

Dear Colleague,

HAVE YOUR SAY ON HOW VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS IN HARROW ARE FUNDED

Harrow Council is undertaking a Strategic Review of the way that it provides funding support to the voluntary sector. This aims to establish a framework to ensure that the Council's grant processes and policies are as simple, efficient, transparent and fair as possible.

A draft strategic framework has been developed, and Harrow Council has conducted an initial consultation with the umbrella organisations who represent the sector. The Council is now rolling out this consultation to invite the voluntary and community groups in the Borough to have an opportunity to comment on the proposals. This is your opportunity to have your say on how your organisation is funded.

Accompanying this letter you will find two documents;

- a) the 'Consultation Strategy Document' – this explains the proposals
- b) the 'Consultation Response Form' – where you can express your views on the proposals.

Harrow Council is handling the mailing of these materials, but it has asked MORI – the independent research company – to process and analyse the results. This means that while the Council will know which organisations have responded to the survey, the individual answers you give will remain strictly confidential to MORI.

The results of this survey will feed directly into the Council's work to improve the way voluntary groups are funded in Harrow, so we would be very grateful if you could spare a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it to MORI in the FREEPOST envelope enclosed by **Friday 25th June 2004.**

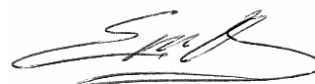
If you have problems reading or understanding this questionnaire, or if you have any other queries, please call David Ward at Harrow Council on 020 8424 1064, or Joanna Slaymaker or Emma Holloway at MORI on 020 7347 3000.

Thank you very much for sparing the time to complete the questionnaire. Your views will be vital in helping Harrow to plan for the future

Yours sincerely,



David Ward
Business Connections
Harrow Council



Emma Holloway
Senior Research Executive
MORI Social Research Institute

Harrow Council Strategic Review of Support to Voluntary Organisations: Consultation Strategy Document

Harrow Council is undertaking a Strategic Review of the way it provides funding support to the voluntary sector and needs your help in understanding the views of the organisations in the Borough.

This strategy document sets out the background and aims of this Review, as well as detailing the proposals where Harrow Council would like your feedback, as a representative of a voluntary organisation in Harrow. Your views on these proposals are very important, so we would be very grateful if you can spare the time to consider these carefully before completing the Consultation Response Form (which should also be in your pack).

Reasons for the Strategic Review:

- Funding patterns and administrative structures have remained unchanged for many years
- New and emerging needs
- Priorities needed re-evaluating, in line with the council's Community Strategy

Aims of the Review

To establish a strategic framework for future funding that:

- Encompasses a council-wide approach to supporting the voluntary sector
- Simplifies administrative processes and establishes common criteria for different types of support
- Has maximum impact and represents best value
- Delivers Harrow Council's policy and grants priorities

Principles underpinning the Review

- The need to improve partnership working
- A desire to improve transparency and clarity about funding decisions
- A commitment to improving the capacity and accountability of voluntary organisations in Harrow.

Introduction

There has been no strategic review of the way in which the Council supports voluntary organisations across the Borough for a number of years. As well as the funds allocated to organisations via the Grants Panel, the Council provides support to voluntary organisations from a number of sources, including;

- Concessionary lettings
- Payments direct from departmental budgets
- Free / discounted use of premises
- Discretionary rate relief

The total support provided in 2003/04 was £4.3m. This included £1m allocated via the Grants Panel of which 97% was provided to previously funded organisations and 3% was given to new applicants. Therefore it is clear that the bulk of funding is provided on a historical basis, which diminishes the Council's capacity to fund new and emerging needs.

Issues identified through the Strategic Review

The following sections of this document raise issues identified through the Strategic Review and raise questions about the proposals made. The information about each proposal is presented, followed by the corresponding question/s which are asked about this proposal. You should read each section carefully and then record your answers in the corresponding section of the Consultation Response Form.

Q1 and 2: Common Grants Criteria

To encompass a Council-wide approach to supporting the voluntary sector, a consistent strategic approach is essential.

The Council's Community Strategy sets out the Council's commitments to strengthening Harrow's community. Clearly therefore, in considering a consistent approach to supporting community organisations, there is a need to ensure that the priorities of the strategy are embedded in the grants processes.

Therefore the following criteria, which are based on the community strategy priorities, are proposed as an over-arching framework for supporting voluntary organisations in Harrow. Proposals must be consistent with one or more of the headings within the Council's Community Strategy: -

- **Empowering Local Communities** - To promote the objectives of community cohesion, equality of access to services and life opportunities for all, enhancing the quality of life of older people, working with the voluntary and community sector as equal partners and celebrating the diversity of the communities of Harrow.
- **Safer Harrow** - To promote and increase the safety of the whole community by working in partnership to reduce crime, disorder and the fear of crime; to reduce the incidence of personal, home, fire and road accidents within Harrow.
- **Regenerating Harrow** - To create a more vibrant and sustainable community with a diversity of employment, thriving businesses, a broad range of good quality and affordable homes and a dynamic town centre.
- **Greener Harrow** - To create a cleaner, greener, sustainable and more attractive Harrow in which to live, work and visit.
- **Children and Young People** - To ensure that the life chances of children and young people are enhanced and supported by the provision of universal and targeted services. To ensure that services are provided for children, young people and their families at appropriate times in their development and transition in an accessible, transparent and seamless fashion across all agencies. To ensure that every child has the chance to fulfil his or her potential by reducing levels of educational failure, ill health, substance misuse, teenage pregnancy, abuse and neglect, crime and anti-social behaviour.
- **Learning for All** - To create a borough where everybody has the opportunity to fulfil their potential through improved standards of education and wider participation in lifelong learning.
- **Making ICT Work** - To develop the availability and use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) across Harrow to enable better and faster access to information and services for the residents of Harrow and facilitate "joined up" working between all partner organisations.
- **Healthy Harrow** - To improve the health of local people by tackling health inequalities and enhancing health and social care services in Harrow.

One or more of the above criteria could be given additional weighting in a particular year so that there was a theme to the support provided.

Consultation Questions:

Please now answer questions 1 and 2 in your Consultation Review Response form

Q3, 4 and 5: Conditions of Funding

It is proposed that in future applicants should satisfy the following conditions:

- The applicant must be a voluntary group based in Harrow, with 80% of its members/users from Harrow.
- The organisation must be properly constituted, have a management committee and a bank account in the name of the organisation.
- The organisation must not promote or oppose any political party.
- The activities the organisation provides must not be of a religious nature.
- The organisation must not be profit making.
- The organisation must demonstrate commitment to the Council's equal opportunities policy.
- The organisation must set out in its application any existing funding provided.
- For community premises applications – the organisation must have no accommodation of their own

and the period of use is limited to a maximum of 3 years.

- The organisation must accept all financial transactions from the Council electronically.
- The organisation must agree to provide a report on the use of the grant, and audited accounts (where audited accounts are not available, management accounts and copy bank statements as appropriate).
- Organisations in receipt of funding in excess of £1,000 per annum, must display the Council logo on their stationery acknowledging they are “supported by Harrow Council”.

Consultation Question:

Please now answer question 3 in your Consultation Review Response form

Further it is suggested that particular emphasis be placed on the following types of organisation and activity, those that:

- Have been awarded the Community Legal Services quality mark, or any other recognised quality assurance award.
- Are proposing projects dealing with consumer advice, debt counselling, immigration, housing, and mental health.
- Are serving black and minority ethnic communities, refugees and asylum seekers and address domestic violence issues.
- Demonstrate that they will use the Council’s grant to attract funding from other sources.

Consultation Question:

Please now answer question 4 in your Consultation Review Response form

It is recommended that the criteria and conditions will apply to the central grants and SLA's, community premises and community lettings, but not the departmental arrangements or discretionary rate relief. The latter are necessarily based on separately identified needs and criteria.

In respect of the community premises, you are asked to consider whether the existing administration process is still relevant or whether the cost of running the premises should be allocated on a grants basis, for voluntary organisations to submit bids to purchase space.

Consultation Question:

Please now answer question 5 in your Consultation Review Response form

Q6, 7 and 8: Grants vs SLA's and Funding Duration

Under the present support given by the Grants Panel, there is no clear rationale over why some organisations are given SLA funding as opposed to a grant.

It is therefore advisable that a threshold be established for SLA funding. Grants below this threshold of, say £10,000, could be subject to a simple funding letter setting out the purpose of funding and reporting requirements.

New SLAs will include details of any conditions attached to the funding, objectives and performance measures, clear reporting requirements linked to staged payments, and "clawback" arrangements, to reduce the financial risks to the Council.

You are also asked to consider the merits of 3 year funding for grants and / or grants-based SLA's, which would offer organisations more financial security, enable them to plan services on a longer term basis and assist them in their attempts to secure funding from other sources. In addition a three-year funding cycle would fit well with the Council's medium term budget strategy.

Consultation Questions:

Please now answer questions 6, 7 and 8 in your Consultation Review Response form

Q9: The Balance of Funding

Another area for consideration is the balance of funding. It is recommended that the application form and monitoring requirements are amended to collect information on :-

- Location of activity
- Type of activity
- Equality issues (for the organisation itself and its service users).

This will enable the Council to compile data and assess the balance of funding over a period of time across geographical areas / activities / equalities groups. It will also enable comparison with the vitality profile.

Consultation Question:

Please now answer question 9 in your Consultation Review Response form

Q10: Transitional Funding

Depending upon the agreed criteria for future support, it would be advisable to establish transitional arrangements to enable historically funded groups, that may no longer qualify for funding, to make other arrangements. Transitional funds would also provide start-up grants for emerging organisations not yet meeting the new criteria.

Consultation Question:

Please now answer question 10 in your Consultation Review Response form

Thank you for taking part in this consultation. Please send your completed Consultation Response Form back to MORI in the enclosed reply paid envelope by **Friday 25th June**.



JN22521/EVH

<Reference here>

**Strategic Review of Support to Voluntary Organisations:
Consultation Response Form**

Please read the Consultation Strategy document enclosed in this pack carefully. When you have read the Strategy document you should then complete this Consultation Response Form. Harrow Council will know which organisations have responded to the survey, but they will not know the views of individual groups; the individual answers you give will remain strictly confidential to MORI.

This form should be returned to MORI in the freepost envelope provided by **Friday 25th June 2004**. The return address for this document should you not have a reply paid envelope enclosed is: MORI Data Services, 77-81 Borough Road, London, SE1 1ZY

If you have problems reading or understanding this questionnaire, or if you have any other queries, please call David Ward at Harrow Council on 020 8424 1064, or Joanna Slaymaker or Emma Holloway at MORI on 020 7347 3000.

Thank you very much for sparing the time to complete the questionnaire. Your views will be vital in helping Harrow Council to understand the views and needs of the organisations which support the residents of Harrow.

Name of Organisation:

Name of person completing form:

Telephone number:

Email address:

Q1 and 2: Common Grants Criteria

Q1. a) **To what extent do you support or oppose the proposed criteria for allocating funding?**
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Strongly support	Tend to support	Neither/nor	Tend to oppose	Strongly oppose	No opinion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q1. B) PLEASE WRITE IN THE SPACE BELOW WHY YOU SUPPORT/OPPOSE THIS.

Q2. a) **And do you support or oppose the idea that one or more of the criteria could be given additional weighting in a particular year so that there is an annual theme to funding?**
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Strongly support	Tend to support	Neither/nor	Tend to oppose	Strongly oppose	No opinion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q2. B) PLEASE WRITE IN THE SPACE BELOW WHY YOU SUPPORT/OPPOSE THIS.

Q3, 4 and 5: Conditions of Funding

Q3. a) **It is proposed that in future, those applying for funding will have to satisfy certain conditions. To what extent do you support or oppose the proposed conditions for applicants?**

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Strongly support

Tend to support

Neither/nor

Tend to oppose

Strongly oppose

No opinion

Q.3 b) PLEASE WRITE IN THE SPACE BELOW WHY YOU SUPPORT/OPOSE THIS.

Q4. a) **It is also suggested that particular emphasis be placed on certain types of organisations or type of activity. To what extent do you support or oppose this?**

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Strongly support

Tend to support

Neither/nor

Tend to oppose

Strongly oppose

No opinion

Q4. B) PLEASE WRITE IN THE SPACE BELOW WHY YOU SUPPORT/OPOSE THIS.

Q5. a) **It has been suggested that the community premises allocation system should be replaced with a grants system? To what extent do you support or oppose this?**

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Strongly support

Tend to support

Neither/nor

Tend to oppose

Strongly oppose

No opinion

Q5. B) PLEASE WRITE IN THE SPACE BELOW WHY YOU SUPPORT/OPPOSE THIS.

Q6, 7 and 8: Grants vs SLA's and Funding Duration

Q6. a) **It has been proposed that a threshold be established for SLA funding. To what extent do you support or oppose a system of small grants below £10,000, and of service level agreements for larger grants?**

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Strongly support

Tend to support

Neither/nor

Tend to oppose

Strongly oppose

No opinion

Q6. B) PLEASE WRITE IN THE SPACE BELOW WHY YOU SUPPORT/OPPOSE THIS.

Q7. a) **There is a proposal that new SLAs will include details of any conditions attached to the funding, objectives and performance measures, clear reporting requirements linked to staged payments, and “clawback” arrangements. To what extent do you support or oppose this type of information being incorporated into new SLA documents.?**

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Strongly support

Tend to support

Neither/nor

Tend to oppose

Strongly oppose

No opinion

Q7. b) PLEASE WRITE IN THE SPACE BELOW WHY YOU SUPPORT/OPPOSE THIS.

Q8. a) **There is a proposal to move to 3 year funding grants. To what extent do you support or oppose this suggestion?**

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Strongly support

Tend to support

Neither/nor

Tend to oppose

Strongly oppose

No opinion

Q8. b) PLEASE WRITE IN THE SPACE BELOW WHY YOU SUPPORT/OPPOSE THIS.

Q9: The Balance of Funding

Q9. a) **To what extent do you support or oppose the idea that the council should monitor the distribution of funding over time?**
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Strongly support	Tend to support	Neither/nor	Tend to oppose	Strongly oppose	No opinion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q9. b) PLEASE WRITE IN THE SPACE BELOW WHY YOU SUPPORT/OPPOSE THIS.

Q10: Transitional Funding

Q10. a) **To what extent do you support or oppose the suggestion that the council should establish transitional funding arrangements?**
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Strongly support	Tend to support	Neither/nor	Tend to oppose	Strongly oppose	No opinion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q10. b) PLEASE WRITE IN THE SPACE BELOW WHY YOU SUPPORT/OPPOSE THIS.

ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION

Please complete the section below which asks about your organisation or group. This information will be used for analysis of the survey results to aid understanding of the priorities of different sections of the voluntary sector. It will only be used by MORI and by Harrow Council, and not passed onto any third party.

Q11. What is the legal status of your organisation

- Registered charity
- Company limited by guarantee
- Other (Please specify below)

Q12. What are the main aims of the group?

- Social/Leisure activities/Clubs/Groups.....
- Help/integrate ethnic minorities/asylum seekers/ refugees.....
- Getting everyone involved in the community
- Help people with diseases/disabilities.....
- Provide a safe environment for children.....
- Prevent crime/make community safer.....
- Cater for the needs of the elderly.....
- Work with young people.....
- Improve skills of disadvantaged people...
- Regeneration of the area.....
- Consumer / debt counselling.....
- Education.....
- Employment/advice on employment.....
- Other (Please specify below)

Q13. Which one of the community Strategy headings listed below best describes the work of your group? TICK 1 BOX ONLY

- Empowering Local Communities.....
- Safer Harrow
- Regenerating Harrow.....
- Greener Harrow.....
- Children and Young People.....
- Learning for all.....
- Making ICT work.....
- Healthy Harrow.....
- Other (Please specify below)

Q14. How long has your organisation been running? TICK 1 BOX ONLY

- Less than one year.....
- Between 1 to 2 years.....
- Between 3-5 years
- Between 6-10 years.....
- Between 10-15 years.....
- Over 15 years
- Don't know/can't remember.....

Q15. **How many people belong to the organisation/group? TICK 1 BOX ONLY**

- 1-15 people
- 16-30 people
- 31-40 people
- 41-50 people
- 51-100 people
- 201-300 people
- More than 300 people
- Don't know/can't remember

Q16. **Who are the main target audiences of the group/organisation?**

- Black and Minority Ethnic people
- Children
- Drug users
- Ex-offenders
- Faith groups
- Gay/lesbian people
- Learning difficulties
- Mental illness
- Older people
- People with physical disabilities
- Refugees/asylum seekers
- Tenants
- Travellers
- (The) unemployed
- Women
- Young people/teenagers
- All community residents/everyone
- Other (Please specify below)

Q17. **Whereabouts do your organisation's activities take place?**

- School
- Community centre/hall
- Leisure centre
- Library
- Somebody's house
- Pub/bar
- Church/chapel/mosque/synagogue/other place of worship
- Youth Club
- Local business/shop
- Leased premises from Harrow Council
- Arts centre
- We own our own premises
- No fixed location
- Other (please specify)
-

Q18. **Which geographical area or areas does the group serve?**

- Central Harrow
- Belmont
- South Harrow
- Rayners Lane
- Wealdstone
- North Harrow
- Pinner
- Kenton
- Edgware
- Other areas (please specify)
-

Q19. **Is the group currently in receipt of funding from any of these sources?**

- Funding from Harrow Council.....
- Funding/sponsorship from central government/department
- Funding/sponsorship from a charity/trust
- Funding/sponsorship from local business
- National Lottery funding
- Donations from members, friends etc
- New Deal for Communities
- Other (please specify)
-
- No, the group is not in receipt of funding from any source

Q20. **If you currently receive funding from Harrow Council, how much is this per annum?**

- Less than £100 per year.....
- £101-£200 per year.....
- £201-£300 per year.....
- £301-£400 per year.....
- £401-£500 per year.....
- £501-£1,000 per year
- More than £1,000 per year.....
- Don't know/can't remember

Q21. **If you do not currently receive grant funding from Harrow Council, do you receive any of the following?**

- Discretionary Rate Relief
- Concessionary Lettings
- Free accommodation at community premises
- Other (please specify)
-

Q22. **From the list below, how would you describe the Council's current arrangements for funding organisations like yours in Harrow? TICK ONE BOX FOR EACH PART OF a)TO d)**

- a) Easily accessible OR
- Inaccessible

- b) Straightforward OR
- Bureaucratic

- c) Easy to understand OR
- Difficult to understand

- d) Efficient OR
- Inefficient

Q23. **What two or three things, if any, would most improve the grants funding system in Harrow, and the way in which grants are awarded?**

- Process applications for funding more quickly
- Provide more information about the process of grants funding.....
- Make the system easier to understand
- Explain the criteria used to allocate funding more clearly.....
- Explain the basis of decisions more clearly
- Ensure that all organisations get something
- Ensure that a few organisations are properly funded.....
- None of these/nothing

Other (please specify)



MORI

