

Appendix 1

Update on actions to address recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Review

No.	Recommendation	Person responsible	Progress update	Indication of achievement
1	To have a Council-financed funding support officer within the voluntary and community sector to support groups in a variety of ways e.g. grant applications, adapting to any changes in the grants process, developing funding strategies, meeting monitoring requirements, procurement processes, community assets. To work closely with the Council's external funding officer.	Corporate Director of Finance and Corporate Director for Community and Environment	Achieved. Cabinet agreed 50% match funding with HAVS to support a Funding Officer for the Voluntary Sector. The officer was appointed to this post in September 2009. The Council's External Funding Manager was involved in the recruitment of this new officer and shared line management responsibilities with HAVS.	Green
2	To have a relationship manager at the Council to act as the main channel of liaison with groups in the voluntary and community sector.	Corporate Director for Community and Environment and Assistant Chief Executive	The Divisional Director for Community and Culture is the Council's relationship manager and is the main channel of liaison with groups in the voluntary and community sector.	Green
3	To develop a third sector strategy for Harrow that seeks to help define the local relationship with the VCS and invests in VCS development in line with partnership priorities. The third sector strategy should also seek to address the recognised gaps in the models developed and proposed by the scrutiny review - Community Trust model (for example gaps in commissioning and premises) and further work on the model of commissioning in the Strategic Relationships model.	Corporate Director for Community and Environment	The Third Sector Strategy was developed and adopted by Cabinet in April 2010. The strategy was co-sponsored by Brendon Hills, Corporate Director for Community and Environment and HAVS. The strategy was developed with input from a project working group made up of both voluntary and statutory sector representatives. It was also informed by the results of a consultation process with the wider VCS. The delivery of the action plan is monitored by a the Third Sector Strategy working group chaired by the Divisional Director for Community and Culture.	Green
4	To ask VCS representatives on the HSP to feed back more systematically to sector colleagues through regular emails or as updates in existing newsletters.	Assistant Chief Executive	The notes of Harrow Chief Executives meetings are made available on the Council website within 5 days of each meeting. Briefing notes of HSP Board meetings are available to HSP representatives and are on the Council website within 5 days of each meeting.	Green
5	To recognise the real opportunity to develop volunteering in Harrow where supply of volunteers outstrips demand – investing more resource to build the capacity of Harrow Volunteers Centre to provide infrastructure and support to small voluntary groups in recruiting and training volunteers and co-ordinating skills for day to day management of groups.	Corporate Director for Community and Environment	Community Development services revised the service level agreement with HAVS in 2009 to agree new targets for the Volunteers Centre. These targets required HAVS to focus resources on providing more infrastructure support to groups to assist them with volunteer recruitment, training and management. Community Development has also worked with the Volunteer Centre on initiatives such as Harrow's Heroes (to support and recognise volunteers) and the One-4-One scheme (the Council's employee volunteering scheme). The Volunteer Centre has also received additional funding from the Council to support organisations with trustee and governance training.	Green
6	To advertise the Volunteers Centre on the Harrow Council website.	Corporate Director for Community and Environment	Information about the Volunteers Centre is available through the Council website through the A-Z of services.	Green
7	To develop robust governance arrangements for the Compact, to include refreshing the document every two years, promoting the Compact and its way of working, formalising conflict resolution (providing a framework for stage 1 complaints). To be the responsibility of a new Compact Board of representatives to feed up to the HSP, and therefore not reliant on individuals.	Assistant Chief Executive	A proposal has been developed to review the governance arrangements for the Compact this includes a proposal to develop a new compact board and peer review arrangements. An outline structure has been agreed by the Voluntary and Community Sector Forum and detailed terms of reference are under development.	Green
8	To produce a reader-friendly summary of the new compact document and distribute this to councillors, officers and colleagues in the voluntary and community sector.	Assistant Chief Executive	The compact refresh has been completed except for the funding code which has been drafted and is now the subject of consultation with the voluntary and community sector and service departments. When this is complete, a reader-friendly summary will be made available. Provisional timescale is July 2011.	Amber

9	To roll out training on the Compact and what it means to partnership working. To be included in members' training, management/officer training and training within the VCS and other partner organisations within the HSP, to raise awareness and understanding. (Please note that part (a) of the recommendation was agreed by Cabinet through the interim report).	Assistant Chief Executive	Some training for members of the Grants Panel has been undertaken. The Member Development programme has been curtailed and it is not certain that wider Compact training can be accommodated. Officer training to focus on the new funding and procurement code when agreed will take place. Previous work with the Office for the Compact ended with the impending abolition of that office.	Amber
10	To rationalise the grant-giving process – to clearly define processes, appeals mechanisms and adherence to these in order to improve consistency and transparency.	Corporate Director for Community and Environment	A grants consultation exercise was conducted in May 2009. VCS organisations were consulted on the grant eligibility criteria, size of grants, funding priorities and process of application. The results of this consultation informed the grant application process for 2010/11. A further consultation has been undertaken in January 2011 to seek views on current arrangements for grants, community lettings and Community Premises. The results of this consultation will inform the process for 2012/13.	Green
11	To move towards three-year funding commitments through grants so as to encourage stability and more scope for planning ahead within the sector.	Corporate Director of Finance and Corporate Director for Community and Environment	The Council's funding is only known for 2011-12. There is currently no clarity on the timing of the next comprehensive spending review or whether a 3 year settlement will be reached during 2011-12 to cover 2012-13 to 2013-14. In addition there is also a possibility of a return to one year only settlements. This situation will be kept under review when there is more certainty further discussions will be undertaken to consider this recommendation more fully.	Amber
12	To consider a longer-term approach (5-10 year funding) for SLAs awarded to VCS infrastructure organisations.	Corporate Director of Finance and Corporate Director for Community and Environment	The Council's funding is only known for 2011-12. There is currently no clarity on the timing of the next comprehensive spending review or whether a 3 year settlement will be reached during 2011-12 to cover 2012-13 to 2013-14. In addition there is also a possibility of a return to one year only settlements. This situation will be kept under review when there is more certainty further discussions will be undertaken to consider this recommendation more fully.	Amber
13	To agree that the 2009-10 grants round should be conducted in full compliance with the existing criteria and process and in a transparent way.	Corporate Director for Community and Environment	Cabinet agreed at their meeting in December 2008 that the 2009-10 grants round should be conducted in full compliance with the existing criteria. The 2009-10 grants round concluded in March 2009. A number of compact challenges were received as a result of the decision-making process.	Green
14	For the Grants Advisory Panel to engage with the VCS to consider the criteria for the 2010/11 grants round and take account of the concerns raised through this scrutiny review about the current system. To bring these proposals to a scrutiny challenge panel in preparation for the 2010/11 grants application process	Corporate Director for Community and Environment	A grants consultation exercise was conducted with the VCS during May 2009. Proposals for revisions to the criteria and application process were discussed with a scrutiny challenge panel and the Grants Advisory Panel in June 2009. This resulted in the introduction of revised criteria and amendments to the grants process.	Green
15	To ensure that all procurement exercises and available premises are advertised in a regular email/newsletter and that the VCS are on that distribution list. To also raise awareness with the VCS that the Council's Web pages for procurement include much help and advice on accessing procurement routes.	Corporate Director of Finance and Corporate Director for Community and Environment	A new procurement strategy has been developed which supports the principle of local procurement. Procurement have negotiated with Corporate suppliers for the VCS to access these contracts and benefit from these deals. The first contract accessed by the VCS through HAD is the Council's Stationery contract this will be followed by access to support with paper, mobile, IT and Utilities. The "Shop Local" initiative was launched to facilitate low value purchases directly from local and third sector markets.	Green
16	To optimise the VCS access to procurement exercises through a fair assessment of the procurement requirements necessary for each tendering exercise.	Corporate Director of Finance.	All tenders are advertised on the Council's website offering fair access to VCS. Additionally, procurement have reviewed its tendering procedures and simplified the Pre Qualification Questionnaire and Tender documents to enable sole traders, partnerships and third sector providers to bid for public contracts.	Green

17	To ask the HSP partners to compile a register of their community premises/rooms and develop a protocol for their use by the VCS. To encourage a fairer and more transparent system of community lettings.	Assistant Chief Executive and Corporate Director for Community and Environment	A strategic review of key sites occupied by public sector partners is being undertaken by the Place shaping directorate, this will include identification of opportunities for third sector usage.	Amber
18	To ask the relevant council directorate(s) (concerned with lettings especially of schools) to assess the current issues around community lettings (of schools and council buildings such as the Teachers' Centre and community centres) and offer possible solutions to these. To articulate this assessment and present possible solutions to a scrutiny committee and concurrently feed into scrutiny's review of extended schools.	Corporate Director for Community and Environment	Community Development and Children's Services met to assess issues around community lettings. A paper was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee meeting on the 28th July 2009 and at a follow up meeting on the 12th October 2009. An action plan to address these issues was developed. Further consultation with the VCS has been undertaken in January 2011 which sought views on how community lettings should be provided in the future. The results of this consultation and proposals for future delivery will be presented to Cabinet in May 2011.	Green
19	To task the HSP with creating an environment where creative people can thrive and make best use of community assets. To seek people with a passion for developing social entrepreneurship and social capital.	Assistant Chief Executive Corporate Director for Community and Environment	The Partnership is considering a draft priority for tackling worklessness which would include opportunities for social entrepreneurship. The Council's new corporate plan includes a priority action to develop a strategy for community management/ownership of Council assets/services by March 2012 and for one scheme to have been	Amber
20	To establish a Community Trust for the council's grants administration processes and carry out further work on how this can best be achieved - the feasibility of a community trust model for grant-giving in Harrow should be fully explored, scoped and costed, using the scrutiny proposal as a basis. To include developing a better understanding of realistic timescales with regard to implementation and the ability to serve future needs of the borough, for example with regard to the Comprehensive Area Assessment.	Corporate Director for Community and Environment	As part of the work undertaken to develop the Third Sector Strategy evidence was collected on experiences in other local authority areas where the grants function had been outsourced to a Community Trust. Some preliminary research on the feasibility, cost and risk implications has been undertaken. The consultation undertaken in January 2011 has also sought views on who should administer a small grants programme in the future, the response to this question was that 62% were in favour of this responsibility remaining with the Council.	Green
21	To conduct a feasibility of the Strategic Relationships Model for commissioning, using the scrutiny proposal as a basis. To include developing a better understanding of realistic timescales with regard to implementation, cultural/organisational shifts required, costs and the ability to serve future needs of the borough.	Corporate Director for Community and Environment	As part of the delivery of the Third Sector Strategy the Council has expanded the remit of the External Funding network to include addressing issues of capacity building. In order to prepare for commissioning a draft checklist for commissioners has been developed and training to improve VCS skills and capacity to bid for commissioning opportunities has been delivered. The results of the consultation undertaken in January 2011 indicate strong support (86%) for the Council securing some services from the VCS through commissioning. A commissioning model will be developed on the basis of the results of the consultation.	Green