



HARROW STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Partnership Structure – Consultation Document

18th April 2011

Introduction

The Partnership Structure has been reviewed to develop a proposal that reflects the new priorities which are described in a paper elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting and reduce duplication across the partnership structure. In summary, the changes involve:

- Creating an Assembly, with a membership largely the same as the current Board, that would meet in a more informal manner, twice a year, to discuss issues such as what to include in a refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy, the best ways of extending community involvement in Harrow or the needs of the diverse communities of the borough.
- Reducing the size of the Board, which would deal with business items such as receiving monitoring reports on progress in implementing both the Sustainable Community Strategy as well as receiving advice from the assembly on issues such as developing strategic direction for the Harrow Strategic Partnership and examining from a community perspective initiatives explored by Harrow Chief Executives;
- Streamlining the management groups and bodies that make up the partnership family.

In proposing changes, it is recognised both the value of the work undertaken by existing parts of the Partnership and the contribution made by groups and individuals. The change proposals should not be seen as rendering any part of the current agenda unimportant but are designed to sharpen the partnership's focus on the most pressing priorities for Harrow and Harrow's public services, including groups support by public services. Where it is suggested that partnership groups are disbanded, it is intended that work in these areas continue with the support of people from a range of agencies but not within the formal partnership structure which needs to be attuned more closely to the new priorities.

Proposed Action

In order to develop a proposal that is fit for purpose for all Partnership members, it is suggested that the Policy and Partnerships team lead a consultation with as many of the Board members as possible over the next four weeks to explain the thinking behind the initial ideas outlined above and gather ideas about these or other changes. The results of this work would be written up and circulated for comments as early as possible to give Board Members time to consider the ideas before the next meeting of the Board on the 12th July, where the new structures would be agreed.

What are you asking the Partnership Board to do
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The Partnership Board is recommended to consider and approve the suggestions made for the future of partnership structure;
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Summary of the Issue

The current constitution defines the Harrow Strategic Partnership as a conduit for change to address the social, economic, environmental, health, education, and community safety needs of the communities of Harrow as reflected in the Sustainable Community Strategy and is the senior partnership in the borough. Its functions include:

- Monitoring the progress and evaluating the success of the Sustainable Community Strategy, through a Partnership Performance Monitoring Framework, ensuring that its kept up to date;
- Encouraging members of the Harrow Strategic Partnership to contribute to the co-ordination of plans, partnerships and initiatives that are delivered in Harrow;
- Jointly developing cross agency proposals and bids for local, regional, national and international funding in consultation with the relevant Accountable Body
- Working together to develop an integrated network of public and other services, focusing on outcomes, minimising bureaucracy and working towards aligning budgets for appropriate projects and areas of work; and
- Assessing the effectiveness of the work of the Harrow Strategic Partnership annually to ensure it delivers the above items

Partnership Board

The most significant change that has occurred since the constitution was agreed in 2010 is that Local Area Agreements will not be renewed and so when the most recent agreement ended last month, there will be no new programme of work that is capable of generating reward grant funding.

In reviewing the constitution relating to the Partnership Board, the function of debating issues of strategic importance to Harrow has been little used and that no such items have been initiated by community representatives. To this extent, the Partnership Board is not fulfilling its remit of providing a forum for exploring the implications of significant change.

A possible future pattern of working could involve a smaller Board, which meets up to four times a year to transact business, hold Harrow Chief Executives to account for progress and set strategic direction.

A key role of the Harrow Strategic Partnership is the engagement opportunities it provides to a wide range of partners/agencies; however one of the key weaknesses of the existing Board is the lack of debate around strategic issues. To build on the existing Summits and develop opportunities for innovative and creative thinking it is proposed to hold up to twice a year, a café style debate around the big questions (i.e. those issues of importance to Harrow), to gather opinions from all sectors and groups within Harrow, which will be named an Assembly. The Assembly will prove an opportunity for partners to bring an issue to the table

and undertake an action learning style event to debate the issues and drawn together recommendations. These will then be captured and developed outside of the meeting.

In tandem with these Assembly meetings, the wider Summit meetings would continue. Partners would be invited to select topics and lead sessions rather than allowing the Council to continue to set the agenda for these and Assembly events. There would continue to be up to two Summits a year.

The revised Board could include:

- The Leader of the Council;
- one other majority party Councillor;
- one minority party Councillor
- two representatives of the voluntary and community sector; *(via an election process)*
- one representative of the business community
- one representative of the PCT
- one GP representative
- one representative of the North West London Hospital NHS Trust
- one representative of the Further Education Sector
- one representative of the Metropolitan Police
- one representative of the London Fire Brigade
- one representative of Job Centre Plus
- Chair of Harrow Chief Executives

The wider assembly would include all of the current membership of the Partnership Board and, possibly, several others.

Harrow Chief Executives (HCE)

There are no significant changes to the functionality of HCE proposed but some related to membership. Specifically, it is proposed to invite a representative from the Clinical Commissioning Board, to identify, invite a new representative of the business community, and resolve the voluntary and community sector representation by having an agreed and permanent presence.

Further thought is to be given to including a representative of the Integrated Care Organisation and Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust on an as and when needed basis. Health representative on HCE needs to be considered alongside the Health and Wellbeing Board discussion to prevent duplication of membership.

It is, however, suggested that HCE should formally endorse the terms of reference and the size of all management groups, sub-groups and task and finish groups. Proposals for groups should set out their purpose, duration and the organisations that would be represented and at what level. Proposals would be measured by the value that would be added.

Management, sub and task and finish groups

Partnership working is essential and should continue across all fields of activity irrespective of whether there was a relevant management group or any other group established. Partnership working across organisations should be seen as business as usual but partnership groups themselves should only be established when there is demonstrable value in doing so. Similarly, groups should report to the appropriate part of the structure only when there is a clear purpose in doing so. This paper does not specifically look into delivery groups which sit underneath Management Groups. However, as part of the discussion on management group's role and purpose it is important to reflect on the remit of the delivery groups.

The prospective Health and Well Being Board and the current Safer Harrow Management Group both have statutory basis and are therefore both necessary. A Health and Wellbeing working group, however, have agreed not to establish a shadow Health and Well Being Board for the time being but are exploring creating a more informal umbrella/pathfinder group.

A decision now needs to be taken on when the existing Adults Health and Well Being Board should be dissolved. The existing Board oversees a number of sub-groups not all of which are currently functioning effectively. If the Board were to be dissolved now, the sub-groups that would support the priorities for the coming year should be retained and report progress through the HCE performance report while the others would report to the organisation responsible for the function (such as the PCT for smoking cessation). If the current Board was maintained, there could be a confusion of roles with the umbrella/pathfinder group.

It is proposed to hold a workshop in June with members of the Children's Trust, the Adult Health and Wellbeing Group and the sub groups. An intended outcome of the workshop is to engage partners in the development of more defined and smaller bodies, which are aligned to the proposed priorities.

The Community Cohesion Management Group comprises representatives of voluntary and community organisations that have an interest in establishing and maintaining good community relations. In this, it has interests in common with the Safer Harrow Management Group and the Better Together Group.

The Sustainable Development and Enterprise Management Group cover housing, planning, economic development and the environment and include partnership links with the Rayners Lane regeneration programme. It is important that the Rayners Lane link is maintained and there is a place for discussion on strategic housing to be undertaken. Advice from the Council's Place Shaping department and the Home Group will be sought during the consultation period to identify a possible solution to this gap.

Neither the Community Cohesion Management Group nor the Sustainable Development and Enterprise Management Group in their current form contribute specifically or uniquely to the new priorities. It is suggested that the Sustainable Development and Enterprise Management Group and Community Cohesion Management Group are disbanded in their current form and discussions commence with the Chairs to review how these groups can be transformed to support the new Partnership priorities, once agreed. This will include the addition to the Better Together Group of the relationship with the voluntary and community sector

If the above was taken into account this would provide the following Management Groups

- The new Umbrella Health and Wellbeing Pathfinder Group (and disband the existing group)
- Safer Harrow

Task and Finish Groups

There is already a number of task and finish groups in place. Once the new Partnership priorities are approved there will be a need to establish task and finish groups to take forward the priorities for 2011/12. The list of groups identified at present comprises:

- Implications of welfare changes
- Reablement Group
- Integrated Children's Working Group
- Commissioning model for Children's Services
- Better Together
- A series of Practitioner Groups looking at processes and how different organisations can best support agreed outcomes

The proposed list of Task and Finish Groups are indicative and will be confirmed once the priorities and the associated workplan are finalised.

Other Partnership Functions

The following groups are also part of the Partnership:

- Greener Harrow
- Harrow Senior Residents People's Assembly (the name for the successor to OPRG and POP)
- The Voluntary and Community Sector Forum
- The Recession Busting Group
- Local Safeguarding Children's Board

Greener Harrow, HSRA, and the VCSF are all reference groups that bring an expertise or special interest perspective to the Partnership's deliberations. They are self governing bodies that have the ability to contribute to partnership discussions and to give advice. It is recommended that the Partnership continues to offer them this facility and that a representative(s) of each of these groups attend the Assembly.

Currently the Local Safeguarding Children's Board does not formally feed into the governance structure of the Partnership. It is therefore proposed that the Board reports quarterly to Harrow Chief Executives and if required any strategic issues are forwarded to the Board for discussion.

The Recession Busting Group was established as a specialist response to the economic downturn and is, effectively, a Task and Finish Group although one whose duration is beyond local influence. It is recommended that this should continue, at least in the short term, until the worklessness priority has been scoped.

Finally although the rationalisation of the partnership structure may appear to reduce opportunities for individuals and groups to contribute to debate, represent points of view and shape the strategic direction of the Partnership. The proposed pattern of Assembly and Summit meetings allows for considerable public and interest group input. However it is felt to be needed, additional engagement activity can be considered, although on the whole maintaining groups primarily to enable engagement opportunities does not represent good governance or use of resources.