

Harrow

Local Economic Assessment 2019 - 2020

Introduction, Aims and Objectives

Introduction

1.1 This is Harrow's fourth Local Economic Assessment (LEA), the previous one being produced in 2013/14. The emphasis of this report is on describing Harrow and its economic position within the West London and London economy. It presents a wide range of economic statistics, comparing Harrow with other West London boroughs, as well as London and nationally.

1.2 In April 2010 a statutory duty was placed on all upper tier local authorities (as part of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act) to prepare a Local Economic Assessment. The duty was part of a policy to grant local authorities greater power and influence to support economic growth in their area. In September 2010 the Coalition Government removed the statutory requirement for local authorities to prepare a Local Economic Assessment. Local authorities are now free to determine the breadth and scope of their assessments reflecting local priorities and 'without interference from Government'. In addition, the Government has stated that it does not intend to monitor or assess LEAs.

1.3 Harrow's LEA still continues to take account of the Memorandum of Understanding agreed between London Councils and the GLA to ensure consistency of approach. The Memorandum of Understanding was a response to the initial set of Government guidance on the preparation of LEA.

1.4 The Memorandum of Understanding agreed a number of actions for the GLA and London boroughs in relation to the LEA including:

- Setting out a core indicative data set for inclusion in all economic assessments in London for benchmarking between London boroughs and groups of boroughs
- Review the process of preparing Local Economic Assessments in London and the usefulness and impact of these on local, sub-regional and regional strategic planning, alignment of activities and joint investment planning, six months or more after all initial assessments are complete

1.5 In line with London Councils' Memorandum of Understanding, Harrow's first Local Economic Assessment was developed in consultation with a range of partners. This included the voluntary, public and private sectors, and strategic partners both within and outside of Harrow.

The LEA Area

1.6 Harrow is an attractive Outer London borough situated in north-west London, approximately ten miles from Central London. Hertfordshire lies to the north, with the District Councils of Three Rivers and Hertsmere immediately adjoining.

1.7 There is considerable partnership working between a wide range of agencies, bodies and groups in the sub-region, and importantly the seven local authorities which comprise the West London Alliance (Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hammersmith & Fulham, Hillingdon and Hounslow) are working together on a range of sub-regional issues.

1.8 The borough is also part of the West London Sub-Region, The London Plan, Greater London Authority (GLA) which currently (from 2011) comprises six other London boroughs: Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Hillingdon, Hounslow and Richmond upon Thames. The borough is located in the north-east of the West London Sub-Region, identified in the Mayor's London Plan as the 'Western Wedge', a vibrant part of the London economy.

1.9 Hammersmith & Fulham formed part of a tri-borough shared services project with Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster. The aim of this project was to combine specific areas of service delivery as a response to the financial pressures facing local government. However, in 2017 a statement was published stating that the agreement was to end in 2018 due to uncertainty caused by Hammersmith & Fulham. The other two boroughs planned to continue sharing services in a bi-borough arrangement.

Map 1.1: Harrow in a Regional Context



Source: West London Alliance

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1.10 Harrow is one of London's most attractive suburban areas. With a population of over 251,100 and growing, only a relatively small amount of land and buildings are devoted to employment and industrial activity compared to other Outer London and West London boroughs. Harrow covers an area of approximately 50 sq km (just under 20 square miles) and over a quarter of the borough (more than 1,300 hectares) consists of open space, much of which is designated Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land. The borough is well connected to the rest of London by underground, and to the rest of the UK by train and by car via the M1, M25 and M40 motorways. Heathrow Airport is also in close proximity, situated in the adjoining West London boroughs of Hillingdon and Hounslow.

Aims and Objectives

1.11 The aim of LEAs is to ensure that local partners are equipped with a sound understanding of the local economy, based on a robust evidence base, and that this understanding should lead to improved economic interventions.

The core objectives¹ of LEAs are to:

- Provide a sound understanding of the economic conditions in the area and how they affect residents and businesses

¹ CLG Statutory Guidance on Local Economic Assessments, March 2010

- Identify the comparative strengths and weaknesses of the local economy and the nature and form of local economic challenges and opportunities
- Identify the local economic geography, including the economic linkages between the area being assessed and the wider economy
- Identify the local constraints to economic growth and employment and the risks to delivering sustainable economic growth

1.12 The Harrow LEA will inform local strategies including: the Harrow Regeneration Strategy; and Housing and Transport strategies. In addition, the LEA formed part of the evidence base for the preparation of Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and the Harrow & Wealdstone Area Action Plan and will also form part of the evidence base when the Harrow Local Plan is updated.

1.13 The Harrow LEA also provides investors, developers, and local businesses with an understanding of the economic conditions in the area as an aid to decision making.