



**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH

**ANNUAL REPORTS OF COMMITTEES  
2012-2013**

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**ANNUAL REPORT ON THE  
WORK OF  
THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**April 2013**

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 This report covers the period April 2012 to March 2013 and outlines:-

- Information relating to the Audit Committee;
- The coverage of work undertaken by the Audit Committee;
- Key issues arising;
- Actions taken during the year, including training, to ensure the effectiveness of the Audit Committee; and
- Future planned work and challenges.

## **2. Background**

2.1 The Audit Committee has been in place for a number of years and has as its terms of reference:

- To consider and monitor the Authority's risk management and internal control environment;
- To focus audit resources;
- To receive and approve the Annual Statement of Accounts
- To monitor performance of internal and external audit; and
- To monitor proactive fraud and corruption arrangements.

## **3. The Audit Structure**

Audit Committee     Cllr Georgina Galpin (Chair from May 2010)  
                              Cllr Frederick Osbourne  
                              Cllr Roger Ramsey  
                              Cllr Frederick Thompson  
                              Cllr Clarence Barrett  
                              Cllr Denis Breeding

Internal Auditors     Internal Service

External Auditors    PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)

## **4. Audit Committee coverage**

4.1 The Audit Committee has received the reports as set out in Appendix A. The coverage can broadly be categorised as regular and specific. More information on both is set out below.

### **4.2 Regular Work**

The Committee has regularly reviewed:

- Progress against the audit plan and performance;
- Key findings/issues arising from each audit undertaken;
- Progress against implementation of the recommendations;
- Anti fraud and corruption activity, including frauds investigated and outcomes;
- Treasury Management activity; and

- The Accounts closedown timetable and progress reports.

#### 4.3 Specific Review / Reports

There were several during the year including a review and approval of:

- the Risk Management Strategy;
- the Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy;
- the Statement of Accounts;
- the Annual Governance Statement;
- the Internal Audit Strategy; and
- the Annual Audit Plan.

The Committee also received assurances via:

- Annual Report from Internal Audit; and
- The work of External Audit (PwC).

### **5. Key issues arising**

- 5.1 The Committee requested follow up audits or received updates from the relevant Head of Service regarding areas where audit assurances had not improved or recommendations not implemented in line with planned timescales.

### **6. Work to ensure effectiveness of Committee**

- 6.1 The Committee has received dedicated training and awareness sessions on Risk Management, Risk Based Verification, Fraud and Housing Tenancy Fraud.
- 6.2 In February the annual review of the Committee's effectiveness was undertaken. There were no significant issues from this exercise.
- 6.3 The Committee now has identified substitute members who are invited to attend all training, this aims to ensure the Committee is always fully equipped to deal with the agenda items presented.

### **7. Priorities and work plan for the forthcoming year**

- 7.1 The Audit Committee is currently planned to meet on four occasions over the next municipal year. There are specific reports planned throughout the year, running through a mix of quarterly progress reports and annual reviews of specific strategies and policies within the remit of the Committee, together with progress reports from the Council's external auditor.
- 7.2 There are new Public Sector Audit Standards being introduced for 2013 and compliance with these will require oversight of the Committee.
- 7.3 Officers will continue to ensure all members on the Committee, and their nominated substitutes, are adequately trained.

**Annual Report of the Audit Committee, 2012/13**

- 7.4 The Committee will continue to focus on ensuring Value for Money and challenging weak areas that have been highlighted by the work of Internal Audit.
- 7.5 The Committee will focus on the Risk Management arrangements being while they continue to be embedded and seek assurances that robust arrangements are in place.
- 7.6 Fraud prevention and detection will continue to be high on the Audit Committees agenda going forward.
- 7.7 The Committee will continue to promote their work to all members of the Council by inviting them to attend their briefing sessions.

**AUDIT COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS  
FROM APRIL 2012 TO DATE**

**April 2012**

- Jacobs Contract Follow Up
- Closure of Accounts Timetable 11/12
- Oracle Report Follow Up
- Internal Audit progress report
- External Audit Plan 11/12 Pension Fund Audit
- Training Requirements for Committee
- Draft Audit Plan Update
- Demise of The Audit Commission
- Annual Report of the Committee
- Urgent Business

**June 2012**

- Appointeeships and Deputyships Update
- Update of objection to accounts action plan
- Internal Audit Progress Report
- Fraud Progress Report
- Annual Head of Internal Audit Report
- Annual Governance Statement
- Closure of Accounts Timetable
- External Audit Update
- Annual Review of Fraud & Corruption
- Annual Review of Risk Management
- Member Training
- Urgent Business
- Annual Treasury Report

**September 2012**

- Annual Statement of Accounts
- International Standards of Auditing – Report to those charged with Governance (ISA 260)
- Response to ISA 260
- Internal Audit progress report
- Fraud progress report
- Expenses and Purchase Card Follow Up
- Outstanding Audit Recommendations
- Urgent Business
- Treasury Update

**December 2012**

- Jacobs Contract Update
- Leaseholder Valuation Tribunal Update
- Annual Audit Letter
- Accounts closedown timetable
- Governance Update
- Internal Audit Progress Report
- Fraud Progress Report

**Annual Report of the Audit Committee, 2012/13**

- Urgent Business
- Treasury Update

**February 2013**

- External Audit Plan 12/13
- 11/12 Audit Report of Grant Claims and Returns
- Children's Centre Follow Up
- Annual Review of the Audit Committees Effectiveness
- Internal Audit Progress Report
- Fraud Progress Report
- Draft Internal Audit Plan 13/14 and Strategy
- Annual Review of Fraud
- Closure of Accounts Timetable
- Urgent Business
- Treasury Update



**AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBERS TRAINING / AWARENESS**

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Session</b>	<b>Coverage</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
June	Fraud	Housing Fraud	Cllr Georgina Galpin Cllr Fred Osborne Cllr Linda Hawthorn Cllr Roger Ramsey Cllr Frederick Thompson Cllr Denis O'Flynn Cllr Ron Ower
December	Fraud	General Fraud Update	Cllr Georgina Galpin Cllr Clarence Barrett Cllr Denis Breeding Cllr Wendy Brice-Thompson Cllr Roger Ramsey Cllr Frederick Thompson
February	Risk Based Verification	New approach to Benefits assessment	Cllr Georgina Galpin Cllr Denis Breeding Cllr Frederick Osborne Cllr Frederick Thompson

**AUDIT COMMITTEE – FORWARD PLAN / TRAINING**

FORWARD PLAN	AGENDA ITEM	PLANNED TRAINING
June 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closure of Accounts Timetable</li> <li>• External Audit Progress Report</li> <li>• Annual Audit Report</li> <li>• Annual Governance Statement</li> <li>• Annual Treasury Report</li> <li>• Annual Review of Risk Management</li> <li>• Member Training Plan</li> </ul>	N/a
September 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Accounts</li> <li>• Report to those charged with Governance</li> <li>• Response to Auditors</li> <li>• Internal Audit Progress Report</li> <li>• Outstanding Recommendations Report</li> <li>• Fraud Progress Report</li> <li>• Treasury Update</li> </ul>	TBC – separate plan to June Committee
December 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Audit Letter</li> <li>• Closure of Accounts Timetable</li> <li>• Internal Audit Progress Report</li> <li>• Governance Update</li> <li>• Fraud Progress Report</li> <li>• Treasury Management Report</li> </ul>	TBC
February 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External Audit Plan</li> <li>• Internal Audit Draft plan and strategy.</li> <li>• Internal Audit progress report</li> <li>• Fraud Progress Report</li> <li>• Annual Review of Audit Committee Effectiveness</li> <li>• Internal Audit Charter and Terms of Reference</li> <li>• Annual Grants review</li> <li>• Demise of Audit Commission</li> <li>• Treasury Management Report</li> <li>• Annual Report of Audit Committee</li> <li>• Close down Accounts timetable</li> <li>• External Audit Pensions Plan</li> </ul>	TBC

**ANNUAL REPORT OF  
THE CHILDREN & LEARNING  
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**



# Havering

LONDON BOROUGH

## **ANNUAL REPORT – CHILDREN AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **SUMMARY**

This report is the annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the past Council year.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable members and others to compare performance year to year.

There are no direct equalities or environmental implications attached to this covering report. Any financial implications from reviews and work undertaken will be advised as part of the specific reviews.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Council note the 2012/2013 Children & Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report incorporating the 2012/2013 Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report.

### **REPORT DETAILS**

During the year under review, the Committee met on 8 occasions and dealt with the following issues:

#### **1. REQUISITIONS**

- 1.1 The Committee held several special meetings during 2012/2013 to consider a number of requisitions relating to decisions made by Cabinet.

A special meeting was held on 9 August 2012 to consider two requisitions, the first relating to the Future Shape of Education Service on a decision made by Cabinet so as to ensure that the Council is able to meet its statutory obligations to support children, families and schools, but within a reduced funding envelope, thereby ensuring the provision of high quality schooling to local residents and protecting the most vulnerable children and families.

## 1.2 **Future Shape of Education Services**

The requisition was sought in order to clarify the following issues:

- a. There is no option identified to work with the existing model. Our services have a high buy in rate so what consideration has been given to expanding and growing these services even further into other boroughs?
- b. In recommendation 2 (b), who will be making the final decision?
- c. All of the options need to be discussed by the Children & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee voted not to uphold the requisition by 7 votes to 1 with 1 abstention.

## 1.3 **Commissioning School Places Strategy**

The second requisition related to Commissioning School Places Strategy for 2012/13-2015/16. The decision of the Cabinet was:

- a. To approve the draft Commissioning School Places Strategy 2012/13-2016/17 (CSPS).
- b. To approve the circulation of the draft CSPS for consultation to all stake holders in school place planning.
- c. To delegate the determination of the final CSPS, to the Cabinet Member for Children Service's and the Group Director for Children's Services.
- d. To note that a further report will be going to Cabinet in September 2012, which will set out the details of each expansion scheme, the consultation process and indicative costs and funding for each scheme.

1.4 The decision had been called in on grounds which included:

- a. To examine the availability of spare accommodation which would meet some of the increased demand.
- b. To examine the implications of the proposed strategy for home to school travel particularly relating to primary schools.
- c. To consider the financial difficulties those schools will face as a consequence of the increase in pupil numbers in the current funding arrangements.
- d. A perceived lack of consideration of options for the development of Academies or Free Schools.

The Committee voted not to uphold the requisition by 7 votes to 1 with 1 abstention.

## 1.5 **Primary School Expansion**

1.6 The Committee held a further special meeting on 11 October 2012 to consider a requisition relating to Primary School Expansion for 2012-2013.

- 1.7 The decision of Cabinet concerned a report on the proposals for primary school expansions in the borough for 2012-13, owing to a projected shortage of primary school places for September 2013. Based on the report (which was circulated to members of the Committee) made the following decisions:
- a. There are 15 schools listed for proposed permanent expansion from September 2013 to meet the projected deficit of primary places;
  - b. The statutory processes are initiated to permanently expand the capacity of eight of those 15 schools by September 2013: Harold Court Primary; Harold Wood Primary; Pyrgo Priory Primary; St Patrick's Primary; Rise Park Infant and Junior schools; and Towers Infant and Junior schools;
  - c. The proposal to expand Branfil Primary School from 1 September 2013 is commenced, following the Representation Period which ended on 31 August 2012;
  - d. That officers take all necessary steps in order to deliver the expansion programme, including the submission of planning applications;
  - e. That the commencement of a tendering process for construction/ refurbishment works at issue of tenders for Harold Court Primary, Harold Wood Primary, Mead Primary, Parsonage Farm Primary, Rise Park Infant and Junior schools, Towers Infant and Junior schools, together with all associated investigations e.g. soil survey, and;
  - f. That the final allocation of available Capital funding as detailed within the Cabinet report was to be delegated to the Lead Members for Children and Learning and Value, and the Group Directors of Children's Services and Finance and Commerce.

- 1.8 The reasons for the requisition were noted on the formal notification and were detailed as follows:
- a. To review the selection of 15 schools and Branfil School set out in the Report to Cabinet for permanent expansion;
  - b. to consider the capital and revenue financial risks predicted for the cost of expansion of the schools;
  - c. to review the timetable to deliver the proposed expansions.

The Committee voted not to uphold the requisition by 8 votes to 4 with one abstention.

### 1.9 **Merger of Children's Centre Activities**

- 1.9 1 A further special meeting was called by the Committee on 6 March 2013 to consider a decision made by Cabinet regarding proposals for the merger of Children Centre activities around 6 hub sites. Alternative operators (such as Schools and Libraries) would run and maintain the other smaller and less-used sites, which would be decommissioned as Children Centres, but continue to provide early years services such as pre-school provision.
- 1.9 2 The reasons for the requisition were detailed on the formal notification and were detailed as follows:
- a. The decision appears to be counter to Central Government and the Councils policies on early intervention

- b. The decision does not appear to have taken due consideration to the rise in the birth rate
- c. To allow Overview & Scrutiny Committees to consider the impact of the Council taking responsibility for Public Health Policy before the closure of Children's Centres.

1.9 3 The Committee voted not to uphold the requisition by 9 votes to 3 with one abstention.

## **2 DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TEENAGE PREGNANCY**

2.1 The Committee was informed about progress made to date from a report from the Young People at Risk Commissioner in reducing teenage pregnancy and substance misuse among young people in Havering. The rate of teenage pregnancy in Havering was above the England and London average with over 60% of conceptions terminated. In 2010, The Children's Trust Board approved the development and launch of a local Teenage Pregnancy (TP) Board with an overall strategic aim to reduce the under 18 years teenage conception rate in the borough by 15%.

2.2 Evidence gathered in the consultation survey in 2010 amongst young people aged 13 years to 19 years by the Havering Teenage Pregnancy Board was used to formulate the Action Plan for 2012-13 whose key priorities were:

- Commission the Integrated Youth Service to deliver the Phoenix teenage Pregnancy Counselling Service and coordinate the delivery of the free Condom Card Scheme
- Commission Young add action, the young people's substance misuse service provider to deliver the targeted Sexual Health Support Service
- Provide a SRE Grant Scheme targeting and inviting 6 schools in Havering that are located in TP hotspots (Harold Hill, Rainham & North Romford) to apply for a grant to support and enrich their Sex and Relationships Education.
- Commission Living Well to provide the "TXTM8" service, the free 24hr sexual health information and advice text service for young people.
- Commission a new Z Card information mini booklet ensuring that is available and accessible to young people through a range of young people services borough-wide.
- Commission a sexual health training programme for staff who works across a range of children and young people services addressing subjects including skills to speak with young people about sex, supporting young people within the law, contraception and sexually transmitted infection courses.
- Conduct the annual Condom Card Scheme's User Satisfaction Survey with registered users to evaluate the service and measure its impact and outcomes on scheme users.
- Review and update the "Only Way is Safer Sex" Facebook campaign and Teenage Pregnancy & Contraception pages on the LBH website.

2.3 The Committee are pleased to report that Havering continues to experience a reduction in the number of teenage conceptions that contributed to and

strengthened a consistent downward trend in numbers and pregnancy rates in Havering (a trend that began in early 2009).

2.4 The Committee also considered progress and actions taken to tackle substance misuse of drugs and alcohol amongst young people.

2.5 Havering's strategic priorities in this area were commissioning, improving services, partnerships and digital worlds. The latter of these was about responding to and exploring new digital opportunities and maximising current technology to provide information, advice and support to young people, parents and professionals whilst recognising the need for reliable on-line sources of accurate information which young people could trust.

2.6 A local schools survey asked pupils their views about their health, education, leisure and personal safety. The survey was carried out in the autumn 2011 and a total of 4 local secondary schools in Havering participated in the survey. Overall, 411 pupils completed the survey. Some of the key findings included:

- In the past 12 months, 24% of pupils reported that people drinking or being drunk had made them feel unsafe "all of the time" or "most of the time". Also, 24% of pupils reported that they "sometimes" felt unsafe as a result of others drinking or being drunk. 29% reported that they had never felt unsafe.
- In the past 12 months, 34% of pupils reported that people dealing or using drugs had made them feel unsafe "all of the time" or "most of the time". 31% of pupils reported that they had never felt unsafe.
- 76% of pupils reported that they were satisfied with the information about drugs and alcohol at school.
- 48% of pupils reported drinking alcohol within the last 12 months while 52% reported that they had never drunk alcohol.
- 14% of pupils reported to have been drunk at least once or more in the last 4 weeks; this equates to circa 2,100 secondary school aged pupils.
- 7% of pupils reported drinking alcohol "1 or 2 times a week"; this equates to circa 1,050 pupils. 3% reporting drinking "most days" which equates to 450 pupils.
- 10% of pupils reported using drugs within the last 12 months which equates to 1,500 pupils.
- 4% of pupils reported using drugs "every day" which equates to 600 pupils.

2.7 The data above had informed the Substance Misuse Action Plan 2012-13 which had an over-riding purpose of ensuring that both the commissioned and youth offending services would be accountable to and working towards developing consistently high quality standards and arrangements for professionals, young people and their families. The Committee noted the key priorities for the 2012-13 action plan were:

- Commission a service to identify and build resilience with schools pupils with substance misusing parents.
- Commission a workforce training programme in 2012-13 for professionals working with children and young people in Havering, ensuring that all sectors are invited to attend the training programme.



- Establish a volunteering scheme to ensure that young people engaged with the commissioned substance misuse service have their wider health and social needs identified and supported to access local services.
- To strengthen the annual needs assessment, design and launch a young people's drugs and alcohol survey encouraging schools and youth support services to support young people complete the survey.
- Design, consult on and implement on-line user satisfaction surveys that invited professionals, young people and parents to comment on their experience of using the commissioned substance misuse service.
- Consult on and design a Quality Assurance Charter outlining a set of standards that professionals can expect from the commissioned service, promoting this Charter through the on-line and paper referral pathways.
- Consult on the development of the local authority website pages for substance misuse related to young people, promoting new pages to the community through the website, professional groups and social media pathways.
- Consult on the development, design and implementation of social media products, in particular developing Facebook and Application software (known as "Apps") in order to maximise new technology to signpost young people and parents to the local commissioned services.

### **3. MULTI –AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB (MASH)**

- 3.1 The London Safeguarding Children Board, the Metropolitan Police, London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS) and the Greater London Authority agreed in 2011 to take forward a London wide project bringing together partner agencies to work more closely together on information sharing. Poor information sharing has been a feature of many inquiries into child death tragedies including Peter Connelly in Haringey.
- 3.2 In Havering, agencies had been working closely together to establish a MASH in Mercury House. Progress had been very good. Although, Havering was not in the original first wave of MASH programmes, the police were now in Mercury House and health partners were recruiting to their post in the multi-agency team.
- 3.3 The Committee was informed that the priority areas that MASH sought to address were as follows:
- placement moves;
  - transfers to social care and the Youth Offending Service;
  - service planning not being informed by young people;
  - poor use of performance data, and;
  - the pace of change being too slow.
- 3.4 With a view to achieving the overarching themes, the triage/MASH 'pod' had been located in a refitted 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the North Wing of Mercury House. A police server had been installed along with a new IT system specially designed for MASH. Within MASH, there were three 'assessment pods', comprising:
- four social workers (including three senior practitioners);

- two advanced practitioners;
- a practice manager, and;
- two administrative staff.

3.5 There was a single assessment framework that was being used to assist staff in dealing with cases that had increased complexity and to analyse cases in line with the Suffolk judgement.

3.6 There had been some improvements of referrals overall as a result of the MASH, although timescales remained a challenge. The next step was to re-launch and extend the hospital social care role in Queens and St Georges and to improve structures by utilising new technologies.

3.7 The Committee asked for more information around the specific time delays in the referral process and queried who coordinated the work between MASH and the Police.

#### **4. TROUBLED FAMILIES**

4.1 The Committee considered a report from the coordinator of Havering's Troubled Families programme.

4.2 In October 2011, the Department of Communities and Local Government announced the national Troubled Families Programme, whereby Government funding would be available to local authorities based on the likely prevalence of families with specific characteristics.

4.3 The Committee was informed that Havering's Troubled Families Programme was a merger of national and local initiatives. The programme had begun by plotting the areas of deprivation to identify the top 100 families.

4.4 The Committee was taken through the process by which the troubled families would be identified. The Government had established national thresholds that included education, crime and anti-social behaviour and work. To these three criteria Havering had added its own local, discretionary criteria.

4.5 So far, Havering had identified 170 families, with a further 415 target families. One family had 37 teams of agencies visit them, which demonstrated the importance of streamlining services and the ways in which the Troubled Families programme would tie-in with the MASH.

#### **5. ACCESS TO FREE SCHOOL PROVIDERS**

5.1 During 2012/13, the Committee also received a document outlining the criteria by which potential Free School Providers seeking to establish a Free School in the borough would be assessed.

#### **6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES – COMPLAINTS & COMPLEMENTS**

- 6.1 The Committee received the report on Complaints and Compliments for Children and Young Peoples Services where the Committee noted that this was reported separately owing to specific regulations.
- 6.2 It was noted that there were around 133 complaints during 2011/12 with 36 matters raised by MPs and Councillors. For 2011.12, 34 compliments were received in relation to the good work Children and Young People's Services had carried out. The Committee also noted that most complaints were initiated by parents and that the majority related to quality of services, alleged staff behaviour and disputed decisions.

## **7. CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE & GUIDANCE**

- 7.1 The Committee noted that the education Act 2011 had inserted a new duty requiring schools to secure access to independent careers guidance for pupils in years 9-11 as well as including options available in respect of 16-18 year olds with regards to education, training and apprenticeships. Schools would be able to work individually or in partnership to secure impartial careers guidance services. The Committee were also informed of the responsibilities of local authorities which were to encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people in education or training and to assist the most vulnerable or those at risk of disengaging with education or work.
- 7.2 The Committee established a topic group to investigate the new careers education, information, advice and guidance service that was to replace the old Connexions Careers Service.

## **8. SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

- 8.1 At the February 2013 meeting, the Committee received a presentation from the Assistant Group Director (Commissioning) from Social Care and Learning regarding progress made with changes to the SEN Transport provision and also went on to discuss the School Travel Plans. Further to a request by the Committee in 2012, members considered a presentation from Havering's Smarter Travel Officer regarding school travel plans in the borough.
- 8.2 The Committee noted that a School Travel Plan (STP) was a document written by a school in consultation with its pupils, parents, staff, and local residents, which sought to address travel and transport issues in and around the school
- 8.3 The STP looked at how pupils and staff currently travelled to school, how they would prefer to travel and how the school could encourage more sustainable travel habits. An effective STP would be kept up to date, reviewed annually, and re-written every three years. School Travel Plans were usually voluntary and relied on the schools willingness to participate.

An STP was said to help schools by:

- Reducing traffic congestion and air pollution in and around the school site

- Improving personal and road safety skills
- Improving the health and fitness of pupils and staff - linked to improved academic results
- Establishing safer walking and cycling routes to school
- Enhancing relations with the local community

## **9. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

- 9.1 The Committee considered a report from the Manager, Additional Educational Needs regarding attendance data for schools/academies for the school years 2009-10 to 2011-12 and the work being undertaken by the Local Authority to support attendance in maintained schools and academies in the London Borough of Havering.
- 9.2 The Committee noted that the Government was placing high importance currently to improving school attendance and reducing the number of children with high levels of absences from schools/academies. The Committee also had regard to information concerning the overall rates of attendance and the rates of “persistent absence” for schools/ academies in the borough for the three school years from 2009-10 to 2011-12, providing comparisons with figures both national and for outer London boroughs.
- 9.3 The Committee noted that School staff, both teaching and non-teaching, were in the front line of the drive to improve attendance. While Local Authority staff could make a valuable contribution, teachers and others who worked in schools were in daily contact with pupils and could forge effective links with parents at a local level. It was essential that the promotion of good attendance was recognised at every school.

## **10. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE**

- 10.1 The Committee considered a report from the Principle Inspector, Havering School Improvement Services (HSIS) regarding the performance of all schools in the borough over the previous academic year.
- 10.2 The report summarised the 2012 performance of Havering primary and secondary schools/academies in key stage assessments, tests and examinations.
- 10.3 The Committee noted that 2012 was another successful year for Havering schools. Although early years results were mixed, Havering enjoyed its best ever results at Key Stages 1 and 2. There was a fall for the first time at GCSE, due to the outcomes of the English results, which were a national phenomenon. For the second year running, Havering had no schools or academies below the government floor standard (60% L4 joint En/Ma at Key Stage 2, and 40% A\*-C (inc En/Ma) at GCSE).

## **11. MODULAR SCHOOL BUILDINGS/SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT/CHILD CARE**

In the final meeting of the Municipal year, the Committee received a presentation regarding the use of Modular School buildings in local schools as

well as updates on the Havering School Improvement Strategy and the Child Care Sufficiency Assessment.

## **12. CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL**

During the year under review, the Panel met on three occasions and dealt with the following issues:

### **1. Placement Stability**

- 1.1 One of the key areas that the Panel investigated during the period of this report was the stability of placements for Looked After Children. Stability had given cause for concern in 2011/12, when statistics showed that 20% of children underwent a placement move, compared with a national average of 10.7% (statistics correct as at December 2011). In one case, a young person had been moved 15 times whilst in care. As a result, an improvement plan and stability audit was instigated within the service.
- 1.2 In order to monitor the efficacy of the new arrangements, the Panel agreed to follow the progress of three children that came into care in March 2013 to gauge the robustness of the new arrangements for placement stability. The panel receives updates on these cases at each meeting, and will continue to do so throughout the year.
- 1.3 The adoption diagnostic carried out by the DFE was discussed and the reasons why adoption can be difficult to achieve in a timely manner, it was noticed that the situation had improved greatly in 2012/13. There are currently 4 children awaiting adoption and the panel acknowledged that this was a complex area they want to monitor.
- 1.4 The local Authority is now part of a court pilot, to improve timescales for cases which reduces the uncertainty for children about what is to happen for the future.
- 1.5 The East London court project was formed as care proceedings at Stratford Court took longer than elsewhere and there had been particular difficulty proving threshold in neglect cases. The proposal is for courts now to make decisions in 26 weeks rather than the current 40-50.
- 1.6 Panel Members were concerned that the threshold for proving neglect was very stringent. A Family Law Review was undertaken to consider how children might be subjected to fewer re-assessments and avoid unnecessary delays.
- 1.7 The appointment of an in-house lawyer to support social workers in the preparation of court cases is expected to ameliorate the situation, and the plan is for the panel to be advised by the project manager of progress of the project.

### **2 Private Fostering Ofsted Inspection**

- 2.1 Havering's private fostering provision was inspected by Ofsted, and was judged to be performing inadequately across the board. This situation has been discussed by Corporate Parenting Panel and the action plan scrutinised. The Panel has requested a full report on private fostering outcomes and an action plan.

### **3 Virtual Head Teacher - Annual Report 2012/13**

- 3.1 At the meeting in March 2013, the Panel received the Annual Report of Havering's Virtual Head Teacher.
- 3.2 The Virtual School for Looked After Children was set up as a direct consequence of The Children and Young Person's Act 2008. As the title implies, the Virtual School does not exist in real terms, but is rather an organisation that co-ordinates educational services for Looked After Children at a strategic level.
- 3.3 The Panel noted that the Virtual School monitored the attendance and punctuality of all Looked After Children on its school register until the end of Year 11. Where there were concerns, the Virtual School worked with the school, social workers, the children and foster carers to remedy the situation.
- 3.4 Each young person receiving education in care has a Personal Educational Plan (PEP) devised in conjunction with the school, carers and social workers to support the young person in achieving educational success. The PEP is assessed every three months and has proved to be very successful in meeting regulations and supporting both social care and schools.
- 3.5 The challenges for the forthcoming year were to:
- Narrow the gap in attainment between Looked After Children and their peers.
  - Act as an advocate for Looked After Children ensuring that they benefit from the best possible educational and learning opportunities and monitor the use of PPA.
  - To work alongside agents and other professionals who support all Havering Looked After Children both within and outside the borough in either providing or commissioning additional learning.

### **4 Future Work Plan**

- 4.1 The panel's future work programme will seek to build on the success of the past twelve months in holding officers to account. Plans include :
- Meeting with the Looked After Children Nurse and receiving the Health report.
  - Looking at the type of accommodation provided for independent living once a young person leaves care and in particular the need to establish supportive landlords.

- Meeting children who have left care to hear of their experiences and see how this can improve the service for others.
- Meeting with the foster carers.
- Meeting with the children in council care and consider childrens views by receiving reports from Viewpoint the online survey of LAC.
- Meeting with the Childrens Society on the risk of children running away from care, sexual exploitation of children in care and children's advocacy.
- Members will attend the Total Respect training where possible delivered by young people.
- Meet with and receive the Annual Report of the Virtual Head and data on education of Looked After Children.
- Receive a report on private fostering updating the position post inspection.
- Consider the new responsilbitiy of the Local Authority in providing LAC services to young people on remand in custodial establishments.
- Track the court project.



**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH

**ANNUAL REPORT OF  
THE CRIME & DISORDER  
COMMITTEE**





## **CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE**

### **ANNUAL REPORT, 2012/13**

#### **SUMMARY**

This report is the annual report of the Crime and Disorder Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the year ending May 2013.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable Members and others to compare performance year on year.

There are no direct equalities or environmental implications attached to this covering report. Any financial implications & risks from reviews and work undertaken will be advised as part of the specific reviews.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the Council note the 2012/13 Annual Report of the Crime and Disorder Committee

#### **REPORT DETAIL**

During the year under review, we have met as a Committee on 5 occasions and dealt with the following issues.

#### **1. TOPIC GROUPS**

##### **1. Domestic Violence**

1.1 Back in May 2012 the Committee established a topic group to:

- review the level of services delivered locally in respect of the effects of Domestic Violence on Young People and Children both as victims, witnesses and/or perpetrators;
- look at what steps the Community Safety Partnership were taking to tackle the problem in the future;

- identify good practice in other boroughs;
  - make recommendations to the administration on areas which could be improved, if appropriate; and
  - look at the scope of Domestic Violence locally against male victims.
- 1.2 The Topic Group met on 4 occasions, including two visits. The first visit was to the Annual General Meeting of the Woman's Aid Refuge and the second to Hackney to meet the officers who run their Partnership Triage.
- 1.3 At the meetings the Topic Group received presentations from the Troubled Families Co-ordinator, Housing Service, Pupil Services and Family Mosaic.
- 1.4 The report and its recommendations are currently being finalised by the Committee.

## **2. VISIT TO ROMFORD TOWN CENTRE**

- 2.1 The committee undertook a night time visit to Romford Town Centre on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012. Those members who attended found the visit informative. They spoke to both the Taxi Marshalls and Street Pastors, two initiatives which had been emulated elsewhere due to their success in Romford. The Drug Itemiser was demonstrated to members. This piece of equipment is owned by the Council but utilised by the Metropolitan Police, especially the Licensing Officer. However, evidence from an itemiser had not been used in London for the purposes of prosecution. Locally the Licensing Officer used any evidence of drug use found, to raise issues with the licensees to enable them to tackle the problem.
- 2.2 During the visit the members were given a demonstration of the new ID scanner purchased by Kosho. This machine was linked to the Sugar Hut in Brentwood allowing the two clubs to share information. Members could see a clear advantage if more of these machines were introduced in clubs/bars in both Romford and Hornchurch Town Centres.
- 2.3 The Committee have indicated they would like to revisit Romford Town Centre to see how effective the various initiatives to reduce Crime & Disorder have been. They also indicated it would be useful to visit Hornchurch Town Centre.

## **3. METROPOLITAN POLICE UPDATES.**

- 3.1 Borough resources had been under pressure at the beginning of the year because of the effects of the 2012 Olympics. Fortunately additional resources had been made available to offset the effects and

there had been no visible increase in crime over that period.

- 3.2 The year has seen change with consultation on the Local Policing Model which resulted in the production of the Policing and Crime Plan for London. Over the four years of the Plan the borough should see an increase in the numbers of police available. Changes in the way the police are deployed should result in a more visible police presence.

Plans to close a number of police stations were proposed but these were reduced following a high profile consultation period by MOPAC. The future of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams was assured with a named PC and PCSO being available in each neighbourhood.

- 3.3 One of the key issues for the borough had been the increase in burglary. There had been a 1.3% increase in the 12 months from April 2012 to March 2013. The good news was that 12.1% were detected. Whilst this may appear low, it actually represented one of the highest detection rates in the Metropolitan area.

The new Borough Commander detailed initiatives which were being introduced to tackle the problem. This included greater co-operation with neighbouring forces due to the problem of cross border burglars.

The target for 2013/14 is a 6% reduction in burglaries, which will be challenging to achieve.

- 3.4 The Committee received details of crime figures over the Christmas period. This revealed an increase over the same period last year. Chief Superintendent Gwillim indicated he would be looking into the reasons for this increase.

#### **4. MODERNISING JUSTICE SEMINAR**

- 4.1 In June the Chairman and an officer attended the Modernising Justice seminar. Between them they attended four of the workshops. The seminar had looked at how technology could be used to improve the justice system. Whilst much of the seminar had been aimed at practitioners rather than scrutineers there had been much to learn at the Seminar.

- 4.2 The Borough Commander informed the Committee that Havering Police had been one of the pilots for introducing the electronic sharing of files across the Criminal Justice system and this had been successful.

#### **5. LOCAL FIRE BRIGADE**

- 5.1 The Borough Commander, Chris Drew, updated the Committee on the

work of the Fire brigade on a couple of occasions during the year. Although the Fire Brigade had needed to identify £65m of savings none of the Fire Stations in the borough were scheduled for closure.

- 5.2 Issues for the borough included false alarms, the greatest number of which had been generated by both Queen's Hospital and St George's Hospital. The Brigade had been working closely with the hospitals to reduce the incidence of such false alarms. Compared to last year the only area seeing an increase in calls was accidental fires in the home. It was suggested that this was being caused by more people being at home or working from home than in previous years.
- 5.3 At the last meeting details of the LIFE Project were provided. This intensive 5 day course was offered to young people between the ages of 13-17. It provided them with new skills as well as building on existing ones and was aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour.
- 5.4 In 2012/13 69 young people took part in the programme, it was hoped that this would increase to 78 this coming year.

## **6. COMMUNITY SAFETY FUND**

- 6.1 Throughout the year the Committee received regular reports on how expenditure from the Safer Stronger Community Fund had been spent. The Committee had an opportunity to comment on the various projects being funded and monitor the level of expenditure, to ensure all the monies were spent during the financial year.
- 6.2 In 2012/13 MOPAC had allocated £110,413.00 to the borough to fund specific schemes. This money had been split across the themes identified in the Strategic Assessment as follows:

**Integrated Offender Management** **£20,000.00**

- Support and advice for offenders

**Violence against women and girls** **£20,000.00**

- Drop – in advocacy services for victims of Domestic Violence (DV) within Havering
- A support group and counselling services for victims of DV within Havering

**Addressing Crime at a local level** **£45,000.00**

The HCSP had established three Area Based Community Safety Groups which will address locally identified crime, including Serious Youth Violence and ASB using a problem solving approach. Each group would be allocated £15,000

<b>Administrative support for the HCSP</b>	<b>£4,413.00</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative support to the HCSP and associated action groups</li> </ul>	
<b>Young People's Substance Misuse Services</b>	<b>£20,000.00</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To contribute to the provision of the Havering Young Person's Substance Misuse Service, supporting young people with alcohol and drug misuse problems</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Call to action</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny process</li> </ul>	

## **7. INTEGRATED OFFENDER MANAGEMENT**

7.1 Back in November the Committee received an update on the work of the Reducing Re-offending Group. The work of this multi – agency partnership group was one of the key areas identified in the Strategic Assessment. In Havering there were 52 Offenders in the IOM cohort as at 1 November 2012.

During the 8 month period beginning 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 the program had delivered:

- 51 positive engagements with 10 young offenders;
- Provided emergency accommodation for 8 clients, 6 of whom were now in stable accommodation, one who had been recalled to custody, and one who had moved back in with his parents;
- A Father's Project for 8 clients; and
- Diversionary activities such as life skills training, cooking, etc.

A number of challenges had been identified. These had included:

- The need to expand beyond Prolific or Priority Offenders;
- The need to identify gaps and avoid duplication. In Havering the gaps included women, gangs and those with mental health issues;
- Getting partners around the table and facilitating access to services.

Whilst the borough did not have a gang problem the challenge facing the council was to ensure one did not develop. Work is currently being developed to address this through the HCSP.

## **8. YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE**

- 8.1 Last year the Youth Offending Service had received an adverse HMI report. Steps were being taken to ensure all the points raised were addressed and the situation remedied. Part of the response was to merge the borough's Youth Offending Service with Barking and Dagenham. The Committee received a report on how this was progressing from the recently appointed Youth Offending Services Manager. The Committee were satisfied with the progress being made and indicated they would monitor progress closely.

## **9. MOPAC FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS**

- 9.1 Under new arrangements for 2013/14, boroughs were not given a grant allocation from the Safer Stronger Communities Fund from the Home Office, but were instead required to submit bids for specific projects. All bids needed to address the Mayor's priorities. These priorities are:

- Tackling substance misuse (including alcohol) related offences;
- Reducing gang crime and serious youth violence;
- Reducing violence against women;
- Reducing reoffending, e.g. delivery of Integrated Offender Management; and
- Anti-Social Behaviour.

15 proposals were submitted, which had been agreed by the Havering Community Safety Partnership.

- 9.2 The Committee were advised that the following bids had been successful:

1. Street Triage - £30,000
2. Substance Misuse and Young People - £40,000
3. Domestic Abuse Perpetrators - £20,000
4. Improving Support for Domestic Abuse - £35,000
5. Rent Deposit Scheme - £32,400
6. Drugs and Alcohol Service Provision - £56,000

The amount of funding awarded was £213,400. The funding was subject to conditions, such as outcomes being more specific and measurable. Officers were still in discussion with MOPAC around these.

In addition to the funding received by the HCSP Barking and Dagenham had received £120,000 for work with gangs and as the Council work together on Youth Offending issues we would benefit from this funding.

The problem for the HCSP was that in previous years it had a small amount of funds available to tackle emerging trends, this was no longer available. The partnership needed to be smarter and they would be looking for sponsorship from local businesses to run specific projects.

## **10. TRANSFORMING REHABILITATION**

- 10.1 The Committee received a report on the Government's consultation on the way forward for dealing with offenders. The Government felt there was a need for change as 57.6% of offenders sentenced to under 12 months imprisonment re-offend. These were the offenders who were not referred to the Probation Service.
- 10.2 The consultation proposals were to introduce new providers in to the probation sector. Independent providers would be invited to bid for work with offenders and the principle of payment by results would be extended. For the first time those who are sentenced to 12 months or less would be supervised by the Probation Service or one of the new offenders.
- 10.3 The Committee noted the report and the reservations expressed by the London Probation Trust. The Committee also noted the opportunities for new initiatives to tackle the problem of re-offending.

## **11. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO TACKLE AND PREVENT CRIME**

- 11.1 In February the Chairman and Vice-Chairman attended the above conference which had been held at One Wimpole Street, London. They both found the day informative and useful. In particular the Chairman found the presentation on Partnership Working to be most relevant.

## **12. CHANGE**

- 12.1 2012/13 had seen a great deal of change in personnel. Internally responsibility for Community Safety had passed from Legal and Democratic Services to Culture and Community following the departure of the Community Safety Manager.
- 12.2 Chief Superintendent Mick Smith had left the Police force and been replaced in the New Year by Chief Superintendent Jason Gwillim.
- 12.3 The Committee had seen a new Chairman appointed Councillor Osman Dervish.
- 12.4 None of these changes had affected the efficient running of the Committee which thanks to the support of all members had continued to carry out its business in an efficient manner.







**ANNUAL REPORT OF  
THE ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW &  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**



## ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13

### SUMMARY

This report is the annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the past Council year.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable members and others to compare performance year to year.

There are no direct equalities or environmental implications attached to this covering report. Any financial implications from review and work undertaken will be advised as part of the specific reviews.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Council note the 2012/13 Annual Report of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### REPORT DETAIL

During the year under review, the Committee met on six occasions and dealt with the following issues:

#### 1. SCORES ON THE DOORS UPDATE

At its meeting in October 2012, the Committee received a presentation on the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. The Committee was informed that the scheme had gone live in June 2012, and had replaced the original "Scores on the Doors" scheme. The Food Standards Agency had paid for a central mail out of all letters informing businesses of the scheme together with certificates and stickers in the week before the launch.

The scheme comprised six tiers from 0-5, with 0 being urgent improvement needed and 5 being very good. These tiers were based on three areas: hygiene and safety procedures, structure and cleaning and confidence in management.

## **2. BLUE BADGE CRITERIA**

At its meeting in October 2012, an update on the Blue Badge Assessment process was given to the Committee. The Committee was informed that the issuing of Blue Badges had been outsourced by the Department for Transport to Northgate. There were two criteria for obtaining a blue badge, one by automatic qualification and the other by assessment. The Council had received between 70 to 100 applications a week. Whilst there had been a backlog during the high demand and the changes due to outsourcing, a second assessor had been employed and the backlog had been cleared.

At its second meeting in October, the Committee received an update on the Blue Badge Scheme. The Committee was informed of the criteria for applicants. If an applicant qualified for the higher level of disability allowance, then that was automatic qualification. All other applications were the subject of an assessment. This could be a paper assessment, where the application and supporting documents are assessed, however in some cases it was necessary to carry out a physical assessment. These were done by Adult Social Care Occupational Therapists.

## **3. HIGHWAY CLAIMS**

The Committee received a presentation at its meeting in October 2012 on Highway Claims. The Committee noted that under section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 the Highway Authority is responsible for “highway maintainable at the public expense” and has a statutory duty to maintain that highway. For Havering this included all roads and pavements currently defined in the Highway Register, which was updated by Legal Services and is a graphical representation of the adopted highway.

The Committee noted that anyone who wished to make a claim could do so up to 3 years from the incident date in the case of personal injury and up to 6 years for property damage.

## **4. SERVICE PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

At its meetings in June 2012, October 2012, March 2013 and April 2013 the Committee received details of service performance information. These included information regarding flytipping, recycling and waste collections, graffiti and noise service requests.

During the update at the April 2013 meeting the Committee discussed the issues around a food inspection case, which had an effect on the performance information, following ongoing investigations.

## **5. HAVERING FRIENDS OF THE EARTH**

The Committee invited representatives from Havering Friends of the Earth to its meeting in October 2012, following a letter received by all Councillors. They raised concerns in relation to recycling in flats and energy saving measures that Friends of the Earth felt the Council needed to address. The representatives stated that there was no doorstep collection of recycling and refuse from residents of flats. Officer and the Committee explained that a lot of work on this issue had been carried out and that there was a doorstep collection which had started in 2005/6.

## **6. RIVER ROM MAINTENANCE**

The Committee received an informative presentation on Flood and Water Management in Havering at its meeting in October 2012. The Flood and Water Management Act provided for better, more comprehensive management of flood risk for homes and business, and helped safeguard community groups from unaffordable rises in surface water drainage charges, as well as protecting water supplies to the consumer.

Havering was a lead local flood authority and therefore had a number of duties. These included:

- Producing preliminary flood risk assessments in conjunction with Planning.
- Producing flood risk and flood hazard maps
- Producing flood management plans
- Co-ordination of flood risk management at a strategic level
- Improve public participation in flood risk management
- Co-ordination of flood risk management with Water Framework Directive.
- Asset Management Register (Designation of structures).
- Consent body for ordinary watercourses (Environment Agency for main rivers).
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) and SuDs Approval Body for development works, the latter which would be in late 2013.

## **7. UPDATE ON THE CARBON REDUCTION COMMITMENT AND ENERGY SAVING MEASURES**

The Committee received an update report at its October meeting on the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) and the actions which the council had taken to improve its energy efficiency over the last year.

The Committee was informed that the CRC was a mandatory scheme aimed at improving energy efficiency and cutting emissions in large public and private organisations. Organisations with over 6 million kWh emissions were obliged

by law to report their energy consumption figures back to the Department for Energy and Climate Change.

For Havering, the total emissions in 2011/12 were 23,000 tonnes which came from the 2012/13 budget and was £280,000. The Committee raised concern about 60% of the consumption being attributed to schools, some of which were Academies and were therefore out of the Council's control.

The Committee was informed of the energy efficiency measure that had been carried out in the last year. The main focus had been on lighting, as that had accounted for approximately 45% of the Council's total electricity.

## **8. THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

In January 2013, the Committee met jointly with the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees in order to scrutinise aspects of the Council's Financial Strategy for the coming year. The meeting, chaired by the Chairman of Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee, scrutinised several issue of relevance to this Committee

## **9. WINTER MAINTENANCE**

At the meeting in January 2013, the Committee received a presentation on the Winter Maintenance Programme 2012/13. It noted that there was a new salt storage facility at Central Depot which could store up to 2,500 tonnes of salt. The Committee noted that the service receive a five day forecast and was therefore able to assess and plan whether gritting was needed.

On average 16 tonnes of salt was spread a night at a rate of 10 grammes per square metre. This was generally from 6:30pm through to 11:00pm. This avoided the "rush-hour" traffic and the vehicles could continue moving. All Street Cleansing and Civil Enforcement Activities were suspended in snow down conditions and operatives were deployed onto local footways, shopping areas, schools and bus access points to distribute salt, to maintain the safety of pedestrians.

## **10. REUSE AND RECYCLING CENTRE CONTROLS**

At its meeting in March 2013, the Committee received a presentation from the Head of Operations at East London Waste Authority (ELWA). The Committee were given the background to how ELWA was set up and who sat on the ELWA Board from Havering.

ELWA was responsible for the Reuse and Recycling Centres (RRCs) throughout the region and for the disposal of the waste. Shanks Waste Management was contracted to carry out the operation.

The Committee was informed that new controls had been put in place so that people using the RRCs who did not live in the ELWA area were charged. These charges covered any additional costs of the disposal of waste.

## **11. COLD CALLING CONTROL ZONE**

The Committee receive a presentation at its meeting in March 2013 on the Cold Calling Control Zones in Havering. The zones were limited to six areas; these were:

- 2 in Gooshays Ward
- 1 in Heaton Ward
- 1 in Elm Park Ward
- 1 in Wennington Ward
- 1 in Mawneys Ward

The zones were popular with residents within them, the Police and the Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT). However the zones had no legal basis and therefore were just a preventative measure.

The Committee was informed of other developments that had been successful. These include the Banking Protocol, the Buy with Confidence Scheme, the Bogus Callers Working Group and assistance in the Operation Scaffold with the police. This was operated twice a year, checking on 2-3 wards each day to ensure that all builders working at the time were properly registered.

The Committee noted that the Consumer Protection for Unfair Trading Regulations established an offence of “conducting personal visits to the consumer’s home ignoring the consumer’s request to leave and not to return”. Many trading standards service have used this legislation as backing for a door sticker, referred to as a “super sticker”. The Committee noted that this was something officers were looking to adopt and to distribute as widely as possible.

## **12. CONSUMER LANDSCAPE PROJECT**

The Committee received a presentation at its meeting in March 2013, from the Chief Executive of Havering Citizens Advice Bureau. In 2011 the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, issued a consultation paper on the future of the “Consumer Landscape” in England. The intention was to “transfer National responsibility for consumer advice, information and advocacy to Citizens Advice, with the handover of the Consumer Direct national advice services to Citizens Advice from April 2012”.

In anticipation of these proposals, Havering Citizen’s Advice Bureau entered into an agreement with Havering’s Trading Standards Service in December 2012 to provide consumer advice, information and education. The project had been recognised as an excellent example of a local response to the national policy.

Officers informed the Committee that since the partnership was the first in London, they were entering the Consumer Landscape Project into the MJ Achievement Awards 2013.

### **13. ADOPTION OF THE LONDON PERMIT SCHEME FOR ROAD WORKS AND STREET WORKS**

At its March 2013 meeting, the Committee were updated on the cabinet report which had been agreed at Cabinet on 21 March 2012. This was in line with the Council Continuous Improvement Monitoring. The Committee was informed that the Council had entered into the London Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works. This scheme would allow for greater control over roadworks across the borough and reduce congestion. It was estimated that the scheme would save £2.7 million in congestion costs across London as a result of better collaboration and more joint working.

### **14. ANNUAL COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS**

At its meeting in April 2013, the Committee received details of complaints and compliments received by services within its remit. The Committee were impressed with the very little number of complaints given the number of people who resided in the borough. The Committee noted that the majority of complaints were in relation to the noise services, which was no longer a reactive services outside of office hours. Officers explained that there were 1.6 FTE allocated to the noise service, however there were other responsibilities that needed to be dealt with including input into planning application and licensed premises noise issues.

The Committee noted the complaints about the Streetcare services, however officers stated that this was due to the recent restructure which had affected service delivery. It was agreed by Committee that the services delivered by Streetcare were what residents saw most of and therefore complaints would be higher. The Committee were informed that there were some compliments, but these were not logged as effectively as complaints. The Committee felt that these should be logged as they were important to staff.



**ANNUAL REPORT OF  
THE HEALTH OVERVIEW &  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**



## **HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13**

### **SUMMARY**

This report is the annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the past Council year.

It is planned for the report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable Members and others to note the Committee's activities and performance.

There are no direct equalities or environment implications attached to this report. Any financial implications from reviews and work undertaken will be advised as part of the specific reviews.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Council note the 2012/13 Annual Report of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **REPORT DETAIL**

During the year under review, the Committee met on eight occasions and dealt with the following issues:

#### **1. QUEEN'S HOSPITAL ISSUES**

- 1.1 Given the number of high profile issues affecting Queen's Hospital, the Committee prioritised keeping up to date with developments there and received regular updates at meetings from The Director of Planning and Performance at Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS

Trust (BHRUT). At its March meeting, the Committee was also pleased to hold discussions with the BHRUT Chairman – Sir Peter Dixon.

- 1.2 Accident & Emergency – Key areas relating to Queen’s Hospital included on going performance issues at A&E. Members were sympathetic to efforts by the Trust and its partners to promote use of alternative facilities to A&E but also felt that Queen’s A&E itself needed to improve its performance. The Committee also undertook a visit to A&E during the year in order to discuss the department’s Rapid Assessment and Treatment system with consultants and other key clinical staff.
- 1.3 Maternity – The Committee was pleased to note during the year the improved performance of maternity at Queen’s Hospital. The closure of the equivalent unit at King George Hospital was closely scrutinised and impacts on both Queen’s and other local hospitals were reviewed both by the Havering committee and the Outer North East London (ONEL) joint committee.
- 1.4 JONAH system and delayed transfers of care – Members paid two visits to Queen’s Hospital during the year in order to discuss the operation of the JONAH computer system for tracking patients. The Committee learnt that JONAH was used to track patients in hospital and should not be used as a performance management tool or to analyse reasons for delays in patient discharge. Members were also concerned that the system could be accessed by a large number of hospital staff. The Committee also held useful discussions in February with a senior officer from the Council’s adult social care department who explained in detail the issues around delays in patient discharge and work the Council was undertaking with partners to resolve these. These areas were also scrutinised further during the year at two topic group meetings on patient discharge, held in conjunction with Havering Local Involvement Network (LINK).
- 1.5 Hospital Complaints – The Committee has also scrutinised, with BHRUT officers, the complaints system at the Trust. Members noted with interest work to address the backlog of complaints received and also efforts to reduce cancellations of outpatient appointments etc. Members continued to receive reports however of lengthy delays in responding to complaints made and a topic group meeting to scrutinise these areas in more detail is therefore scheduled to be held in June 2013.

## **2. HAVERING CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP (CCG)**

- 2.1 The Committee received an initial presentation in April from the chief operating officer of Havering CCG, the new GP organisation responsible for commissioning many local health services. The Committee considered in detail the role of the new body and its plans in a number of areas including increasing opening times of GPs and making more use of existing primary

care facilities. Further scrutiny of the work of the CCG is likely to be undertaken by the Committee during 2013/14.

### **3. ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL**

3.1 Throughout the year, the Committee has scrutinised changes at and plans for St. George's Hospital in Hornchurch. The Committee was kept fully informed of developments due to the sudden closure of the site for health and safety reasons and the Chairman, along with other Members, has visited the alternative facilities provided at Brentwood Community Hospital, King George Hospital (Foxglove ward) and Greys Court in Dagenham. Members have been generally approving of the level of care provided and have made a number of suggestions as to how facilities could be improved, particularly at Foxglove ward. The Committee remains concerned however at the additional travel distances involved for residents of Havering, whether patients or relatives, in getting to these facilities. The Committee will therefore continue to scrutinise the plans of providers for returning these services to facilities in the Havering area.

3.2 The Committee also scrutinised the recent consultation on future development of the St. George's site. Members were concerned that the proposals were too vague at this stage although it was accepted that more detailed plans would be brought by the CCG to scrutiny in due course. The Committee plans to continue its oversight of all plans for the St. George's complex during the coming municipal year.

### **4. HEALTH SCRUTINY CORRESPONDENCE**

4.1 The Committee has continued, where it feels it appropriate, to use its powers to request specific information and responses from the Health Trusts to matters of concern. Issues scrutinised in this way during the year included the facilities at Foxglove ward of King George Hospital, lack of clear signage at Queen's A&E and the condition of the buildings at the Victoria Centre in Romford. All letters and responses received are copied to all members of the Committee in order that they receive the latest information.

### **5. COMMUNITY SERVICES**

5.1 In March, the Committee scrutinised the work of North East London Community Services who provide a range of community services in Havering and neighbouring boroughs. Members were impressed that more services such as for those patients requiring an IV drip could now be provided in the community rather than an acute hospital. This presentation also allowed the Committee a further opportunity to scrutinise plans to relocate services formerly carried out at St. George's Hospital, at sites within Havering (see paragraph 3.1).

## **6. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

- 6.1 The Committee has continued to scrutinise local mental health services and a representative of North East London NHS Foundation Trust is present at most meetings. The Committee has been briefed on NELFT's services for older people. The Committee also noted that NELFT had introduced community clinics in order to deliver mental health services closer to people's homes.

## **7. SITE VISITS**

- 7.1 The Committee has raised concerns throughout the year that existing medical facilities in Havering were being underused. To this end, a number of visits have been undertaken to local facilities in order to view, with senior health service officers, the type and extent of services currently available. At South Hornchurch Health Centre for example, Members found on both visits during the year, that a considerable amount of the building had been given over to office accommodation and that other areas were not being used for much of the day. Discussions are continuing with providers on how this could be resolved and better use made of such facilities.
- 7.2 In addition to those visits outlined earlier in this report, Members also visited the Victoria Centre in Romford and discussed with staff the breast screening service available there. While highly impressed with the service and level of care offered, Members were concerned about the poor condition of the estate and buildings at the site and the Chairman has initiated discussions with the Havering CCG on how this can be improved.

## **8. JOINT HEALTH SCRUTINY**

- 8.1 The Chairman and other Members have continued to play a full part during the year in the Outer North East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee which continues to look at a range of health issues relevant to the sector as a whole. All Members receive agendas and minutes of the Joint Committee as well as updates between meetings. Key issues scrutinised by the Joint Committee during the year have included:
- 8.2 Hospital Transport – Members of all Councils involved with the Joint Committee have expressed concern over travel difficulties encountered by residents in seeking to attend local hospitals etc. At a meeting with Transport for London officers in October, members of the Joint Committee raised issues such as there being no direct bus service between Queen's and King George Hospitals. Other issues raised included the lack of step free access at many local stations and that the transport needs of hospital staff and visitors should be considered as well as those of patients.

- 8.3 Care Quality Commission – The Joint Committee has held discussions with the compliance manager for the Care Quality Commission who explained the organisation’s role in registration and inspection of a range of services including GPs and NHS dentists.
- 8.4 Maternity Services – The Joint Committee held a special meeting in February to consider the impact of changes to maternity services across North East London. This considered issues such as the births capacity at hospitals across North East London and plans to cope with expected increases in local population levels. The changes to maternity catchment areas were also scrutinised in detail.

## **9. HAVERING LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK (LINK) AND HEALTHWATCH HAVERING**

- 9.1 The Committee has continued throughout the year to work closely with Havering LINK and receive updates on the organisation’s work. LINK members were present at each meeting of the Committee until the organisation’s abolition and replacement by Healthwatch Havering in April 2013.
- 9.2 Healthwatch Havering – In September, the Committee considered a requisition of an initial Cabinet decision on the commissioning of a Local Healthwatch service. This allowed the Committee to scrutinise in detail with the Council’s Assistant Director – Transformation (Commissioning) the plans and consultation for the commissioning of a Local Healthwatch service in Havering. Following the scrutiny, the requisition was not upheld by the Committee by a majority of four votes to zero (two abstentions). The Committee also held a further special meeting in October to scrutinise the results of the Healthwatch consultation. At its final meeting of the municipal year in April, the Committee received a presentation from the Chairman of Healthwatch Havering who explained the organisation’s structure and initial plans. The Committee is keen to further develop its relationship with Healthwatch in the coming year.

## **9. OTHER ISSUES SCRUTINISED**

- 9.1 Health and Wellbeing Board – In October, the Committee received a presentation from the Chairman of Havering’s Health and Wellbeing Board (Councillor Steven Kelly). This covered the plans and priorities of the Board which included areas such as dementia identification and support, the early detection of cancer and reducing avoidable admissions to hospital. The Committee also discussed the Board’s plans give support to vulnerable elderly people to enable them to live independently.

9.2 NHS England – The Committee also held discussions with a representative of NHS England (formerly the NHS Commissioning Board) who explained the organisation’s role in commissioning specialised services and supervision of the work of CCGs. The Committee also scrutinised NHS England’s responsibilities as regards ensuring the safety and quality of NHS services.



**ANNUAL REPORT OF  
THE INDIVIDUALS OVERVIEW &  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**



## INDIVIDUALS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### SUMMARY

This report is the annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the past Council year.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable members and others to compare performance year to year.

There are no direct equalities or environmental implications attached to this covering report. Any financial implications from reviews and work undertaken will be advised as part of the specific reviews.

### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Council note the 2012/13 Annual Report of the Individuals Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### REPORT DETAIL

During the year under review, the Committee met on six occasions and dealt with the following issues:

#### **1. KEEPING PEOPLE WITH LONG TERM MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OUT OF HOSPITAL**

At its meeting in July 2012, the Committee received a presentation on Supporting People with Long Term Mental Health Conditions to Remain out of Hospital.

The main service emphasis was the "Right Care in the Right Place, at the Right Time". This included the focus on good practice for recovery through community services and in the stages of care to prevent a hospital admission.

North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) was in the process of portability of assessments, so that if a service user moved out of the area, the assessment would go with them to prevent duplication. NELFT was also working closely with GPs and the CCG, by holding regular network meetings to give advice and education about getting information to the patients.



The Committee noted that there was a Mental Health helpline available 24/7, which was available to everyone, including service users, other services as well as families and professionals. It was explained that a flowchart had been put in place for all London Ambulance Service to refer to when dealing with people with mental health conditions. This flowchart gave a pathway of care available for the London Ambulance staff to make a decision as to where to take the patient. Contact details for the Mental Health Service were available for advice before taking patients to A&E. Pre-assessments could be made by the Home Treatment Team before patients were taken to the 136 Suite at Sunflower Court at Goodmayes Hospital.

## **2. REQUISITION OF REVIEW OF FAIRER CHARGING POLICY**

At its special meeting in August 2012, the Committee considered a call-in of a Cabinet report on the consultation process of proposed changes to the Council's Fairer charging policy. The proposed changes were:

- a. Removal of current maximum charge cap in place for users of domiciliary care service.
- b. Review of Proportion of disposable income chargeable in financial assessments
- c. Review of Disability related expenses allowance.

Following in depth discussions the Committee resolved to not uphold the requisition.

## **3. REQUISITION OF APPROVAL FOR AWARD OF TENDER: REABLEMENT SERVICE**

At its special meeting in August 2012, the Committee consider a call-in of a Cabinet report approving the award of a five year contract, following a competitive tender process, for the provision of reablement service to adults. Following in depth discussions the Committee resolved to not uphold the requisition.

## **4. REQUISITION OF COMMISSIONING OF A LOCAL HEALTHWATCH SERVICE**

At its special joint meeting with Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2012, the Committee considered a call-in of a Cabinet report on commissioning of a Local Healthwatch service.

Following in depth discussions the Joint Committee resolved to not uphold the requisition.

At its special meeting in October 2012, the Committee met jointly with Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for officers to explain the final results on a Local Healthwatch model for Havering. The main themes to come out of the

## **Individuals Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 07 May 2013**

consultation included that a strong local voice was required for Havering and that a joint model with e.g. Barking and Dagenham would not be suitable.

The Committee noted that the overall option for Local Healthwatch in Havering had been confirmed as a stand-alone organisation procured by the London Borough of Havering as it was felt this offered the most flexibility in the Healthwatch model.

### **5. AGEING WELL THEMES**

At its October 2012 meeting, the Committee discussed a briefing note following the successful Ageing Well Event. The briefing note outlined topics that other Overview and Scrutiny Committees would be scrutinising as part of their work programme. The Committee agreed that they would wish to form a topic group to scrutinise the Impact of Services on the Elderly.

### **6. ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE AND ANNUAL REPORT**

At its meeting in October 2012, the Committee received the Adult Social Care Complaints Procedure and Annual Report. Procedural changes had been made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) duty, as the LGO powers had been extended to investigate self-funder complaints in domiciliary care agencies and residential/ nursing homes.

The Committee noted that often safeguarding and complaints overlapped. As a result a draft protocol had been produced but required input from both Health and the Police before it could be finalised. Once finalised the protocol would be included as an appendix to the procedures.

The Committee noted that the total number of complaints had gone down over the last four years; however there were more informal complaints, which were resolved much quicker.

The Committee considered the Complaints Action Plan. Officers explained that action was taken for each of the issues identified, and the action plan was reviewed regularly with the operational management group.

### **7. ACTIVATE HAVERING**

At its October 2012 meeting, the Committee received a report on the Activate Havering Project which was aimed at strengthening voluntary action in Havering, by maximising community assets and co-ordinating volunteering, as well as tackling social exclusion experiences by many older people.

Six weeks of fact finding and research had been carried out to find out what people needed and wanted in Havering. This was in response to the Over 65 Outreach Project findings which identified loneliness and isolation as a key concern of older people in Havering. The Committee noted that after carrying out the research the approach to Activate Havering included:

## **Individuals Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 07 May 2013**

- A “social membership” scheme to improve older peoples social networks to prevent isolation
- A co-ordinated approach to volunteering by enhancing volunteering opportunities and provide more opportunities for local people to get involved.
- Delivery of a sustainable handyperson service to carry out minor household repairs to ensure older people can be safe at home, a key element of the “Prevention” agenda.
- A consortia solution to befriending, which involved providing trained and vetted volunteers to visit older, and other vulnerable people.
- Work with Havering’s diverse faith sector to strengthen the support they are able to give to families and older people within their communities.
- Maximising the use of council and borough facilities by linking and promoting services through the new and existing structures and building upon the work of Care Point.

The Committee was informed of a number of different projects that had been set up, or negotiated with existing partners. These included Havering Safer Homes, Activate Havering Variety Club in partnership with Havering Museum, and the provision of free swimming for residents over 50.

### **8. LEARNING DISABILITIES DAY SERVICES UPDATE**

At its November 2012 meeting, the Committee received a progress report following the topic group that had examined the proposed changes to the day service. The Committee were advised that the closure of St. Bernard’s Day Centre had been very successful. The former Nason Waters and Western Road services had been amalgamated at 100 Avelon Road and were due to formally open in 14 November 2012.

The Committee was informed that the new centre covered the capacities of both the previous buildings but now offered more activities. Connections had been made with the rangers at Hornchurch Country Park and Rainham Village so that community activities could be put in place.

### **9. DIAL A RIDE**

The Committee discussed the continuing problems with the Dial a Ride service in Havering at its November 2012 meeting. There was a continuing high level of trip requests not being fulfilled as evidenced by Dial a Ride’s own data. Other problems included very low incidents of multi-passenger scheduling and Dial a Ride refusing to work with the Council to seek to improve the situation.

The Committee met informally with Council officers and the Dial a Ride member representative to discuss the way forward. It was agreed that a list of questions should be sent on behalf of the group to the Deputy Mayor and that a meeting should be requested with the Deputy Mayor and a group of members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee including the Dial a Ride member representative. A very successful meeting was held in February 2013

Subsequently officers at Havering contacted the Managing Director of Surface Transport at Transport for London, to discuss any new initiatives and to agree terms of reference.

## **10. THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

In January 2013, the Committee met jointly with the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees in order to scrutinise aspects of the Council's Financial Strategy for the coming year. The meeting, chaired by the Chairman of Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee, scrutinised several issues of relevance to this Committee.

## **11. SAFEGUARDING**

At its meeting in February 2013, the Committee received a report providing information about the position of Safeguarding Adults in the London Borough of Havering and highlighted some of the main challenges and achievements of 2012. The Safeguarding Adults Board was a partnership made up of organisations including the Council, Police, Probation Service, National Health Service bodies and the voluntary sector. The Care Quality Commission also had an input.

The Committee noted that the Safeguarding Adults Self-Assessment Assurance Framework (SAAF) was introduced in 2011 to enable NHS commissioners and providers to review and benchmark their safeguarding adults' systems. The SAAF had several standards that related to measures that supported good safeguarding practices, including strategy, systems, workforce and partnerships.

## **12. PREVENTION STRATEGY**

In February 2013, the Committee received a report outlining the Prevention Strategy which was developed in 2011 by the Adult and Health Transformation Programme. The strategy was developed on behalf of partners participating in the programme. The partners included the London Borough of Havering, NHS Outer North East London, and subsequently Havering Clinical Commissioning Group, North East London NHS Foundation Trust and HAVCO.

The primary focus of the strategy was to promote independence, increase value for money and better outcomes for people to remain in their own homes. The Committee noted the themes of prevention including: strong leadership and a clear vision; a coordinated approach across the Council and other stakeholders; sustainable community capacity that increases engagement and motivation; a focus on safeguarding to help reduce social isolation and encourage participation; accessible and targeted information and advice; an enabling and empowering workforce culture; and stimulating the development of a diverse market.

## **Individuals Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 07 May 2013**

The Committee was informed that within the Prevention Strategy was the Fall Prevention and Bone Health Strategy. The Committee noted the implementation progress and the service that had been put in place to assist with prevention. This included the falls care pathway in collaboration with GPs, clinicians from the Acute Trust, London Borough of Havering, voluntary groups and service users.

Concern was raised by the Committee about the promotion and publicity of the services available to residents over 65, who could benefit from the service; however were not know to Adult Social Care.

### **13. PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

Following a request by members of the Committee, at its meeting in February 2012, details of the performance information that were presented to Cabinet was brought to the Committee for members to raise any matters of concern within the Committee's remit.

The Committee raised the issue of the performance in take up of direct payments as a proportion of self-direct support. Officers informed the Committee that whilst the service was below the target, the population of Havering was very challenging. There were a lot of older people who did not want to deal with their own finances.

### **14. CARE POINT UPDATE**

At its meeting in March 2013, the Committee received an update on the progress of the Care Point Service. In 2011, the Council worked in partnership with a number of voluntary sector organisations (HAVCO, Age Concern, Citizens Advice Bureau and Crossroads Care) to form a consortium to manage the new Care Point Service.

Care Point provided free information, guidance and advice on any enquiry. To ensure that all clients received the most accurate and relevant information, Care Point worked closely with all voluntary and community organisations, statutory services and the NHS within Havering. Care Point signposted and/or referred clients to relevant voluntary organisations, statutory bodies and the NHS (Referrals were only made with the clients written authority and express permission).

### **15. EXTRA CARE STRATEGY**

At its March 2013 meeting, the Committee received a report on part of the Extra Care Strategy. This centred on the new development at Dreywood Gardens, which the Council had worked in partnership with East Thames Housing Group to develop. The Committee noted that extra care was between sheltered accommodation and a residential home. Extra care housing provided a more significant level of personal care or support, as well as accommodating those with relatively low support needs, but who were otherwise able, and wished, to live independently.

The Committee was informed that the Council had 100% nomination rights of the 98 units. Twenty of which would be for shared ownership and seventy eight of which would be rented. The eligibility for the properties was a Havering resident over the age of 55 with a social care need. Of 2000 people in the Adult Social Care database, there had been interest from 280 people. Given the high demand, it was hoped that further units could be developed in the future.

The official launch was hoped to take place in the summer of 2013, once residents had settled.

## **16. IMPACT OF SERVICES ON THE ELDERLY TOPIC GROUP**

At its meeting in October 2012, the Committee agreed to establish a topic group to scrutinise the impact of services on the elderly. The Committee wished to understand the impact that housing services had on older people generally, older people with disabilities and vulnerable residents in Havering, together with finding out about services available for these groups and how they can be accessed.

The group met with representatives from Havering and Age Concern and visited a number of older persons accommodation, including the new extra care development at Dreywood Gardens. They also visited housing schemes in the neighbouring borough of Barking and Dagenham to see how other boroughs catered for their elderly population.

The group agreed there are many activities available to those that are aware of the services, however there were a large number of elderly and vulnerable people who did not know about these services and were essentially isolated. The group agreed to draft a letter which could be sent out to all elderly people informing them of the services/ activities available within the borough together with trying to find out the reasons why they were unable to access the services.

## **17. DEMENTIA STRATEGY UPDATE**

At its meeting in May 2013, the Committee received a report on the Dementia Strategy for Havering. The Committee noted that this was high both nationally and locally, and as a result the Health and Wellbeing Board also had it high on its agenda.

The Committee was informed that a Dementia Partnership Board had been established in November 2012 and met monthly. The Board was made up of representatives from both Social Care and Health Partners. The Board was working together to deliver the strategy following four overarching objectives, which had been agreed by the shadow Health and Wellbeing Board.

Officer informed the Committee that a review of all services would take place in May which would feed into the care pathways and the way forward.

## **Individuals Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 07 May 2013**

The Committee were impressed with the hard work of officers in getting the information out to the local community.

### **18. TRAVEL TRAINING**

At its May 2013 meeting, the Committee received an informative presentation from the Disablement Association of Barking and Dagenham (DABD (uk)), who provided Independent Travel Training to and from educational establishments or day centres. This promoted independence and the opportunity for vulnerable adults to do things for themselves.

Officers explained that travel training comes under the remit of Personalisation. The key work used was "assistance" this did not mean the provision had to be borough transportation or taxis as had been expected in the past. Individuals who had specific travel needs were always offered the most independent and personally enabled solution for their particular situation.

Officer assured members that all individuals had to pass the travel training before they could travel alone, and the scheme was not for everyone. Assessments were carried out before the training commenced and if a decision was taken that the training was not suitable then the individual would not start the training.

It was important that the individual's family were supportive of the scheme, as this enabled a smooth transition. Trainees complete a 12 week course which builds up an individual's confidence, coping skills and provides more opportunities for them. It was successful in increasing social inclusion of vulnerable individuals.

The Committee was informed of a number of successful travel training cases, which had enabled the individuals to travel to their college alone, and one individual had been successful in securing a part time job which she would not have been able to do without the confidence of the travel training.

The Committee, with the exception of two members, felt the scheme was very good in promoting independence for vulnerable adults.

### **19. ENABLEMENT AT YEW TREE LODGE RESOURCE CENTRE**

At its meeting in May 2013, the Committee received a presentation on the enablement centre at Yew Tree Lodge Resource Centre. The officer stated that the centre had originally been designed for people with the physical disability, but this had changed in 2009 to help with the reablement following a hospital stay, a disease or illness.

The aims and objectives of the centre were to provide services to people with disabilities and offer the opportunity to access information and practical guidance on:

- preventative care methods, which helped people to regain and maintain functional skills that are necessary in their daily living;

## **Individuals Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 07 May 2013**

- to promote development of the integrated capacity of individuals' abilities that combines the physical, cognitive and social aspects of their wellbeing and encouraging a more active way of living;
- to encourage more positive attitude towards coping with limitations as a result of long-term illness or disability.

The Committee noted that each client has a Personal Management and Care Plan which outlines the physical, cognitive and social needs that are identified at the initial assessment. Specific targets are agreed with each client and facilitated throughout the 6-week course. Each individual is assessed and set specific targets which are meaningful and worthwhile to each individual, whilst still challenging and achievable.

The Committee noted that between January 2012 and January 2013, there had been 70 people who had commenced reablement, of these 70% needed no further care.





**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH

## **TOWNS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13**

### **SUMMARY**

This report is the annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the past Council year.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable members and others to compare performance year to year.

There are no direct equalities or environmental implications attached to this covering report. Any financial implications from reviews and work undertaken will be advised as part of the specific reviews.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Council note the 2012/13 Annual Report of the Towns and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **REPORT DETAIL**

During the year under review, the Committee met on seven occasions and dealt with the following issues:

#### **1. REQUISITION OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

The Committee considered the following three requisitions during the year.

## **CAR PARKING CHARGES IN PARKS AND OPEN SPACES**

In August 2012, the Committee considered a requisition of an Executive Decision on the Car Parking Charges in Parks and Open Spaces.

The Committee was informed that a number of alternatives options, as explained in the Cabinet report, had been considered but rejected as they did not meet the dual aims of encouraging more genuine use of the car parks by public users and achieving the agreed MTFs savings.

It was explained that the collection of money from the meters and enforcement at the car park sites could be met from existing car park resources and patrols. This would be covered by a Service Level Agreement between Parking and Culture & Leisure.

It was felt that the introduction of charges would increase the overall number of genuine park users using the car parks. Officers would seek to obtain figures from Streetcare to check if usage of the car parks had in fact increased.

It was explained that changes to the borough-wide parking tariffs could only be made via Cabinet and these charges were currently subject to a five-year assurance level. Officers would check when this assurance period was due to run out. Members felt that parking charges in parks in other parts of the country were in general much higher than in Havering.

The Committee voted NOT to uphold the requisition by a majority of five to three.

## **REVISED HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME AND NEW TENANCY STRATEGY**

In October the Committee considered a requisition on the revised housing allocation scheme and new tenancy strategy.

The Committee was informed that it was a new requirement of each housing authority, brought in by the Localism Act 2011, that a Tenancy Strategy be published covering the authority's approach to the use of fixed term tenancies, rather than lifetime secure tenancies. Housing Associations operating in the borough were required to have regard to the Tenancy Strategy when setting their own tenancy policies. Given this influencing role of the Strategy, it also included details of the Council's approach to affordable rents, these being rents of up to 80% of local

market rents, introduced in 2011. The draft Tenancy Strategy had been produced following thorough and detailed consultation with residents, registered providers (also known as housing associations or registered social landlords) and other stakeholders.

At present there were approximately 12,000 people on the Council's Housing Waiting List with only approximately 700 properties being let each year. Therefore it had been agreed to introduce a residential qualification of two years thereby only allowing households in the borough to be able to register.

Under the proposed strategy new tenants would be given fixed term tenancies of five years, or three years if there were children over the age of fifteen living at the property, which would be reviewed at the end of the period and renewed if there had been no change in circumstances.

Members noted that the new fixed term tenancies would only affect new tenants and not existing ones.

Members were also advised that there were currently over 700 properties in the borough that were under occupied and that the Council had no way of asking people to downsize to smaller properties

It was agreed that additional initiatives were needed to tackle the problem of downsizing tenants to properties more suitable and that it was important to carry on building new properties in the borough to offset the loss of properties that had come about partly due to the success of the Right to Buy initiative.

The following grounds of the requisition were:

1. To review the responses received through the various consultation processes;
2. To consider the delegation authorities contained in the recommendations within the Cabinet Report;
3. To consider the impact on tenants of the Guidance to housing associations on affordable rents;
4. To consider the impact on new tenants and their families of fixed term tenancy that comes to an end;
5. To review the Community Contribution Reward arrangements within the proposed Allocation Scheme

Members noted that there would be a targeted approach to fraudulent use of the reward.

Councillor Kelly advised that drawing up the proposals had been a difficult piece of work but overall the proposals had been well received. Although it would be some time before the Council would see the benefits of the proposals it was believed to be a fairer system for residents.

The Committee voted NOT to uphold the requisition by a majority of 4 votes to 1 with 2 abstentions.

### **DISUSED LAND ADJACENT TO MELVILLE ROAD ALLOTMENTS, RAINHAM - REQUISITION OF CABINET DECISION**

At its meeting in December 2012 the Committee considered a requisition of a Cabinet decision that concerns a site comprising of 2.13 acres of land adjoining Melville Road allotments that had remained unused for 24 years.

Cabinet had agreed that the land was surplus and that 1.53 acres be disposed of for residential development and an area of 0.6 acres be retained for the creation of additional allotment plots.

Members were advised that any disposal of land would be subject to the approval of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

During the debate members questioned as to whether the needs of the community had been considered before any decision had been taken and that careful consideration needed to be taken on the balance of need for residential housing and those who wanted plots on the allotment.

The Committee voted NOT to uphold the requisition by a majority of 7 votes to 2.

## **2. HOMES IN HAVERING**

The Committee received a presentation in July 2012 from the Head of Housing and Public Protection confirming that the Council and Homes in Havering (HiH) remained separate organisations.

The ALMO had been set up originally as it was the option chosen, after consultation, to receive and administer the Decent Homes funding from the Government. The HiH Board was made up of four Councillors, four tenants and four independent directors.

The Council undertook a consultation with tenants between October 2011 and February 2012 with an offer to tenants and leaseholders indicating

that the Council control would allow costs savings of at least £300,000 per year by for example combining Council and HiH call centres. The Council had also undertaken to maintain the quality of service and to deliver the Decent Homes programme.

The results of the consultation had also indicated that 31% of tenants had wanted to keep HiH and 48% wished to return to Council control while 19% had not indicated a preference. This had resulted in Cabinet deciding in March 2012 to bring HiH back into the Council with a target to achieve this by 1 October 2012.

The committee was informed that all permanent HiH staff would transfer to the Council on the same terms and conditions. There would be around 150 permanent staff transferred with a further 20-30 staff on fixed term contracts which would be extended to the end of March 2013. The TUPE protection period would last two years but reorganisations could still be undertaken during this period.

There would not be many changes for tenants as a result of the transfer and there would be no change to the tenancies themselves. The HiH Board would be abolished and a residents' forum set up with the proposal that this be chaired by the relevant Cabinet member.

The new organisation would be called Havering Homes and Housing Service although the only immediate changes as regards branding etc would apply to letterheads and signage at the Chippenham Road building.

The Committee was informed that the termination agreement had been reached amicably with a unanimous vote of the Board in favour.

The repairs contract with Morrisons expired at the end of July 2013 and would shortly be retendered. It was also clarified to the Committee that Morrisons normally used a sub-contractor for void properties.

There were approximately 2,500 leaseholders in Havering with around 20% of properties sub-let to others. Leaseholders were also consulted and favoured coming back into the Council. Leaseholders would have two representatives on the residents' forum.

### **3. JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE OLYMPIC GAMES**

The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Culture and Leisure services on the Jubilee events that was held in Havering for over a four week period. These events included the Big Dance Weekender event

in Hornchurch which attracted both older people and children trying out ballroom dancing and an open air cinema.

A diamond jubilee market and the Romfest event were held over a weekend in June. Other activities included a carnival procession, a fun run and sports festival at Raphael Park as well as the lighting of a beacon in Havering Atte Bower and a concert at Langtons which was attended by 2-3,000 people.

There had been approximately 90 street parties across the borough which was more than many other boroughs. Two open spaces – Brittons Playing Fields and Park Lane Recreation Ground were to be designated as Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields. This would give the sites extra protection in the planning process and would mean it would be very difficult to develop housing on the sites in the future. Veolia had agreed in principle to fund £25,000 of improvements at each site and the Council was also bidding for national funding for this work.

#### Olympics Preparation

The Head of Culture and Leisure Services also reported on the preparation for the Olympics that a total of £16.5 million of Olympic contracts had been won by Havering businesses. That robust planning had been undertaken for major incidents during the Games period in order to ensure the safety of Havering residents.

As regards day to day impact, there were no Olympic training venues in the borough although the A13 through Havering was part of the Olympic Route Network with the A12 as a back up route. It was possible that one lane of the route may be set aside for travel to Hadleigh Farm in Essex, the venue for the Olympic mountain bike event.

The Committee was informed that local businesses had received a lot of advice from Transport for London regarding arrangements during the Olympic period and a number of workshops had been held. Only a few Council services would be affected by the Olympics with possible issues for services such as street care and safeguarding.

The Council was trying to purchase two torches for display in Havering Museum and the local studies centre.

The Committee was also informed that about four hundred unaccredited Chinese media would be based in Havering during the Olympics and had hired the former Albermarle Youth House as a media centre. The journalists would be encouraged to spend in the local economy and it was therefore hoped to bring an overall benefit to the borough.

#### **4. HAVERING MUSEUM**

The July meeting of the Committee was held at the Havering Museum. Members undertook a visit to the museum and received a brief talk from the staff on the main features of Havering Museum that had now been open for two years.

The Committee was informed that the campaign to build the museum had in fact started in August 1999. That few people felt they lived in Havering as a place, preferring to say they lived in e.g. Collier Row. As such, the museum had been designed with a separate pod for each of the five towns – Hornchurch, Upminster, Rainham, Romford and Havering Village.

Members then toured the museum noting that it included a children's learning zone, reception area and a shop selling the largest selection of local history books in Romford. The displays also included audio recollections of local residents as well as interactive screens in each pod.

#### **5. OLYMPIC LEGACY**

At its meeting in October 2012, the Committee received a presentation from the Head of Culture and Leisure Services that highlighted the impact and legacy of the 2012 Olympic/Paralympics Games on Havering.

The Committee was informed that Havering had the following ten point delivery plan:

1. To improve the health and wellbeing of Havering residents
2. To permanently increase opportunities to participate in sports, the arts and other cultural activities
3. To increase volunteering and involvement in the voluntary sector
4. To organise a cultural programme linked to the four year Cultural Olympiad
5. To maximise job and training opportunities for Havering residents
6. To ensure that local businesses benefited
7. To secure sustainable transport, housing and regeneration benefits that would positively contribute to sustainable development in Havering
8. To promote Havering as a visitor destination
9. To stimulate interest in education and learning;
10. To maximise opportunities for community safety

Members noted that since the Games finished there had been evidence of increased participation in sport and physical activity particularly in athletics

and cycling. This also included local initiatives such as upgrading leisure centres.

Lord Coe visited Hornchurch Leisure Centre and had promised to return to the borough to open the Romford Leisure Development when completed.

Members noted that several emergency planning contingencies that had been put into place in case the need had arisen during the games has left the Council better prepared for the future.

Members also noted that a total of 39 contracts had been awarded to Havering businesses, through the CompeteFor scheme. It was noted that some local businesses had found the CompeteFor application process rather bureaucratic.

## **6. PARKS AND OPEN SPACES**

In November the Committee considered a report that detailed an overview of the resources and performance levels of the Parks and Open Spaces services. The report covered the scope of the many aspects of maintenance and tasks undertaken by the service. It also provided comparison figures with other providers and detailed the role of the Friends of Parks in the help they provided in maintaining their local parks.

The report stated that the borough's parks and open spaces were maintained by a company called Mayrise and that council officers monitored approximately ten percent of the works carried out. Members of the committee were of the view that this was not a high enough percentage to be able to gain an insight as to whether a good standard of service was being received.

The Committee also noted that no more Green Flags were to be awarded to parks in the borough, with the only possible exception of Raphael Park which may in the future qualify for a Green Flag as there had been a commitment to funding for improvement works.

Members noted that the amount of complaints received regarding the borough's parks had been steadily falling and public satisfaction levels had increased from the mid fifties to nearly seventy five percent.

The committee requested to receive regular maintenance update of works being carried out in parks rather than sporadic concerted efforts usually just prior to an event or inspection taking place. Members also agreed that it would be useful if in the future they could be advised of the nature of complaints the Council was receiving about parks and open spaces.



## **7. TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION**

At its meeting in December 2012 and February 2013 the Committee received a presentation from the Council's Regeneration Manager on the regeneration of the borough's town centres.

Following the presentation the Committee agreed to undertake a tour of town centres.

The Committee recently visited Romford Town Centre accompanied by ward councillors.

Other visits are planned for 3 July to tour Hornchurch, Elm Park and Rainham. Following on would be a final leg on 17 September to tour Collier Row, Hilldene and Upminster.

## **8. TRANSPORT FOR LONDON - TRAFFIC ISSUES WITHIN HAVERING**

At the request of the Committee, Members received a briefing from representatives of Transport for London (TfL) on traffic issues within Havering.

During the presentation Members were informed that several junction upgrades were being introduced along the A12 including the provision of a cycle path alongside the pavement between Whalebone Lane and Gallows Corner.

That cameras were now installed at the Mawney Road junction of the A12 to deter drivers from performing illegal U-turns.

Members of the committee raised the problem of litter between the Barley Lane junction and the Mawney Road junction of the A12, the TfL representatives undertook to deal with the removal of the rubbish.

Members also commented about the amount of road repair equipment that had been left behind at the side of the road between the junctions of Mawney Road and North Street. TfL representatives also undertook to arrange for the materials to be removed.

During a discussion regarding the turning patterns at the junction of the A12 and Gubbins Lane members of the committee were advised that the Council was currently carrying out studies to see if a problem existed with cars crossing each other incorrectly.

Members also stated that several mesh barriers had been removed along the A12 near Harold Court Road. TfL representatives advised that several tranches of street furniture removal had taken place but if it was now deemed unsafe then a feasibility study could take place to see if the furniture needed to be re-introduced.

## **9. COMMUNITY SOCIAL HALLS/ROMFORD LEISURE DEVELOPMENT**

At its meeting in February 2013, the Committee received a presentation from the Head of Culture and Leisure Facilities updating on the sale of the community halls and the Romford Leisure Development.

Members noted that the following two social halls that had been discussed at a previous meeting had now been leased. The New Windmill Hall had been re-leased in August 2012 and Tweed Way Hall had been re-leased in October 2012 to outside organizations

The Committee was informed that Dukes Hall had now closed and plans were being made to dispose of the site.

Members noted that Morrisons Supermarkets planned to build a superstore, petrol garage and residential properties on the site of the current Romford Ice Rink. As part of the deal the Council would acquire a plot of land situated on the corner of Grimshaw Way in Romford on which it was proposed to build a leisure centre that would include a 25 metre swimming pool, an ice rink and gymnasium.

The proposed development would required planning permission and the plans were passed at the Regulatory Services Committee on 14 March.

In response to a question regarding the possibility of a temporary ice rink being opened whilst works on the new leisure development were taking place, officers advised that investigations had taken place but it had proved financially prohibitive to open a temporary ice rink.

## **10. SERVICE PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

At its meeting in February and May 2013 the Committee received details of service performance information. The report provided Members specific performance indicator that related to the work area the committee.

At the May 2013 meeting the Head of Development & Building Control provided the committee with an insight on the steps being taken to remedy the situation that related to Planning Services applications which missed its target.

## **11. THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

In January 2013, the Committee met jointly with the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees in order to scrutinise aspects of the Council's Financial Strategy for the coming year. The meeting, chaired by the Chairman of Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee, scrutinised several issue of relevance to this Committee



**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH

**ANNUAL REPORT OF  
THE VALUE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**



**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH

## **VALUE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13**

### **SUMMARY**

This report is the annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the past Council year.

It is planned for the report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable Members and others to note the Committee's activities and performance.

There are no direct equalities or environment implications attached to this report. Any financial implications from reviews and work undertaken will be advised as part of the specific reviews.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Council note the 2012/13 Annual Report of the Value Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **REPORT DETAIL**

During the year under review, the Committee met on nine occasions and dealt with the following issues:

#### **1. AGEING WELL REPORT**

At its meeting in May 2012 the Committee received a report detailing some themes arising from the Ageing Well Event which considered the priorities for older people in the borough. The Committee were informed that the appendix to the report showed the areas where event participants felt that things were going well and those areas where they were not going well. The latter areas were potentially what the Committee needed to concentrate on. The strands of themes were discussed by members, and they agreed that

there were areas which could be incorporated into their work programme for the next municipal year.

The areas that the Committee agreed would be good to scrutinise were:

- Impact on housing for the Elderly
- Cost of Dial a Ride
- Transportation

The Committee discussed the different areas including the involvement of the Champions for Diversity and Older Persons in any review. The Committee agreed to allow other Overview & Scrutiny Committees to take a lead in their areas of speciality. The Committee would look to joint working with other Committees in any relevant areas proposed for review. Officers stated that there would be opportunities for joint working with other Committees in some of the areas discussed.

## **2. COUNCIL TAX TOPIC GROUP UPDATE**

The Topic Group received further briefing note as part of its scrutiny review on Council Tax Collection.

The Topic Group would be seeking further information in the following areas as part of the review:

1. Update progress from the arrears team
2. A consideration of value for money

## **3. PRESENTATION FROM DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING CONTROL ON SECTION 106**

In July 2012 at the request of the Committee, the Head of Development & Building Control provided an overview on Section 106.

Section 106 (S106) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allowed a local planning authority to enter into a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner in association with the granting of planning permission. The obligation was termed a Section 106 Agreement.

Planning Officers negotiated and agreed what obligations were appropriate for each development.

The following key points were outlined to the Committee:

Obligations included in a S106 were of a financial nature such as contributions for education purposes, highway works, parks or public art. Non-financial obligations could include the provision of affordable housing and restrictions on the issuing of residents' car parking permits.

The Financial Obligations were calculated as part of the planning application process whereby the planning officer consults with all relevant services. Each service would respond to the planning officer with comments on the application, and if appropriate, the level of S106 contribution required. The level of the contribution must be in accordance with the Council's current policies.

As part of the process, the service must be in a position to justify the amount required and produce a breakdown of how the contribution had been calculated and for what purpose it was required.

When S106 Agreements were negotiated, agreement would be reached as to the period of time the Council had to spend the contribution, once it had been received. A typical time period for many contributions was seven years from the date of payment, however this time period must be reasonable and was negotiated on an individual basis.

Sometimes it would be reasonable for the developer to request that the Council spend the contribution sooner. The agreement would stipulate exactly what the contribution must be spent on, such as a developer paying £25,000 for Highways to build a pedestrian crossing in a specified location within 2 years.

Monitoring of the S106 Agreement entailed that once the agreement had been completed, the details of the agreement were placed on the S106 Monitoring Schedule where all relevant services had access to the details of the agreement.

The Corporate S106 Liaison Group met every 6 weeks and all relevant services were invited to attend. The Monitoring Schedule was regularly updated by Planning and Finance to include S106 contribution payments received and spent. The details of S106 agreements being monitored were reported to the Monitoring Committee every quarter.

The responsibility to ensure that contributions were spent within time and on the specified purpose remains with each service. Planning, Legal and Finance provided a supportive role to services via the Corporate S106 Liaison group and maintained the S106 Monitoring Schedule regularly.

If the Council did not spend the money on the specified purpose or within the time frame outlined in the S106 agreement the developer could request that the contribution (including interest) be returned to them.

The Council could also approach the developer and request that a further agreement be signed (Deed of Variation) varying the terms of the original S106 to allow the Council more time to spend the contribution – this was entirely at the discretion of the developer and the Council could not assume that the developer would agree to this.

#### **4. PRESENTATION FROM STREETCARE ON POTHOLES**

At the request of the Committee, – the Streetcare Co-ordinator for Highways provided an overview on how potholes are repaired.

The Committee was informed that the service, in its capacity as the Highway Authority, had a statutory duty under the Highways Act 1980 s41 to maintain the public highway. In this respect, part of the duty to maintain included inspection.

Ad hoc reports of defects from members of the public, Council Members, other Council Officers, the Police and others may need to be inspected to determine precisely what action was required. These were usually received via the council's CRM system, letters, phone calls, emails etc.

The service had an inspection regime that entailed periodic inspection of between one and six months. An intervention level that required safety work being undertaken detailed that any potholes in excess of 40 millimetres in depth would require the raising of an order. In the case of footway defects, the measurement was 25 millimetres.

As a works order had to be raised for any repairs carried out on the public highway it was important to take an accurate measurement of any works to be undertaken. This information should include: the type of material the repair was in e.g. blacktop, concrete, slabs, kerbs etc. and the accurate measurement of the repair required.

Section 58 of the Act dealing with inspection was strictly followed by the service and had been the Council's defence when claims were made against it. The Committee noted that the council defended all claims and had a very good record of success as the service was always able to produce a five year history on a particular road. This had been commended by Zurich Insurance.

Currently the in house DSO had a contract to undertake all repair works. The DSO was noted as quick at responding and being good value for reactive action.

The Committee was taken through the process of reporting a pothole, its being recorded on the CRM system, passed to the work queue of the relevant Area Liaison Officer and, after inspection, an order being raised.

The Committee was advised that Area Liaison Officers were required to inspect at least 10% of completed work.

The Streetcare Co-ordinator, Highways attributed many of the recent pothole defects in the borough to the last two bad winters.



## **5. LOCALISATION OF COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT - REQUISITION OF EXECUTIVE DECISION**

At a Special meeting of the Committee held in July 2012 the Committee considered a requisition of a Cabinet decision.

In accordance with paragraph 17 of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Rules, a requisition signed by two Members representing more than one Group (Councillors Keith Darvill and Clarence Barrett) had called in the decision of the Cabinet Member dated 11 July 2012 concerning the localisation of Council Tax support.

The Cabinet Member for Value had made the following decisions:

1. That Cabinet note the financial pressure of a £1.9m reduction in government grant for council tax support in 2013/14.
2. That Cabinet authorise consultation with the Greater London Authority on the Options with the preferred option being Option 8. The report submitted to Cabinet stated that Option 8 was the officers' recommendation for short listing for consultation with the GLA as it combined elements which proposed minimal impacts on working age claimants and taxpayers with only one home. It was also reasonable to expect working adults residing with the claimant to make a contribution to the council tax through an increased non-dependent deduction.

Option 8 combined a restriction in benefit to a weekly Band D charge, increasing non-dependent deductions and reducing certain exemptions to zero per cent. This option had a projected saving of £1.8 million.

The report added that in order to present the GLA with the principles behind a true range of variable options, it was recommended that Options 3, 7 and 8 should be taken forward to the formal consultation process.

The reasons for the call in were detailed as follows:

- 1 To provide the Value Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to consider in detail the options for the Havering Local Scheme before the preferred options are the subject of consultation with the Greater London Authority.
- 2 To consider whether there are alternative options that should be considered by Council members.

The Committee noted the following responses by officers to the points made by Members:

- That the decision on which option to be taken forward would need to

be approved by Full Council by the end of January 2013.

□ There was no clear indication on the level of grant available to help administer the scheme at this stage.

□ That information on the consultation would be available on-line, via Focus groups and in newspapers including the Council's Living magazine.

During the discussion, the Group Director for Finance and Commerce agreed to send a briefing note to all Members, with a draft consultation paper, in order to inform Members of the impending consultation.

Following debate, the Committee agreed not to uphold the requisition.

## **6. PRESENTATION ON THE WORK OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN**

In November 2012 at the request of the Committee, the Manager of Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Support provided an overview of the work of the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Committee was taken through the role of the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and the various stages before a case gets to be reviewed by the Ombudsman service.

The Committee was informed that the LGO has jurisdiction over the following public services:

- Local authorities
- Greater London Authority
- Police, fire and waste authorities
- School admission and exclusion procedures
- Environment Agency (flood protection issues)

The LGO's role was to investigate complaints of "maladministration that had caused an injustice"

If the Ombudsman's recommendations have found maladministration then the recommendation was that this must be reported to full Council.

As regards housing complaints, even during the period when housing was managed by Homes in Havering, the Council remained responsible in Ombudsman's eyes. Under the Localism Act 2011, housing complaints would transfer to the Housing Ombudsman with effect from April 2013. Under the new procedure, complaints about housing management could **only** be made by:

- An MP
- A Councillor
- A "tenant panel"
- The complainant – but only once internal complaints procedures

had been exhausted and at least eight weeks have passed since then.

The Housing Ombudsman's findings were enforceable by a court order.

The presentation also detailed the total decisions on complaints about the council between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012. The decisions were laid out by service area involvement.

## **7. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2011/12 - QUARTER 1**

The Committee considered a report that set out the Council's performance against the Value Living Ambition Goal for Quarter 1 of 2012/13.

Cabinet had directed that all of the Council's Corporate Performance Indicators would be reported to Value Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The report outlined the performance of the Council's Corporate Performance Indicators for the first quarter (April-June 2012) against the five Living Ambition Goals of the Corporate Plan.

Following the abolition of the national performance framework at the end of 2010 and the requirement for local authorities to report on a statutory set of National Indicators, the Council had undertaken a comprehensive review of all indicators and, in consultation with Services, had rationalised the number that would continue to be collected locally.

The list of performance indicators was reviewed again for 2012/13 and the revised list was approved by CMT and Cabinet. The list included 68 Corporate Performance Indicators, 39 of which were measured quarterly and reported to CMT, Cabinet and the Value Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the remaining indicators were collected and reported on an annual or bi-annual basis only.

The report before the Committee identified where the Council was performing well (Green) and not so well (Amber and Red). The variance for the 'RAG' rating was:

- Red = more than 5% off the Quarter Target
- Amber = up to 5% off the Quarter Target
- Green = on or above the Quarter Target

Where performance was more than 5% off the Quarter Target and the RAG rating was 'red', a 'Corrective Action' box had been included in the report. This highlighted what action the Council was taking to address poor performance where appropriate.

Also included for indicators measured quarterly was a Direction of Travel column which compared performance in Quarter 1 2012/13 with performance in Quarter 1 2011/12.

The report detailed that of the 39 indicators measured quarterly, 37 had been given a RAG status in Quarter 1. For one indicator a RAG status was not applicable and for the other indicator the information was not yet available. In summary 26 indicators (70%) were rated as 'green' and 11 indicators (30%) were rated as 'amber' (1 indicator) or 'red' (10 indicators). The Committee considered the Corporate Performance report for Quarter one. The relevant Head of Service were present and had the opportunity to outline the challenges that has led to their respective services missing their targets.

The Head of Development & Building Control explained that there was a rush of planning applications earlier in the year, seeking to be approved before the Mayor's new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) came into effect. The performance in the first quarter of this year reflected the fact that the planning service were still catching up with the backlog this had caused.

The Head of Housing & Public Protection outlined that the economic climate had impacted on performance for this indicator. In order to address performance issues, Homes in Havering and now Housing had produced a 52 week projection of arrears and debits to identify previous trends. As well as this, new reports would be developed to give details of potential weaknesses in the way arrears are collected.

The Interim Head of Children & Young People Services informed the Committee that the percentage of placements lasting at least 2 years was a measure of the stability of placements for looked after children. The performance in this area was not considered good enough, particularly in the area of teenagers where foster care placements can tend to break down. A review of this area had been undertaken. This had resulted in increased work to recruit foster carers and also different procedures which offered greater support to the foster care placements when they came under pressure. This was an area that was being prioritised for improvement within children's services.

The Head of Adult Social Care outlined that these indicators were in relation to hospital discharges. The first indicator was an overall partnership indicator that measured the total number of delayed discharges across the system including in the hospital itself which was still higher than it should be and was not yet showing improvement. The second related to delayed discharges for which Havering was responsible. This was reducing due to work being undertaken within social care and the numbers of delays were lower than last year. The indicator was shown as red despite the reductions because a tougher target has been set indicating Havering's intentions to continue to improve its services in this area. The Council continued to work with health partners and with the other local authorities who were served by BHRUT to improve systems and processes to improve care in the community in order to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions, particularly of older people.

A more stretching target had been set for this indicator than last year in order to continue to increase the amount of self-determination and choice for social care clients. The Committee was informed that performance was already higher than last year, but had not yet met the new stretch target.

The Head of Customer Services explained to the Committee that the indicators relating to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit were recession related. There had been an increase in the numbers of people claiming housing and council tax benefit and needing to be assessed for those benefits because of changes in their circumstances. This increase had put substantial pressure on the staff processing these claims and some additional resources have been brought in to clear a backlog that had developed. Given the upturn in demand/activity it was anticipated that, despite the additional resources, performance would not substantially improve during quarter 2. A review of overall demand was being undertaken as this upturn had knock-on effects on the customer services function while it was continuing to implement the new customer services processes.

Members were informed that a large proportion of Member/MP enquiries and corporate complaints relating to Housing were as a result of the benefit reforms, rather than an enquiry about the service. To address performance, complaint owners would be reminded to respond to enquiries within the required timescales. Additional resources would also be put in place in those services where the number of enquiries had increased.

In general the Committee was assured that improvements would be apparent by next quarter but it was not certain that the services would be on target.

Members requested to receive raw data in respect of the Member Enquiries and Corporate Complaint indicators. They also requested the same of Housing, in respect of the age of the rent debt pressure. This was an area that was being prioritised for improvement within children's services.

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## **8. HAVERING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

At the request of the Committee, Members received an annual update on the Havering Strategic Partnership. The report outlined the Havering Strategic Partnership (HSP) 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and the outcomes from the event.

The 2012 conference celebrated the work of the partnership over the last ten years and the many successes that had been achieved by working together.

Following the conference, an evaluation was undertaken to determine the value of holding an annual conference. Overall, feedback from partners was extremely positive.

The report informed the Committee that partners were also asked as part of the feedback if there were any topics they would like to see at future Havering Strategic Partnership events. The feedback showed that they would like to see more local business involvement and business related topics, and more workshops on what partner organisations were doing.

Ensuring that partnership working was kept as a priority for the borough even after the demise of the Local Area Agreement was also an emerging theme.

## **9. PRESENTATION ON INSURANCE CLAIMS**

At the request of the Committee, the Internal Audit & Corporate Risk Manager and Insurance & Risk Manager provided an overview on the work of the Council's Insurance Team.

The Committee was informed that the council arranged a large portfolio of insurance covers protecting council assets and staff including property insurance (buildings and contents), motor, liability and other risks. The Council opted to self-fund a large deductible in respect of the major risk areas which was financially advantageous and provided greater control and incentive to improve losses. It could be viewed on the basis of a very large excess and claims within which were met by the insurance fund. Payments from the fund were made in accordance with the policy terms and conditions.

The Committee was provided with a breakdown of the type and nature of claims arising from incidents during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2012 and the total cost associated with these indicated between that for the period 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2012.

Members gathered that, claims made against the council were investigated by the Insurance Team within the various legal protocols and timescales that apply. The council's insurers provided a claims handling service for claims within the deductible which for public liability and employers liability claims currently stood at £156,331 but liability decisions were made in conjunction with the insurance team to prescribed limits of authority and in close liaison with the department concerned.

That the largest proportion of public liability claims arose from the council's non delegable duty as a highway authority, these included accidents on the highway and highway tree related claims.

The overall figures showed a reducing trend in the number of claims and it needed to be highlighted that the 2010 figures reflect a year with two periods of poor winter weather which had a detrimental effect on highway condition and the weather itself could prevent prompt and effective repairs being carried out.

The highway tree claim numbers had steadied largely due to the wet summers experienced. Members were informed that low rain fall and hot summers increased the number of tree related claims.

Claims arising from incidents on the highway generally range from a damaged tyre on a pothole to a personal injury claim for someone tripping on the highway with varying degrees of injury.

2010 figures reflected a year with two periods of poor winter weather which had a detrimental effect on highway condition and the weather itself can prevent prompt and effective repairs being carried out. This also included a rare high value injury claim settlement.

2009 figures reflected a severe winter period suffered that year. Under the Highways Act the council is afforded a defence to claims as long as the service can demonstrate that it had reasonable systems of maintenance and inspection in place and that these were adhered to and where it can be demonstrated that the council had done all that was reasonable and the Council could not be held to be legally liable for an accident a claim would be defended to court.

Havering had a very good success record of defending cases that were litigated, either judgement being entered in its favour at trial or cases being discontinued before trial and costs recovered.

All claims were considered on their own merits considering the legal liability issue. Even in the case of a small claim i.e. £250 vehicle pothole damage if the council had a robust defence such a claim would be defended to court and whilst in such circumstances the Council may not recover its costs it sends a strong message to claimants and solicitors that the council would always take a robust but fair line when considering legal liability issues. This had notably given LBH a reputation of being no easy touch as the service had heard from local solicitors who agree they would not chance their arm on a weak case, knowing that the council would take a consistently robust approach.

The Committee was informed that team faced the following future challenges:

That the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) was due to be implemented later this year which was to severely reduce the time in which the team had to deal with a liability claim from 90 days to 40 days. This meant there would be increased pressure on staff and resources to comply with.

Other changes in the MOJ reforms aimed to reduce the highly disproportionate costs of third party solicitors, allowing a fixed rate where claims up to £25k were dealt with within the parameters of the claims portal which was to be introduced and also removed the right for a solicitor to receive success fees which can double the base legal costs and under current protocols routinely outweigh the damages many times. They would also no longer be able to recover the ATE insurance premium.



There were also proposals to allow solicitors to receive a success fee from the claimant's damages and in order to offset this, there would be an automatic rise in damages of 10%.

Also where claims were successfully defended to court, the council would no longer be able to recover costs but the potential saving outlined above more than made up for this as the council's costs were only ever a fraction of claimant's costs.

## **10. STREETCARE SERVICES ENQUIRIES ON CRM**

At the request of the Committee, the Head of Streetcare attended a meeting of the Committee to respond to Members enquiries on the Streetcare service's performance.

The Committee was informed that every complaint logged on CRM for the service was allocated to the relevant section of Streetcare to investigate and that the head of service was able to keep track of every log.

In response to monitoring of Streetcare CRM issues, Members were informed that the relevant senior officer monitored the complaint and that the Head of service also kept track of every activity.

In response to what step does Streetcare take on receipt of service request/ CRM compliant. The Committee was informed that once the Area Liaison Officer (ALO) picked a job, a visit was arranged to assess the complaint area. Following the inspection the ALO would update the case and arrange for the repairs to be carried out. At this stage the CRM case would be closed. In order to monitor the repair job, a case file was opened on an Highways IT system which currently lacked the facility to auto respond to the complainant with an update of the job. The Committee was informed that the current Highways IT system of keeping efficient track of jobs but IT were looking at building one in to the system.

## **11. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2011/12 - QUARTER 2**

The Committee considered a report that set out the Council's performance against the Living Ambition Goal for the second quarter (July-September 2012).

The Committee considered the following Value specific performance indicators:

Sickness absence rate per annum per employee (days)

That work was currently taking place to identify why sickness absence had increased over the last year and this had been made a corporate priority. Once any issues or trends had been identified, actions would be put into

place to address these.

Speed of processing changes in circumstances of HB/CTB claimants (days)

Speed of processing new HB/CTB claims (days) (NEW)

These indicators related to the Housing and Council Tax Benefit that were recession related. There had been an increase in the numbers of people claiming housing and council tax benefit which needed to be assessed because of changes in their circumstances. This increase had put substantial pressure on the staff processing these claims and some additional resources had been brought in to clear a backlog that had developed. Given the upturn in demand/activity it was anticipated that, despite the additional resources, performance would not substantially improve until Quarter 3. A review of overall demand was being undertaken as this upturn had had knock- on effects on the customer services function while it was continuing to implement the new customer services processes.

Percentage of Member/MP enquiries completed within 10 days

Percentage of corporate complaints completed within 10 days

The Corporate Policy & Community Manager informed the Committee that a large proportion of Member/MP enquiries and corporate complaints were related to Housing as a result of the benefit reforms, rather than an enquiry about the service. The CRM system is being developed to record Member/MP correspondence and the new system has the facility of email chasers to remind staff of the service level agreement target of 10 working days.

## **12. DISPOSAL OF OLD WINDMILL HALL - REQUISITION OF EXECUTIVE DECISION**

At a special meeting of the Committee in February 2013 the Committee considered a requisition on the disposal of the Freehold interest in the Old Windmill Hall and Car Park.

In accordance with paragraph 17 of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Rules, a requisition signed by two Members representing more than one Group (Councillors Clarence Barrett and Paul McGeary) had called in the Cabinet decision of 13 February 2013.

A Cabinet decision was agreed on 13 February 2013, the decision taken was:

1. To confirm that the Old Windmill Hall site and adjacent car park be declared surplus and to authorise the disposal of the freehold interest in the site.

2. To authorise the commencement of the statutory process to

appropriate from open space and then dispose of the land coloured blue on plan sps1294/1 Rev A.

3. To authorise the appropriation of the land shown coloured green on plan sps1294/1 Rev A from the curtilage of the Old Windmill Hall to open space use subject to the removal from open space use of the land shown coloured blue.

4. To authorise the appropriation of the disposal site (edged red on plan sps1294/1 Rev A) for planning purposes.

5. To authorise the Property Strategy Manager, in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal & Democratic Services) undertake all appropriation processes and for the Lead Member for Value to consider any objections received and whether to confirm the appropriations.

6. To authorise the Property Strategy Manager, in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal & Democratic Services) to deal with all matters arising from this decision and to complete the disposal. This is to include completion of the statutory process for the appropriation of open space and the appropriation for planning purposes in the event of there being no representations on these issues.

The reasons for the 'call-in' were:

1. That not enough consideration has been given to uses suggested by local ward councillors or the Friends of Upminster Park group, e.g. Sculpture Garden, Car Parking for users of the New Windmill Hall and other Park users, Quiet Garden, Sensory Garden for those with visual impairment, etc.

2. That the sale will exclude the potential for any expansion of the New Windmill Hall and Car Park or use by another community group.

3. That no meaningful consultation had taken place with local ward councillors, the friends of Upminster Park or the wider community in respect of this decision.

Following debate, the Committee agreed not to uphold the requisition

### **13. DISPOSAL OF LAND AT GOOSHAYS DRIVE – REQUISITION OF CABINET DECISION**

At the meeting in February 2013 the Committee considered another requisition of a Cabinet decision.

An Executive Decision was agreed on 19 February 2013, the decision taken was to:

1. To approve the boundary of the disposal site at Gooshays Drive, Harold Hill as shown on the attached plan and to note the disposal activities that have taken place to date.

2. To confirm that the proposed works to create new pitches at Broxhill Park and Dagnam Park proceed, subject to confirmation that they will discharge the relevant planning conditions on the Gooshays site.

3. To agree that works to the Broxhill Park the works will be on the basis of the recommendations within the Sports Turf Research Institute report dated 24 May 2012 and that works at Dagnam Park will be on the basis of option B within the Sports Turf Research Institute report dated 23 May 2012 (or on such other basis as reasonably required by Sport England in order to meet the conditions contained within the Gooshays planning consent).

4. To approve, as an exception to the Council's Capital Strategy, the funding of these works from the approved capital allocation for Broxhill

Park, subject to repayment from the S106 payment in respect of the development at Gooshays Drive.

5. To approve a waiver to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and appoint Turfdry as the preferred contractor for the works at Dagnam Park at the price shown in the exempt appendix to this decision.

The reasons for the 'call-in' were:

1 To review the boundary of the proposed disposal site

2 To review the proposed works to create new pitches at Broxhill Park and Dagnam Park

3 To consider the recommendations of Sports Turf Research Institute dated 24 May 2012

4 To review the Council's exception to its capital strategy

**Following debate,** the Committee agreed not to uphold the requisition

#### **14. WEBCASTING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS**

In April 2013 members of the Committee received a presentation on the webcasting of council meetings.

Members were advised that the Council used webcasting to encourage increased engagement with local people in decision making and to provide additional accountability.

Members noted that webcasting of council meetings had been introduced in July 2009 and was used to broadcast both Council and Cabinet meetings.

The webcasts were available to the public direct from the Council's website and could be watched live or at a later date as all webcasts were archived for six months.

Webcasts were promoted using social media including the Council's website, Twitter and Facebook.

The webcast service was provided by a company called Public-I, who provided a similar service across many local authorities throughout the country.

The service cost approximately £15,000 a year to run which provided the Council with 120 hours of coverage, webcast equipment and a high level support service.

A total of 12,216 viewings had been made of 64 webcasts. 10% of these had been watched live with the other 90% having been watched using the archiving service.

Each meeting had attracted between 100 and 250 views with Cabinet meetings attracting higher viewings than Council meetings.

The Council had a commitment to finding alternative ways of engaging people in local government decision-making and the webcasts were watched by more people than attend the committee meetings in person. Members were advised that consideration was being given to possibly webcasting meetings of the Regulatory Services Committee.

During the debate members asked whether a survey could be placed on the site to gather information as to who was watching the webcasts and to perhaps advertising forthcoming webcasts in the Council's "*Living*" magazine.

Members also discussed the possibility of benchmarking with other local authorities to ascertain their viewing figures and patterns.

## **15. COUNCIL TAX UPDATE**

Members received an update on the current position regarding the reclaiming of outstanding Council Tax arrears.

The report to the Council Tax topic group in February 2013, detailed the arrears position at the time, totalling £15,056,341.13

Following a subsequent request for additional information, additional details were provided which established the age of the debt.

Where a customer had multiple debts they would be counted in each year.

With the closing of year end accounts the current arrears were being assessed and would shortly be available through the Council Tax Year End Summary.

However, recovery action and account maintenance had been on-going and as requested by the Committee a detailed breakdown of the arrears was provided.

There were now a total of 52 cases with action being taken against them. Unfortunately as the majority of these accounts sat at deductions from on-going benefit and the weekly deduction was less than £3.50 per week these would take some time to clear.

## **16. HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFITS PRESENTATION**

Committee members received a presentation on the Council's Housing and Council Tax benefits system.

Members were advised that Housing Benefit to help individuals to pay their rent, both Council Tenants and Private Sector Tenants, was paid to over 14,000 residents at a total cost of £89,000,000 during 2012/13.

Council Tax Support was paid to over 19,000 residents at a total cost of £22,000,000 during 2012/13.

Members were given a detailed description of how new claims and changes to existing claims were processed.

Despite the increase in caseloads over the years the number of Benefit Officers employed within the Service hadn't changed except where increased Admin (recession) funding was provided by Central Government for 2009 / 10 & 2010 /1. During those two years, despite the recession, owing to the funding and the increased number of staff the Council recorded its best performance figures. Recession funding from the Government had since reduced and with it the number of Benefit Officers affecting performance.

The cause of the backlog in outstanding claims was due to a number of reasons. The economy wasn't improving and the number of claims being received continued to rise. In addition to the number of new claims being received there had been a significant increase in the number of records

received from the DWP compared to 2011 / 12. In July 2011 the DWP started to automatically send the Council changes in customers Tax Credit entitlement ("ATLAS" records). From January 2012 the ATLAS records had increased to include changes to all state benefits and other changes the DWP have become aware of.

The end of February and throughout March were the busiest times of year due to "annual billing" as the new Council Tax Bills began to be received.

The Council have also introduced this year the new Council Tax Support scheme, replacing Council Tax Benefit and prepared for the other Welfare Reform changes including: Under occupancy rules within the Social Sector and the Benefit Cap.

Going forward funding had been secured to temporarily employ Liberata's resilience processing team to help clear the outstanding work. Existing staff would continue to prioritise new claims, urgent cases, more recent Change in Circumstances and correspondence received via the DWP. Overtime would also be provided. With the introduction of Universal Credit over the next 12 months, the Council would not recruit into vacant posts but would continue to use Serco staff as an extension of the Council's staff. New Initiatives implemented during 2012 / 13 including On line Claims and Risk Based Verification to increase the speed of processing should begin to be realised. During 2013 / 14 the Council intended on automating the assessment of the Atlas records received from the DWP.

## **17. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INFORMATION QUARTER 3**

The report before members set out the performance of the Council's Corporate Performance Indicators for the third quarter (October-December 2012), against the five Living Ambition Goals of the Corporate Plan.

Members expressed concern that the four indicators that were viewed by the Committee were all in decline.

The earlier Housing/Council Tax Benefits presentation had gone some way to explaining two of the declining indicators but there was no information to advise as to why corporate complaints had failed to meet its target.

Members suggested that perhaps in future more Performance Indicators could be assessed by the Committee.



**ANNUAL REPORT OF  
THE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT  
GROUP**





## **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13**

### **SUMMARY**

This report is the annual report of the Member Development Group, summarising the Group's activities during the past municipal year.

It is planned for the report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable Members and others to note the Group's activities and performance.

There are no direct equalities, environmental or financial implications attached to this report.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Council note the 2012/13 Annual Report of the Member Development Group.

### **REPORT DETAIL**

#### **1. MEMBERSHIP AND GROUP DEVELOPMENT**

- 1.1 At the start of the year, the Group was chaired by Councillor Dennis Bull and other members were Councillors Osman Dervish, Pam Light and Barbara Matthews. Following the sad death during the year of Councillor Bull, Councillor Light became Chairman of the group with Councillor Melvin Wallace also joining the group. Places on the group are also available to the Independent Residents' and Labour Groups in order to ensure as broad a consensus is reached as possible as regards options for Member development. The group is facilitated by officers from Democratic Services with assistance from Human Resources.

## **2. EVENTS ORGANISED BY THE GROUP**

- 2.1 **Dementia Awareness** – Given the age profile of the population of Havering, the Group arranged for an officer from Age Concern to deliver some training to Members on dementia awareness. This three-part session, run in October and November, gave Members an in-depth insight into the effects of dementia and how people suffering from this condition could be best assisted. Feedback from Members who attended was that the event was well facilitated and that they were now more aware of the issues relating to this condition.
- 2.2 **Equalities Issues** – Two events were organised during the year to give Members more information on the obligations and requirements on the Council as regards the equalities area. In the first of these, a representative from the charity Stop Hate UK gave Members a briefing on the types of hate crimes and how these could be prevented. There was however a feeling amongst Members that they would like more information on the specific requirements placed upon the Council in this area. As such, a briefing was arranged in September from Karon Monaghan, a leading QC in the equalities field who discussed the equalities obligations on the Council under the new legislation introduced in this area.
- 2.3 **Chairing Skills** – In November, it was arranged for an external facilitator to give Members some training on chairing skills. This two-part session was open to all Members who may need to chair meetings, whether formal Council meetings or on other occasions. The Group was keen to share this event with other boroughs and was therefore pleased to welcome Councillors from the London Boroughs of Ealing and Hackney who also attended the training.
- 2.4 **Health Reforms Training** – In June, a development session was arranged to give Members more of an understanding of the recent reforms taking place in the health sector. This covered areas such as the role of the Clinical Commissioning Group and of the Local Healthwatch organisation. Clearly, with such a major level of changes to the organisation of local health services, the Group feels it may well be useful to return to health issues in some form as part of the development events planned for 2013-14.
- 2.5 **Anti-terrorism Briefing** – In May, Members received an important and timely briefing from an officer of Havering police on anti-terrorism measures and what Councillors, in their role as community leaders, should be on the alert for.

## **3. FUTURE PLANS**

- 3.1 Although the Member Development programme for 2013/14 is currently under discussion by the Group, future programmes for Members are likely to include an expansion of the role of the existing IT support group for

Members and a presentation on the use in Havering of the Community Payback scheme for young offenders.