

Your future our future
Working together
to save money
Pre-Consultation Document



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Why are we consulting?

Central government is cutting the funding that it gives to all councils across the country. In June 2010, Harrow Council was told that it would have to make cuts of £3.95m, and we are expecting more announcements about further cuts to the money we receive to deliver services. We believe we will have to cut 25-40% of the budget over the next few years. The Council has to save money and run services differently to make ends meet. We are going to make a lot of changes to save money, which will be good for our users, (e.g. reablement/helping you to be more independent), and some which most users will not notice, e.g. back office/procurement. However, this will not be enough, so we need to work with you to work out how we can get through the tough times together. With this in mind, over the next three years Adult Services may need to find up to £16m to contribute to managing the overall Council budget.

The future is going to be challenging, but we are committed to protecting overall eligibility for Adults Services, and wish to ensure vulnerable people living within the borough are able to access safe, efficient and high quality care. We do not want to make changes to services that will compromise the quality of the services, so where possible, we want to focus on services that can be improved and made more efficient, without adversely affecting the people that use those services. We would therefore, like to invite you to help us identify these areas for improvement.

These are difficult times, which mean we have difficult choices to make. The Council cannot stay as it is, and must make savings over the next four years. If we do not make savings, we may have to cut services. It is important that you are able to have your say and help the Council to deliver services that continue to meet the needs of people living in Harrow.

If all of the proposals in this document were implemented this would save the Council around £1.5m, which in the current financial climate is not enough, however, with your help we need to go beyond this level. If you do not agree with these options, we will need your suggestions as to what could be introduced to replace them, and, given the level of savings required we also need additional options that could be considered.

Our commitment to you

The Council is committed to helping people in Harrow to have a bigger say in how services are planned and delivered. We want to work with you, to decide what changes need to be made and how to deliver services in the future.

We have developed a Steering Group, which includes representatives from organisations and people in the community. This group will make sure we are carrying out the consultation with as many people as possible, and will also help us to listen to your views.



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The timetable for consultation

We want to give you as long as we can to feedback your views, and therefore, plan to carry out the consultation in two phases; a pre-consultation phase and a full consultation phase. The ideas that are collected throughout the pre-consultation phase will help us to decide the changes that could be made to services. We will then talk to you about these changes and explain how they have been developed in the full consultation.

Pre-consultation phase	18 October 2010 to 17 December 2010
Gathering views and deciding what changes we will ask you about in the full consultation and reporting how these decisions were made to everybody who was consulted.	20 December 2010 to 31 January 2011
Full consultation phase	1 February 2011 to 30 April 2011
Considering views and making recommendations for change	1 May to 31 May 2011
Report to Harrow Council Cabinet	Summer 2011
Feedback showing how your views shaped the changes to services	Summer 2011

This is the way we are going to talk to you

The Steering Group have helped us to design the consultation, to ensure that as many people as possible can give their views.



Launch Event

We are going to launch the pre-consultation phase with an event. The event will give us the opportunity to talk to a wider audience about the changes, and to listen to your ideas. We will also be checking that the way we intend to involve people throughout the consultation will help us receive as many views and ideas as possible.

Postal Survey

By the end of October 2010 there will be a postal survey carried out with all 6,500 users and carers receiving Adult Care services in Harrow. We hope that a lot of people will complete the survey and offer their views. The information we collect will give us a rich source of information to help us to decide the changes that could be made to services. We will then talk to you about these changes and how they have been developed in the full consultation, during spring 2011.

Pre-consultation document

We want all residents in Harrow to be given the opportunity to give their views, which is why we have developed the pre-consultation document, as it outlines information about the consultation process and helps you, as residents, to start thinking about which changes can be made to services to help us to save money and what you think of our ideas. This is also a good opportunity to ask how we can improve all the services we provide in Adult Care.

Out and about

We also know that not all users and carers will want to complete a survey, so we will be offering other opportunities for you to give us your views. We are going to come into the community and work with local organisations to ensure as many



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people as possible can talk to us, which we will do in the following ways:

- **Road shows;**
- **Discussion groups;**
- **Attending Community Group meetings when invited; and**
- **Focus Groups.**

If you belong to a community group that would be interested in giving their views, we will make every effort to come along and talk to you. If you need some help to be able to give your views, please let us know, as our staff may be able to help you. Please contact us using the details at the end of this document if you would like to discuss this further.

What are we going to talk to you about?

We want to hear your experiences and ideas about all of the services that are provided in the Council's Adults Services Department.

These services are:

- Care Management
- Homecare
- Day Care
- Occupational Therapy
- Transport to Community Services
- Residential and Nursing Care
- Buying Adult Care Services (Commissioning)
- Supporting People
- Mental Health
- Helpline
- Neighbourhood Resource Centres
- User and Carer Engagement
- Safeguarding
- Brokerage (helping people to spend their personal budgets).



This consultation is an opportunity for us to listen to you and act where we can, on what you are telling us. We have also done some early work to develop ideas, and would like your opinions about these and what other options you think there might be. If you tell us not to take forward any of these options then we will need to work with you to identify alternative ways to deliver the savings. Whatever changes we make, safeguarding Adult Services is a priority.

1. Meals on Wheels

The Harrow Meals on Wheels Service provides a service to approximately 300 people living in Harrow. Harrow Council currently provides meals to people who meet the eligibility criteria. The types of meals we currently provide are standard, Kosher and Asian. In 2010-11 the cost of this service is £500,000, of which £355,000 is recovered from service users by way of meal charges, with £145,000 funded by the Council. Service users pay for the meals based on the charges agreed by Council, and are not subject to financial assessment. The people that deliver meals on wheels are highly valued by service users, who see a friendly face and are offered the added comfort that they have someone who can inform social care if there are any concerns and we know that this is a highly valued service.

Our ideas include:

- Hot meals presently cost £4.55 and frozen meals cost £2.95. If we charged £4.55 for hot and frozen meals it would generate savings of £16,000.
- Changing the current providers of the Asian and Jewish meals could generate savings of around £23,000.
- Increasing charges to fully recover costs would generate £145,000.

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2. Help us to decide the cost of your care

We would like to ask you whether you feel that charges should be related to the ability to pay for services and what issues we need to be considering if this policy was put in place.

Currently service users pay for services which are agreed by the Council as being chargeable, although the amount an individual pays is based on the individual financial circumstances as part of the financial assessment process.

At present, service users will pay for home care services up to a maximum of £250 per week. There are approximately 1,000 service users in receipt of home care. Of these service users, approximately 200 pay the maximum charge of £250 per week.

Residential care charges are set nationally by the Department of Health, so we are not consulting on these.

The cost of providing transport and day care services are not recovered from service users. There are approximately 950 service users in receipt of day care and 690 (in total) who are receiving transport services.

A contribution policy would result in the total cost of care services, (rather than charges being raised for individual services) being chargeable, subject to the ability to pay being assessed. For clients in receipt of a personalisation budget, payments would be made after the client's contribution has been made.

Some ideas are:

- Removing the ceiling on the charges for those in a better financial position, who are able to pay for all care received. This could generate around £300k subject to financial assessment.
- Charge for all services e.g. day care, respite care and transport that are not currently charged. Charging for day care alone could generate around £200k assuming attendance for two days at a charge of £30.75 per day.

3. Transport to Community Services

Community Transport supports approximately 256 service users to access in and out of the borough on a daily basis with a total of 1,280 journeys per week. It costs Harrow Council £2.1m to run this service for vulnerable adults. People attending day services, and travelling to and from residential units, benefit from the service. In addition, a number of voluntary sector and residential groups also benefit through their users accessing the service.



Our ideas include:

- Looking at the criteria applied for eligibility to the service;
- Helping people to become more independent by including travel training;
- Looking at ways that semi-assisted travel could be provided; and
- Identifying ways that family/carers could assist with some of the transport arrangements.

If all of these ideas were implemented it would bring in additional savings of around £500,000 over the next few years.

4. Annual Inflationary Uplift for all Fees and Charges

The Council currently uplift charges for some services on a yearly basis in line with inflation. What we are proposing is to introduce an annual inflationary uplift to all fees and charges. These uplifts would be introduced as part of the wider Council's budget setting process in relation to all fees and charges. This would bring in additional income to the Council and we could also make administrative savings.

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5. Concessionary Travel

The following concessionary travel services are provided for eligible residents in Harrow:

- **Freedom Pass:** The scheme allows free travel on buses, tube, national rail (London network), the DLR and Tramlink, for older and disabled people who reside in the Borough. These are age related and disability related automatic passes, and as such are not affected by this consultation. The consultation however, relates to Discretionary passes, which Harrow currently offers to claimants not meeting the automatic criteria and which limits concessionary travel within London. Freedom passes are valid for five years and there are currently 1,623 passes issued costing £289,446 yearly.
- **Blue Badge:** The Blue Badge scheme gives free and dedicated parking close to amenities, for drivers and passengers with mobility related disabilities, or who are blind. Blue Badge holders are able to park on yellow lines for up to three hours and are also exempt from the central London congestion charge. A pass is valid for a three-year period whereupon pass holders have to reapply. As at 2007, there were approximately 9,695 people allocated Blue Badges, which is costing around £117,000 in lost parking charges.
- **Taxicard:** Is for people with serious difficulties with walking, (including breathing problems and sight loss), to travel in taxis at reduced rates. The scheme in Harrow allows members to take a maximum of 108 trips per annum. In 2009/10 there were approximately 5,232 users of this service, which is costing Harrow £652,000. Taxicard is financed by London Boroughs, with support from the Mayor. However, numbers are increasing mainly due to demographics, and reviewing eligibility and trip numbers on this discretionary service is a potential way of capping costs.

A service efficiency review has recently been carried out on this service and has found that administrative processes are disjointed with no 'single view' of concessionary travel. It was also found that the eligibility criteria was not being applied consistently, and in many cases was being interpreted generously when compared to other boroughs. We will be improving the way in which our administrative processes currently function.

The ideas that we would like to discuss with you are:

- Establishing an eligibility policy for a discretionary Disabled Person's Freedom Pass, which includes the following options:
 - Not issuing new passes, would deliver a saving of £289,446 but phased in over a number of years;
 - Stopping all existing passes, would deliver a saving of £289,446 immediately;
 - Retaining an option for exceptional cases only, would deliver a saving of £270,000; and
 - Retaining for specific mental health eligibility criteria only, would deliver a saving of approximately £149,942.
- Establishing levels of entitlement for multiple services as part of a response to London Council's proposals on future Taxicard funding.
 - A Blue Badge driver should not be considered as eligible for a Taxicard;
 - A Blue Badge passenger should have a reduced Taxicard trip entitlement to cover for occasional unavailability of a vehicle; or
 - A Blue Badge passenger can elect to have either a Blue Badge or a Taxicard;
 - A Freedom Pass holder should not be entitled to a Taxicard, or should have a reduced trip entitlement, for example 52 trips per annum.

The above would not deliver direct savings but would either restrict growth/cap expenditure levels in Taxicard expenditure or increase Parking income.

- Agreeing to charging £10/£15/£20 for lost/damaged replacement Freedom passes would deliver a saving of between £10,000 and £40,000.



These are some of our ideas, but what we want to do is hear your views on these suggestions and any other ways you think we can make savings. We want to work with you to decide what changes need to be made and how we deliver services in the future. We will be talking to as many people as possible including users and carers to ensure our services are shaped by the people who use them now including people who might use our services in the future.

Contact Details:

Please contact us with your views and ideas in any of the following ways:

- Website: <http://www.harrow.gov.uk/adultservicesconsultation>
- Email: adultservicesconsultation@harrow.gov.uk
- Telephone: **020 8424 1017** (*Please note that this telephone line only receives answer phone messages – these will be collated and included within the consultation however it will not be possible to provide individual responses*).
- By freepost: FREEPOST RSKK XXBR-UCHU, Harrow Council, Adults Services Consultation PO Box 65, Harrow. HA1 2XG
(If you are a user or carer and have received a survey from Ipsos MORI please DO NOT return the survey to this address)

How are we going to tell you about the decisions that have been made?

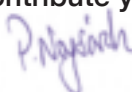
All of your views will be collected and the Steering Group will help us to listen to your ideas and consider which changes we can make to services. Recommendations will then be made to the Portfolio Holder and the Adults Transformation Board, who will decide which changes we are going to talk to you about in the full consultation in January 2011.

We will write a report about the views that have been collected, and how they have been considered and have influenced the changes that will be included in the full consultation. We will send this report to anybody that has identified they would like a copy, and will also make it available on our web page <http://www.harrow.gov.uk/adultservicesconsultation>

We value your views and hope you will contribute your ideas.



Cllr Margaret Davine



Paul Najsarek