Cabinet will be the subject of consultation with the Residents' Panel in September and the outcome reported to Cabinet as part of the draft corporate plan in December 2009.

Overall summary

2008/09 has been very successful for the Council. It has improved its financial standing, and its performance has improved across a range of services according to externally assessed judgements including the Audit Commission, PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC) and the Municipal Journal. The Council's partnership with key organisations in the

borough has improved and has produced new and improved governance arrangements, a new Local Area Agreement and a refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy.

At the same time, some issues have increased in significance and the Council's efforts have yet to demonstrate change on the ground. Perhaps the most urgent is the impact of the economic recession which affects directly or indirectly all aspects of life in Harrow including the demand for public services and, increasingly, the capacity of public services to meet those demands. In response to the expected reduction in grant, widely predicted as including real cuts in grant in the years ahead,, and to identifying opportunities to invest in improved services, the Council with its partners is putting in place a programme to transform the way in which public services are delivered, seeking to join up back office functions to achieve economies of scale and provide more seamless access to services via a rationalised estate of public buildings.

These issues and the inertia in public opinion responding to changes in the standards of service delivery have produced a disappointing overall score for public satisfaction with the Council. 39% responding to the Place Survey are satisfied or very satisfied with the way in which the Council runs things compared with an Outer London average of 46%, although satisfaction overall has risen from 2007 levels. To some extent, this may be a product of the Place Survey result showing that Harrow residents feel less well informed about local public services than their neighbours in the rest of Outer London (31% in Harrow and 36% on average in Outer London). Young people generally feel safe, enjoy school and achieve highly and are generally happy living in Harrow. They want to feel safe on their journey home and to increase information available on things to do, places to go and the range of services available to them.

Policy context

For local communities to be a driving force behind the UK's recovery from the global downturn, they need a stronger voice and a greater say in the decisions that affect them. The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill, which has recently had its second reading, aims to strengthen local democracy and support councils and local people in working together to increase jobs, skills and housing and improve infrastructure. Councils will get a stronger economic role that expects them to work closely with regional partners to deliver economic growth and support vulnerable people. The Bill will also place a new duty on councils to promote local democracy, to strengthen its communities and ensure all sections of the community understand how the council and other public bodies work, who makes the decisions and how they can get involved. The Bill is likely to complete its parliamentary passage later this year.

The Houghton Review looked at how local authorities and their partners could do more to tackle worklessness. The Review's key recommendation is that helping people to find, and stay in, work should be a priority for local government and its partners. The worklessness assessment will also be part of the economic assessment duty that will come into force in 2010.

The Equality Bill, introduced into the Commons on 27 April 2009, sets out to strengthen protection, advance equality and simplify the law. It incorporates key provisions which the council needs to take account of, such as the introduction of a new strategic duty to reduce socio-economic inequalities in local communities. The aim of the equalities

duties will require public authorities (including schools) to consider diverse needs when designing and delivering public services to achieve fairer opportunities and better public services. The new duty extends the current protected duties of race, disability and gender to cover age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.

The long standing agreement which sets out shared commitments and guidelines for working between local and central government and the voluntary and community sector is currently being refreshed. The revised national Compact will be launched later this year during Compact Week, 2-8 November. The basic principles that underpin the Compact will remain valid and will form the core of the refreshed Compact but it will also cover commissioning and equality laws that are not in the current version.

Demands on public expenditure are gaining momentum and this, in turn, places pressure on public bodies and the voluntary and community sector. In future, the Council will need to maximise the use of all the resources available.

There continues to be pressure to reduce the volume of household waste sent to landfill. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has launched a strategy to support a low-carbon economy through optimising packaging and maximising recycling. The strategy relies on local councils and businesses treating waste packaging as a resource, leading to more recycling by businesses, and a new emphasis on quality in household collection and sorting.

The Policing and Crime Bill amends the legislation on the functions of police authorities to ensure that they take account of the view of the public in everything that they do. The Bill now contains measures to give local communities a say in licensing decisions, changes police powers to help tackle underage drinking and add 'reduce reoffending' as a statutory responsibility for the Safer Harrow Management Group and ensure the Probation Service is a key partner to help work towards delivering safer streets.

The Laming report in relation to safeguarding children re-enforces the requirements to ensure formal partnerships to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, as outlined in the Children Act 2004. These requirements need to be effective and demonstrate impact on outcomes for children and young people.

Local policy

The Sustainable Community Strategy states that "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, economic 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, promoting respect and being the safest borough in London."

In 2008 a new Local Area Agreement was signed between the Harrow Strategic Partnership and central Government. The members of the strategic partnership, including the council, have agreed to deliver on a revised set of improvement priorities, totalling 32 designated indicators and 16 local indicators.

The Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2011 sets the vision for improving outcomes for children and young people agreed by the Children's Trust.

Much attention has been and will continue to be focused on mitigating the effects of the recession.

The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook a detailed examination of how the voluntary and community sector could be strengthened in Harrow. Most of their recommendations have already been accepted and the all but one of the others are being addressed through the development of a Third Sector Strategy which is to be considered by Cabinet in October. This Scrutiny Review won an award from the Centre for Public Scrutiny as the best review in the financial scrutiny category.

Perhaps the most significant policy issue involving the whole Council and its partners is the recently announced Transformation Programme. The programme, which comprises a number of individual work streams, is about improving the quality of front line services, working more closely with partners including the Police and the Primary Care Trust and the voluntary and community sector, and renewing the Council's relationship with residents to enlist their active help in achieving Harrow's ambitions.

More specifically, the Transformation Programme includes:

- Cross service/partner efficiency reviews, looking at how the council and its partners can achieve economies of scale and service improvements by incorporating the best practice to be found in Harrow;
- Working more closely with residents who can help to address some of Harrow's ambitions by adopting different attitudes and behaviours to reduce the scale of the tasks facing the Council and partners;
- considering the future operating model, looking at the best way of providing services in the future, the scope for commissioning other organisations to carry out work on the council's behalf and the viability of providing the current range of services and the ability to provide new services to respond to future needs and demands;
- Service Efficiency Programmes which are about identifying ways of producing the same or better outcomes using less resource and streamlining processes; and
- Place Shaping/property review which will consider the impact that the developing physical environment has on the way people live in Harrow and how it can improve the quality of life as well as looking at rationalising the use of the public sector buildings in the borough. There are more than 150 public (council and partner) buildings and there may be service efficiencies and accessibility to be gained from strategic co-location, as well as cost reductions if fewer buildings are needed in future.

Performance

The 2008 PWC benchmarking survey shows that Harrow is now one of the fastest improving councils in London and moved up over 19 places from 66th to 37th best performing unitary authority in the country. Residents are already noticing the difference: satisfaction has risen by 8% since May 2007 despite the economic conditions. The council is also now a genuine trailblazer in a number of fields ranging from individual budgets to recycling.

In 2006 the council was perilously close to becoming London's only one star authority whilst in 2009, the Audit Commission says that 'improving well' and have 'accelerated' the rate of progress well above the national average – with two-thirds of performance indicators improving. The council is now only one part of the adult social care judgement away from scoring three out of four ('two stars' on the old CSCI ratings) and improving well.

In 2009, the inspectorates confirmed, that after many years of static performance, the council has made great strides in accelerating performance in all service areas:

- Adults have moved to 1* promising capacity to improve (for the first time in 7 years).
- Housing has moved up to 3 out of 4.
- Use of Resources and VfM scores have moved up to 3 out of 4.
- Housing Benefits is 4 and is now excellent in 12 out of 13 categories.
- Culture has moved up to 3 (libraries now have the highest usage and satisfaction levels in the country).
- Adult and Community learning achieved Ofsted grade 2 (1 is Excellent) – the only council provider in the country to achieve this.
- Children's services have moved up to 3 out of 4, (all scores were at least good, and two are outstanding).
- The 2008 PWC benchmarking report identifies Harrow as the 2nd most improved council in London and 6th best performing overall.
- The Audit Commission's profile showed that two thirds of indicators improved in 2008, above the national average.
- The 2008 Halifax Quality of Life survey listed Harrow as the third best London borough for the standard of living.
- Harrow is now recognised as 'improving well'.

This improvement has been achieved in the context of Harrow being a low spending authority.

The Council was short listed in the Best Achieving Council category in the recent Municipal Journal awards. Only 6 authorities across the country were short listed and the inclusion of Harrow Council in this group is an external validation of the significant progress that the Council has made in recent years.

This year sees the introduction of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) replacing the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). The essential difference between these two assessments is that while CPA looked back at the levels of performance achieved in the past, CAA looks at current performance and the capacity to improve, not just of the Council but of all of the public services making up Harrow Strategic Partnership.

CAA is made up of two elements – an organisational assessment of the Council and an area assessment looking at the capacity of the Partnership. The latter has been approached through the development of a self evaluation designed to comment on the three main questions posed by CAA, namely:

- How well do the priorities for the area reflect the needs and aspirations of local people;
- How well are the priorities being delivered; and
- What is capacity for improvement in the future?

As well as these issues, CAA also looks at four cross cutting themes: value for money; sustainability; equalities and support for vulnerable people.

A draft of the self evaluation has been prepared and is with the CAA lead for comment. At the same time, an improvement programme is being developed to address those issues that the self evaluation has highlighted as areas where progress could and should be made.

Finance and value for money

Two years ago the council's financial capacity was weak; it had minimal reserves, the worst outer London value for money (VfM) scores and needed to find savings of £9m from the committed budget for 2006/2007. Now, the council's financial capacity is good, it has delivered £42m efficiency savings, kept council tax below 3%, greatly strengthened the balance sheet, and increased reserves to £5.25m – a four fold increase..

Each year, the Audit Commission looks at the current year's budget totals for individual services and plots them against the performance for the previous year in order to give information on a timely basis. Although the planned expenditure does not exactly equate to the level of performance achieved, the trend data this analysis provides is useful in describing the direction of travel. In 2008/09, Harrow increased the percentage of service/performance outcomes ranked in the top quartile from 22% in 2007/08 to 26% and the number in the second quartile from 20% to 25%. At the same time, the percentage in the bottom quartile fell from 14% to 11%.

Despite these good statistics, only 24% of the public reported in the Place Survey that they agreed or strongly agreed the Council provided value for money compared with the Outer London average of 30%. There is still therefore more to do to translate Harrow's improving position into resident perception and satisfaction.

Deliver Cleaner and Safer Streets

Why this is a priority

- The cleanliness of streets is fundamental to customer satisfaction and the Council's reputation
- Despite being a low crime borough, crime is still the fourth most frequently mentioned concern of local residents
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Overview of cleanliness

Cleaning the streets is the Council function that is experienced by the greatest proportion of residents. The standard to which this function is performed is often considered to be the hallmark of the quality of a local authority.

The standard of street cleaning in Harrow has varied over the last few years. The financial problems facing the Council in 2006/07 and 2007/08 required large savings to be found from all services including street cleaning. However, in 2008/09, the Council has been able to invest in its priorities and especially in street cleaning where more than £1.2m of additional resources were made available. Further investment has been made in 2009/10.

The Residents' Panel was asked their opinion of this priority in September 2008 and 91% agreed that it was an appropriate and important issue for the Council to focus on.

Performance and Public Satisfaction

Cleaner and safer streets are amongst residents' highest priorities. Two years ago, street cleanliness was amongst the worst in London. To improve this, the council introduced new street sweeping cycles and 30 extra street sweepers in the main shopping areas and stations. A new high-impact Envirocrime team now tackles the borough's worst areas by reducing fly-tipping, graffiti and litter. Three Harrow parks have won the highly coveted national 'Green Flag' awards.

The Place Survey which measures public satisfaction with Council services shows that clean streets remain the service which the public have identified as the third most in need of improvement. 62% of the public believe that local public services are working a great deal or to some extent to make the area cleaner and greener compared to the Outer London average of 66% and 46% are satisfied or very satisfied with the Council's performance in keeping public areas free from litter and refuse, compared with the Outer London average of 66%.

Overview of Safety

Since 2005, Harrow residents' perceptions regarding crime and community safety have seen a substantial shift. Fear of crime is down and the proportions who say they live in a "high crime" area have fallen. This shift largely took place between 2005 and 2007 and these improving results have largely been maintained, although fear of crime has crept up slightly again in 2008. The Place Survey in late 2008 showed that crime levels had fallen to the fourth issue residents felt was in need of improvement from the highest issue in 2005.

The council, in partnership with its key partners, held 7 of 'Weeks of Action' in 2008/09. Each campaign involved a wide range of Council staff, the Police and other agencies with a focus on improving cleanliness and visibility of policing. Follow-up actions have also been programmed to ensure the improvements are sustained. A new police contingent for the town centre funded jointly by the Council and Harrow Police, providing six Constables, a Sergeant and two Police and Community Support Officers and helping to address residents concerns, has been operating successfully throughout the year.

The recession is likely to have an impact on acquisitive crime and domestic violence. The work of the cross partnership Recession Busting Group and the research commissioned by Harrow Chief Executives into the implications of the downturn for Harrow will help to direct the choice of future priorities.

Harrow has one of the lowest youth crime rates in London due to a successful range of multi-agency strategies and high level engagement of local young people. Young Black boys are over represented in the criminal justice system, requiring targeted youth support and prevention and intervention levels.

Performance and public satisfaction

Thanks to the work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), Harrow is now one of the safest boroughs in London contributing only 2% to London's overall crime rate and residents' fear of crime is also down, now only 44% rate crime in their top five priorities (down from 53%). Improving this position is a key priority, so together with the police the council has: established a new police team in the town centre; implemented an Antisocial Behaviour Strategy which has reduced first time offending and reoffending rates; launched a Business Against Crime initiative that reduced assaults by 20% and robberies by 46% and supported council staff to train to become PCSOs in Harrow, the first borough to do so. The innovative multi-agency 'Weeks of Action' campaigns bring together local organisations to carry out a range of activities from removing graffiti and fly tipping to collecting rent arrears. They have already made a major impact on reducing crime and improving residents' quality of life in some of the most deprived areas of Harrow.

The Place Survey asked whether respondents agree that local public services are working to make the area safer. The Harrow outcome was that 68% agreed or strongly agreed, which was 1 percentage point higher than the Outer London average. By contrast, 40% of Harrow residents said that they felt safe or very safe outside after dark compared to the Outer London average of 42% and 82% said that they felt safe or very safe outside during the day compared to the outer London average of 84%. These differences are within the margin of error of the Place Survey.

The Place Survey also asked about a range of anti-social behavior issues. In these questions, residents were asked whether they felt the issues named were big or fairly big problems and responded as follows:

Noisy neighbours or parties	Harrow 24%	Outer London average 18%
Teenagers hanging about	Harrow 45%	Outer London average 49%
Rubbish and litter lying around	Harrow 51%	Outer London average 47%
Vandalism and graffiti	Harrow 39%	Outer London average 41%
Drunken or rowdy behavior	Harrow 33%	Outer London average 36%
Abandoned or burnt out cars	Harrow 12%	Outer London average 14%

Residents were also asked whether the police and other public services asked for their views about anti social behavior issues: 28% of Harrow residents agree or strongly agreed that they did, compared with the Outer London average of 29%. 29% of Harrow residents and an average of 29% of people living in Outer London agreed that the Police and local public services were successful in dealing with anti-social behavior.

Improving support for vulnerable people

Why this is a priority.

- In the latest inspection, adult services was rated as 1 star with promising prospects, the first improvement in six years
- The Transformation Programme in adult social care remains work in progress
- Adult Services needs to remain a priority in order for the borough to sustain it's focus on improvement
- Quality of life and safety of vulnerable people is the responsibility of the whole Council. Sustaining this priority ensures all Council departments focus on this area.

Overview

The Primary Care Trust and the Council published the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) in November 2008. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the needs of children and adults across Harrow. The overview set out below is largely based on that contemporary and authoritative picture of need in Harrow. The JSNA was, however, produced before the scale of the recession was apparent and does not adequately reflect the increasing vulnerability in the Borough due to its impact. This needs to be a driver in the development of service plans for 2010/11.

The local multi-agency intelligence data, used to inform our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, tells of a changing Harrow. It identifies areas of need, and a list of vulnerable people in the area that the council and its partners have agreed should be targeted for additional support. The council and its partners have consulted with a wide range of stakeholders, including children, young people, service users and their families in developing joint commissioning strategies and children and young people's plan and have received positive feedback from inspectors on the way forward.

Overall, residents of Harrow enjoy a comparatively high level of income, standard of living, housing, skill base, educational achievement, employment, satisfaction with their area, and health. The challenge for Harrow remains to maintain and improve on this, especially in certain areas that are of national concern, e.g. environment and healthy lifestyles.

Data for Harrow suggests that there is a net inward migration to the borough of adults and younger people from different ethnic groups, whereas the outward migration consists mainly of older white people. There has also been a disproportionately high increase in the number of older people and adults living alone. These factors can further magnify isolation and impact on health and well-being.

For children's services, there is concern about increasing need as a result of inward migration due to war, conflict and economic deprivation. This has an impact on schools and their pastoral care capacity and on social need in general. There are sections of the community, including the Somali, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Polish communities with additional needs. As Harrow is perceived to be an affluent borough, the realities of the need are not met by associated funding as in other boroughs with high levels of need. Overall the level of affluence has meant that Harrow has been able to attract only relatively small amounts of funding to meet the needs of residents who are in pockets of deprivation, e.g. housing and support for vulnerable people, job search support, and development of the voluntary sector.

Not everyone shares in Harrow's success and there are stark social and health inequalities. For example, a young person living on a Council estate in Roxbourne, rather than in Hatch End, is more likely to be living in a household with a single parent, or with both parents out of employment. They are more likely to be on free school meals, achieve poorer GCSE results, practice unsafe sex, become pregnant while still a teenager, and remain unemployed. They are more likely to be in contact with people who use drugs and are involved in crime.

They are also more likely to think that these experiences are a norm, and less likely to have role models that encourage them to break out of this cycle. These risk factors may be exacerbated if the young person is also from the BME community. Some of Harrow's Black Minority Ethnic (BME) groups, including refugees and asylum-seekers and new migrants, are also more likely to be living in areas of deprivation. There are specific ethnic groups with specific needs. For example, it has been identified that white working class boys are more likely to be unemployed, fail to achieve, and to get involved in crime, than the general child population. Black boys are more likely to get involved in the Criminal Justice System.

Vulnerable groups like those with disabilities and mental health problems are also generally more likely to experience income and housing deprivation.

The most distinctive feature of Harrow is its ethnic and religious diversity. This is increasing, and, in particular, it seems likely that there will be a significant increase in the proportion of people of Tamil, Somali and Pakistani origin. People of Indian origin in particular are part of the higher socio-economic group in Harrow and are largely second or third generation migrants, a sizeable majority of whom originate from the Gujarat region of India. Young people from this community are under-represented in statistics on crime and children in need. They tend to perform well in schools.

Poorer health is experienced by Indian Asians aged over 50, particularly women and there is evidence of earlier onset of symptoms of ageing. Low representation of Asian people in mental health services may also be an indication of unmet need or of reliance upon alternative coping strategies. A significant rise in the proportion of Asian older people will pose challenges in terms of providing culturally appropriate services, and may also mean a larger number of Asian carers, who may have different support needs.

The Black Caribbean and Black Other population in Harrow is also an upwardly mobile group, being more economically active and having more top-level qualifications than average for their ethnic groups in London. Black adults, particularly Black Africans, are

also more likely than white and some other ethnic groups to be continuing their education. Young black people are also more likely to remain in education, employment and training after GCSEs, compared to white counterparts. However black people are also over-represented in Harrow's unemployment figures. Young black people are also more likely than white groups to be unemployed, children in need or involved in crime. Increasing numbers of young black people are likely to be arrested for drug-related offences though not in treatment, indicating a need to engage earlier with them. Black people in Harrow are also over-represented in mental health services, in line with national trends. Refugees, asylum-seekers, and a potentially increasing number of new migrants, pose challenges in meeting needs for education, training, housing, employment and culturally sensitive services although these groups make up a small percentage of the overall Harrow population.

Black and minority groups have specific health issues e.g. higher prevalence of certain diseases and health conditions, access to services, and maintenance of healthy lifestyles. However, cultural practices that may be conducive to good health also need to be reinforced, e.g. aspects of diet, or lesser prevalence of smoking or drinking.

There are differences in family structures amongst different ethnic groups. For example, in the 2001 Census, black groups had the highest proportion of lone parent households, Asian or Other groups had the highest proportion of married couple households, and White groups had the highest proportion of one person households and one person pensioner households, and two person pensioner households. Changing ethnic structure of the population may have an impact on family structures.

Ethnic diversity of the borough, as well as arrival of new communities, poses new challenges for services. The challenge also remains to get a fit for purpose balance between integrated and separate services for different communities.

13.6% of Harrow's population consists of people over the age of 65, compared to the London average of 11%. Compared to 2008, in 2016, estimates suggest there will be 3100 more people over the age of 65, including 500 more people aged between 80-84, and 500 more people aged 85+. There will also be an increasing number of older people living alone; living without their own transport; living with complex needs, dementia or learning difficulties; or caring for someone whilst in poor health themselves. Detailed projections for the number of older people needing different health and social care services indicate that there will be an increasing demand for health and social care services.

A gap in the need for and provision of these services in an appropriate and timely manner can hasten the move to residential care, which may not be appropriate or desired, and will be more expensive. At the same time there is a need to develop more appropriate residential provision. The fact that a significant number of Harrow's older people are owner-occupiers and live in the least deprived wards suggests that Harrow may have a significant number of older people who may be funding their own care as self-funders. A Commission of Social Care Inspection (CSCI) report from 2006 suggests that nationally self-funders are underserved, and have specific needs for advice, support, monitoring, and specialist provision, which need to be explored.

On most health indicators, Harrow is in line with, or doing better than, national and London averages. However, there are national concerns over certain health trends as well as inequalities within the borough on the basis of ward, ethnicity and socio-economic status.

Under-representation of Asian groups in mental health services may be indicative of a hidden need and needs to be explored. Although the proportion of black people is smaller in Harrow than elsewhere in London, there is the same national concern about over-representation in mental health services, and the differential in the type of support provided to different groups. Health needs of those with disabilities and mental health issues also need a focus.

There is a need to work in innovative ways to meet the challenge of budget constraints, offer choice and control to residents in housing, health, and social care services. This will include greater support for carers and self-funders; engagement with service users and carers; working in partnership with the voluntary and community sector; and building upon systems to detect, prevent and investigate abuse. There is also a need to increase satisfaction with council services.

The impact of new migration into the borough of various ethnic groups cannot be estimated, but it can be anticipated that there will be a growing need, increasing deprivation and need to capacity plan.

The Residents' Panel was asked its opinion of this priority in September 2008 and 80% agreed that it was an appropriate and important issue for the Council to focus on.

Performance and Satisfaction

Within tight financial restrictions, the Council and the Partnership have prioritised the need to continue to improve support for vulnerable people. The definition of vulnerability has been extended from the traditional meaning of social care recipients to include victims of crime, people who need assistance to fulfil their potential and socially excluded people.

In relation to social care, the Council is a leader in the provision of individual budgets with In Control reporting 20% of all individual budgets in place in London at December 2008 being in Harrow. There are extensive support arrangements in place for users who opt for an individual budget, utilising skills from within the Council and the voluntary and community sector.

The Council's recent record on adoptions is outstanding and is the product of a fruitful partnership with Coram Family Services. The value of joint commissioning has been explicitly recognised with the PCT transferring significant funds for the provision of services for Learning Disability services to the Council to achieve better value and better services. Joint commissioning has also become a standard approach for many services for children and young people, other services for adult social care users and in areas such as drug treatment.

The Council's education service has identified some categories of pupils as being in need of additional support to enable their potential to be fulfilled and have provided, for

example, an attainment support project for Key Stage 4 Black and Minority Ethnic pupils. There has been a multi strand approach to addressing exclusions from school using statutory and voluntary sector resources to provide a range of approaches from which to select the most likely to succeed with each individual pupil at risk of exclusion.

An outcome of the Partnership-supported Overview and Scrutiny review “Delivering a Strengthened Voluntary and Community Sector” is the development of a Third Sector Strategy for the Borough. A partnership working group is overseeing the preparation of this strategy which is co-sponsored by the Council and the Voluntary and Community Sector. The Strategy will set a framework for better commissioning of the Third Sector to support all areas of public services but, most notably, services for vulnerable people.

The number of people coming within the broader definition of vulnerability is expected to rise over the coming years not least as a result of the recession. The challenge for the Partnership is to find innovative ways of addressing their needs given the inevitable financial restrictions.

Other achievements include the opening of Grange, Pinner Wood and Kenmore Children’s Centres, the roll out of the Miss DorothyDotCom programme giving access to this anti-bullying resource to all primary schools, providing 2,500 breaks for carers of adults and children, establishing the Silverdale Contact Centre giving a residential setting for meetings between children looked after and their parents, improving the help to live at home for adults with physical disabilities and those with learning disabilities to excellent in the last quarter of 2008/09.

Social care activity is not given much priority in general satisfaction surveys but the Place Survey revealed that 41% of Harrow residents believed that older people are given the information and support they need to continue to live in their own homes for as long as possible compared with 39% which was the Outer London average.

A number of other surveys have been undertaken with social care users and the main items of interest are listed below.

Adults with learning disabilities

Of 251 face to face interviews carried out; 79% think their daytime activities are good, 80% feel safe in their day to day lives; 74% had received a care review, 84% said their health was discussed as part of the review, 85% said they are treated well when using services from the council, 62% said help and support from the council makes their lives better.

Carers

Of 452 postal questionnaires completed; 70% felt their last carer’s assessment covered all aspects of their caring role; 80% felt they know a fair amount about what to do to improve their health; 70% felt the council had treated them with respect and consideration, 73% were satisfied with services they receive from the council. For those carers who have gone beyond the assessment phase and have received a service the satisfaction levels are higher.

Adults in residential and nursing homes

Of 42 interviews conducted, 58% said the council had done all it could to help them stay at home rather than move into residential care; 90% said staff treat them with dignity and respect; 74% agreed that staff listened to what they say.

Homecare outcomes are strong as evidenced in the recent National Home Care Survey

88.1% of respondents were satisfied overall with the homecare service they received. This was an excellent result and compares strongly with Harrow's nearest neighbours

Meals on Wheels

Three hundred Meals on Wheels clients were asked to complete a survey questionnaire anonymously and to return it with the driver. A total of 204 were returned. The results are shown below

98% of respondents expressed overall satisfaction with the Meals on Wheels service; 100% of respondents stated that they received their meals within the allotted time between 11.00am and 1.30pm; when asked about the quality and presentation of the food, 66% thought that it was excellent or good; 97% of respondents think that the service is reliable and 95% of respondents said that the Meals on Wheels drivers are helpful

Older people, physical disability and sensory services

Results from the recent internal survey of clients, across the older people, physical disability and sensory service categories, gave the following results:

Over 90% of respondents rated their assessment highly - being given enough time, being listened to and feeling part of the decision making process; the vast majority of clients reported that they were treated respectfully by those providing care and that their personal care and health needs were being met; most believed they had more control over their lives as a result of the intervention by social services and were able to do more of the things that mattered to them and 78% of clients were, overall, happy with the care package they had received

Residential & Nursing Care Clients

The recent Ipsos MORI survey carried out for the council found that all of the people interviewed believed that staff helped to keep them safe, and 80% were not concerned about their personal safety within the home. 90% of people interviewed felt that they were treated with dignity and respect and that their privacy was respected, and 85% felt staff were sensitive to their particular needs.

Independent Homecare survey undertaken 6 monthly by Age Concern.

86% of respondents said service improved or not changed; and 99% said that their cultural, religious and dietary needs were being met.

Building stronger communities

Why this is a priority

- The percentage of people who think that their local neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together has declined for the fourth year in succession.
- We need to provide services that meet the differing needs of our community
- Tension is created where people do not feel that they are part of the 'system' and do not feel that they have the opportunity to express their views, be heard or be able to influence

Overview

Attention in performance terms on community cohesion has focused on progress against the Local Area Agreement indicator measuring the percentage of people who say that people from different backgrounds get on well together in the area. Over the three years of the LAA (2006-2009) performance against this indicator has declined from an initial baseline of 55% to a 2008 figure of 48%. To some extent, however, this gives a misleading picture as the percentage disagreeing that people from different backgrounds get on well together has remained largely stable while there has been an increase in the numbers saying that they don't know.

The Place Survey which was introduced in 2008 asks a slightly different question which does not give a 'don't know' option. The Harrow score in the first Place Survey was 76%, one percentage point higher than the Outer London average.

The tolerance of different faiths and ethnic groups in Harrow is a real strength. The Council does not take this for granted, and continues to work hard to build stronger communities where people get along with one another. The 'Under One Sky' festival, part of a year long calendar of community events, brings together 13,000 residents from different backgrounds. The Council works closely with the local community to build resilience to violent extremism, for example Harrow Central Mosque accommodates council community officers so they are at the heart of the community, and the Somali Interagency Task Force has delivered cultural awareness training to various council activities. A resident's welcome leaflet has been launched and will be made available to all new arrivals to the borough this year.

Harrow's diversity in terms of ethnicity, culture and religion makes community cohesion a high priority. A key to improving cohesion is reducing inequality in income, employment, education and the skills base, housing conditions and physical environment. Economic deprivation indicates a need to work with local employers, maintain business occupancy, attract new business, work with training providers, and offer more job-related support, as well as developing more flexible models of working and meeting family responsibility.

Another key aspect of community cohesion is reducing crime and fear of crime, particularly racial crime, involvement of young people in crime, and anti-social behaviour. There is also a need for safety services to engage with specific community groups. Promotion of healthy lifestyles (e.g. awareness of sexual health, drugs and alcohol, and physical activity) also contributes to reducing inequality and crime.

Opportunities to participate in the society generally and influence it positively can also increase community cohesion. Engagement with the voluntary and community sector is crucial in promoting healthy lifestyles, civic participation, equality and safety, and thus achieving community cohesion.

The Residents' Panel was asked their opinion of this priority in September 2008 and 57% agreed that it was an appropriate and important issue for the Council to focus on. This priority gained significantly less support than the first two. This is thought to be because community cohesion is already strong in Harrow and the impact of the factors that detract from cohesion is present mostly in small pockets of deprivation. For these reasons, the need to address cohesion might not be as widely perceived as the need to provide cleaner streets or support vulnerable people.

Performance and satisfaction

The Passport to Culture Scheme promotes the many cultural opportunities available to all ages across the borough. Key developments during the year include the building of the first voluntary aided Hindu school in the UK; the re-opening of Gayton Central Library, and the new Harrow Central Mosque

The Council secured £400,000 ESF funding to work with partners to encourage residents in five targeted local areas back into work (the XCITE project). £400,000 City Pathfinders funding has also been secured to deliver a project to increase the number of ESOL training courses available across the borough.

The Council has invested another £1m of LSC capital funds to build and open a new Adult Learning Centre on the grounds of a local primary school. The new centre is being run in partnership with a local FE college, and targets residents from one of the most deprived Wards.

The Women's e-safety project promoting internet safety awareness amongst Muslim women won 'Best Women's project' in a recent GOL PVE awards scheme. This generated a lot of local and national media interest, as well as from other Councils interested in replicating the council's good practice. Harrow has also extended the number of community venues available to encourage people to report Hate Crime. Since the launch of the additional 12 sites, the number of reported incidences has increased.

The Council's one 4 one employee volunteering scheme has helped make good progress against the LAA target for increasing volunteering in the Borough. The final measure will not be available until December 2009 but current indications are that the stretch target will be reached. Not only does volunteering provide an expression of community pride and add to the fabric of Harrow as a community rather than just a place, it also helps people reduce social isolation, acquire new skills and, if they want to, to find employment.

In addition to the programmes targeted specifically on community cohesion, many of the Council's other services and programmes contribute to developing and enhancing community cohesion such as the special planning for the future of Harrow via the Local Development Framework. The Framework has as one of its objectives the creation of an environment which encourages and supports community activities which, in turn, promote cohesion. Harrow is a borough full of diversity, with a great mix of people and places. The Council wants to ensure future developments preserve the heritage of the borough whilst creating a Harrow fit for 2025.