

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Report of the Scrutiny Review Group

**SCRUTINY REVIEW OF
NEW HARROW PROJECT**

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(This report was presented to the Cabinet in July 2004 and is included with the publicly available papers for that meeting. It is also separately available on request)

Acknowledgements

The review group would like to thank all those who helped them in this review by giving up their time and sharing their experiences, perceptions and views. Particular thanks go to Councillors Archie Foulds, Chris Mote and Paddy Lyne (Leaders of the Council, Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups) and to Joyce Markham (Chief Executive), Nick Bell, Paul Osburn, Jill Rothwell and Tony Lear (Executive Directors of Business Connections, People First, Organisational Development, and Urban Living), Paul Najsarek (Director of Organisational Performance) and Chris Naylor of IDeA for his support in helping scope the review.

This report has been compiled by the Members named. The views expressed are solely theirs.

Review group membership

Councillor Jean Lammiman (Lead Member)
Councillor Alan Blann
Councillor Mitzi Green
Councillor Ann Groves
Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan
Councillor Mark Versallion

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In 2002, the Council embarked upon an extensive change programme, the New Harrow Project (NHP), to radically alter the way that it delivers its services to its communities; this has been supported by a re-organisation of its management structure.
- 1.2 During the years immediately preceding the introduction of the NHP, Harrow, on the surface appeared to be an authority which was operating reasonably well. The 2000 MORI survey had indicated that 55% of citizens were fairly/very satisfied with the Council's overall service, the Annual Audit Management Letter and external inspection reports had been generally acceptable, the Council had not found itself in serious and unmanageable financial difficulties, complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman had been relatively few and a firm base of partnership working had been established within the Borough.
- 1.3 Deeper examination, however, identified a number of areas where changes were needed to the way the Council operated in order to modernise the way the Council worked and to improve service delivery. The combination of the appointment of a new Chief Executive and a change in the Council's leadership provided the opportunity for a radical new approach. Preparations for the 2002 local elections had provided the political groups with the opportunity to canvass the views of local residents and to re-examine their key priorities, resulting in the inclusion of environmental improvements within the Labour Group's local election manifesto. Around the same time, the all party Appointments Panel for the new Chief Executive had decided to seek an organisational change candidate, leading to the unanimous appointment of the current Chief Executive, Joyce Markham.
- 1.4 Following a period of discussions and presentations to Members and staff, Cabinet in July 2002 considered and approved the proposals for the New Harrow Project (NHP), the implementation of which has seen a radical transformation in the way that the Council is organised and delivers its services to local communities. Due to the enormous implications and potential impact of this decision for the Council, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has followed up its previous review of the NHP South Harrow Pilot with an examination of the overall concept of the NHP, supported by case studies of both the roll out of the Public Realm Maintenance (PRM) work to Areas 2 and 3 and the Community Schools Pilot (see Figure 1).
- 1.5 The report into the case study on the Community Schools Pilot (Appendix 2) was considered by Cabinet at its meeting in July 2004; our report on PRM Areas 2 &3 is presented as an appendix to this report and concludes this phase of our review of NHP. Our recommendations in relation to the two case study areas are presented within the individual respective reports.
- 1.6 For this phase of our review, we set out to assess whether the NHP provides the Council with Value for Money whilst delivering the required service improvements. Given a general perception that the Council was 'ticking along', fundamental questions must be asked: was change necessary and, if so, is the chosen structure the right one for the organisation? We have, accordingly, focused much of our attention on the basic concept behind the NHP to see whether it is well conceived and understood both internally and externally, the structures established to implement the NHP and the impact that the NHP is having, and has the potential for, making.
- 1.7 We do not see our work on the NHP finishing here and indeed anticipate examining other aspects of the NHP over the next year or two, both specifically and also within the

context of our intended review of the Council's consultation processes. Given the importance of NHP to the Council, its residents, partners and local communities, we believe that we would be failing in our responsibilities if we were to take any other approach.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The adoption of the NHP has, without doubt, resulted in a radical change in the way that the Council is managed and in its approach to service delivery. Central to the project have been the aims to bring improved service delivery closer to customers and the community whilst simultaneously developing a more effective and businesslike approach to the management of the Council. We believe that the overall concept is based upon sound and rational principles and find that good progress is being made towards both these core aims.
- 2.2 The Council's 2002 CPA rating, which was awarded just after the adoption of the NHP, was 'weak'; upon refreshing in 2004 this score was raised to 'fair'. Similarly encouragingly, the return visit of the IDeA inspection team in January 2004 reported 'huge progress' in service delivery, budget management and performance management, with evidence of the new structures being bedded in, the new executive arrangements working, and good progress being made in relation to the ICT and human resources strategies.
- 2.3 Success in national competitions provides further evidence of the effectiveness of the NHP approach in relation to the provision of Public Realm Maintenance services, a recognised area of previously weak service delivery.
- 2.4 The Community Schools Pilots have been operating for relatively short periods and their medium/long term impact will not be apparent for sometime yet. Our separate case study has, however, concluded that, on the evidence available to date, they have been successful, offering a wide range of activities in schools and for the local community. Projects have been driven from the bottom up and have been developed according to the local needs of the area, Furthermore, the programme has been effective in successfully taking forward the principles embodied in the Government's pathfinder 'Extended Schools' initiative. We are pleased to note that our comments and recommendations are being incorporated into the further roll out of this programme.
- 2.5 As part of our review we carefully considered the issue of whether it was right to embark on a radical change agenda and have concluded that the need for change did exist. There was a need to improve services and responses to the public and community, some areas of which were patchy. The major issues that emerged in October 2002 around the previous year's budget assumptions and organisational key priorities confirmed the need to achieve financial stability and to overhaul the approach to strategic planning and investment. Departmental silo working was hindering services from responding in the most effective manner possible and there was a need to improve the organisation's sharing and learning processes. There was also a need to modernise and restructure the organisation and its cumbersome decision making processes, strengthen its capacity at middle management level and at the corporate centre and develop the flexibility to respond to external stimuli and government imperatives,
- 2.6 The findings of the May 2002 IDeA peer review and the summer 2002 Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) confirmed many of these weaknesses whilst also identifying a number of organisational strengths to build upon. Both these independent assessments highlighted a number of fundamental areas for improvement and identified actions which would need to be taken to assist the Council to reach its ultimate aim of a 'good' CPA rating at our next assessment in 2005.

- 2.7 The organisational structure adopted, based upon the four main Directorates of People First, Urban Living, Business Connections and Organisational Performance supporting an area based model of service delivery is a radical change for the Council and, as far as is known from our further research, is unique to Harrow. The decision to re-focus on customer needs cannot be questioned whilst the implementation of an area based approach which recognises the diverse profile and needs of different parts of the Borough is sound, as demonstrated by the findings set out in the Harrow Vitality Profiles.
- 2.8 From our own experiences we support the importance of the former Education and Social Services Directorates working much more closely together and believe that their amalgamation will be one of the keys ways of strengthening the services offered to our customers; the work of the Community Schools pilots are already providing evidence of this. Similarly, we consider that the formation of the Urban Living and Business Connections Directorates are also soundly based. We believe that the creation of the Organisational Development Directorate is essential not only to provide the strong central core which has been absent in Harrow but also to spearhead and support the Council's challenging change agenda. We expect that the post of Director of Organisational Performance will be instrumental in this. The adoption of the interim management structure succeeded in providing the newly appointed Executive Directors the opportunity to focus on developing their Directorates.
- 2.9 Whilst we support the principle of area service delivery, we believe that this is not an easy structure for many people to understand. The dual role of the Area Director is a particularly difficult concept and one where further clarity, including around lines of accountability and responsibility, is needed.
- 2.10 It is important in any project, and particularly one of this significance, to ensure that the appropriate groundwork, including around project planning (including funding) and communications, is undertaken prior to commencement. We appreciate the arguments that the need to build up a momentum for radical change may require the balancing of quick action against early engagement and accept that outcomes to date appear not to have been unduly affected by the tight timescale set. We would, nevertheless, recommend strongly that due and timely consideration is given to these matters in all future projects.
- 2.11 There are, inevitably, risks associated with the introduction of all new initiatives. We believe that in this case, where both organisational and cultural changes are involved, the risks are likely to be high. In acknowledging these risks, the Leader of the Council expressed his view that there were also risks associated with doing nothing and that the latter was not a viable option; failure to improve would put at risk the Council's future potential to gain the additional freedoms which were being made available to better performing Authorities. Whilst we accept the validity of this argument and recognise that the pilot approach has done much to minimise the overall risk to the Council, we would nevertheless have expected there to have been a formal risk analysis undertaken both of the overall project and of each of its constituent elements before their commencement. We regard such a documented approach to be essential to good project management and would strongly recommend its adoption in the future.
- 2.12 The project and resource management of the NHP is itself a further area which we suggest needs to be strengthened. Capacity for effective project management across the Council is an acknowledged area of weakness which we are glad is currently being addressed as part of NHP itself both at officer and Member level; as scrutiny Members we have ourselves benefited from a Member development session in this area. We feel, however, that the detailed project planning both in relation to the overall project and to

the South Harrow PRM Pilot and the current Community Schools Pilot could have been stronger. Whilst the South Harrow Pilot nevertheless stood up to rigorous evaluation, we would like to see all further stages of the NHP being subject to a fully documented project management process. This will not only assist effective implementation but also support the transparency and accountability around the proposals and their implementation.

- 2.13 We have found the engagement of Elected Members around the project to vary to a significant degree, even at the level of political group leader. Communications between the Leaders of the two larger political groups appears to be well established with the Leader of the Conservative Group reporting that he had been involved in the project from inception. In contrast, the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group stated that her group had not been engaged in the process and that, as leader of her Group, she had only been marginally involved in the process in recent months. Given the hung nature of the Council, we feel that this is regrettable.
- 2.14 We are also aware that some other Members' understanding of the New Harrow Project may still be limited. Given the significance of the project to the operation of the Council, this is surprising. Whilst the project has been debated in Cabinet and Council on a number of occasions and various other communication channels have been used, we recommend that the Executive undertake a review of the process for Member engagement in the NHP.
- 2.15 We believe, however, that Members and their political groups must themselves also accept some responsibility for addressing their own development needs. We have been disappointed that Member attendance at some of the developmental events in this area has been poor. Political groups have a role in encouraging and supporting their Members in this and we would expect them to exercise this responsibility both through re-examining their own processes for the cascading of essential information throughout the group as well as for ensuring that their Members are aware of the relevance and importance of the more critical development opportunities offered. In parallel, we believe it important for Directorates, as well as the corporate centre, to be proactive in facilitating Members in developing their understanding of the full implications of the NHP.
- 2.16 Communications with staff have been taken forward in a number of ways, with particular attention being given to middle managers given their particular position in relation to the Middle Management Review, their key positions in the organisational structure and the risks associated with maintaining staff morale and losing valuable staff expertise and corporate memory. The staff survey undertaken in November 2003 concluded that, generally, staff did not view the management of the change favourably and lacked some clarity about what was happening in the organisation as a whole and in relation to the plans for the future.
- 2.17 Communications with the public within the NHP roll out areas has been good. The area newsletters serve as a good channel of communications with residents and are well supported by the tremendous efforts of frontline workers both whilst engaged in consultation exercises and, equally importantly, whilst carrying out their more routine duties. Communications around the project in non-roll out areas has, however, been more limited. We believe that there is a need to strengthen the overall public engagement in the NHP and suggest that the results of the latest MORI satisfaction survey support this view.
- 2.18 In the early stages of projects such as this, the information transfer process is normally associated with a tight central control, resulting in a top down approach. We believe that it would be appropriate for consideration to be given as to how broader ownership can be

harnessed for future stages of the project, including the development of a stronger bottom up approach. In this connection, senior management has already indicated to us that there may be a need to revisit the processes currently being used to engage Members, staff and the public in the change process. We would very much support the use of route maps and stories in this task and are recommending that the Publications Panel use these tools in taking the message forward.

- 2.19 We have also looked at the arrangements for democratic accountability around the more recent stages of the project. At the outset of the South Harrow Pilot, detailed planning and progress reports were submitted to the New Harrow Project Panel. This secured essential transparent and accountable decision making around a major project and also ensured that information was available both to all other Members and to the public. The Panel has not, however, met since July 2003 and has not considered issues related to the Community Schools initiative, reports on the latter having been submitted to Cabinet. We believe that there is a need to review the process by which Members are engaged in the New Harrow Project, including the role of the NHP Panel and as indicated above recommend that the Executive undertakes a review in this area.
- 2.20 Whilst it is difficult to comment conclusively about the efficiency and effectiveness of the project as a whole, given its all-encompassing nature, it was our stated intention to examine whether the NHP has provided Value for Money (VFM). Where hard figures can be evidenced, these have been examined and we comment below on a number of other financial implications which seem to us to be associated, directly or indirectly, with the project. We will continue to press for hard data on financial costs and to take these into account in our future work on other aspects of the NHP.
- 2.21 Our two case studies have looked at VFM from the perspective of frontline service delivery. In this connection, we need to acknowledge that in common with other Outer London Authorities, the latest MORI customer satisfaction survey provided a somewhat disappointing result of 45% of residents being satisfied with the overall service of the Council (compared with 55% in 2000/01). This result may have been partly affected by the Council tax increase and the fact that the survey was based upon a random sample across the Borough which, given the timing of the survey, was likely to have only included a small proportion of residents from the Public Realm Maintenance roll out areas.
- 2.22 On our visits, our discussions with residents from the roll out areas have provided positive feedback of the work that is underway and we anticipate that the results from a repeat survey next year should show a much improved satisfaction rating. Progress on taking forward the First Contact initiative, which is expected to strengthen the Council's interface with the public, has been much slower than expected but progress is now being made and we expect that implementation will lead to a further improvement in satisfaction ratings.
- 2.23 The NHP, however, extends well beyond frontline service delivery. The five identified planks of the project also include achieving financial stability, rebuilding the organisation, implementing a new ICT strategy and establishing a Council-wide performance management system and processes. Without doubt the Council now operates on a much more robust financial and business like footing, with considerable progress having been made in a range of areas, such as the development of the Medium Term Budget Strategy, the formulation of the ICT and HR strategies and the strengthening of our procurement processes, all of which are essential to a forward looking Council. Good progress is also being made in relation to the development of organisational capacity through the top management re-structuring, including the formation of the Organisational

Development Directorate which we see as being critical to taking the project forward. The Middle Management review is now underway as is the introduction of a Council-wide performance management system and processes. The former is critical to the rebuilding of an organisation which is able to support the change process and associated developments whilst the latter will be instrumental in helping to develop and strengthen the evaluation criteria for all Council activities, including the project, which we feel should be undertaken as a priority.

- 2.24 Due to the extensive impact which the NHP has had across all aspects of the Council's functioning, it has proved difficult within the context of this review to quantify the cost/benefits of the project at any one point in time. For example, we expect the development of the ICT, HR, Corporate and Community strategies will bring significant benefits to the way the Council works, liaises with its partners and serves its communities.
- 2.25 Many of the financial outcomes of these initiatives may not be quantifiable but there is already evidence of substantial procurement savings, which are expected to achieve some £4m in 2004/05. Furthermore, the Council is also making good progress to achieving its Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) stretch targets, a number of which are directly related to the Public Realm Maintenance and Community Schools initiatives. If the targets are fully achieved by 31 March 2006, an additional performance reward grant of some £5m will be made available. Another example of an indirect benefit from the NHP would arise if a 'good' score is achieved in the 2005 CPA. The resulting freedoms and flexibilities would reduce significantly the Council's external inspection costs.
- 2.26 The NHP has served as the key driver for the Council's activities since its inception, which has served to keep the Authority focussed on the project's main objectives. Given the magnitude of the change agenda and the constraints on the capacity of the organisation, it has sometimes been difficult for staff to maintain all other activities at previous levels. Although we have not directly put the question to the Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP) we wonder, for example, if there has been an assumption that the NHP would enable the HSP to develop without any specific attention being given to it. We would, therefore, recommend that the Council provides greater clarity over its priorities, supported by an honest and realistic assessment of what is possible within given constraints and timescales
- 2.27 The implementation of the NHP has, by design, been on a phased basis, with the effective use of pilots to assist in the learning process and also ensure that resources, both financial and skills, are available before rolling out tested initiatives. The piloting of an initiative is invariably resource extensive and the sustainability of the project when rolled out to the whole organisation needs to be examined. Our concern over 'momentum build-up' is exemplified in the failure to set up 'loose-tight' structures to support initiatives from their inception as well as in the limited early transfer of learning in some areas, such as in the first phase of the Community Schools Pilots. We are, however, pleased to see that improvements in the latter example have been forthcoming since our inspection tour.
- 2.28 Given the progress that has already been made to date and the all-encompassing impact of the various NHP initiatives discussed above, we query whether the time is now ripe for renaming the initiative. We have been convinced that the brand name 'New Harrow' needs to be retained but would suggest that its continued definition as a project is now no longer appropriate, with the culture and initiatives being mainstreamed into the Council's normal working life. There is now a golden opportunity for 'New Harrow' to benefit from organisational learning from the roots up – in our ongoing scrutiny we will

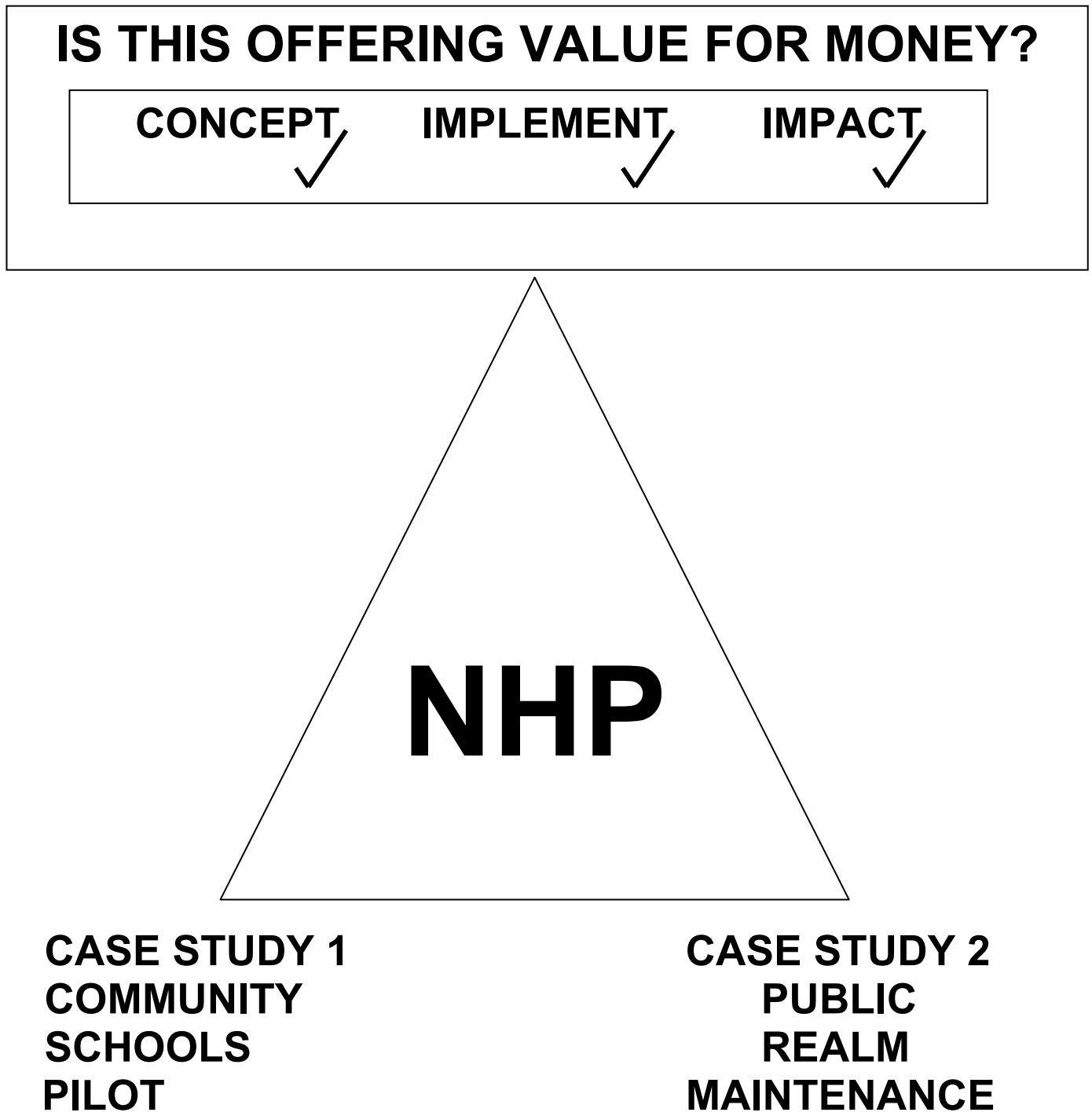
look for cross-cutting organisation, communication and consultation structures to enable the people of Harrow to participate in, and benefit from, 'New Harrow'.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Rigorous groundwork is completed prior to the adoption of all future projects and a fully documented project planning process is implemented.
2. The role of the Area Director is supported by clear lines of accountability and the responsibilities of the post are clarified and communicated.
3. Consideration is given to supporting the sharing of information and learning experiences arising from the Project across the whole Council and to establishing processes to support organisational learning in future.
4. The Executive reviews what further measures may be necessary to ensure the sustainability of the project.
5. The progress of First Contact, which is fundamental to strengthening the Council's interface with the public, continues to be expedited.
6. The Council seeks greater clarity over its key priorities and this is supported by clear statements of what will and will not be possible in given timeframes.
7. Further consideration is given to the ways in which the ownership of the NHP can be broadened.
8. The Executive undertakes a review of the process for Member engagement in the NHP and all political groups review their processes for cascading information to their Members and ensuring that their Members are aware of the relevance and importance of the more critical development opportunities offered.
9. The Executive revisits the processes used to engage staff & the public in the change process and the Publications Panel considers the use of route maps and stories to assist in communicating the New Harrow Project message both internally and externally.
10. The Council considers whether it would now be appropriate to rename the NHP, to recognise the mainstreaming of activities and the organisation's culture change.

FIGURE 1

Review Structure



4. METHODOLOGY FOR CORE REVIEW*

4.1 The meeting of the Review Group held on 11th September 2003 agreed its methodology for the review. This was later adapted to allow the presentation of further information requested by the Group. The methodology followed comprised:

11 September 2003

- Pre-scoping meeting

10 October 2003

- Identification of work streams for the review

28 November 2003

- Pre-scoping session

16 January 2004

- Scope

30 January 2004

- Scope

19 March 2004

- Report back findings

26 March 2004

- Meeting with the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of People First

31 March 2004

- Meetings with Executive Directors of Business Connections, Organisational Development and Urban Living

22 April 2004

- Meeting with Chief Executive

07 May 2004

- Meeting with Leader of Labour Group

15 June 2004

- Meeting with the leaders of the Conservative Group and Liberal Democrat Group

30 June 2004

- Meeting with Director of Organisational Performance

* The methodologies for the two case studies are covered in their separate reports.

5. REVIEW OF NEW HARROW PROJECT – PHASE 2 SCOPE

1	SUBJECT	New Harrow Project – Phase 2
2	COMMITTEE	Overview & Scrutiny
3	REVIEW GROUP	Lead Member - Cllr Jean Lammiman Members – Cllrs Blann, Mitzi Green, Ann Groves, Versallion
4	AIMS/ OBJECTIVES	To review whether the NHP provides Value for Money and delivers the services by examining: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the concept behind the NHP and determining whether the project is well conceived and understood both internally and externally 2. the structures established to implement the NHP and their appropriateness for achieving the project's aims and aspirations 3. the positive impact that the NHP is, and has the potential for, making and the timescale for the anticipated outcomes
5	MEASURES OF SUCCESS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transparency and clarity over the rationale behind, and process followed, which led to the conception and adoption of the NHP 2. Improved understanding both internally and externally of the aims and objectives of the NHP 3. Clarity and understanding of the officer accountabilities to deliver the project's aims and aspirations 4. Clarity and understanding of how the Member structure 'fits' with the NHP, Member accountabilities for service performance and the fulfilment of the Ward Councillor's representational role 5. Embedding of appropriate structures and procedures to manage, deliver and support services efficiently and effectively in ways which reflect the aims and objectives of the NHP 6. Examination of the impact that NHP has had to date on Public Realm Maintenance and the potential that it has to impact on community schools services 7. Identification of the framework which has/is to be put in place to evaluate the impact of the new structure 8. Exploration of the commitment of partner and stakeholder bodies in working jointly with the Council in delivering the aims and objectives of the NHP 9. Involvement of Ward Councillors, staff, partner bodies and community representatives in the review process 10. Production of a report on the findings of the review, with any appropriate recommendations for Cabinet consideration.

6	SERVICE PRIORITIES (Corporate/Dept)	The NHP is central to the advancement of all of the Council's corporate priorities
7	SCOPE*	<p>Concept Identification of the problems which led to NHP Rationale behind the NHP concept Analysis, research, budgetary projections and project planning undertaken prior to adoption Communications on NHP – internal and external</p> <p>Implementation Examination of appropriateness of new structures to achieve aims Examination of procedures put in place to support new structures Exploration of the extent to which partner bodies and stakeholders have 'bought into' NHP Review of the evaluation framework put/to be put in place</p> <p>Impact Consideration of how NHP outcomes will help to deliver the corporate plan and other key strategies Consideration of impact of NHP on improved CPA rating Examination of any Best Practice models (including of discrete services) elsewhere if appropriate Public satisfaction</p> <p>See also 2 case studies for details</p>
8	LEAD MEMBERS*	Cllr. Jean Lammiman
9	REVIEW SPONSORS*	Jill Rothwell
10	LEAD OFFICER/ ACCOUNTABLE MANAGER*	John Robinson Peter Brown
11	SCRUTINY SUPPORT*	Frances Hawkins
12	EXTERNAL INPUT*	Stakeholders, partner bodies, other Local Authorities, public, external inspector
13	METHODOLOGY*	Desktop research – published NHP Committee reports, IDeA & CPA reviews, research & project planning undertaken prior to the adoption of the project (including any best value comparators), communications on NHP with the public, public satisfaction data Individual discussions with Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Area Directors Meeting with NHP Panel (including Group Leaders) Meetings/discussions with HSP Board, stakeholders, staff, AC lead inspector for LBH
14	ASSUMPTIONS/ CONSTRAINTS*	Other Local Authorities have valid experience to input & time available Resources of Members, Senior Departmental officers and Scrutiny Unit

15	TIMESCALE*	Interim report 2004 (Process ongoing onto completion of NHP project in 2006)
16	SCRUTINY RESOURCE COMMITMENTS*	Yet to be identified Scrutiny resources to be proactively managed, with flexible deployment, pooling of resources and re-allocation of any 'spare' resources wherever possible
17	REPORT AUTHOR*	Cllr Jean Lammiman supported by the Scrutiny Unit

NB * Also see appended 2 case studies

CASE STUDY 1 – COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PILOT

1	SCOPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processes being established to support joined up working on the pilot Resources available to support the pilot Overview of services/initiatives contributing to pilot
2	LEAD MEMBERS	Cllr Mitzi Green supported by Cllr Jean Lammiman. Other Members Cllrs Mrs Bath, Miss Bednell, Lent and Marie-Louise Nolan
3	WORKSTREAM SPONSOR	Paul Osburn, Executive Director, People First
4	ACCOUNTABLE MANAGER	Michael Hart, Area Director, People First
5	SUPPORT OFFICER	Scrutiny Officer
6	EXTERNAL INPUT	Stakeholders, partners, community groups, public
7	METHODOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at briefing for all Council Members Presentation by project manager on evaluation framework & performance against targets, benchmarking exercise Desktop consideration of results of community survey Meeting with staff involved in pilot including Community Learning Co-ordinators, language support & community based workers Use of existing evidence already collected by scrutiny bodies to inform this workstream Discussion with partner bodies & community groups (At evaluation stage, meeting with local residents, families & pupils to consider success of those services/initiatives identified for detailed examination)
8	ASSUMPTIONS/ CONSTRAINTS	<p>Pilot will be sufficiently advanced for meaningful review in timescale set</p> <p>Members determine and lead on the review, supported by officers to the level of resource indicated in the project plan</p> <p>Resources of Members, Senior Departmental officers and Scrutiny Unit</p>
9	SCRUTINY RESOURCE COMMITMENTS	<p>All Review Group Members 5.5 days</p> <p>Cllr Mitzi Green - additional 5.5 days</p> <p>Scrutiny Unit 4 days 03-04, 14.5 days 04-05</p> <p>Scrutiny unit resources to be proactively managed, with flexible deployment, pooling of resources and re-allocation of any 'spare' resources wherever possible</p>
10	TIMESCALE	January – May 2004 for initial phase – (provisional – TBC)
11	REPORT AUTHOR	Cllr Mitzi Green supported by Scrutiny Officer

CASE STUDY 2 – PUBLIC REALM MAINTENANCE – AREAS 2&3

1	SCOPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards of 'Street Scene' maintenance achieved against targets and residents' needs Integration of other services, including People First Services, into NHP and outcomes of measures implemented Increase in the level of resident involvement and overall satisfaction achieved in Areas 2&3 Effectiveness of the plans/infrastructure put into place to support ongoing maintenance of standards in Areas 2&3 Effects of roll out to Areas 2&3 on service standards in other areas Evaluation of the options for further roll out of Public Realm Maintenance across the Borough & cost/benefits of so doing
2	LEAD MEMBERS	Cllr Blann, supported by Cllrs Ann Groves & Vina Mithani. Other Ward Members to be agreed
3	WORKSTREAM SPONSOR	Tony Lear, Exec Director (Urban Living)
4	ACCOUNTABLE MANAGER	Andrew Trehern, Area Director (Urban Living)
5	SUPPORT OFFICER	Scrutiny Officer
6	EXTERNAL INPUT	Residents, local commercial & other stakeholders, Ward Councillors, partner agencies
7	METHODOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation by Project Manager on the operation of Areas 2&3 & evaluation of performance against targets Analysis of feedback from customer feedback cards in Areas 2&3 Invite feedback comments directly to scrutiny, using NHP Newsletter Inspection tour of areas Discussions with Project Steering Group & key officers, working both directly on project & in other service areas, including children and learning services Meeting with residents & local stakeholders Discussions with local community groups & partner bodies Informal liaison with NHP Panel & Ward Councillors
8	ASSUMPTIONS/ CONSTRAINTS	<p>Pilots will be sufficiently embedded within timescale to allow interim evaluation</p> <p>Members determine and lead on the review, supported by officers to the level of resource indicated in the project plan</p> <p>Resources of Members, Departmental officers and Scrutiny Unit</p>
9	SCRUTINY RESOURCE COMMITMENTS	<p>All Review Group Members 8 days</p> <p>Cllrs Blann – additional 4 days</p> <p>Scrutiny Unit 12 days 03-04</p> <p>Scrutiny unit resources to be proactively managed, with flexible deployment, pooling of resources and re-allocation of any 'spare' resources wherever possible</p>
10	TIMESCALE	<p>Interim report April 2004 (provisional)</p> <p>Final report Sept 2004</p>
11	REPORT AUTHOR	Cllr Blann supported by Scrutiny Officer

6. FINDINGS

Issue	Evidence source	Findings	Comment
Costs	Meeting with ED (BC) Committee reports	<p>The Community Schools pilots (the ha2cando and Canons clusters) were funded through one part of the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) to raise the attainment of children on free school meals. A third group of schools (the Central Harrow/.Harrow High cluster) received a similar level of LPSA funding for this purpose.</p> <p>The approved 2004/05 budget contains provision for £400k for the phased roll out of four further clusters of schools, (subject to final Cabinet decision). Additional resources of £120k would be needed in 2005-06 for the full year operation of all clusters from April 2005. This will be considered as part of the Council's 2005/06 budget setting process.</p>	
		<p>On-going top management costs were less than the pre-NHP costs, excluding one-off costs e.g. recruitment & selection; cost of latter would diminish proportionately over time. Compared with updated pay increase figures for the 'old' structure cost (£1.7m), revised costings for the structure show a total cost, based on actual salaries where known, of £1.688m, a reduction of £12k on the original estimates when comparing on a 'like for like' basis.</p> <p>There is currently a budget of £60k within the change management budget to cover the costs of the temporary Head of Community Care Services. Additional funding of some £34k to support the cost of a Director of Community Care post has been met from the existing People First Budget.</p> <p>The Strategic Planning Director post (Chief Executive's) would cost approximately £94k and could justifiably be charged to capital.</p>	Quantification of costs/ benefits of project are difficult to quantify at any particular time.

		<p>R&S costs would be incurred where there were no suitable internal candidates for middle management posts. May also be some middle management redundancy costs. Overall savings of approx £40k (original £8,542k) were estimated from the MMR (excluding the Chief Executive's Departmental restructuring)</p> <p>Some efficiency savings resulted in 2003-04 e.g. Procurement. MTBS would not have been possible without NHP New IT systems can reduce cost & improve efficiency – improved performance can be demonstrated through BVPIs</p> <p>The forecast Change Management outturn figure for 2003-04 was £879k with a net 2004-05 budget of £387k. The original restructuring budget for 2003-04 was £515k with an estimated net saving of £370k in 2004-05.</p> <p>The 2002-03 actual expenditure on NHP PRM services was £535k whilst the forecast 2003-04 outturn was £2687k.</p> <p>Total PRM Areas 1-6 revenue budgets are £4,474,000 for 2004/05. £7,691,000 has been included in the PRM MTRB for Areas 1-9 in 2005-06, this figure representing the part-year effects for Areas 7-9.</p> <p>The NHP PRM capital budgets include £2,578.6k for 2004-05, £1,500k for 2005-06 and £1,500k for 2006-07.</p>	
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Key drivers for NHP	Meetings with Leader, CE, Exec Directors, Director of OP	<p>Change of leadership and appointment of new Chief Executive (CE) provided the opportunity for change and cross party appointment of CE had been made on the basis of a change agenda. Harrow had had a low national profile and had yet to embrace fully the Government's modernisation agenda.</p> <p>Key drivers identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to improve services to public & community • Silo working • Need to overhaul approach to strategic planning & investment (including IT & financial planning – revenue & capital) • Need to improve responses to community needs • Member perception of some failing services & patchy service delivery • Major issues emerged in October 2002 around the previous year's budget assumptions and organisational key priorities • Risk averse organisation • Structure inward looking & old fashioned - risk averse, low officer delegations, cumbersome decision making • Single CE and Director of Finance post was a potential limitation on vision • Many senior officers had been in post for a considerable time - need for fresh approaches • Limitations on middle management capacity & reluctance to share information • Flexibility to respond to external stimuli and government imperatives also limited • Limited capacity at corporate centre • Labour Group election manifesto committed to environmental improvements • Need to strengthen collective responsibilities of Portfolio holders 	The holistic re-assessment of the way the Council operated identified a range of concerns which had previously been addressed on an ad-hoc, 'fire-fighting' basis. For the first time in a number of years, the Council had taken an outward looking perspective of its working.
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	<p>CPA IDeA peer review External Inspection reports</p>	<p>CPA & IDeA peer reviews identified a number of strengths and weaknesses of the Authority, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service delivery not aligned to service priorities • Weak focus & concentrated on frontline service delivery & managing short term issues • Reluctance to take difficult decisions • Poor performance on environmental issues • Weak leadership and strategic direction – limited capacity at Member and officer level • No strategic plan to deal with workforce planning & capacity issues • Lack of detail on how strategic priorities were to be achieved • Resources not linked to priorities – need to realign to Members’ priorities • Outdated financial systems & reactive based - service delivery subjected to stop/go budgets • Lack of transparency in allocation of growth budgets • Strong Departmental culture • Risk averse culture and un-ambitious expectations • Strong Departmental performance management but no corporate framework • Lack of capacity at corporate centre – no MTBS, need for ICT strategy, risk management not integrated into service planning, no strategic corporate intelligence base • Weak at sharing/ learning from experiences • Strong & mature partnership culture but strategic partnership direction lacking – limited pooling of information to enhance corporate working • Strong consultation but little evidence of its impact on setting priorities or in decision making process • Low overall customer satisfaction • Patchy service delivery, some areas with uncertain prospects for improvement • Need to modernise Council at all levels 	<p>Strong correlation between IDeA & CPA findings & the internal assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation</p>
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<p>Vision</p>	<p>Meetings with Leader, CE, Exec Directors, & Dir (OP) Committee reports & proceedings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall vision was to bring effective services closer to the people to meet their needs. Need to ensure constrained resources hit targeted groups identified from firm evidential base (e.g. vitality profiles) to reflect individual community needs. • Concept of area service delivery had been adopted following recognition of the diverse nature of the Borough and the differing needs of the respective communities. • Pilot approach whilst still developing the structure was adopted to elicit realistic cost levels, the concept having been untried elsewhere. • Phased approach also to allow newly appointed senior management to input into shape of new Directorates. • Interim management structure introduced to provide flexibility and to free up Exec Dirs to develop new Directorates. • In PF, reconfiguration of Directorate around themes would help to address silo working, particularly in relation to children's agenda. • PF model proposed had succeeded in other authorities. Management change could build on old strengths & address weaknesses, updating ways of working • Vision centred on bringing services closer to customers and improving approach to business. Strengthening Departmental centre is critical to change agenda. Previous over-Departmentalisation has been recognised & need for corporate approach is being genuinely supported. • Overall, no big master plan existed – area concept developed as part of the bigger vision using a stepped approach. 	<p>NHP concept well founded and generally supported</p> <p>5 identified key planks of NHP reflect the need to move closer to customers and to develop a more business like approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving financial stability • Rebuilding the organisation • Area assessment and delivery of services • Implementing an ICT strategy • Establishing a Council-wide performance management system & processes <p>Due to the way the project was conceived and implemented, there was an absence of an overall master plan.</p>
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			Area concept & role of area director not easily understood by all
Risks	<p>Meetings with CE, Exec Directors, Director of OP</p> <p>Strategic risk register</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor performance/CPA rating • Monetary & sustainability – at outset project committing significant resources without planned budget provision - ambitious programme needing solid foundation built on good budget processes & effective prioritisation eg initial appointments. Emphasises importance of introducing MTBS. • Level of effect on the ground – how it would look to those with little knowledge of real current issues • Expectations of Members & public - needed clarity about what was achievable within identified resource; cynicism on the street • Political – first year budget investment significant, election year, potential barrier to success • Adequacy of intellectual capacity within Council to develop/constructively challenge idea & capacity to manage large scale organisational change – addressed through introduction of phased approach & interim appointments. Interim structure difficult for Members to understand • Working (NWW). Particularly difficult for middle managers – MMR. Maintenance of staff morale was key – people required to maintain day jobs whilst managing change process. Possible loss of most marketable people & loss of corporate memory • Not securing the optimum balance in focus between external forces and internal issues. NHP is driving the Council but danger of other priorities not being recognised if they do not fit with NHP • Potential future poor settlement or additional education passporting requirements • Strategic risk management exercise undertaken in 2003-04 identified the Council's corporate risks. Exercise undertaken in 	<p>Whilst risks can now be identified, there is an absence of evidence that these had been fully assessed and evaluated prior to a decision being taken to adopt the project</p> <p>Resources initially only identified for first phase of project gives rise to uncertainty & risks around sustainability</p> <p>Point of no return reached on appointment of Exec Directors.</p> <p>Particular risks around middle management & maintenance of staff morale/ retention of skills & corporate memory. This level</p>

		<p>Urban Living to identify key Directorate risks and similar exercises are planned to enable all remaining directorates to have carried out a review of their risks by 3/05. Elements of risks identified at both strategic and directorate levels are relevant to the implementation of the NHP - management actions are being put in place to mitigate and monitor these.</p> <p>For NHP to succeed will need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of cross-party political support • High calibre staff – who understand needs without close supervision • Finances – funding & resources, reserves, staff changes, recruitment, training, IT, refocusing services (either through pump priming or addressing historical under-resourcing) 	<p>of management is also critical to implement cultural change</p> <p>Danger of some external issues being marginalised due to focus on NHP. Response to external pressures in longer term are also critical to future assessments of Council's performance.</p> <p>Political change is a risk beyond Council's control. Political group support for concept is therefore even more critical</p>
	Meeting with Leader of Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of budget provision at outset • Risks acknowledged but there were also risks around doing nothing. Failure to act risked loss of freedoms for better performing Authorities • Pilot approach minimised the risks • Capacity to implement • Potential for future political instability 	

	Meetings with Leader of Conservative Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main challenge is completion. • Also risk around people. Separation of professional & middle managers for Middle Management Review (MMR) was risky but right approach • Pay structure designed to make managers look outward & was performance related 	
	Meeting with Leader of Lib Dem Gp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of failure – money, lack of enthusiasm, particularly from middle managers & professionals, loss of expertise (although recognition of need for new blood) • MMR process is demoralising for some staff • Timescale for project was extended because of finances but balance needed for Council Tax purposes 	

<p>Effectiveness of project & resource planning</p>	<p>Meetings with Leader, CE, Exec Directors, Director of OP</p> <p>PRM & Community Schools case studies</p> <p>Reviews of South Harrow Pilot & Areas 2&3 PRM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues of importance in project & resource planning included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Service reconfiguration – particularly avoidance of critical service failure b) Reduction in performance – need to plan for the worst case c) Staff concerns – personal considerations d) Capacity of Directorate to manage change – Full team of Directors only in place since 1.2004. MMR generates uncertainty but would build capacity at right levels in Directorate e) Speed of change – for staff & community. Need to ensure service is robust before change occurs – particularly re joint children’s services f) Resources – money, people, premises & IT. PF relying on existing resources & LPSA for Community Schools. Money in budget for roll-out • At outset, internal project management expertise & capacity had been low. Bringing in external expertise would have been an option. Improvement plan in place & will support delivering accountability • Currently too much is rooted through senior officers – MMR should deliver a trusted middle layer to operate effectively 	<p>Project planning around PRM had been stronger than around NHP vision. No grand master plan existed due to decision to adopt pilot approach</p> <p>Project planning processes need to be strengthened in relation to Community School pilots</p> <p>Need to ensure that current development of project management capacity is maintained and appropriate implementation procedures established</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variation of level of project management expertise across Council. Register of projects is being compiled to help to identify and mismatching between importance of projects & their risk levels • Resource had followed NHP priorities e.g. IT, performance management, clean & green 	<p>Long-term resource planning not possible initially due to decision to adopt a phased approach based on pilots. Now being addressed through MTBS as/when decisions are taken.</p> <p>Need to balance holistic approach to project against using a pilot approach as this was untried ground.</p> <p>Vitality profiles will provide essential tools to support project planning in future.</p> <p>Given the hung nature of the Council, the feeling of non-involvement of the smallest political groups in these important areas is of concern (see also below)</p>
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	Meeting with Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good practices in project planning being developed. • Resource planning had been addressed in MTBS, with further capital works being taken on board in year 2. Not able to say yet whether all lampposts could be replaced by 2006. • PRM work had been more critical in relation to timing & budgets • ICT needs were highly complex but progress being made • Corporate Plan would be key to taking NHP forward. Community Plan also important 	
	Meeting with Leader of Conservative Gp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHP has not been well linked together to form a whole project • Resource planning is fairly efficient. Although rollout needed more money earlier, this was not viable • Area Directors would hold responsibility for cost centres. Public would expect rapid responses • One area had greater need, which could lead to political disagreement over the allocation of resources. • Vitality profiles could be used to justify need 	
	Meeting with Leader of Lib Dem Gp	Difficult to comment as not felt to have been involved in this aspect although monthly meetings held with Exec Directors & 2 UL Directors and briefing received from Exec Dir PF. Some early problems experienced by other Members of the Group had been addressed.	
Evaluation of project to date	<p>Meetings with Leader, CE, Exec Directors, Director of OP</p> <p>Scrutiny reviews of South Harrow Pilot, PRM Areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance management is least developed of future phases but looking at implementing new system (High Performing Harrow) in September, for going live in 4/2005. Programme Board chaired by Director of OP to develop consistent approach to performance management. • For Community Schools pilot, questions would focus around <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are service users at the centre of activities? 2. Have gaps in service provision yet to be filled to provide an integrated service response to users? 3. Is service provision becoming more joined-up and what lessons to be learnt? 	Scrutiny's own 2 reviews of PRM & of Community Schools Pilot indicate that they are working well. External reviews of PRM also support this, as do winning of national awards for South Harrow Pilot and increasing national recognition

	<p>2 & 3, Community Schools Pilot</p> <p>External reviews of South Harrow Pilot & PRM Areas 2 &3</p> <p>Committee Reports</p> <p>2003 MORI Resident Satisfaction survey</p> <p>Community Strategy</p>	<p>4.Improvements in response time to deal with issues</p> <p>5. Clarity & quality of communications about service users between service providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of overall success of Community Schools Pilot would be medium term – 2-3 years • Also evaluate by engaging service users, regulators & inspectorates, Council’s own performance management, number of complaints, level of staff ownership • Pilot is working – benefits from breaking down silos, sustaining funding from existing resources • Multi-agency approach of Community Schools pilot will be evaluated by engaging service users, regulators, & the CSCI/OFSTED, through Council’s performance management processes, number of complaints, level of staff ownership • Already some examples of demonstrable efficiencies & in some areas improved performance & cost effectiveness (e.g. BVPIs) • Visibility of better services & effective changes – drive further improvements • PRM well established • Community Schools pilot being established • MMR structure was being implemented • Progress made in implementing First Contact • Positive feedback from HSP & other partners 	<p>for work in this area.</p> <p>2002 MORI resident satisfaction survey results disappointing but may reflect overall trend in Outer London. Proportion of residents affected by PRM roll out surveyed is likely to be low. View expressed that all parts of Borough deserve same standards.</p> <p>Further work on establishing robust evaluation system needed for PRM; system still to be established for Community Schools.</p> <p>Evaluation of Community Schools Pilot will of necessity be of a different nature to that for PRM & based upon a longer timescale.</p> <p>Evidence already exists of other improvements</p>
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			including improved financial stability, organisational restructuring, including at the centre, implementation of ICT & HR strategies, development of Council-wide performance management system & processes.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint HB & DWP outreach initiative would have been unlikely without NHP • Improved engagement with partners • PRM recognised nationally as being a success • Developing work with PCT on sport & health links • Some evaluation work been done around PRM but needs further refinement; evaluation process for Community Schools is at an early stage • Different strands of NHP have different lead officers responsible for evaluation 	Need to capture organisational learning and to transfer it to develop mutuality.
	Meeting with Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive public feedback to Members & at meetings • PRM successfully piloted & tested • MMR underway • MTBS now in place • Fundamental budget problems had been addressed, providing much stronger Council Tax position for next few years • Community Strategy developed & HSP strengthened • Reorganisation provided much stronger platform for progress • Recent MORI poll showed some ambivalence 	

	Meeting with Leader of Lib Dem Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRM has been successful & is respected • Feels that not all objectives had been achieved in some areas & that standards in some areas in South Harrow were slipping. • Believes all parts of Borough deserve same standards despite phased roll out. Some questioning of the application of the criteria for determining the roll out areas 	
Communications		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, may need to revisit way information is communicated – increased use of stories to engage, focus on key messages. • Generally, area concept has been difficult for most people to understand. 	<p>Recommend to the Publications Panel the use of route maps and stories to engage people.</p> <p>Area concept and dual role of Area Directors are not well understood.</p>
Staff involvement & understanding	<p>Meetings with Leader, CE, Exec Directors, Director of OP</p> <p>Scrutiny reviews of PRM</p> <p>2003 Staff survey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff engagement being addressed by communicating message into all aspects of Directorate – to secure understanding & motivation. Staff also can see improvements & meaning of performance management • Initially attention was focussed on PRM but people appear to have heard the messages which are relevant to them. • Staff at Depot were empowered by the changes but other services were not being given the attention or opportunity to develop – could have been managed better by championing & identifying good practices elsewhere across Council • Middle management is likely to demonstrate the greatest resistance to change- history of launches of initiatives which have not been implemented through passive resistance. Series of staff events started in October 2003. 	<p>Staff engaged on PRM very involved, committed & enthusiastic. Although efforts made to communicate with staff, same level of engagement not apparent in other staff groups possibly due to initial high focus being on PRM.</p> <p>Staff survey undertaken at a time when the</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to improve frequency & effectiveness of communications – particularly important re MMR. • The staff survey undertaken in November 2003 concluded that staff did not view the management of the change favourably and lacked some clarity about what was happening in the organisation as a whole and in relation to the plans for the future. The survey results around staff's understanding of the Council's strategic direction and objectives and the fit of individuals' own work objectives with the former, the belief that the changes will make Harrow more effective as an organisation, that they had been kept well informed about the changes taking place and that they feel positive about the future of the organisation are all significantly lower than the expected benchmark results. The degree of staff understanding of the changes taking place within the Council was also below the benchmark norm. • The number of staff who responded negatively to the way that the changes were being planned and whether they felt generally well informed about what is happening in the organisation, the quality of the organisation's management of change generally, the openness in which the Council communicated with staff, and the support that the Council gives to staff who are most affected by change were all better than the benchmark although there is still room for improvement in these areas. • Staff also felt that the Council did not celebrate its successes, share good ideas effectively or work effectively together across different divisions and Departments 	<p>restructuring had not yet had a chance to bed down. Some of the results from the survey would be expected after a period of change. Management of change process itself was not viewed favourably with lessons to learn in relation to keeping staff informed, consulting & supporting those most affected by change. People are relatively well informed about the performance of their department and issues that affect them but there is less clarity over what is happening in the organisation as a whole and in relation to plans for the future.</p>
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	Meeting with Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNISON advise that staff are supportive of the change • Senior & middle management willing to take on changes • Autumn staff survey showed mixed messages – some anxieties. No evidence that changes had not been good 	
	Meeting with Leader of Conservative Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff feedback is that NHP is understood • Staff need the opportunity to input – information should also flow bottom up 	
	Meeting with Leader of Lib Dem Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff achieve high standards & have high degree of loyalty, work hard & feel rewarded for meeting objectives but greater top down communication is needed 	

<p>Member involvement & understanding</p>	<p>Meetings with Leader, CE, Exec Directors, Director of OP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 ways for Member involvement in new initiatives – Cabinet reports, scrutiny pressure/new ideas, ideas arising from area service delivery, political manifestos • Government emphasises building up Member capacity for political leadership & community governance although limited take up of recent INLOGOV training. • Recognition of some Member concern about level of involvement although general support for concept. Some Members may still not have full understanding. Participation at some developmental events has, however been disappointingly low, including Community Schools seminar. Communications are ongoing. • Member concerns may possibly have arisen by the need to balance quick action against early engagement, decision having been taken to build momentum before developing structures • NHP Panel was active in early stages of PRM pilot & triggered its own meetings. Had been easier to engage ward members at the start but the momentum had been difficult to maintain. Member ownership was however for the political membership to deliver e.g. Members had been given the opportunity to indicate interest in area committees/forums. Local priorities could push issues up to corporate level. CE had had some discussions with individuals on 1:1 basis but offer to address members at group level had not been taken up. • There had also been some engagement with key Members at Directorate level but their own responsibilities for Member development was not clearly seen by all Directorates 	<p>Given the significance of NHP, low attendance at development events is highly disappointing.</p> <p>Political groups must accept some responsibility for the non-engagement and any understanding gaps amongst their Members & need to review their processes for dissemination of information and for the encouragement of participation in Member development opportunities.</p> <p>Officers may need to revisit their assumptions about political group communication processes.</p>
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	Meeting with Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHP Panel established to buy in the critical support from all political groups & had been effective – clean & green established, standards agreed, Pilot reports monitored, buy in achieved • Political input also through Cabinet • Some political debate about speed of implementation • Relatively confident that all Members understood aims & vision although levels of understanding probably varied • Discussions in Council & events although latter disappointingly attended at times • Intention is to build in regular Ward Member involvement on Community Schools pilot through range of opportunities – hopefully through cluster groupings • Resource constraints has directed focus onto Members in roll out areas • Area Forums were not to be reintroduced in earlier format. Needs of each area varied. Members community roles to be enhanced by their serving as advocates for their areas 	<p>Important for Directorates to accept responsibility for communicating Member development in relation to their own aspects of NHP</p> <p>Lib Dem Group clearly feel significantly less involved/engaged in NHP.</p> <p>Member accountability has been weakened by the recent absence of NHP Panel to meet. Basis of South Harrow Pilot was fully reported to NHP & proposals for taking the project forward examined in detail. This was valuable in securing Member involvement as well as providing transparency about the proposals. Regular ward member involvement is expected in Community Schools Pilot.</p>
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	Meeting with Leader of Conservative Gp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area structure difficult to understand • Believes that, as Group Leader, he had been involved from the inception but still limited knowledge about community schools pilot. Information overload • Were some political issues initially – e.g. adequacy of access to information. Management issues still being sorted • Cabinet has been engaged • Role of NHP Panel seen as ensuring effective & appropriate implementation – particularly useful at initial stage for checks & balances • Concept should be understood by backbench Members. Discussed at Group meetings but dependent on individual’s interest. Involvement as being rolled out to their wards – engagement important for feedback. Group has a responsibility to ensure Members are informed 	Terms of Reference of NHP Panel do not support the learning experience for the whole organisation.
	Meeting with Leader of Lib Dem Gp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believes that understands principles but feels a second-class service had arisen in non roll-out areas • Absence of clarity about where budget is going • Role of Area Director also needs clarifying • One shop stops should help • Not certain about the use of vitality profile as tool • Lib Dem group Is not engaged • Community school concept is commended – enables schools to support individuals • NHP Panel has not met recently & is needed 	

<p>Partner engagement & understanding</p>	<p>Meetings with CE, Exec Directors, Director of OP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial discussions were held with external groups, including partners & some community groups. • Multi- agency approach is working with good partner engagement & generally positive feedback from HSP & partners. Evidence exists of initiatives which are unlikely to have developed without NHP e.g. joint Housing Benefit & Department of Works & Pensions outreach initiative around benefits & entitlements. May need to look at LSP separately • Need to improve communications with business community • Range of methods used for communicating with public. May be a need to focus more on areas outside of roll out & to increase use of informal community sector networks. • Too early to evaluate public engagement in Community schools. PRM has been both customer & community focussed with some examples of successful ad-hoc local initiatives – e.g. provision of cricket square for young people in West Harrow • First Contact has not progressed as quickly as hoped • Recent MORI resident satisfaction survey results do not provide helpful indicators of progress. Survey was based upon a random sample across the Borough only a small proportion of who were likely to have been involved in the roll out. Results from Outer London were generally disappointing, possibly as a result of Council Tax increases. Survey will probably be re-commissioned on an annual basis • Range of method for communicating with public. Possibly may need to focus more on areas outside of roll out & increase use of informal community sector networks • Some examples of successful ad-hoc local initiatives 	<p>Partner bodies have been engaged in NHP although there are issues around the possibility of HSP being overwhelmed by NHP & an assumption that NHP would enable HSP without any specific attention being given to it.</p> <p>Need to develop further communications with business community – scrutiny’s own experience of tremendous & willing support for Council activities from business community.</p> <p>From own Ward experiences, public largely see NHP as ‘clean & green’. Knowledge of PRM has spread with residents outside PRM roll out areas anxious to be included within the project. PRM scrutiny reviews</p>
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			<p>have seen a culture change with greater public ownership for standards in their local areas.</p> <p>Need to look at ways of communicating wider remit of NHP to public, including enlisting help of community sector networks. Issues to be revisited again through review of Communications Strategy. NHP brand has helped.</p>
	Meeting with leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always would be room for improvement in understanding across the Borough. Fears of lowering of standards in non NHP areas had proved unfounded – services were being sustained & joined up beyond PRM • Knowledge of NHP had spread beyond roll out areas with the NHP brand • Too early to judge the effectiveness of HSP but hoped that joined up working had been facilitated by NHP – hope that addressing health inequalities would be a particular future focus • Communications Strategy was being developed. NHP had resulted in some improvements • Individual experiences provided good change evidence for communicating 	

	Meeting with leader of Conservative Gp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling that NHP is not well understood by the public who still see it as clean & green. • Publicity & selling of concept could be improved e.g. dedicated issue of Harrow People setting out timescales • Areas outside rollout also seeing some improvements • Need for cultural change – ownership by the public & getting them to work with the Council 	
	Meeting with Leader of Lib Dem Gp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public understanding depends on where they live • NHP perceived as clean & green with cynicism amongst those outside the roll out area 	
Sustainability	Meetings with CE, Exec Directors, Director of OP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHP was moving away from a project to being mainstreamed. Indications of sustainability were growth of project by itself, culture change, MTBS, continuity • PRM was not currently being extended to further areas to ensure the availability of the necessary management capacity • Need now to link 5 NHP planks more closely together – single document/route map with key priorities & way forward is fundamental to organisational change. Work is underway on this, mapping the route by actions & timescales in relation to people, resources, customers, service improvements, partnerships • Plan for roll out PRM was fairly clear • Position in relation to Community Schools still being considered • Work is underway on Performance Monitoring & MMR • Potential need to refresh NHP in relation to vision, priorities & brand name. Keeping New Harrow was important for the external message but dropping project would reflect the mainstreaming of the work • Particular need for work on this through corporate/service & financial planning • Area working would address those areas still to engage in NHP 	Use of Route map approach to be recommended.

Future phases of project	Meetings with CE, Exec Directors, Director of OP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance – rebuilding & stability work almost complete. Particular emphasis on social services accounting mechanisms & ensuring money was appropriately allocated. Work also being undertaken on the consultation strategy • Organisational structure. MMR to be completed & further work to be undertaken on some professional roles • IT – partner to be selected shortly. First Contact was initially linked to IT although discussions underway on the possibility of sharing a contract with Hammersmith & Fulham • Area delivery – PRM & Community Schools provided for in MTBS. OFSTED has looked at Community Schools project informally. Other services are looking at the benefits of area delivery • Need to address private sector dwelling supply & demand imbalance – growth in single person households & issues of affordable warmth & avoidable deaths • Economic regenerations – few businesses develop to middle size • Develop sport service & use of parks – links between young people’s drinking in parks & fear of crime. Health links • Need to help staff make more sense of all Council’s priorities against demands of NHP. Need for clear & honest messages. 	
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Learning points	Meetings with CE, Exec Directors, Director of OP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons continually being learnt through experimentation with NWW e.g. Need for earlier start to linking development to IT strategy to business areas – late start resulted in longer time in securing buy-in & finalisation • More formal project planning - Need for a whole organisation programme plan for NHP • Data was being pulled together from range of sources to take forward – fairly firm support structure would be needed • Greater championing & identifying areas of good practice across the Council would have supported earlier engagement of staff beyond PRM services • Critical importance of good IT • Benefits from single assessment • Need for robust evaluation criteria to demonstrate the impact of changes • Improving frequency & effectiveness of communications – particularly re MMR • Improvements in the way Members kept involved & updated • Improved & more coherent planning of resources for community engagement & consultation would have supported increased external engagement • Need for route maps – increased engagement with partners makes it difficult to track routes • Introduce more systematic learning process for the future – possibly use CPA self-assessment as a tool 	<p>More rigorous approach to project management of whole project from the outset would have been preferable - including identification of evaluation criteria</p> <p>Effective communications both internally & externally critical</p> <p>Systematic learning process & sharing of experiences is important</p>
	Meeting with Leader of Conservative Gp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of educating people to understand NHP – more external communication • Area system creates New Harrow – currently halfway there 	
	Meeting with Leader of Lib Dem Gp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out of PRM needs to be to same standards & level of enthusiasm • Success will be dependent on calibre of area directors 	

Communication with other Leaders	Meeting with Leader of Conservative Gp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works well. • In early days, information flow was more limited & so unable to prepare a budget • Given a hung Council, process has been reasonable • Initially insufficient information was available 	
	Meeting with Leader of Lib Dem Gp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some communication with current Leader of Conservative Group but limited contact with Leader of Council or PHs. Important issue in a hung Council. Attempt to initiate a leaders' group has not succeeded 	
Role of Scrutiny	Meeting with Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet/scrutiny structure still relatively new • To ensure the Executive remained on track • South Harrow pilot report had proved very helpful & hoped for further work of equal value 	
	Meeting with Leader of Conservative Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could take on checking role for NHP • Scrutiny needs more resources as investigative system to check decisions • Should develop policy, independent of administration's wishes • Public needs should drive scrutiny agenda • Needs more public involvement 	
	Meeting with Leader of Lib Dem Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important to take an independent role, representing public & producing action plans • Need to investigate how the former strategic role of NHP Panel was to be fulfilled 	

GLOSSARY

BC	Business Connections – This Directorate brings together the services needed to run Harrow efficiently and effectively, including all finance systems, ranging from council tax to housing benefits, and to make sure we are using to the full the benefits that IT can bring.
CE	Chief Executive
CPA	Corporate Performance Assessment – Government assessment that helps local councils in England improve local services for their communities. CPA looks at how well the council delivers its services. It also considers how well the council is run, as this will impact on how they deliver their services in the future.
First Contact	Best Value review of how the Council interfaces with the public.
IDeA	Improvement & Development Agency – An agency created by and for local government in England and Wales. Independent of central government and regulatory bodies. Work with councils to build capacity for change by stimulating and support continual and self-sustaining improvement and development within local government.
LPSA	Local Public Service Agreement - An Agreement between Government and Council that runs for three years from 1 April 2003, that combines a number of local and national objectives under which, the Council receives extra money in return for improved performance against agreed targets.
MMR	Middle Management Review – The restructuring of the Council’s tier of middle management.
NHP	New Harrow Project
NWW	New Ways of Working
OD	Organisational Development – The Directorate of the Council dealing with Human Resources and Organisational Performance.
OP	Organisational Performance – Part of the OD Directorate responsible for Scrutiny, Strategy, Performance and Policy.
PF	People First – The Directorate now responsible for the majority of services previously provided by the former Education and Social Services Departments.
PH	Portfolio Holder – Cabinet Member with responsibility for a specific service
PRM	Public Realm Maintenance
R&S	Recruitment and Selection of staff

UL	Urban Living – The Directorate responsible for bringing together the services that improve our quality of life - environmental services such as street cleaning and road maintenance - with environmental health, housing and planning to provide quality, targeted provision throughout the borough.
VFM	Value for Money