

Response to Recommendations

Recommendation	Response	Lead Officer	Timescale	Response March 2011
1 We urge officers to ensure that the Borough's sustainable community strategy is at the core of all of our property proposals and drives a coherent and ambitious borough-wide strategy for asset management/development.	Agreed The Sustainable Community Strategy provides the policy and priority context for the property strategy. Consideration is currently being given to the benefits which could be realised through the adoption of a HSP Property Strategy.	Andrew Trehern Corporate Director, Place Shaping	September 2010	A Council property strategy was compiled and has been used to guide asset development and disposal decisions during 2010/11. The fundamental changes which were introduced by the coalition government, eg localism agenda, NHS review, etc prevented the development of the HSP wide strategy.
2 We urge the Council to develop its asset management proposals in partnership with other public sector organisations. The work of this review and other Scrutiny projects has identified the opportunities offered through capital developments and we remain unsure that all of the opportunities for sharing resources are being exploited. We appreciate that this is difficult but nonetheless we would urge officers to continue to identify joint objectives.	Agreed The asset management (Property) strategy will be developed in consultation with the members of the HSP Board.	Andrew Trehern Corporate Director, Place Shaping	September 2010	Extensive collaboration with the Police, the PCT, GP partnerships, DWP, WLA has been and is ongoing. This engagement will influence asset development decisions over the medium term form 2011/12.
3 Whilst we commend the work of the Place Shaping directorate and its ambitions regarding the management of the asset base, we would	The Place Shaping review and approach to asset management will be guided by the LDF Core Strategy, which sets a spatial vision for the whole of Harrow.	Andrew Trehern Corporate Director, Place	LDS Programme	Very good progress was made during 2010/11, in respect of the various planning policy documents which combine to form the LDF.

	<p>suggest that there is still more that could be done. In particular, we would recommend that the detailed area planning profiles as adopted in Camden are developed in Harrow. This will ensure that the needs of a local area, its asset base, both public and private and the views of its residents about the local character can be at the heart of development as we emerge from recession.</p>	<p>The Core Strategy will be supported by an infrastructure plan, based on identified need, vitality profiles, and other local, area based information.</p> <p>It is not intended to progress the development of Area Profiles, such as those previously used in Camden, as officers consider that this approach would add limited additional value.</p> <p>Therefore, it is not intended to progress this recommendation at this stage.</p>	<p>Shaping</p>		<p>The LDF Core Strategy has been revised and restructured on an area basis.</p> <p>The LDS was adopted in December 2010 incorporating an Area Action Plan for the Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area.</p>
4	<p>We also suggest that the detailed planning profile also includes information and intelligence on not only the Council's asset base but partners' assets co-located with our own. The recession offers us the opportunity to make innovative proposals around the asset base through reduced property prices which can in turn offer innovative solutions to property issues for ourselves and partners. We would suggest that discussions with Hillingdon Council would be helpful in this context.</p>	<p>See comments above.</p> <p>The "Information and Intelligence" which has been compiled in respect of property includes all of our key partner's facilities.</p> <p>The Property and Place Shaping review of the Corporate Transformation Programme is looking at all HSP assets, and partners are directly engaged in that process. The potential for co-location is a key objective of the review and is already being pursued actively with partners where this will provide customer service, efficiency and sustainability gains.</p> <p>Consideration has been given to the purchase of property at</p>	<p>Andrew Trehern Corporate Director, Place Shaping</p>	<p>On going</p>	<p>There are a number of good examples where co-location arrangements have matured including:- Alexander Avenue Health Centre, the Childrens centres, Neighbourhood resource centres, Police safer neighbourhood offices.</p> <p>Additionally engagement continues with the Police, NHS and voluntary sector.</p> <p>The 2011/12 capital MTFs provides for the first time capital resources to enable the acquisition of property, to further strategic objectives.</p>

	Response	Lead Officer	Timeline	Response in 2011
<p>5</p> <p>We recommend that the council diversifies its asset options along the lines of the recommendations above in order to diffuse the impact of the recession on the key asset management proposal – the redevelopment of the Civic Centre – and to ensure we hit the ground running as the economic situation improves.</p>	<p>strategic locations. Officers will continue to scan the market for appropriate opportunities.</p> <p>The Place Shaping and Property Review will recommend a “Strategic Sites Development Programme” at Cabinet in Autumn of 2010.</p> <p>One of the objectives of this programme will be to present a compelling opportunity for inward investment to Harrow.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the redevelopment of the Civic Centre will be part of the strategic sites programme.</p>	<p>Andrew Trehern Corporate Director, Place Shaping</p>	<p>September 2010</p>	<p>The “Strategic Sites Development Programme” has been subsumed within the Central Harrow Area Action Plan (AAP).</p> <p>This document will be subject to consultation in the spring of 2011. The next stage of the AAP process will identify, and present outline proposals for a range of key development sites including those owned by the Council and will form the basis of the final AAP which will be submitted to the Secretary of State in early 2012.</p> <p>It is now intended to prepare an inward strategy, capitalising on the site development proposals set out in the AAP.</p>
<p>6</p> <p>We urge the Council to ensure that all potentially viable assets, of which we are precluded from disposing at the present time due to the recession, are assessed for their letting potential in order to maintain a revenue stream. In particular, we would urge the Council to consider how such premises might be beneficially let to the Third Sector or to small businesses at reduced (or zero?) rents to support these organisations through the recession.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>The commercial property portfolio is managed at high level of occupancy and this is being maintained throughout the recession to date.</p> <p>The proposed HSP property strategy will include policy in respect of access to premises by the third sector, social enterprises, etc</p>	<p>Andrew Trehern Corporate Director, Place Shaping</p>	<p>September 2010</p>	<p>The commercial property portfolio performed well during 2010/11.</p> <p>Lease and rent payments totalled £2m.</p> <p>Occupancy levels were held at 99%.</p>

	Description	Lead Officer	Timeline
7	<p>We recommend that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the charging framework be reviewed to ensure that it gives a corporate steer to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using charges to influence demand ○ Assessing the impact of the charge for one service on another • the framework be launched formally; • training on the framework be provided to all relevant services; • the framework be made easily accessible to managers, via the hub • that consideration be given to Scrutiny supporting the annual review of charging policy. 	<p>The charging framework will be reviewed during 2010-11, and communicated to all managers. The framework will constitute part of the Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process which includes review of fees and charges. The proposals for fees and charges will feed into the Challenge Panels held in October/November to ensure that budget managers have adequately and appropriately addressed the requirements of the charging framework. Planning workshops are offered to managers as part of the integrated planning process – and this will include review and challenge of fees and charges in light of the charging framework review. Timetable is being finalised. All directors will be asked to confirm that their directorate has fully implemented the charging framework.</p>	<p>Jennifer Hydari Divisional Director Finance & Procurement</p> <p>Finance training on fees and charges – early June Draft Policy 25 June Finalise Policy 16 June Training from 2 Aug to 6 September</p>
8	<p>We recommend that the 'Better Deal for Residents' proposals are considered further by our successor body should that be agreed</p>	<p>We expect the Better Deal for Residents Programme to identify a number of proposals that will be of strategic importance to the Council, that will constitute major policy, and that will transform the relationship between the Council and the residents of Harrow. The</p>	<p>Tom Whiting Assistant Chief Executive</p> <p>Better Deal for Residents is a medium to long term programme. There are no specific dates at this stage</p>

	Response	Lead Officer	Frequency	Response date: 2011
	Council will welcome Scrutiny's input to these proposals and will look to seek a range of Scrutiny inputs whether it is through committee, review or through challenge panels.		for reports or decisions.	
9	We recommend that further work is undertaken to investigate the viability of the establishment of an 'Invest to Save' fund.	Myfanwy Barrett Corporate Director of Finance	Ongoing	
10	We recommend to the next Overview and Scrutiny committee that a body similar to the Standing Review of the Budget be established in the next administration	N/A	N/A	

