

Community Budget Pilot - Expression of Interest

1. Vision and Ambition:

Harrow is very well positioned to take forward the whole place Community Budget concept. We see this as complementary to our transformation objectives, particularly, effective joint working which is one of Harrow Strategic Partnership's core objectives. The Council and its partners recognise that Community Budgets provide a fantastic opportunity for building on our existing strong relationships and achieving better outcomes through redesigned, co-ordinated and better integrated public services.

Harrow already has highly successful partnership arrangements which have delivered improved outcomes to our residents. The partnership includes:

- The Council, which is very proud that it has come a long way in recent years. It is acknowledged as innovative and creative, providing high performing services at low costs. It is seen as a strong community leader. This has been recognised by it being named the current Municipal Journal Best Achieving Council in the UK;
- Our Local Police service, which is both ambitious and innovative, is already delivering low crime rates. It has, amongst many other initiatives, already delivered a Joint intelligence Unit and Analysis Group with partners, and a joint Anti-Social Behaviour Team, and licensing capacity with the Council;
- Our Health Sector, which has made substantial progress on the opportunities provided by the emerging health reforms with a Clinical Commissioning Group in place together with a Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board. Preparations for the transfer of the Public Health function to the local authority are well advanced;
- Our vigorous and inventive voluntary and community sector, which is commissioned to deliver a significant proportion of public services and attracts very high levels of volunteering;
- Our Job Centre Plus which is a valued contributor to our Partnership, leading and supporting employment and training initiatives with the assistance of our Further Education Colleges; and
- Our Business representatives to the Partnership who have recognised the many benefits that a Community Budget could bring to the economy of Harrow.

We are keen to build on these good relationships through the whole place Community Budget. We have identified that, as a pilot, we could extend early intervention from the right service, at the right time which, freed from silo budget considerations, could have a significant impact on family success, improving health, increasing independence of older people, reducing worklessness and addressing anti-social behaviour amongst many other benefits. This can be summarised as commissioning around the client, not around the budget.

Our whole place community budget **ambition** is:

“To create a single access mechanism for all local public services that provides a gateway to holistic, integrated services dedicated to identifying and taking early action to treat the underlying causes of problems to prevent them becoming critical or long-term issues.”

This would require:

- Effective joint triage and referral systems based around multi-agency multi-disciplinary teams to screen, risk assess and fast track all incoming work to the most appropriate team/service. This will also provide enhanced information sharing and intelligence gathering capacity.
- Multi-purpose, multi-functional, co-located facilities for the whole of the public sector, acting as community hubs from where residents can access services and contact local public services.
- Rationalising our combined estate to reduce costs, modernise facilities to benefit customers and staff, and maximise efficiency.
- Re-designing services to break through organisational barriers, which do not make sense to our customers or our staff and to join up complementary services to provide a seamless offer to residents.

We would achieve this by building on the foundations now in place especially the Children's Access Team model described in more detail in Section 4.

Collaboration with partners in Harrow comes from a long-held belief that improving the quality of life for our residents cannot be achieved by any single agency working in isolation. We also recognise that the best chance we have to achieve the scale of efficiencies required (30% less resource in local government alone) while protecting frontline services and delivering national priorities, is through more effective joint working. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts and we need to harness all local public services to achieve our financial and service ambitions.

The public sector spends approximately £1.9bn in Harrow or £8,800 per resident. Working together to deliver just a 1% saving would realise £19m and, more importantly, it would enable us to improve outcomes for local people. However, the barrier has been making the ideal work within the unique regional governance structures of London, which can militate against any genuine local autonomy. Our systems are not designed for integrated or horizontal ways of working and our target driven culture requires us to look up to Government for direction rather than locally to partners and residents. We too often focus on issues from a professional perspective rather than from an outcome or customer view point. This has made progress frustratingly slow at times and has motivated our partnership to seize the potential of further joint working through the greater opportunities provided Community Budgets.

There is willingness by partners in Harrow to be creative and innovative in developing and delivering approaches to the integration of services which is why the Partnership has made effective joint working one of our four priorities. All Partners operate coterminously with the Council and are very excited at the opportunities Community Budgets offer. They have all supported this expression of interest in principle.

2. Scale & Outcomes

The outcomes we are trying to achieve are:

- Reduced (residents') vulnerability
- Stimulate growth in the local economy
- Understand and reflect customer needs
- Services built around the needs of the individual not organisational silos
- Reduce duplication of services
- Shared information

- Joint commissioning
- Rationalise assets.

3. Scope of a community Budget:

A Harrow Community Budget pilot could include amongst the many ideas we have the following services and functions.

- The development and expansion of **Access Harrow**, our contact centre through which nearly all council services are provided, has enabled us to deliver a more joined up and personalised customer service for residents through improved customer contact and resolution at first point of contact. Indeed, over 90% of our calls are now resolved at the first point of contact. Our vision is to continue the expansion of Access Harrow to include partner services, such as booking GP appointments, and handling non-emergency calls for the Police. This would create a joined up public services access centre.

Contact will be migrated to an 'online banking' style relationship via authenticated portal and web forms. We envisage that our existing "My Harrow Account" capability which allows residents to manage their contacts with the Council could be extended to a single account for residents dealing with all public sector service in Harrow. This would create a unique one-stop-shop for **all** public services.

Developing the Children's Access Team model, described in more detail in Section 4, for all customers with complex needs would enable them to be assessed by a multi-agency team and referred to the right service within our integrated structure. This would lead to earlier, more targeted intervention, with the input from the various professionals involved being managed to better match the needs of the customer concerned.

Our ambition is to provide both a common front door to all public services and a fully integrated response for those who need it.

- We have developed a blueprint with the **police** around the principles of working closer together and the benefits our residents would see as a result. The integration proposals are envisaged to generate estimated annual revenue savings of £2.3m. We have well-developed proposals for the co-location of the Police 'headquarters function', within the Civic Centre, and Police operational functions within a centrally located Council facility. We are waiting for the Mayor of London and the Metropolitan Police Commissioner to agree to Harrow acting as a pathfinder for inter-agency co-location and wide-ranging property rationalisation.

We have agreed to the co-location of Harrow's public protection officers from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) within our Children's Access Team. Harrow Children's Services is one of three key pilot sites across London and is leading the way in establishing a MPA Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as part of a new regional initiative to improve collaborative safeguarding practice.

With the agreement to pathfinder status and the flexibility of a Community Budget, the Council and the Police could build more effectively on currently integrated services, such as our joint ASB team, Licensing, Intelligence Unit and Analytical Group referred to earlier to continue to improve customer service. We are also jointly developing a programme to introduce Integrated Offender Management involving, amongst others, the Probation Service and Job Centre Plus.

- The Council is working with **health** colleagues, including a representative of our Clinical Commissioning Group, on a 'Health Integration Programme', including integrated commissioning around the user, and to put in place plans for the strategic development of local health services over the long term. This programme is also dealing with the transfer of public health services to the Council which, through community budgets, would provide even better links to more holistic health and wellbeing outcomes.

We are ready to prepare a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and working on the creation of HealthWatch. Other links between Council, community and health concerns that could be promoted better as a Community Budget pilot include the Health gains from addressing fuel poverty and promoting energy efficiency to contribute to slowing climate change.

We want to explore the possibilities of linking our social care services more closely with the **Integrated Care Organisation** that brings together hospital and community health care in Harrow. The ICO has brought improvements in healthcare for patients in Harrow by removing artificial boundaries between hospital and community healthcare services. It provides greater choice for patients and allows more care to be delivered both closer to home and in the home. It puts more emphasis on long-term conditions such as Chronic Heart Disease and Diabetes, and has the ability to look after the whole of the user's needs over a longer period. Closer organisational working, and being able to blur the distinction between medical and social care, would further improve the quality of care and make significant efficiency savings.

- As a **public sector**, we operate from 147 different buildings. There is significant opportunity to rationalise the number of assets by sharing services, co-locating facilities, introducing new methods of working and service delivery, as well as working with our Clinical Commissioning Group to assist the development of integrated 21st Century primary care services. This could make significant revenue savings while enabling joined up services at the first point of contact. New locations for joined up services will be chosen on the basis of the extensive service user and customer segmentation data that the council already holds. Indeed, as one example, there is an opportunity to establish a single borough facility for **emergency services**, by bringing the two fire stations and the ambulance station together with the Council's operational vehicles and depot into a centrally located base, together with a shared services platform for all relevant support functions.
- Using the flexibility offered by Community Budgets we would bring together the administration of Universal Credit, Council Tax Benefits and the employment work of Job Centre Plus in a **One Stop Shop for Jobs** to reduce welfare dependency, yield significant administrative savings and help reduce fraud and error. A further benefit would be linking this service with our economic development team who provide a strong conduit to our business community and our FE Colleges to ensure the right skills are developed for our local business needs.
- Service integration through Community Budgets would allow local **job centre plus** to make better links with council and health services to signpost appropriate people to the Work Programme's prime contractors and disabled people to the Work Choice programme. Better integration would also support identifying clients for and assisting their participation in the DWP/ESF (European Social Fund) employment focussed provision for families with multiple problems.

4. Evidence of successful Partnership Working

The Partnership has recently agreed four new priorities, with the overarching theme and priority for the Partnership being **effective joint working**. This theme emerged from an assessment of local need drawing on partnership and national data and the aspirations expressed in regular engagement exercises.

Harrow has numerous examples of existing strong partnership working, which is leading us towards our ambition of a common front door for all public services. The further development of these services would also benefit from a Community Budget.

- In 2010 the Harrow Strategic Partnership committed resources towards the development of a multi agency/disciplinary **Children's Access Team (CAT)** as the single point of contact for all new referrals to Children's Services, which is the first of its kind. The core team complement includes social workers, Police public protection officers, PCT health navigator, education lead, social welfare worker, young person's worker and other staff working on a sessional basis. The CAT will be fully up and running by January 2012.

Harnessing the efficiencies and benefits of co-locating multi agency/disciplinary staff and partners, the CAT will work together to screen, risk assess and fast track all incoming work to the most appropriate team/service. This will provide enhanced information sharing and intelligence gathering capacity. The outcome of this approach will be a more systematic and holistic approach for the individual where the right skill set and package of support will be provided.

- Our commitment to Partnership working can be evidenced in our work in the Denver Project which brought together Children's Services, Community Safety, Housing, Police, Health, and Schools staff to support a family with the most complex needs in the borough and the neighbouring community in which they live. The Partnership ethic created a team unified by the objective of securing an improved outcome that overcame the differences of emphasis, style, and working practices of the team members. The project has made a significant contribution to the quality of life of the family and the local community and has provided a template for future working around families with complex needs.
- What sets Harrow apart is our **excellent working relationship with the Police** with many examples of where together we have improved the services we provide to residents, for example, our work on a co located joint intelligence unit and joining up of our anti social behaviour teams. The Council, the Police and the Probation Service are working to launch an Integrated Offender Management Service by April 2012 to assess and address the risk of re-offending. Another example of fruitful co-operation is our joint approach to licensing.
- Harrow is one of the leading Councils in **personalisation** and we are constantly challenging the way we provide our adult social care services through bringing the service user to the forefront of delivery. Already, £29.8m is invested in community based activity in 2011/12 and Harrow currently has 39% of all community based service users on personal budgets with a target of 50% by the end of 2011/12.
- **Harrow's Reablement** performance demonstrates our track record of jointly delivering projects which improve outcomes for local people and deliver significant financial savings. This service is on target to achieve savings of £350,000 in the current financial year with an expected total £2m savings over 3 years. The Department of Health Reablement Framework illustrates Harrow as having an average performance rate of 84.6% of Reablement service users requiring no further service, with more than 5,000 people

receiving Reablement services from October 2010 to July 2011. This service is assisted by Circles of Support, a scheme which encourages volunteers to support people in their own homes. An evaluation of Reablement cases to date shows 94% of Reablement recipients were satisfied or very satisfied with the service.

Our Personalisation scheme and joint health and council Reablement programme have increased the independence of older people, enabling them to live in their own homes for longer, improving their quality of life.

- The recently introduced Health Reforms have provided an opportunity to further **grow and expand our relationship with new partners**. We have successfully established a Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board and have built strong relationships with the new Clinical Commissioning Group and the elected GPs. GP representatives have recently joined both the Partnership Board and the Harrow Chief Executives and discussions have taken place with the PCT, GPs and the Council on opportunities for providing commissioning support to the Clinical Commissioning Group.
- The **Harrow School Improvement Partnership** is the country's first schools driven improvement partnership. It is a dynamic, traded collaborative led by schools for schools, initially with Local Authority support. It ensures that schools in Harrow have access to high quality, locally available school improvement provision. It has already received the backing of well known education Professor and Patron of the Partnership, John West-Burnham. Within 2 years it will become a social enterprise, led by head teachers.
- The **Families with Complex Needs** project is a key priority for the Harrow Strategic Partnership. The aim is to identify efficient ways of providing services to the most complex families to address underlying problems, It focuses on key early interventions that can prevent similar families from developing such complex needs. A core strategy group has been convened consisting of representatives from the Council, Police, Health and VCS partner agencies to focus on the holistic needs of a pilot group of high need families and applying 'team around the family' principles.
- Harrow's innovative partnership with **Coram**, a voluntary sector agency, has resulted in one of the most effective adoption services in the country delivering both high success rates and short processing and evaluation periods. This approach has been held up central government as the way forward in the provision of adoption services in local authorities,
- We have a long standing and successful partnership with **Capita** who, as well as providing IT support and development services, add to the Council's capacity to work up and take forward transformational projects on a payment by results basis. In Harrow, Capita initially specialised in ICT based Business Transformation projects but we have expanded their remit to include support for a full range of change projects.
- We have established partnerships with our **residents** such as the recruitment of some 1,200 Neighbourhood Champions who act as the Council's eyes and ears reporting on environmental and anti social behaviour issues,. Our Pride in Harrow weeks of action target small neighbourhoods and, with local people and a multi-agency response , address environmental and other outstanding issues such as abandoned vehicles, untaxed cars, fly tipping, installing smoke alarms and public health promotion.
- Our extensive **Lets Talk** community engagement campaigns are an innovative way of demonstrating community leadership and bringing residents into the decision making process.

5. Decision making

The range of projects in place demonstrates the strength of our partnership decision making abilities. This is a product of the partnership structures that we have evolved.

We have recently put in place a slimmed down Partnership Board chaired by the Leader of the Council which is responsible for the strategic direction of the partnership, renewing the Community Strategy and overseeing the business of the Partnership generally. The Board is assisted by an Assembly – a wider group of partners who meet to debate more open ended questions to provide options for the future direction of strategy. The most important questions are considered by a summit of 120+ local groups, organisations and individuals to ensure decisions are firmly based on real experience and incorporate a wide range of interests.

At the operational level, we have a well established regular meeting of Harrow Chief Executives including those of the Council, the PCT, the Hospital Trust, the Chair of the Clinical Commissioning Group, the Chief Executive of a leading voluntary sector organisation, the Borough Commander, the Regional Manager of Job Centre Plus and a private sector member of the Large Employer Network. This group drives the implementation of strategy, identifies opportunities and fresh ideas for more effective joint working and ensures that our partners' aims and aspirations, policies and practices are aligned and coherent.

The Chief Executives' meeting receives regular performance and financial reports and ensures that the Partnership Board is aware of successes and areas of concern.

6 Capacity to deliver

The partnership inspired work programme we have set out demonstrates both an appetite and capacity to deliver improved outcomes for local people across the range of our partnership's responsibilities. We have enhanced the Council's capacity to deliver through the long-term partnership arrangement with Capita to provide some core services and project support when required.

Community Budgets provide tremendous opportunities for local leaders to shape their public services, but also provides uncertainty amongst our local partners about what they can and cannot do in our local area. Some of our partners are still finding themselves pulled vertically rather than allowed to work horizontally with other local organisations.

We have identified a number of challenges to the successful implementation of the Community Budget concept. We feel that it is important to recognise the existence of these challenges from the outset and seek support from Government where appropriate in overcoming them.

- **Joining up the Public Sector Infrastructure** – A key challenge is the relationship between the MPA and MPS whereby decisions made on local assets are made by the MPA with minimal involvement and consultation with the MPS. There is also a lack of autonomy provided to the local police force to influence the location of local assets. This has posed problems in the recent past and could delay promising co-location and integration proposals.
- **Spending and Accountability Rules** – There are different rules for how money is spent between Whitehall and Local Government and also between local partners. For example, the rules and regulations on what constitutes capital expenditure are different for local authorities and Primary Care Trusts and Whitehall spending does not distinguish between

capital and revenue. There will need to be a commonly understood single set of financial rules for the Community Budget Programme.

- **Financial Barriers** – The local Primary Care Trust has a significant financial challenge, which could mean that decisions made will conflict with our Partnership ambition. This also has implications for the enthusiasm of partners to include primary care budgets with any Community Budget as it could result in a sharing of a deficit.
- **Localism** – There is some uncertainty around the extent to which national decision making and priorities will impact on the ability of a Community Budget pilot to address local needs in the most effective way. This happens now with central policy, targets and priorities sometimes conflicting with local needs. Partners will need reassurance that the effort entailed in constructing a new way of working will be worthwhile and allowed to demonstrate its effectiveness.
- **London Governance** – London has additional complexities due to the further layer of rules and regulations and drive for more cluster working. The drive for efficiencies in the Police and Health sectors is leading to sub-regional models of working which could militate against an integrated public service model for a single borough, for example, the difficulties involved in taking Harrow out of the North West London Health Cluster arrangements or a Metropolitan Police property and custody review need to be fully recognised.
- **Management availability** – the impact of the spending reductions across the public service has already included a reduction in the senior management capacity of all partners and raises issues about the feasibility of releasing key staff despite the ability to back fill and the desire of senior staff to take on a secondment opportunity.

7. Use of Resources

We undertook a significant amount of work in preparation for possible Total Place pilots in understanding local public expenditure and the detailed responsibilities of partner organisations. This learning is available to support Community Budget work.

While there is local evidence of aligning budgets, for example, to support the Reablement programme, substance misuse prevention and treatment and anti-social behaviour, there are fewer examples of pooled budgets where there are concerns that the benefits of programmes may not accrue to all of the funders and not in proportion to their investment. The Community Budget concept essentially removes this concern and allows services to be commissioned that address the needs of individuals without having to put in place complex joint funding packages. There is an appetite to overcome this through the Community Budget process in Harrow.

The way in which the partnership used its Local Area Agreement Reward Grant funding is an example of partnership decision-making unaffected by concerns about the rates of return to individual partner organisations. In this case, the Partnership as a whole funded a range of projects by organisations from each part of the public and the voluntary sector by assessing the impact each would have against the Partnership's priorities.

8. Sharing learning

The Council has given presentations on its journey to the Best Achieving Council award to a wide variety of audiences ranging from individual authority management teams to national

conferences. The Partnership has been happy to promote other successful projects such as our Neighbourhood Champions programme of local residents to support the Council and the Police in addressing anti-social behaviour and our Borough Beat scheme to promote staff volunteering as Special Constables.

We have recently hosted a visit from the Riots, Communities and Victims Panel to share with them our thoughts about why Harrow did not experience disturbances this summer. We have shared our experience of radically improving our adoption service with Martin Narey, the recently appointed Ministerial Adviser on Adoption.

On a regular basis, we contribute our experience to the West London Alliance, a group of nine West London Councils that develop collaborative strategies and improve provision of the public services in West London through sharing knowledge, expertise and resources and the Chief Executive London Committee.

We staged a conference to share the operation of our successful Help2Let scheme that supports placing people in housing need in private sector properties and contributed a case study to the National Local Government Network on tenant behaviour.

Our Access Harrow centre hosts weekly visits from Councils anxious to learn from our which is recognised as the best in the country.

9. Conclusion

Harrow has demonstrated its readiness, willingness and ability to engage with the Community Budget concept and that we have a clear ambition for the scope and scale of the changes we know are needed and that could be achieved with pilot status. We are also aware of some of the barriers to success but feel that, in partnership with Government, these can be overcome.

Harrow has come a long way in its transformational journey and still has challenges to face. However, our experience of managing change, securing improvement, partnership working and engagement with our community, linked to our continuing ambition for better outcomes at lower costs, makes Harrow an exceptional candidate for a Community Budget pilot.