

Harrow Strategic Partnership – Annual Report 2009/10

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Introduction

Harrow Strategic Partnership brings together the public, private and voluntary sectors to work for a better future for the borough. Its vision for Harrow as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy is:

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.

This report looks back on progress made in 2009/10 and how the priorities for the Partnership have changed in the light of the national economic position, but also looks at the ambitions for 2010/11 and how these may develop in the coming months.

How the Partnership does its work

Harrow Strategic Partnership is managed by a Partnership Board comprising Harrow Council, NHS Harrow, Harrow Police, JobCentreplus, representatives from further and higher education in Harrow, representatives of business in Harrow and representatives of the voluntary and community sector. The detailed membership is set out at the end of this report.

Reporting to the Board, we have established a group called Harrow Chief Executives made up of the Council's Chief Executive, the Chief Operating Officer of NHS Harrow, the Police Borough Commander, the Chief Executive of Harrow Association for Voluntary

Service and the Chief Executive of Harrow in Business. During the year, we have added the Chief Executive of North West London Hospitals NHS Trust and the District Manager for West London of JobCentreplus to this group. Harrow Chief Executives meets every six weeks reviewing performance, developing new ideas and managing the partnership between Partnership Board meetings.

Most of the Partnership's work is undertaken by and under the direction of the following five thematic management groups:

- Adult Health and Well-being
- Children's Trust
- Community Cohesion
- Safer Harrow and
- Sustainable Development and Enterprise.

The Management Groups have appointed a wide range of delivery groups specialising in aspects of their work. A description of the work undertaken by each is set out later in this report.

The Harrow Partnership structure is completed by two reference groups – the Older People's Reference Group and the Voluntary Sector Forum both with the remit to ensure that the point of view of their particular membership is represented to the partnership and informs decisions.

The membership comprises a wide range of bodies but all set out to deliver better outcomes to Harrow residents. The members of the Partnership have agreed to the long-term vision for the borough set out in our Sustainable Community Strategy and all are concerned with improving the quality of life, the strength of communities and the well-being of the borough

Five Key Priorities

The Partnership's work programme has traditionally focussed on the Local Area Agreement. Local Area Agreements are statements of some of the issues that are most important for particular locations and include actions to improve aspects of life locally. These are negotiated with Government which agrees a number of stretched targets - area of activity where the Partnership agrees to improve performance over three years and, in return, the Government undertakes to provide a reward grant providing those improvements are achieved.

The current LAA contains 32 stretched targets, all of which address needs in the Borough. However, the work programme necessary to work towards these stretch targets was wide ranging and lacked a defining narrative that described the most pressing issues facing Harrow in the short term. So the partnership adopted five priorities for 2009/10 based on the circumstances facing the borough and the opportunities that partnership offers. These are:

- Mitigating the impact of the recession
- The Environment and Climate Change
- Community Cohesion
- The Better Deal for Residents programme; and
- Public Health

For each priority, baselines and targets have been agreed. Four of these priorities are being driven forward by thematic management groups and are discussed in more detail in the relevant chapter. The fifth, the Better Deal for Residents Programme, is outlined within the chapter devoted to Harrow Chief Executives.

Harrow Chief Executives

As well as maintaining progress on the Local Area Agreement by managing the performance of all the organisations within the Partnership that are contributing to achieving the stretched targets, Harrow Chief Executives has been most concerned about the impact of the national fiscal deficit on local public services. Estimates of spending reductions of 30% or more over the next three years have become commonplace, although no one yet knows for certain the scale of cuts to come.

The Partnership's response has been to develop a concept of Total Place and, from that, a workstream called the Better Deal for Residents Programme. Total Place looks at how much public funding is spent in Harrow and compares the results on a service by service basis with other boroughs in London. For Harrow, the total public expenditure is approximately £1.9 billion a year including resources spent by Government directly, such as pensions and benefits, and via other organisations such as the NHS, the Greater London Authority and Transport for London, the Police and the Council.

The comparison with other boroughs suggested that efficiency savings could be achieved through the approach of working with families who receive the most support from local public services and through providing different forms of care to prevent the need

for some emergency admissions of older people to hospital and ensure that, once discharged from hospital, older people do not need to be re-admitted. Other aspects of the Better Deal for Residents Programme include:

- **Residents' contribution** by identifying ways in which residents can help in making Harrow better. For example, it is clear that if fewer people drop litter, there will be less for the Council to sweep up. The more that everyone recycles, the less the Council will have to spend on Landfill Tax, which is charged on refuse that is not re-used or recycled. This part of the Programme, which is called Better Together, is about much more than these examples. It is about residents taking more responsibility for their own future, for their area and for the borough as a whole. Changing behaviour to stay healthy – through, for example, better diet, not smoking and taking exercise – helps both individuals and the services that would otherwise be needed to support them; acting as a Neighbourhood Champion to report issues such as graffiti and fly tipping or broken street furniture helps the Council to improve the area, while becoming a volunteer with a local voluntary sector organisation can help to improve the Borough as a whole.
- **Service Efficiencies** where the same types of work are being done in most, if not all, departments, and across partner organisations. We are now examining whether the people who do the same type of work should be brought together to gain economies of scale and/or greater effectiveness.
- **Property** as NHS Harrow, Harrow Police and the Council have, between them, more than 150 buildings from which public services are organised and/or delivered. This provides scope for rationalising the public sector estate and for bringing together services which complement each other and make them easier for residents to use. There are some existing examples of buildings offering medical and social care assessment and support services. The Building Schools for the Future programme includes developments, such as the new Hatch End High School, where leisure facilities have been designed to be used by both the school and the public.
- **The Structure for the Future** which is considering public services are best provided by public bodies or whether they should be supplied by private, voluntary and community organisations, or a mixture of all three. It seems likely that there will be an increase in commissioning services from organisations which specialise in some forms of service provision and, certainly in the case of the voluntary sector, often have close links with and a deep understanding of Harrow residents and their needs.

These programmes can only be approached on a partnership basis since the savings will mostly come from joining up the services provided by different organisations in Harrow to improve efficiency and reduce duplication and, at the same time, improve residents' experience of using public services.

Comprehensive Area Assessment

Last year, a new assessment format was introduced by Central Government which looked at partnerships' capacity successfully to improve their local area. This was called the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). It involved the Audit Commission looking at how the Partnership determined its priorities and whether these reflected the needs of local people, how well the agreed priorities were being delivered and whether the partnership had the capacity for improvement in the future. The Assessment did not provide a single score or rating but instead delivered a narrative drawing attention to good performance and issues where improvements could be made.

The first CAA recognised that the partnership was working well across Harrow and delivering good outcomes for residents. The report also recognised that the Council, health services, the police and others are working towards a common vision for Harrow in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement. The Area Assessment highlighted the work taking place by Harrow's partners to meet future financial challenges and improve services through sharing staff, buildings and joining up services.

In particular, the CAA highlighted:

- The high quality services, for children and young people in Harrow
- The low numbers of young people who are not in education, employment or training
- The good support provided for young people with learning disabilities and/or disabilities and in need of protection
- The good progress that is being made on transforming services for adults who need additional care
- The above average life expectancy in Harrow and the low levels of drinking, teenage pregnancy and levels of drug misuse in comparison to the rest of England
- The cross agency work that local organisations are doing to tackle the economic issues through supporting employment locally
- The broad range of agencies who work together to further develop a 'sense of community'
- The low crime levels in Harrow as a result of effective partnership working resulting in fewer people now having a fear of crime

- The work that is taking place to improve the Harrow environment including having one of the best recycling performances in London.

The CAA also drew attention to issues where there could be improvements:

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- Environment - climate change, CO2 emissions and traffic congestion;
- Narrowing and Gap in educational achievement and permanent exclusions from schools;
- Improving skills and learning opportunities for adults
- Health inequalities including diabetes, TB and an improvement in overall adult lifestyles

The following areas will also be considered although they were not specifically identified as areas for improvement

- Community Cohesion
- Street Cleanliness

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All of these issues have been picked up in the draft Partnership submission for the current assessment.

Management Groups

Adult Health and Well-being

One the major focuses for this management group has been the development of a Health and Well-being strategy. Although not quite complete at the time of writing, significant progress has been made in identifying potential remedial action to address health inequalities. The ultimate measure of health inequality is the differential life expectancy across the borough, which is as much as seven years between the highest and lowest wards. Life expectancy is affected by a range of factors including affluence, education, diet, exercise, smoking, employment, and housing conditions amongst others. The emerging strategy also recognises the importance of lifestyle factors in determining the happiness of people locally which also affect mental health and wellbeing. The

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final parts of putting this strategy together involve devising detailed work plans to influence positively the factors that affect life expectancy against the backdrop of reducing resources.

Children's Trust

The Children's Trust has been formed to replace the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership with effect from April 2009.

The Children's Trust is the sum total of co-operation arrangements and partnerships between organisations with a role in improving outcomes for children and young people. The aim is to promote co-operation between partner organisations to improve children's well-being but the Children's Trust is not a separate organisation. Each partner within the Children's Trust retains its own functions and responsibilities within the wider partnership framework.

A formal Children's Trust is different from the previous arrangements because;

- it formally binds all partners into agreements on how we work together
- it includes agreement on financial commitments to meet agreed priorities
- it formalises partner commitment to resource the agreed priorities laid out in the Children and Young People's Plan
- partnership working is formally led, resourced and monitored
- it reduces the risks of variable financial positions impacting on financial commitment and on performance.
- it provides for overall sustained improvements in performance and outcomes for children and young people.

The Children's Trust has undertaken significant and high quality work of which only a selection can be reported here. This includes work to narrow the gap in achievement between top performers and the most vulnerable children in our schools, the good to outstanding initiative which is helping schools to move to an outstanding Ofsted rating. Currently, Harrow has the highest percentage of schools judged to be outstanding of any area in the country, while the majority is good and none is less than satisfactory. There has also been good progress in improving the safeguarding services with children looked after enjoying more stable placements and a record number of adoptions being completed.

Community Cohesion

Work on refreshing the structure and membership of the management group has been delayed pending the appointment of a Divisional Director of Communities. Meanwhile, however, the management group have progressed the 'Our Harrow Our Community' campaign and have prepared a community cohesion action plan centered around the following work areas:

- increasing the percentage of people who think that people from different backgrounds get on well together;
- increasing the perception that people in the area treat one another with respect and dignity;
- improving the perception that Harrow provides a an environment in which the third sector can thrive;
- increasing migrants English language skills and knowledge;
- increasing regular volunteering;
- increasing the percentage of people who feel that they can influence decisions affecting their locality;
- increasing civic participation;
- increasing the perception that people are treated fairly by local public services;
- reducing inequality in gaining qualifications; and
- increasing the percentage of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood.

Work initiated by the Community Cohesion Management Group was also recognised during the year by Community Partnership awards for the Somali Taskforce which won a project award and highly commended for the Community Road show led by the Hate Crime Forum.

Safer Harrow

The Safer Harrow Management Group has seen both total crime and the fear of crime reduce over the last year with very significant reductions in some crime types. The Group has also sought to build on the success of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and the Weeks of Action campaigns by launching Neighbourhood Champions with the aim of recruiting a champion for each and every street in the borough – a total of more than 2000.

Neighbourhood champions will provide a network of volunteer residents and give them a voice in their community. The scheme will

- use the Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators network as a base to provide a quick start for Neighbourhood Champions;
- ensure Public Realm and Community Safety teams work closely with Access Harrow to deliver cleaner and safer streets and develop a synergy with Neighbourhood Champions.

- develop relationships between the Council and Neighbourhood Champions focused on their experience of frontline services;
- improve the targeting of information about the Council's services;
- improve the information flow about enquiries and the Council's response using the technologies now available through Access Harrow;
- develop closer liaison between the public and the Council workforce.

Safer Harrow has also overseen the procurement of Smartwater, a proprietary property marking product which provides a unique mark for each household's property. It is expected that as the take up of Smartwater increases across the borough, the incidence of burglary will decline.

Sustainable Development and Enterprise

In the course of the last year, two major structural changes have been instigated by the management group – first adding the work of the Recession Busting Group to the Group's responsibilities and, second, bringing the Rayners Lane Neighbourhood into the Partnership.

The Recession Busting Group has been working to mitigate the impact of the recession on Harrow businesses and residents. It has established a detailed dashboard of indicators to monitor the impact of the recession, publicised various way of reducing the risks posed by the recession and been part of the team putting together the launch of the Credit Union in Harrow to provide saving and affordable loans.

The Rayners Lane Estate Committee has been working with the Home Group to produce a revised and updated Neighbourhood Plan. This has now been presented to the Partnership which has agreed to adopt its recommendations, link the plan into other work that is being promoted under the auspices of the partnership and look for opportunities to pilot new initiatives to tackle disadvantage in the Rayners Lane area.

Local Area Agreements

The Partnership's first Local Area Agreement (LAA) came to an end at the end of March 2009, with the exception of one target that ran on to the end of March 2010. During the last year, the Partnership has been collecting and verifying the outturn position against each of the stretched targets and submitting an initial claim for reward grant. The Partnership achieved the full stretched target in

seven of the 12 targets, virtually all of another target and one half of a two outcome target. In summary, eight and half of the twelve targets were achieved. The total possible reward grant available under the LAA was £6,337,575. The Partnership's claims will total £4,680,000. Of this total, half will be paid as capital and half as revenue.

In line with a decision of the Partnership taken in 2005, 50% of the reward grant received has been made available to Management Groups to distribute to the organisations that delivered the stretched performance and 'earned' the reward grant while the other 50% has been retained by the Partnership. Where reward grant has been 'earned' by public sector organisations, this has been recycled to support the work of the management groups concerned.

The partnership element of the reward grant has been recommended to be applied to address the 5 key priorities set out earlier in this report and, in particular, the Better Deal for Resident's programme. This is, in effect, an invest to save approach as the reward grant will meet some of the costs associated with restructuring services and property to enable the Better Deal outcomes to be achieved. As far as possible, reward grant will not be used to support ongoing revenue schemes that will generate demand for other funds on a year of two.

The Partnership is now in the final year of its second LAA which runs from 2008 to 2011, overlapping with the first by a year. The form of this LAA is rather different as it includes 32 stretched targets covering a wide range of issues but has a maximum reward grant element of £1.5m. The breadth and scope of this LAA has reduced the focus that characterised the first LAA but has involved far more services in joint, partnership working.

Performance Management

The increasing complexity of the LAA, the addition of the 5 Partnership priorities and the emphasis of the Comprehensive Area Assessment on partnership achievements have all combined to promote a review of Partnership Performance Management. A new and more rigorous performance management framework was agreed during this year which includes devoting every other meeting of Harrow Chief Executives to performance issues. The performance data has also been made available to the Board.

Improvement Programme

The Partnership took the opportunity last summer to consider how it could improve to better lead organisations in the Borough to achieve the vision set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy. With the help of a specialist consultancy, the Partnership

reviewed the models used in high performing areas around the country and held a diagnostic workshop to identify where and how improvements could be made. This resulted in a Partnership Improvement Plan covering the structure, the remit of each of the Management Groups, the involvement of different groups, ways of taking forward the Partnership's priorities, and improving communications. Progress against the Improvement plan is monitored through the revised performance management process.

Future Work

The coming 12 months are likely to be dominated by the need to make substantial progress on the Better Deal for Residents Programme. This is likely to take the form of joining up services between partners and establishing common direction, reporting and standards, seeking opportunities for co-location, both to release unnecessary public buildings and to achieve better service integration, and progressing the element of the programme that increases residents' involvement in the design, development and delivery of services, including taking more responsibility for the future of their area.

At the same time, the current LAA will come to an end and the processes of recording and verifying our final position against the 32 stretch targets will be undertaken. It is not yet known whether there will be a further LAA but, if there is, negotiations on the content, shape and degree of stretched performance will take up a significant proportion of capacity. Whether or not there is a new LAA, there will be a need to refresh the current Sustainable Community Strategy since its short-term action plan is provided by the LAA and will also expire in March 2011.

The Partnership Constitution is due to be reviewed and a risk register agreed, monitored and updated. The actions agreed as part of the Partnership Improvement Plan should be completed in this year. It is hoped that the Compact will be re-launched together with a new Partnership body to champion Compact working and attitudes across the Partnership and that a mutual complaints resolution procedure is agreed with one or more West London boroughs.

Finally, some members of the Partnership have expressed a wish to be more involved in its work, both as individuals and as representatives of organisations. Part of the ongoing challenge is to identify ways in which all partners can contribute their energy and expertise, and that of their organisations, to secure an improved future for Harrow

Membership

Harrow Partnership Board comprises	Harrow Chief Executives comprises the Chief Executive or equivalent of
Leader of the Council	Mayor of Council
Deputy Leader of the Council	Mayor of Police
Portfolio holder with responsibility for the Local Area Agreement	Mayor of Association of Voluntary Services
Leader of the Opposition	NSPCC
Deputy Leader of the Opposition	Mayor in Business
Chair of PCT	Job Centre Plus
Member of the MPA	North West London Hospitals NHS Trust
Representative of Chamber of Commerce	
Representative of Mayor in Business	
Representative of Large Employers Network	
Representative of 5 Voluntary and Community Sector	
Representative of University of Westminster	
Representative of Further Education	
Chair of Older People's Reference Group	
Representative of Learning and Skills Council	
Representative of North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	
Representative of Job Centre Plus	
Representative of London Fire Brigade	
Representative of Central and North West London Mental Health Trust	
Chair of CRE	
Representative of 2 Mayor Youth Parliament	
Representative of 5 Management Groups	