

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE REPORT – QTR 2, 2004/05**Cabinet - 11 November 2004****PERFORMANCE SUMMARY****Ambition**

This is the second report to Cabinet demonstrating Harrow's programme of change to improve services and quality of life for residents and local stakeholders. The Authority's ambition to be a 'good' authority by 2006 remains a strong focus of activity and we have made further steps towards this goal in the last quarter which are detailed later in the report.

Priorities and Focus

The New Harrow Project priorities continue to be the main driver behind our change programme. Officers are currently working on guidance for directorates to develop next years Corporate and Service Plans. As key parts of the New Harrow Project have been delivered it seems appropriate to refresh the Council's corporate priorities to drive our planning for next year.

Capacity

The attached report shows that the middle management review and the business transformation partnership are both making good progress. The report also shows that the Council is facing some challenges in delivering whole organisation projects while building our capacity. This is reflected in the status of our equality and LPSA projects. The Council has now appointed to its Programme Manager position. This will support improved delivery in our key corporate projects.

Performance Management

The High Performing Harrow project, Programme Management, Service and Financial Planning and an improved approach to managing inspections are all supporting improved performance management. The attached report demonstrates that these projects are already delivering improvements and are on track for further impact over the rest of the financial year. Achievements in this area should drive real impact for users over the next few months.

Achievement and Investment

The Council's investment programme set out in the MTBS and our improvements in capacity and performance management continue to lead to real improvements for residents. In the last period there have been notable improvements in a number of areas:

- The benefits service has been assessed as "good" and the speed of processing applications continues to increase. Harrow now has the best turnaround time in London for new claims (Qtr 2).
- The Adults and Older People block has moved from "red" to "amber" following improvements on a number of elements

- Improvement in turnaround of SEN statements maintained (since March 2004, cases excluding “exceptions” maintained at 100% within target time; cases including “exceptions” improved from 44% to 98%)
- Council tax and NNDR collection rates are exceeding targets, the council rating 3rd best in London

However, we must ensure that these improvements lead to residents reporting improved satisfaction with the Council. Immediate priorities to address this area:

- The further development of communication and engagement strategies to inform residents of what the council is doing and seek their contribution
- A review of our customer interaction
- Further focus on partnership impacts through the HSP to address areas of concern to residents, which the council cannot address alone
- We are undertaking a specific performance management project in social care

Appendices –

Overview of results by theme

Schedule of detailed results by theme and indicator

Explanatory key