

# Communications Plan

May 2010 - April 2011



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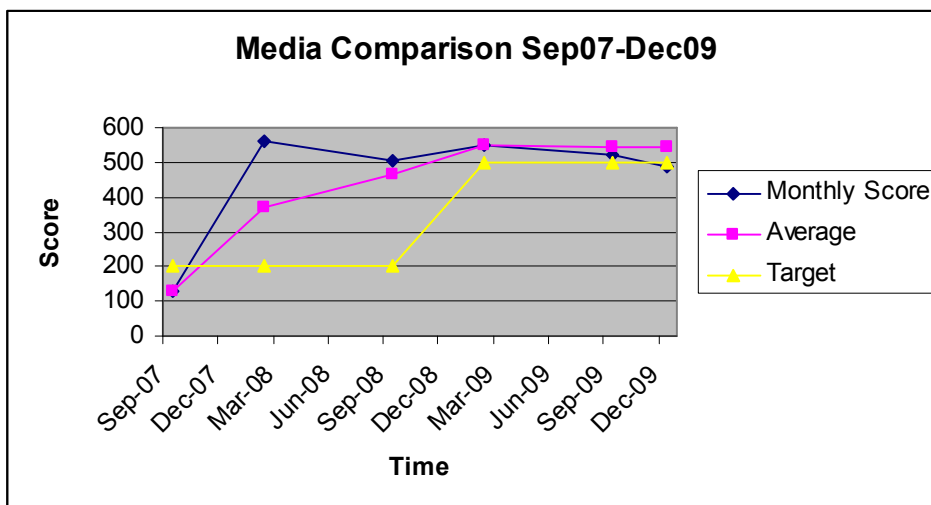
**1. Background: Progress so far**

**1.1** Harrow Council has improved its reputation over the past two and a half years. This is indicative of the increase in informed ratings for services and benefits by five points (from 52% to 57%) since August 09. This also represents a 12 point improvement since May 2007 when Westminster City Council carried out the initial review of communications in Harrow and has contributed to a rise in net resident satisfaction of 18%. This illustrates the impact of good communications and improved services working together.

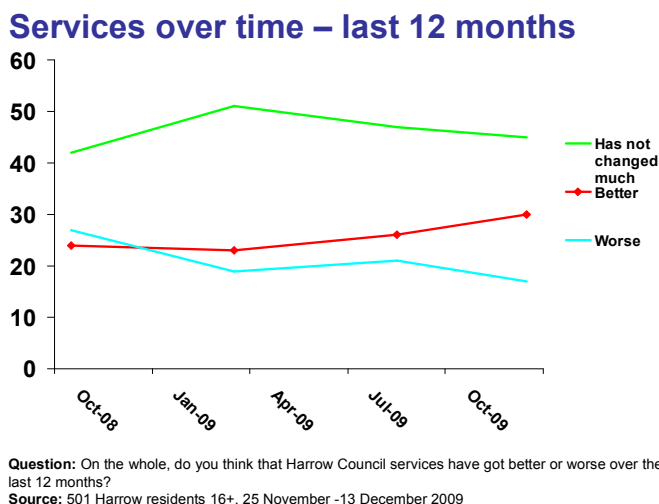
**1.2** The Corporate Communications Team have contributed to this by using the evidence gained from the Reputation Tracker surveys - conducted every four months - to focus on the key drivers of satisfaction, the vast majority of which have seen dramatic improvements:

- a. A net improvement in the perception of value for money by 7%
- b. An increase of 24% in net informed rating for services and benefits
- c. A 17 point net improvement more residents feel they can influence local decision making
- d. A 9 point net rise in people from different backgrounds who feel they get on well together
- e. Over 10% more residents have seen the council branding on refuse vehicles or street sweepers and their pushcarts.

These are the core communications measures to analyze the impact of communications. Other methods of evaluation show the volume of outputs such as media coverage, see below:



1.3 In addition, specific areas (which have been supported by service level campaigns) such as recycling, street cleaning, fly-tipping and customer services are perceived to be improving during the last year. This can be shown in the below figure:



1.4 However, there still remains a lag in overall satisfaction compared to individual services. This will be further qualitative research. In addition, there is still a significant gap between Harrow’s reputation and that of a number of comparable London boroughs, as can be seen below:

Figures taken from similar Reputation Surveys.	London Authority	Satisfaction (%)	Value for money (%)	Informed about services and benefits (%)
<b>Inner London Boroughs</b>	Wandsworth	79	72	65
	Westminster	77	53	71
	Hammersmith and Fulham	75	58	69
	Southwark	72	49	62
<b>Outer London Boroughs</b>	Sutton	67	43	58
	Newham	60	41	57
	Lewisham	60	40	55
	<b>Harrow</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>57</b>

1.5 Staff have also seen a significant improvement with the Chief Executive Michael Lockwood noting there has been a ‘step-change’ in communications. Since May 2008, the communications team has made a major contribution to the following results in the November 2009 Staff Survey:

- Increased overall satisfaction by 11%
- 21% rise in net informed level
- Information about the council vision has increased by 9%
- 12% increase in those who would advocate Harrow Council as a place to work.

## **2. Summary of Plan for 2010/11:**

- 2.1** The objective of the council's Corporate Communications Team is to continue improving the reputation of Harrow Council and the borough by increasing net satisfaction by 5%. This is done to build trust, demonstrate value, retain staff and win additional funding.
- 2.2** We will do this by building on the progress achieved in the 2009/10 plan, continuing to focus on the key drivers of satisfaction such as cleaner and safer streets as well as providing good value for money. We will also seek to accelerate this momentum by focussing on some of the key remaining challenges, improve the effectiveness of our key channels like Harrow People, website and notice boards as well as launching new ones such as an e-newsletter and targeted direct mail shots to key segments.
- 2.3** The council's corporate priorities remain the same and are well supported with: 93% in favour of delivering cleaner and safer streets, 83% to improve the support for vulnerable people and 58% build stronger communities.
- 2.4** This will be delivered through the corporate story that 'Harrow Council is 'getting better' and demonstrating this through examples such as the Local Government Chronicle short-listing that the council as one of the most improved authorities in the country.
- 2.5** We will achieve this plan by delivering integrated marketing communication campaigns that improve information about council services, help retain and recruit staff, and explain the goals of the authority to the public and government. Each campaign will consist of a linked series of media, marketing and internal communications activities designed to achieve an agreed objective. A realistic and challenging target is normally around +/-5% in terms of perception shift.
- 2.6** All work will be delivered with regard to achieving high professional standards and measurable results for the benefit of the community. It will be done in conjunction with improvements in the quality of service delivery and customer experiences forward through the Access Harrow Strategy
- 2.7** This document sets out the medium-term work that the Corporate Communications Team will deliver for the council over the 12 months from the start of May 2010 until the end of April 2011. This takes into consideration that in the weeks running up to and shortly after the local elections

on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010 there will be a period of limited activity and may require subsequent amendment whichever party is in power after the next local election. Post May we will also look at developing a comprehensive member training programme that includes intensive broadcast training as well as promoting the media protocol and involvement in the marketing campaigns.

**2.8** It represents a comprehensive work plan to offer direction to the team and support the corporate business objectives of the Council. It will be evaluated against targets that envisage an increase in key measures of at least 5% such as resident perceptions of council information and value for money.

**3. Goals: Where does Harrow want to be in May 2011?**

- 3.1** Harrow Council wants to be recognised as one of the best council in London by 2012.
- 3.2** Within this we want residents, as well as staff, to endorse the Council story and recognise that the authority is demonstrably 'getting better'. We will also seek to deliver a 'Harrow Leaders' programme to create advocates to actively promote this message within their community.
- 3.3** We will also promote the Council's improvement agenda amongst key organisations such as the Government, the Audit Commission, service inspectorates etc. In addition, we will co-ordinate a conference speaking programme to increase Harrow's reputation as an improving authority amongst peers and contact schedule to influence the new Government on issues such as fair funding - whichever party is in power after the next general election.
- 3.4** Extend access to the individual services through campaigns delivering measurable changes in behaviour and perceptions, as agreed with service departments.
- 3.5** Support the Council's work with partners by developing or adding value to joint initiatives and seeking commercial arrangements where they benefit the Council.
- 3.6** Ensure the communications team contributes to the 'Better Deal for Residents' transformation programme by itself demonstrating value for money and improving customer service.

#### **4 Measurement:**

**4.1** Success in delivering our communications goals will contribute to the Council improving its overall satisfaction rating. The overall performance will be measured through the Reputation Tracker in April/May 2011 but this will be monitored four months prior to this in Nov/Dec 2010 and before that in Aug/Sept 2010.

**4.2** The overall aim of the communications team will be to increase net satisfaction with council to 40% (+5% on December Reputation Tracker) by 2011. Communications also has an impact on a number of other performance indicators involving perception such as fear of crime.

**4.3** In the same time period, we will do this by focussing on the key drivers of satisfaction which will be measured against increasing the following three key areas:

- **Residents:**

- the net number of people who feel informed about council services and benefits (+5% on December Reputation Tracker)
- the net number of people who think we provide good value for money (+7 on December Reputation Tracker)

- **Stakeholders:**

- the number of net advocates in the community (+9% on the December Reputation Tracker)
- the net number of residents who think that they can influence decisions affecting their local area (+10% on the December Reputation Tracker)

- **Staff:**

- the net number of staff who are satisfied (+4%)
- the net number who feel informed (+7% on the November Staff Survey)

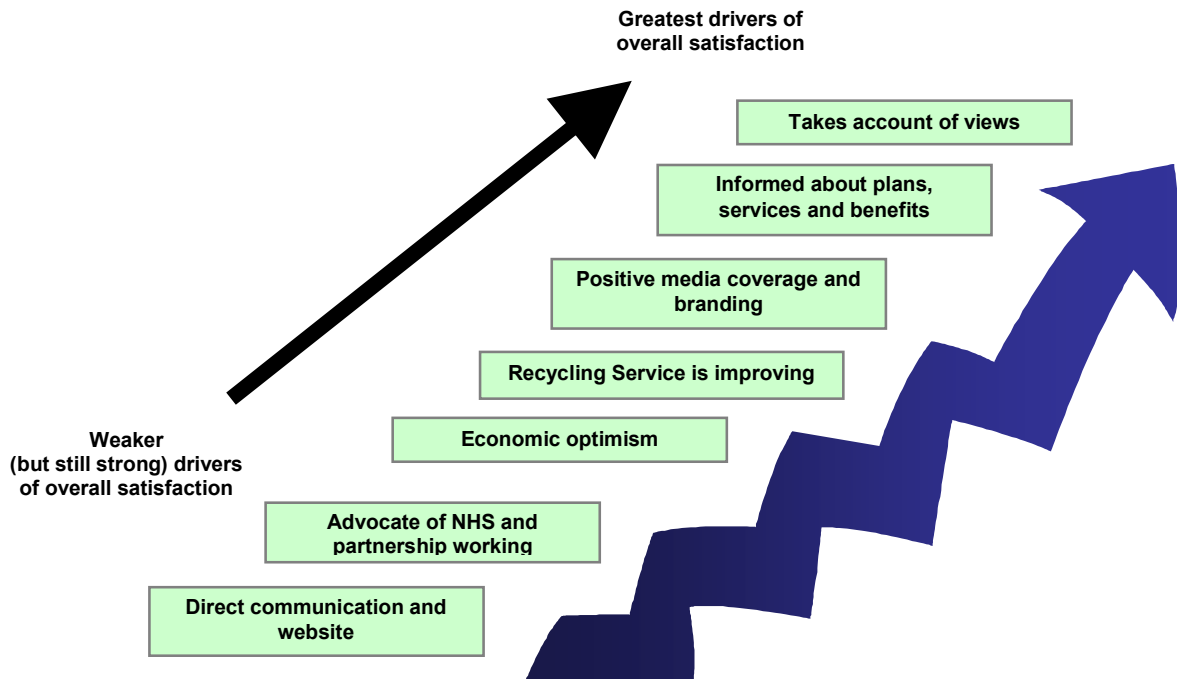
**4.4** The corporate communications team want to be recognised as one of the best in the country by April 2011. This professional ambition to deliver results evaluated through the key drivers of satisfaction, additional qualitative feedback and award submissions. We will also support the aim to be the most improved Council in London, by supporting relevant Council awards.



**4.5** We will consistently deliver to the highest standard in the sector for the delivery of communications in terms of clarity, accuracy, accessibility of communication, management of resources, and adherence to the law.

## 5. Research

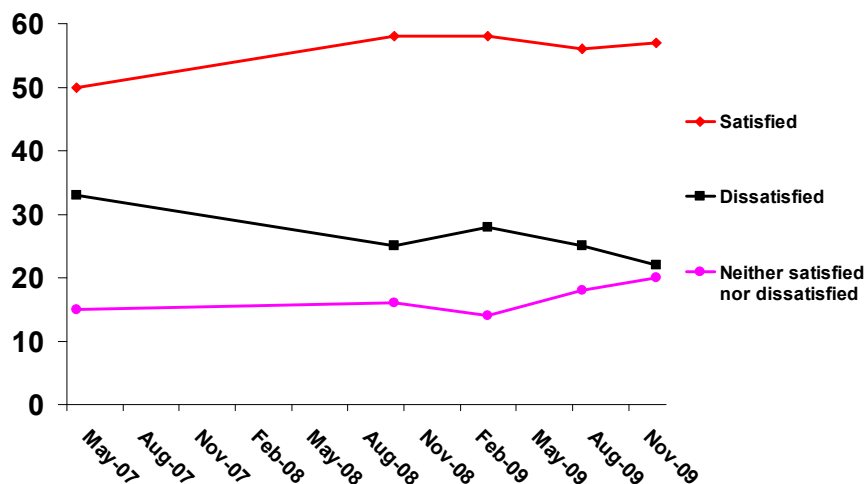
Evidence from the most recent survey of residents in Harrow (the December 2009 Reputation Tracker) shows there are a number of key facts to consider when communicating in Harrow:



### 5.1 Overall Satisfaction:

Satisfaction levels are steady amongst those who are satisfied and there has been a constant decrease over the waves in dissatisfaction levels. More residents are now 'sitting on the fence' about whether they feel satisfied or dissatisfied with the council. 35% of residents are neither satisfied/ dissatisfied or slightly dissatisfied - these should be a focus for our communications. This can be shown in the graph overleaf:

## Satisfaction with the council



Question: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the London Borough of Harrow runs things?  
 Source: 501 Harrow residents 16+, 25 November -13 December 2009

### 5.2 Harrow is getting better:

Encouragingly a third of Harrow residents (30%) think services have got better over the last 12 months, half (45%) think they have not changed much and a one in six (17%) think services have got worse. Those residents who think customer services, street cleaning or fly tipping are getting better are at least twice as likely to be satisfied compared to those who think they are getting worse.

However, the total number of people who will speak highly about the council has remained in line with the result from August (27%). This is important as 85% of advocates are also satisfied with the Council. Residents who are most likely to be advocates are those who think the council offers good value for money (49%), informed about plans (44%) and those who think the council takes account of residents' views (43%). There is also a risk that with residents perceiving that services have improved over the past 12 months that their expectations for next have also increased.

### 5.3 Value for Money:

Less than two in five (35%) of residents think Harrow Council offers local people good value for money – this is an improvement of 5% points since October 2008. However, 42% do not feel the council offers good value for money. 85% of those who do think the authority are likely to provide such value are satisfied with the Council making this one of the strongest

drivers. 86% support changing the way the council works to be more efficient and 80% support the council's plans to freeze council tax.

As well as how the council spends money and keeping council tax low, the state of the economy is an important driver with 67% of residents being satisfied if optimistic about the economy. Residents are almost twice as likely to think the economy is getting better if they perceive they are getting good value for money from the council. Therefore in a tough economic backdrop there is likely to be more scrutiny of public spending and it will be more difficult to shift the value for money perception.

#### **5.4 Local Decision-Making:**

79% of those who think their views count are also satisfied with the council – this is a significantly high correlation, however at present only 38% say that the council takes account of residents views when making decisions. Around a third of residents say that they know how to get involved in local decision making.

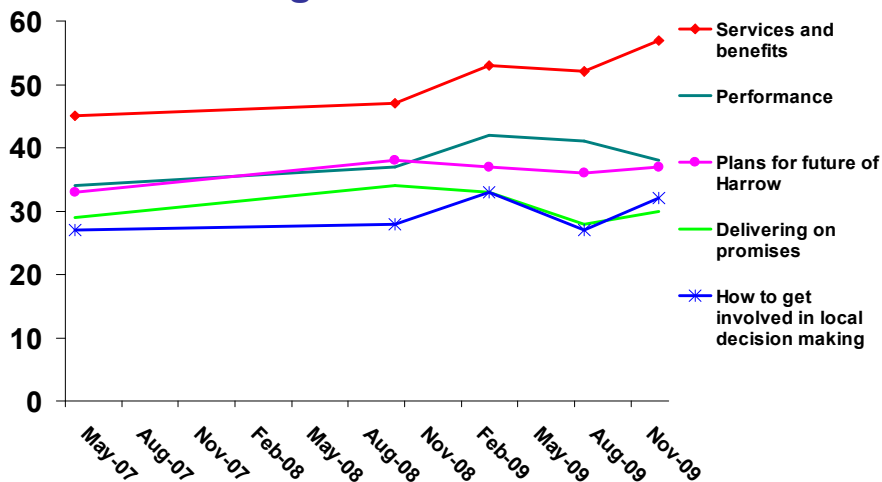
Specific initiatives to encourage residents to have their say should help to address this issue. Four in five also support neighbourhood champion's scheme, giving residents the opportunity to report street problems (81%). Two in five (42%) residents would be interested in getting involved in the scheme.

#### **5.5 Informed Ratings:**

Residents who say they feel well informed about services and benefits are more likely to feel positive about the council than those who are not well informed. Four in five (79%) residents who feel informed about services and benefits are satisfied with the council compared to just 35% of those who do not feel well informed. Value for money also increases among those who feel informed. Around half (47%) of those who feel informed about services and benefits agree the council offers value for money compared to one in five (19%) of those who do not feel informed.

The amount of people who feel informed about the services and benefits the Council provides has increased consistently since May 2007. This can be shown in the below diagram on the next page:

## Informed ratings



Source: 501 Harrow residents 16+, 25 November -13 December 2009

### 5.6 Corporate Identity/ Brand:

Satisfaction with the Council and advocacy of the Council increases amongst residents who have seen the Council logo (compared to those who have not seen it) on street sweepers and their push carts, purple council street cleaning equipment/vehicles and at their local library. Informed ratings about services and benefits is also higher among residents who have seen the Council logo on these items.

A significant 9 in 10 adults aged between the age of 18 and 24 have seen the Council logo on street sweepers and their push carts, with 80% of this age group seeing it on their local library. This is significantly higher than just over half those residents over 45 years old. When residents see the corporate identity they associate it with the Council's values such as getting better, providing value for money and delivering cleaner and safer streets.

### 5.7 Health and Work with Partners:

61% of those advocates for the health services are satisfied with the council. Those residents who think local public services act on their concerns are likely to be satisfied with both the council and NHS services in Harrow. Those residents are also much more likely to have seen Vitality Views magazine as more advocates are either over 60 (as well as 16-24 year olds).

## 5.8 Audiences:

### There are four main resident audiences in Harrow:

- 5.8.1 General resident
- 5.8.2 Customer of specific service(s)
- 5.8.3 Community Leader
- 5.8.4 Staff resident

#### 5.8.1 General residents

According to Experian Mosaic data – which includes the Reputation Tracker and MORI surveys – there are four key general resident segments who have the lowest perceptions of the council in terms of satisfaction, value for money and informed levels. This is shown in the below table:

Segment	Harrow Segment Description	% of Harrow Households	Receptive	Unreceptive	Council keeps us well informed	Value for money	Satisfaction with the Council
<b>A</b>	Extremely wealthy professionals, corporate careers	10.30%	Internet, telephone, post	SMS text, face to face	Medium	Low	Medium
<b>B</b>	Financially secure older couples	12.00%	Internet, telephone, post	Local newspapers, face to face	Medium	Medium	Medium
<b>C</b>	Middle aged families in suburban areas	16.60%	Internet, telephone, local newspaper	Face to face	Low	Low	Low
<b>D</b>	Ambitious young professionals on high salaries	9.50%	Internet, telephone, post, SMS text	Face to face, local newspapers	Low	Medium	Low

The geographical representation of Experian data across Harrow is shown in Appendix 1.

Segments C and D are likely to feel that the Council does not provide good value for money as they do not have a great deal of exposure to the Council and are unlikely to be service

users. Therefore highlighting the level of services the Council provides and making this more personal to them may help to change this perception.

Segment D are a transient population who are likely to work and socialise in the city and therefore do not spend a great deal of time in the borough. They are also likely to live near to the tube and railway stations as well as being less willing to engage with the Council and therefore need more specific messages which are integral to their daily lives or given to them in a context which sits within their lifestyle.

In some respects it is somewhat surprising that Segment C do not feel informed. They are likely to have been in the borough for more than nine years and have children of school age, or have put children through the Harrow school system. Segment C residents are geographically located in suburban areas in the centre of the borough with middle aged families and so should naturally be core Harrow People readers. Therefore suggesting that we need to get these people to read/engage with Harrow People more.

However, this appears to be largely because apart from schools or parks, they do not access many council services or have much positive contact with the Council. As this group comprises 16.6% of the borough, increasing how informed these residents feel, will impact positively on the overall council informed rating. There may also be an issue about certain residents accessing services – these barriers will also be researched during the campaign planning stage.

#### **5.8.2 Customer of specific service(s)**

Those residents who access council services are often more satisfied with the council and have more positive perceptions of value for money than those who do not access services. This group are therefore not a key target audience in driving up satisfaction.

However, the quality of service that customers receive can be inconsistent across the council. Likewise when residents contact the council they may not always get a positive overall customer experience even if their issue is resolved and progress is not always provided. In addition, general customer service studies also show that a satisfied customer will inform around 3 people about their experience with the council whereas a dissatisfied consumer will share their problems with up to 10 people.

This means that some communications support should be provided to help drive up customer satisfaction and drive down the number of critics.

### **5.8.3 Community Leaders**

As we know from our customer service experience, those critical residents can have a larger impact on the local environment than those advocates. We also know that there are certain individuals within Harrow who have, through their position or role within the community, an even greater impact on other residents' views. In such an example, if critical of the activities of the council, such opinion formers or community leaders, could inform one hundred or potentially one thousand residents that they are dissatisfied.

It is therefore critically important for the Council to engage with such residents, attempt to engage with these 'Harrow Leaders' and inform them in particular about our plans for the borough. The first job will be to audit local councillors in those most dissatisfied or uninformed areas to research who are the most important community leaders in their locality. We will then ask for their views on a range of issues as part of a stakeholder survey which will provide a benchmark for future activities. Further work will be addressed in the 'Have your say' campaign and will go into more detail.

### **5.8.4 Staff Views**

Significant improvements have been made since May 2008, with increases of 11% and 21% in overall satisfaction and net informed level. In total, over three quarters (84%) of the questions have got better with 31% showing significant improvement. Staff are also more aware of the council vision and are more likely recommend the Council as a place to work to friends and families. Colleagues also believe that their efforts are better recognized with over half now feeling well informed about the CREATE Awards that recognise Staff Excellence.

However, research from the Staff Survey 2009 reveals that certain departments within certain corporate directorates such as Finance, Place Shaping as well as Community and Environment are significantly less satisfied than others. Professionals and specialist staff are the least satisfied and informed within the Council and could be a potential barrier to increasing overall satisfaction within the organisation. Likewise although managers have seen an improvement in perceptions during the last six months, two thirds of 1<sup>st</sup> line manager's or supervisors still do not feel informed.



58% of staff at external sites feel well informed about the council, compared to 69% at Civic Centre, with less than half (46%) of library staff feeling informed about the council. We will therefore focus on this specific area but also review the information sent to, and received by, external sites.

Less than one in three (29%) of staff think that their views and opinions count to the council. Although more staff now believe the Council is good at managing change, with the Transformation Programme on the horizon, it is very important that the Council demonstrably engages with colleagues. For example, through the 2010 Innov8 competition which will be embedded into the CREATE Awards for the first time.

## 6. Strategy:

- 6.1 The strategy of the communications team is to deploy consistently pro-active and evidence based communications to protect and enhance the reputation of the Council, retain and recruit staff that are knowledgeable and experienced in their field, and win additional resources for the borough.
- 6.2 Within this we will focus on increasing satisfaction by targeting our communications to those residents who are moderately dissatisfied, tend to disagree that the Council provides good value for money or think they receive only limited information.
- 6.3 This strategic plan is based on the overall story that Harrow Council is delivering better streets, building strong communities and supporting vulnerable people. These will provide the basis for the six marketing communications campaigns which will all have defined goals and robust measurement agreed in advance. (See section 12 for more details on the individual campaigns.) Specifically, we will focus our campaigns in four main ways:
- I. Targeting of segmented groups through localised marketing activity
  - II. Demonstrating how the Council is acting on people's concerns
  - III. Informing residents about specific 'better for less' services and benefits, as well as plans for their area and fun activities.
  - IV. Building the council's reputation and profile through the best read and most viewed media.
- 6.4 We will focus our effort on the key drivers of resident satisfaction. These are:
- **Overall informed:** 73% of residents say they are satisfied with the Council if they feel well informed about Council services compared to 35% if uninformed.
  - **Better services:** Those residents who think the Council's services have got better over the past twelve months are significantly more likely to be satisfied those who think it has got worse. This can be improved if they are well informed about the services and benefits that the council provides.
  - **Value for Money (VFM):** 85% are satisfied with the Council if they feel the organisation offers good VFM.
  - **Media:** 70% are satisfied if they feel the media has been positive/neutral.
  - **Brand:** Satisfaction levels are around 5% higher among those who have seen the Council logo on vehicles, street sweeper uniforms and their pushcarts.

- **Decision making:** Those who feel informed about how to get involved in local decision-making are around a third more likely to be satisfied with the council than those not informed.

**6.5** Overall we deploy media relations tools to protect reputation, recruit staff and drive advocacy ratings. We use internal communications to retain staff, increase productivity and increase understanding of the goals of the leadership of the authority. We deploy marketing communications techniques to provide information on - and increase access to - our services. We manage public affairs campaigns to win additional resources and support for the Council.

**6.6** The current major outputs that will be improved from May 2010 to the end of April 2011:

**External:**

- Improve quality and consistency of Council branding
- Six editions of a refreshed Harrow People
- A combined A-Z and Council Tax Guide sent to all residents
- Special edition of 'THAT' magazine to promote summer activities for young people.
- An average of 600 points per month for media scores (including one trade hit per week) according to our evaluation scoring system
- At least two hits in the top media targets every month and an 80% pos/neutral score.

**Internal:**

- Twelve CEX Newsletters and four editions of The Arrow (based on the key campaigns)
- Twelve staff and four manager forums as well as two staff recognition 'CREATE' awards

**6.7** The new key activities we will develop and launch for the same time period will be:

**External:**

- Develop more targeted marketing activities with Experian information including up to four direct mail shots to key segments
- Launch new e-newsletter as well as improved use of targeted email
- Promote new 'online banking style' services and refresh main web home page
- Re-launch the new noticeboards, promote the service to local communities and use the channel to promote services and benefits
- New 'Harrow Leaders' community engagement and advocate programme

**Internal:**

- More focused communications with targeted departments
- Launch specific newsletters by area where relevant
- Develop targeted communications with Experian information

**6.7** We will also work jointly with the Police, PCT and other partnership bodies to demonstrate community leadership as part of the Audit Commission's new Corporate Area Assessment. Specifically, this will include specific external campaigns such as: Neighbourhood Champions with the Police; and Healthy Harrow with the PCT and Hospital Trust.

## 7. Corporate Message

7.1 The Council story for 2010/11 remains broadly the same as the previous financial year. This reflects the continuing three corporate priorities but also the economic recovery. This latter issue is likely to carry on for some time.

7.2 However, the Council as a whole needs to improve getting this message out to residents, and the Communications team will be working on this with other departments.

7.3 Within the Better Harrow campaign, plans should incorporate how to stimulate the local economy through the Recession Busting Group. This will also be tied to the 'Better Deal for Residents' Transformation Programme with key decisions likely to be taken during the Summer.

7.4 The key overall message is as follows:

*Harrow Council is working hard to provide good value local services. We know that money is tight at the moment but we are spending your money wisely and are focused on cutting our own costs as well as helping to make your lives better.*

*We are making Harrow better, cleaner and safer, building strong communities and supporting vulnerable people. This is underpinned by providing better quality services for less money to all our customers to give excellent value for money.*

*We want you to see your Council as one of the best in London, so we intend to make improvements in every area of our work, listening to your needs and reporting back on what we've changed.*

7.5 In order for the narrative to have the desired impact, it needs to be executed across the Council and demonstrated through real service delivery improvements. These messages will be further developed in our work on the Corporate ID review. This will ask key questions such as: what does the Council stand for and what is its promise to customers (in its priorities, its service delivery and the way it works with customers). The behaviour of frontline staff will also be an important part of this work, and these areas will also be a key channel of communication with our customers.

## **8. Engaging with residents**

**8.1** Communications for 2010/2011 will primarily focus on fewer but more focussed campaigns, engaging with residents with a clear message around value for money.

**8.2** This will focus on three areas: how the council is saving money; informing residents about services and benefits; and how we are helping residents through the recession or stimulating the subsequent economic recovery.

**8.3** The creative umbrella concept for this whole campaign will be 'Have you heard...?' This will reinforce the three key areas through a number of propositions such as: 'Have you heard... we are freezing Council Tax in 2010-11'. This will be rolled out across a wide spectrum of marketing and media channels throughout the borough.

**8.4** We will produce separate campaign plans for each activity to address specific issues and priorities, highlighted in the Reputation Tracker and the 2009 Experian Report. Our key priority will be communicating value for money, delivering cleaner and safer streets and local decision making. In addition we will be promoting the activities for young people and adults, as well as the performance and plans of the Council. These are detailed in section 10.

**8.5** Campaign planning process for 2010/2011 will follow a strategic approach to ensure they all meet the set objectives and delivered within the timeframe set. These will include:

- New star chamber process to add creativity, ensure clear objectives are agreed and signed off from the start of the campaign.
- Campaign check list and timeline (see Appendix 1) to guarantee maximum impact and resources are effectively in place
- Quarterly campaign review meetings to check progress and delivery done through the regular monthly communications meeting.

**8.6** The external marketing activity will focus on two areas:

**8.6.1** Improving current publications and general marketing activities;

**8.6.2** Launching new activities to target specific groups through research.

### **8.6.1 Improvement of Current Activities and Channels**

We will give a clear focus on improving all council publications, ensuring all content has a clear resident perspective, makes good use of images of residents, is jargon free and engaging.

**a) Harrow People:**

We will enhance the impact of our flagship magazine by:

- Introducing a set format for articles to focus on residents, facts and figures, as well as 'have you heard' contact details.
- Articles focussed on residents' most important issues as identified by the new 2009 MORI Place Survey and focussed on resident's views.
- Pilot localised marketing information using Experian data.

**b) Vitality Views:**

We will deliver an improved magazine for over 50s by:

- Refreshed design and style based on resident feedback.
- Directly distributed to resident's homes using Experian data.
- Campaign related articles on health and well-being; 'have you heard' about services and benefits; have your say; and cleaner and safer streets.

**c) THAT magazine:**

We will deliver an improved magazine for young people by:

- Special edition to promote activities to do during the summer.
- Research new distribution methods to target information through parents as identified by the Experian research.
- Support and advise a new web-based edition focussed on events and linked to the new MyHarrow newsletter.

**d) Community Notice Boards:**

We will relaunch the new public notice boards located in upto 20 sites across the borough, ensuring consistent branding and delivering specific campaign messages such as 'Have you heard...'. We will also advertise the new noticeboards on the website for local groups to 'have their say' and promote their own local community events.

**e) Evaluating and monitoring of key channels:**

We will regularly check the impact of key marketing activities to ensure that all publications and marketing materials are being distributed and presented in the most effective way:

- Initial review of distribution companies and destinations e.g. Libraries.
- Reputation tracker quantitative results.
- Quarterly reviews and ongoing spot checks.

We will also look at introducing new poster sites and point of sale points within council buildings across the borough.

**f) Media relations:**

We will introduce a new improvement programme to deliver exceptional media relations:

- 600 points per month (including one trade hit per week).
- At least two hits in the top media targets every month.

The press office will deliver this by:

- Improved preparation through weekly rota of forward planning diaries
- Proactively pitching stories to opinion forming media such as Radio 4's Today programme
- New weekly on-call rota to pitch stories at 8.30am, carry out paper review and present team meeting at 9.15am
- Increasing core skills such as research and writing
- Building confidence through specific coaching on pitching stories
- Contribute regular stories to the award winning campaigns
- Each media officer delivering 150 points per month
- Co-ordinated trade media grid and short story updates sent weekly

**8.6.2 New Communications Channels and Activities**

**a) MyHarrow e-newsletter**

We will launch a new e-newsletter which will be issued to all consenting residents, providing key information on council services. As a key part of the Value for Money campaign, this will work towards raising resident satisfaction levels by informing residents about the services and benefits provided, news and plans for the local area as well as events and activities. The pilot newsletter will be an informative easy to read online tool, issued on a monthly basis and will direct users towards Harrow Council's website for further detailed information.



## **b) New Personalised Online System**

We will launch the new online log in system enabling residents to view their personal details i.e council tax bills, statements, housing benefits etc. This will initially be rolled out as a pilot scheme after May and then will form part of the Value for Money campaign (subject to additional marketing budget) through the existing channels and direct mail to key groups such as the young professionals (Segment D in Experian Data terms).

## **c) Direct Mail**

Within each priority one campaign, we will utilise the Experian data to implement more targeted communications to key demographics who currently are not sure or are marginally dissatisfied. This will seek to:

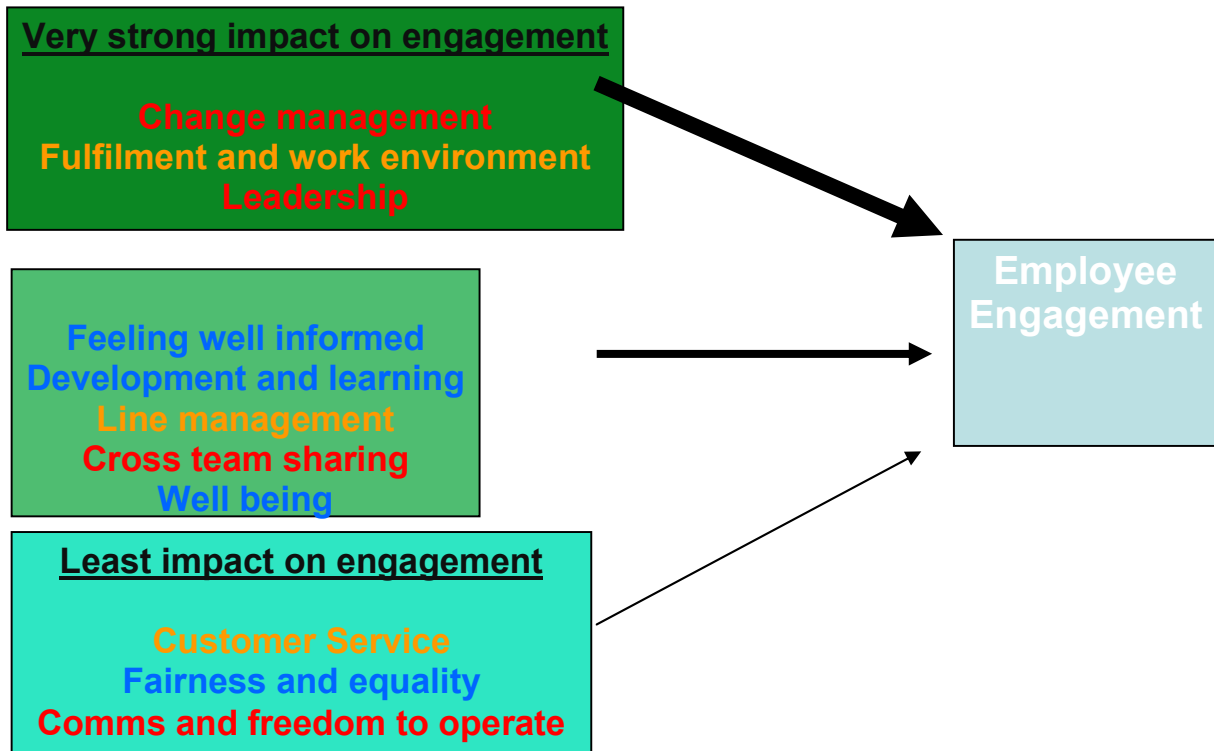
- Focus on key campaign issues such as Neighbourhood Champions, 'Have you Heard... ' and activities for adults and young people.
- Personalised content as well as specific names and addresses.
- Review current council correspondence and ensure it is jargon free and has a clear tone of voice as well as delivering the corporate narrative and priorities.

## **d) Additional tactical activities**

After the local election, we will also reproduce a new 'Know your Councillors' poster for distribution within the noticeboards and provide media training for new Portfolio Holders. Both these activities will be supported by the corporate communications team but will require additional funds from the relevant departments.

## **9. Engaging with staff**

**9.1** The main focus for communicating with staff will be through the 'Better Deal for Residents' transformation programme. This will involve increasing general awareness for the 'Better Deal for Residents' and engaging those colleagues in specific affected services to manage the change process. Along with feeling well informed and well-being, change management comes out the highest driver of employee engagement in terms of measures which communications can influence.



**9.2** We will also work to inform staff about the benefits they are entitled to and encourage the take up of wellbeing events - the top issue from the December 2009 staff survey. We will also deliver the 'you said, we did actions' from the same questionnaire.

**9.3** As with engaging residents, the overall internal communications programme will seek to do two main things:

- 9.3.1** Build on the existing communications activity and channels;
- 9.3.2** Launch new channels or activities for those departments with lowest informed and satisfied ratings.

**9.3.1 Build on the current communications channels:**

The latest staff survey has shown the power of internal communications to increase satisfaction with the council by informing colleagues about timely and relevant activities. Certain channels – such as the Chief Executive's staff forums and newsletter continue to be very successful – although others need to be improved:

### **a) The Arrow**

We will review and refresh the staff newspaper in order for it to reach a similar number of colleagues as the Chief Executive's Newsletter. We will do this in the following ways:

- Reducing the number of pages and editions
- Focus the content around the communications campaigns such as transformation and well-being events.
- Utilise frontline staff experiences to demonstrate key stories.

### **b) Communications guidelines and monitoring**

- Refresh the internal comms guidelines to ensure that colleagues from across the council understand how and which channel to use for different types of information.
- Audit the distribution of internal publications and carry out an external site survey including the depot, libraries, teacher's centre and other buildings across the borough.
- We will also review the current staff noticeboards, recommend increased use and introduce a new system of keeping them updated as well as looking at new poster sites such as within the lifts and staff canteen.
- Hold quarterly focus groups inviting staff out of the civic centre, for feedback on any planned changes to the current internal communication tools.

### **9.3.2 New areas to develop and launch:**

We will focus on those staff with lowest informed ratings that will include specific improvement plans for certain departments as well as relevant stories to the whole council.

### **a) Directorate Level Communications**

The latest survey results showed that staff want to receive more information about their department. We will therefore:

- Work with managers to produce a 'shopping list' of tips on how they can communicate better with their team.
- Organise a more structured calendar of 'well being' events to run through the year, including two CREATE awards, Harrow Cup and Chief Executive Quiz.
- Rewarding staff success and commitment to the council
- We will focus on supporting key departments to increase information given by managers, further promote team briefings and where appropriate lead on directorate e-newsletters.

## **b) Corporate Wide Information**

In addition to these two areas, we will look to improve the tactical implementation of our information to staff:

- We will ensure that all external campaigns include an internal communications element.
- We will re-enforce the corporate story, promoting more well being events and generally communicating in a clearer and more engaging way.
- We will launch a new dedicated campaign on well-being, introducing more events like the Harrow Cup and the staff benefits fair;

### **9.4** We will also address specific issues raised by the December 2009 Staff Survey:

- relaunch the manager cascade email system to ensure that staff know the reasons behind decisions such as Cabinet and Corporate Strategy Board.
- promote the benefits of holding regular team meetings and draft specific information for managers to pass on to their staff;
- promote the innov8 campaign and LEAN programme to ensure that staff feel that they can put forward ideas without fear of negative consequences;
- work alongside Human Resources to introduce spot checks for IPADs to ensure that learning and development needs are addressed and follow-up actions completed.

## 10. Corporate/Service campaigns

10.1 Below is a summary of recommended campaigns by priority:

Comms Priority	Campaign	Goal(s) Driver or of Satisfaction	Potential activity	Audience
1	Better Harrow	Increase number of residents and staff who feel Council is improving. Increase satisfaction with customer contact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote overall transformation programme through regular media coverage, general marketing activities and specific internal communications.</li> <li>Reintroduce 'A day in the life' sub-campaign in Harrow People and local media about frontline services and staff.</li> <li>Branding - focus on quality, introduce new authorisation form for printed material and review progress on signage, uniforms and correspondence.</li> <li>Focus on improving quality of Customer Service across the council and follow up activity on specific services.</li> <li>Internet style banking for council services.</li> <li>Recession busting activity to help make residents lives better and promote the economic recovery.</li> <li>Regular media campaign to promote how the council is helping and protecting residents through trading standards, benefit fraud etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All residents</li> <li>Focus on uninformed wards and those who have contacted the Council.</li> <li>Focus on Segment D young professionals</li> </ul>
1	Value for Money	Increase perception of providing good value for money	<p>One clear theme 'Have you heard...'</p> <p>Within this two key strands: cut waste; inform the number of services we provide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular fortnightly media activity demonstrating how we are getting better e.g. economic recovery plan and freezing council tax.</li> <li>Pilot new outbound e-newsletter</li> <li>'Have you heard' guide direct mailed [subject to additional funds]</li> <li>'Better 4 Less' - Promote the Council Transformation Programme and launch external suggestion scheme 'innov8'.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on uninformed wards and those who have contacted the Council.</li> <li>Focus on Segments A-C</li> </ul>

1	Cleaner and Safer streets	Increase perception of clean streets Reduce the Fear of Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main focus Neighbourhood Champions</li> <li>• Local data and targeted activity by street or ward.</li> <li>• Increased use of direct mail after police/Council activity on issues such as Smartwater.</li> <li>• Specific Project Plan for promoting Week's of Action (Double volume of direct mail; publicise film; more visible branding and signage).</li> <li>• Utilise police channels such as monthly local newsletter and half yearly borough wide newsletter.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uninformed residents</li> <li>• Use Experian data to focus on specific streets.</li> </ul>
2	Increase support for vulnerable (young) people	Increase awareness of activities for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall theme of 'School at the heart of the community' focussing on new facilities and activities available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Whitmore High School</li> <li>• New Sixth Forms</li> <li>• Change in the Age of Transfer</li> <li>• New Children Centres</li> <li>• New school meals</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Activities for young people (particularly during the summer holidays)</li> <li>• THAT magazine (online and special summer edition direct mailed to parental addresses)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people via their parents.</li> </ul>
2	Increase support for vulnerable people	Increase health and well-being amongst adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint campaign with PCT.</li> <li>• Activities for adults including free swim and potential 'Passport' or Vitality Views.</li> <li>• Provide advice on specific service level leaflets to promote specific Adult Services available to eligible residents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All residents</li> <li>• Focus on Segment C (Experian Research)</li> <li>• Service users</li> </ul>
3	Build stronger communities	Increase number of people who feel they can influence local decision-making.  Increase the number of residents who are informed about the councils plans for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation around future of Harrow as a place.</li> <li>• Question Time in community centres across the borough.</li> <li>• Community Action Days and use of new video booth technology</li> <li>• Harrow Leaders Public Affairs Campaign, trade press engagement and conference speaking programme</li> <li>• Promote Harrow's Heroes volunteering and Under One Sky events.</li> <li>• Promote key planning activities such as the development of the Core Strategy and new bus routes in Central Harrow.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All residents</li> <li>• Focus on neutralising critics and those with lowest perception of influencing decisions.</li> </ul>

<b>Potential Additional Projects:</b>			
Better Deal for Residents Programme	Increase information of services and benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage staff directly affected by the Better Deal and inform wider staff.</li> <li>Inform and encourage participation of partners as well as residents in delivering the whole programme and specifically the Better Together workstream.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See separate campaign plan.</li> </ul>
Cleaner and Safer streets	Increase recycling to 50%+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Separate funds identified and agreed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See separate campaign plan.</li> </ul>
Increase support for vulnerable (young) people	Increase informed rating for services and benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Separate funds identified and separate campaign plan to be agreed.</li> <li>Focus on promoting new children centres in local areas.</li> <li>Encourage take up of services for parents of children under 5 years old.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See separate campaign plan.</li> </ul>
Better Harrow	Increase registration rate of residents for ten year census	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population/Census</li> <li>Focus on key hard to reach areas</li> <li>Use face to face canvassing as well as additional booster direct mailshots</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All residents</li> <li>Hard to reach groups</li> </ul>
Finance	Increase take up of Direct Debit to pay Council Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial business case to increase online payments of council tax through direct debit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All residents</li> <li>Segment D young people and other areas of low take-up</li> </ul>
Housing	Increase tenant satisfaction and overall satisfaction with the Council	<p>Launch service improvement plan and engage staff and residents in outcomes.</p> <p>Improve the quality of the information to tenants through a dedicated campaign that will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website and e-mail</li> <li>Direct Mail</li> <li>Homing In</li> <li>HomeseekeNews</li> <li>Face to face engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing tenants and leaseholders.</li> </ul>

## 11. Appendix 1:

### Team Responsibilities

The main Communications Team leads for the key service areas are as follows:

- i. **Better Harrow:** Andrew Hadfield, supported by Jenny Stott and Joe Lumley.
- ii. **Value For Money:** Andrew Hadfield, supported by Oliver Parrish and Alana Blair.
- iii. **Deliver Cleaner and Safer Streets:** Fergus Sheppard, supported by Nicola Rae and Joe Lumley.
- iv. **Build Stronger Communities:** Fergus Sheppard, supported by Nicola Rae and Angela Hart.
- v. **Improve Support for Vulnerable People:**
  - **Activities for Young People:** Fergus Sheppard, supported by Oliver Parrish and Angela Hart.
  - **Health and Wellbeing for Adults:** Andrew Hadfield, supported by Nicola Rae and Emma Murray.
- vi. **Corporate Internal Communications:** Andrew Hadfield, supported by Emma Murray and Jenny Stott.

### Organisation:

Andrew Hadfield, Head of Communications, will continue to lead the team with Fergus Sheppard, as his deputy responsible for the press office and campaigns. All of the above activity will be supported by Subo Kathiresan (Graphic Designer) and Dermot Carlin (Photographer).

The current team have now been in place for some time with new members being integrated quickly and effectively. We will need to now ensure that the team has the relevant capacity and skills to deliver this 2010/11 workplan.

This may mean bringing in additional resources to deliver enhanced results on specific campaigns and redeploy staff on a flexible basis during other times during the year within the service level agreement.



### Communications Risk Register

Risk No.	Risk Description	Controls/ Mitigants (in place and effective)	Risk Rating (after controls in place)	Further Actions (underway or planned)	Target Risk Rating	Action Owner	Risk Owner	Risk Status
1	Economic impact on satisfaction and value for money perceptions	Treat by demonstrating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how stimulating recovery such as Shop Local Awards</li> <li>• saving £50m of own budget</li> <li>• better inform services and benefits</li> </ul>	C4	N/A	C4	Andrew Hadfield/ Mark Billington	Tom Whiting/ Andrew Trehern	Amber
2	Higher resident expectations due to improved services	Take the opportunity by promoting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further service improvement</li> <li>• ‘A day in the Life...’</li> <li>• ‘Have you heard...’</li> <li>• ‘Have your say...’</li> </ul>	C4	N/A	C4	Andrew Hadfield/ Jonathan Milbourn	Tom Whiting	Amber
3	The Better Deal for Residents programme having a negative impact on staff morale and resident satisfaction.	Transfer by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early engagement</li> <li>Explanation of budget situation</li> <li>Benefits of change</li> <li>Improved service delivery</li> <li>Support to affected areas</li> </ul>	B3	N/A	B3	Andrew Hadfield / Jon Turner	Tom Whiting/ Carol Cutler	Amber
4	Non-delivery of key objectives in communication s plan and impact on Audit Commission CAA rating	Treat by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly campaign review meetings</li> <li>Regular 1:1</li> </ul>	B4	N/A	B4	Andrew Hadfield	Tom Whiting	Amber

### Communications Timeline 2010/11

Campaign/Activity by date	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
<b>External Campaigns</b>												
<b>Better Harrow</b>				Shop local awards		Customer Service Day				'A Day in the life...'		
<b>Cleaner and Safer Streets</b>	Neighbourhood Champions public launch				NC follow up publicity and Smartwater				Neighbourhood Champions direct mail.			
<b>Value for Money</b>	'Have your heard...' launch					Guide and follow up activity				Council Tax	A-Z Guide	
<b>Have your say</b>	Harrow Leaders Programme				'Have your say'				Harrow Leaders Programme			
<b>Activities for young people</b>	Bank Holiday		Summer FUN (Special edition of THAT)			FUN Half-term activities		Festive FUN		Half-term activities		FUN Easter Activities
<b>Health and well-being activities</b>	FUN family activities								New Year Vitality			
<b>Internal campaigns and key activities</b>												
<b>Staff Well-being</b>		Harrow Cup and charity events							Health and benefits programme			
<b>Transformation</b>		Staff engagement		Public engagement			Service transformation					

**Campaign Template 2010/11**

TITLE	TITLE OF CAMPAIGN
<b>SUMMARY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective and key activity</li> <li>• The audience challenge (no more than three sentences)</li> <li>• Lead Comms (Media/Marketing/Internal) officer</li> <li>• Relevance to Better Harrow and corporate priority</li> <li>• Start and finish date</li> </ul>
<b>APPROVED BY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name of Service</li> <li>• Corporate Director (these people should approve final plan)</li> <li>• Portfolio Holder (these people should approve final plan)</li> </ul>
<b>RESEARCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audience insight, to include as much as possible of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Breakdowns by age, sex, race, habitat and segment size</li> <li>○ Their interests, concerns and views on the council</li> <li>○ How and where they spend their work and leisure time</li> <li>○ The media they consume, and sources and messages they respond to</li> <li>○ How they travel and where they shop</li> <li>○ What they find useful</li> <li>○ Any other aspects of their lifestyle we can tap into</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Signpost any relevant audience context from the last 6-12 months or any supporting research of interest. This must include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Experian data</li> <li>○ Reputation Tracker</li> <li>○ MORI</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>AUDIENCE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know your audience and make sure you're targeting the right demographic to meet your objective.</li> <li>• If appropriate, highlight specific targets within the wider audience group i.e. young professionals in Headstone South ward or, Middle aged families in Cannons wards. You should refer to the Experian data.</li> <li>• How are we going to engage or inform our Harrow Leaders.</li> </ul>
<b>PARTNERS (if applicable)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List external partners and how they will contribute i.e. NHS Harrow, Metropolitan Police, Voluntary Sector etc</li> </ul>
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the end of the campaign, what do you want to achieve? What is your main aim for this campaign?</li> </ul>

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<p>What are you going to do to make this campaign work and to ensure you meet the overall objective? NB: This is not the implementation but a 'shopping list' of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the campaign is?</li> <li>• When is it going to be implemented</li> <li>• How are you going to implement it? What tools/channels are you going to use?</li> <li>• Who are you going to target? Are you aiming for borough wide awareness or more localised activity? Use research from the Experian data?</li> </ul>
<b>MESSAGE &amp; STYLE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specify the appropriate tone of voice / style for the audience</li> <li>• Rank up to three key messages</li> </ul>
<b>BIG IDEAS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List up to three of the major activities within the campaign. Present them as single-line bullet points and list them in order of prominence / impact</li> </ul>
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In details, how are you going to implement your campaign</li> <li>• Provide top line description of each major activity in no more than one paragraph</li> <li>• Include a succinct 'supported by' line for each major activity i.e. Supported by: Harrow People, website, Noticeboards etc</li> <li>• Arrange the activities in chronological order</li> <li>• Incorporate media, research, marketing and internal communications contributions</li> <li>• State timescale with a <u>realistic</u> start date and date for concluding the campaign</li> </ul> <p><b>TIP:</b> It's useful to break the sections up. Suggested sub headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are we going to do? (maybe split into key phases/sections of the campaign) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Phase 1</li> <li>○ Phase 2</li> <li>○ Phase 3</li> </ul> </li> <li>• When are we going to do it?</li> <li>• How will it work? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tactic 1</li> <li>○ Tactic 2</li> <li>○ Tactic 3</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>For each of the tactics consider the audience you are primarily targeting. Ask your self the question "What is the best way to reach this audience." But your self in their shoes and utilise the Experian Data. Perhaps consider the below check list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Notice boards</li> <li>✓ Banners</li> <li>✓ Direct Mail</li> <li>✓ Media/PR</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Harrow People/ inserts/publications</li> <li>✓ Hand outs</li> <li>✓ Posters</li> <li>✓ Leaflets</li> <li>✓ Brochures</li> <li>✓ Website</li> <li>✓ Email marketing</li> <li>✓ Social networks</li> <li>✓ Gold bulletin (school specific)</li> <li>✓ Grapevine/Arrow, Staff updates (internal)</li> <li>✓ Community TV</li> </ul> <p>Why this campaign? (Is sometimes good to re-enforce why you are proposing to run this campaign and how it will benefit the business/departments objective.</p>
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<b>EVALUATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What success measures are you aiming for eg – XX% increase etc</li> <li>• Confirm Reputation Tracker measures and the frequency of their measurement i.e. every quarter, half-yearly etc</li> </ul>
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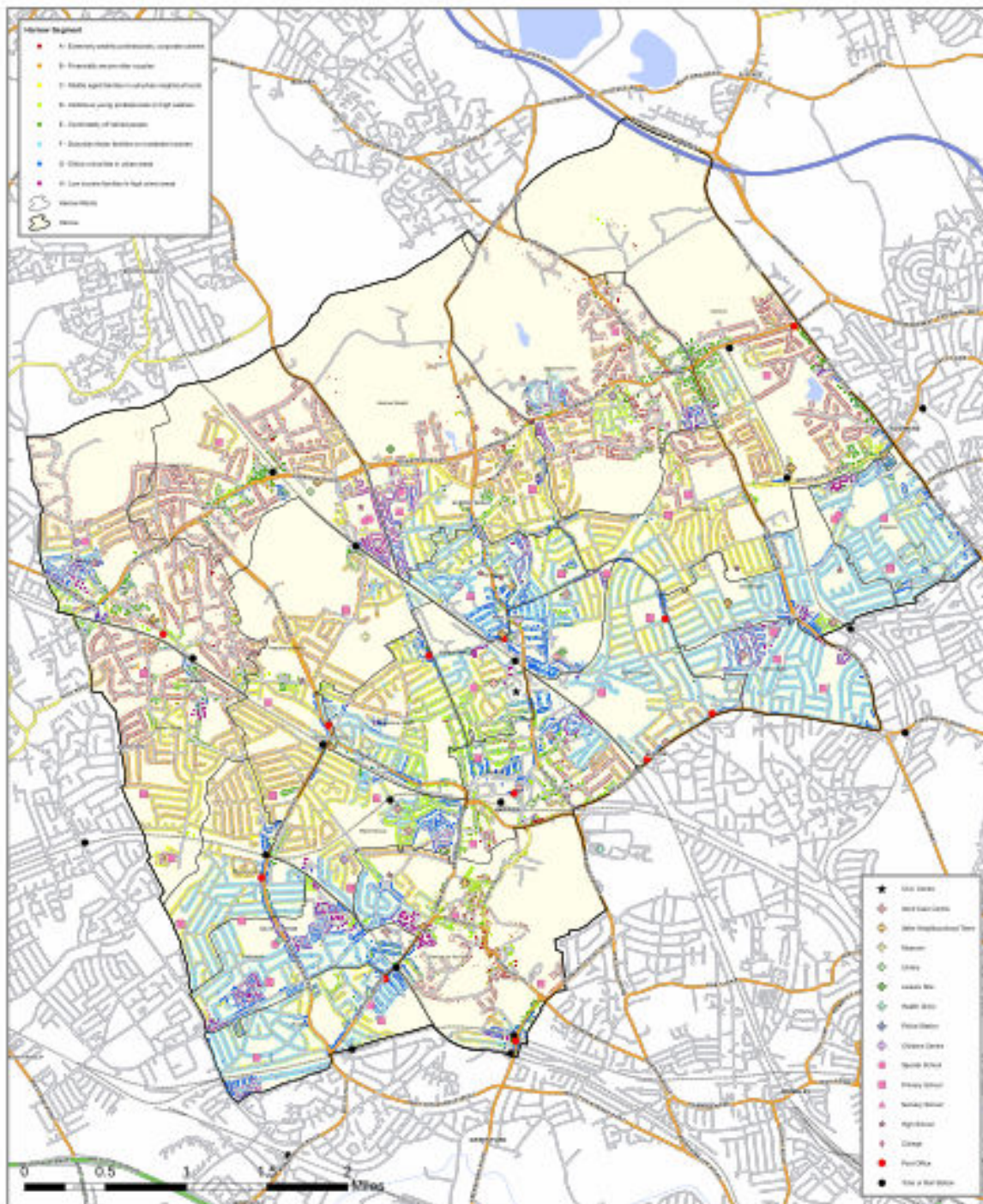
<b>FINANCIAL RESOURCE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How much is it going to cost? Break down the budget into each tactic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tactic 1 £XX</li> <li>○ Tactic 2 £XX</li> <li>○ Tactic 3 £XX</li> </ul> </li> <li>• List the account and cost centre that will be charged for each activity – obtain this from the department</li> </ul>
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<b>START DATE/DURATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detail month by month timings for campaign</li> </ul>
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<b>COMMS TEAM</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List the Comms team working on the project including media, member services and creative lead officers.</li> </ul>
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# Harrow Mosaic Segments

Household Level



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