

What problems are posed to Hillingdon, and beyond, by the legal high Khat and what can we do to tackle them?

Witness Session 3: Health

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REASON FOR ITEM

To enable the Committee to gather the evidence for their in-depth review of the legal high Khat

OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE

1. Question witnesses on the importation and distribution of Khat, making use of the suggested questions and asking additional questions as required.
2. Identify issues for further investigation at later witness sessions.
3. Highlight potential issues for the Committee's recommendations in the final report.

Background

This is the first meeting that Residents' and Environmental Services POC has considered the topic of Khat. At its meeting of 8 June 2010 the Committee considered a scoping report for the review of Khat. Members agreed that the aim of the review would be:

"A review into the problems caused by Khat leading to recommendations to help Hillingdon deal with the problems associated with the legal high."

Terms of Reference

1. Members also agreed that the terms of reference for the review should be:
2. To learn about the production of Khat: where it is grown, who grows it and how much it costs to produce it;
3. To examine the importation of Khat: how the UK Border Agency deal with Khat dealers at Heathrow Airport;
4. To analyse the distribution patterns in the borough: where is it sold and the cost;
5. To examine the usage of Khat: the profile of the average user, social effects, health side effects;
6. To investigate the link, if any, between Khat use and anti-social behavior;
7. To analyse whether the use of Khat is spreading in the UK and what can be done to discourage this in the future: would it be possible to grow Khat in the

UK and could this lead to expansion of use not only within communities renowned for consuming Khat now but more wide-spread usage;

8. To investigate how the London Borough of Hillingdon could work with external agencies to tackle the problem of Khat in the future;
9. To identify ways in which the London Borough of Hillingdon can raise awareness of the problem.
10. To report to Cabinet recommendations based upon comprehensive evidence.

Witnesses

Date of RESPOC meeting	Witnesses Invited
22nd September 2010	<u>Importation & Distribution</u> Viv Pullha , UKBA Joanne Kingham , UKBA Shabeg Nagra , Health Control Officer, Heathrow
7th October 2008	<u>Social</u> LBH Councillors Mahamoud Ahmed – EACH Trevor Biggs – Chair, Hillingdon LINK Graham Hawkes – Interim Manager, Hillingdon LINK Fatima Abdi – Sahan Centre Anab Abdala – Sahan Centre Mr Amri – Hayes Islamic Centre
16th November 2008	<u>Health</u> Dr Ellis Friedman , Joint Director of Public Health, LBH and NHS Hillingdon Mustafa Aden – Tageero, Inequalities Group Liam Kenny – Vice Chair, Community & Police Consultative Group. Ali Saka & Kola Makoyowo , Hillingdon Action Group
14 December 2010	<u>Crime & Anti-Social Behavior</u>
14 January 2011	<u>National</u>

Suggested Questions / Lines of Enquiry for Witness Session 3

1. What short and long term health problems are caused by Khat?
2. What problems are caused by using Khat in conjunction with cigarettes and alcohol?
3. Do Khat users tend to also use other drugs?
4. What assistance is available to help Khat users wishing to give up?
5. Is usage confined to particular ethnic groups?
6. What educational activities do you carry out to warn of the harmful effects of Khat?
7. What, if any, measures would you like to see introduced and by whom?

SUGGESTED COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

Members question the witnesses and use this information to formulate recommendations for their final report.