

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date:	8 September 2010
Subject:	Harrow Magistrates' Court Challenge Panel Report
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director Partnership Development and Performance
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	Not applicable
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Report from the Harrow Magistrates' Court Challenge Panel

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report outlines the findings from the Harrow Magistrates' Court scrutiny challenge panel which took place on 8 September 2010

Recommendations:

Councillors are recommended to:

- I. Consider and agree the report from the Challenge Panel;
- II. Refer the report to Cabinet.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

This report outlines the findings of the Harrow Magistrates' Court challenge panel which took place on 19 August 2010. The Overview and Scrutiny committee commissioned the Challenge Panel to consider Ministry of Justice proposals to close Harrow Magistrates' Court with the intention that its comments and observations would feed into the Council's formal response to the public consultation, due to end on 15 September 2010.

Financial Implications

As detailed in the attached report, the closure of Harrow Magistrates' Court has the potential to create significant additional costs for the Council.

Performance Issues

The attached report considers issues that the Council might encounter if Harrow Magistrates' Court is closed. The report specifically looks at the potential impact of the proposals on Harrow's Legal Department and the Collections & Housing Benefits Department. Consideration was also given to the performance of the Council's partners, including Harrow Police.

Environmental Impact

There are no specific environmental implications associated with this report.

Risk Management Implications

There are no specific risk management implications associated with this report

Corporate Priorities

The Challenge Panel considered the following Corporate Priorities:

- Improve support for vulnerable people by considering the impact of the magistrates' court closure on court users, many of which are victims of crime;
- Building stronger communities by considering the impact of the court closure on Local Justice.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Not required for this report.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Damian Markland, Acting Senior Democratic Services Officer,
0208 424 1785

Background Papers: None