



HILLINGDON
LONDON



Residents' and Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee

Councillors on the Committee

Michael White, (Chairman)
Teji Barnes (Vice-Chairman)
Kuldeep Lakhmana (Labour Lead)
Mohinder Birah
Peter Davis
Patricia Jackson
Judy Kelly
Brian Stead
Jas Dhot

Date: THURSDAY, 12
NOVEMBER 2015

Time: 5.30 PM

Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM 3A -
CIVIC CENTRE, HIGH
STREET, UXBRIDGE UB8
1UW

**Meeting
Details:** Members of the Public and
Press are welcome to attend
this meeting

Published: Wednesday, 4 November 2015

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Putting our residents first

Lloyd White
Head of Democratic Services
London Borough of Hillingdon,
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Terms of Reference

A central role of a Policy Overview Committees is to undertake in-depth policy reviews on specific issues. Reviews provide the opportunity to hear from members of the public and expert witnesses, including people from a wide range of external organisations. Reviews usually make recommendations to the Cabinet on how the Council could improve its work. They therefore perform an important role in opening up the policy-making process to a wider audience, including people who would not normally have the opportunity to participate.

This Committee undertakes the policy overview role in relation to the following matters:

- Highways, traffic, parking & street environment
- Local transport, including rail, cycling & London Underground
- Footpaths and Bridleways
- Road safety and education
- Planning & Building Control
- Libraries
- The Borough's heritage and history
- Sport & Leisure services
- Waste management & recycling
- Green spaces, allotments, woodlands, conservation and sustainable development
- Consumer Protection, Trading Standards & Licensing
- Registrars & Bereavement Services
- Local watercourses, drainage and flooding
- Environmental Health, Air & Noise Quality
- Local impacts of Heathrow expansion
- Local impacts of High Speed Rail

Agenda

Chairman's Announcements

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declaration of Interest in matters coming before this meeting
- 3 To confirm that all items marked Part 1 will be considered in Public and that any items marked Part 2 will be considered in Private
- 4 To agree the Minutes of the previous meeting - 15 October 2015 1-4
- 5 Major Review 2015/16 - Mechanisms for Reviewing Major Developments in the Borough and Identifying Lessons to be Learned for the Planning Process 5-10
- 6 Draft Final Report of Hoarding Review 11-30
- 7 Briefing on West London Coronial Service
- 8 Forward Plan 31-38
- 9 Work Programme 2015/16 39-40



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Minutes

RESIDENTS' AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Thursday 15 October 2015

Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Michael White (Chairman), Teji Barnes (Vice-Chairman), Mohinder Birah, Peter Davis, Jas Dhot, Patricia Jackson, Judy Kelly, Kuldeep Lakhmana and Brian Stead.</p> <p>Officers: Nigel Dicker (Deputy Director, Residents Services), Claire Freeman (Regulatory Services Manager), Stephanie Waterford (Licensing Services Manager) and Khalid Ahmed (Democratic Services Manager).</p> <p>Witnesses: David George (Station Manager - London Fire Brigade), Jennifer Lewis (Community Team, Central and North West London Foundation Trust) and Sunny Mehmi (Service Manager - Mental Health, LB Hillingdon).</p>		
27.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT ALL ITEMS MARKED PART I WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT ANY ITEMS MARKED PART II WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items on the agenda would be considered in public.</p>		
28.	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2015</p> <p>Agreed as an accurate record.</p>		
29.	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 75%; padding: 5px;"> <p>RESIDENTS' & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE - MAJOR REVIEW 2015/16 - HOARDING</p> <p>Evidence from Jennifer Lewis, Community Team, Central and North West London Foundation Trust, Sunny Mehmi, Service Manager, Mental Health, LB Hillingdon</p> <p>Reference was made to hoarding disorder which manifested itself in different ways. With some people it was part of their personality and choosing to hoard was a personal choice. Some people got into a pattern in life and this was how they chose to live their lives.</p> <p>The Mental Health team and Social Workers got involved in cases after referrals were made from the Anti-Social Behaviour Investigations Team or the community social housing team.</p> </td> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Action By:</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>RESIDENTS' & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE - MAJOR REVIEW 2015/16 - HOARDING</p> <p>Evidence from Jennifer Lewis, Community Team, Central and North West London Foundation Trust, Sunny Mehmi, Service Manager, Mental Health, LB Hillingdon</p> <p>Reference was made to hoarding disorder which manifested itself in different ways. With some people it was part of their personality and choosing to hoard was a personal choice. Some people got into a pattern in life and this was how they chose to live their lives.</p> <p>The Mental Health team and Social Workers got involved in cases after referrals were made from the Anti-Social Behaviour Investigations Team or the community social housing team.</p>	<p>Action By:</p>
<p>RESIDENTS' & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE - MAJOR REVIEW 2015/16 - HOARDING</p> <p>Evidence from Jennifer Lewis, Community Team, Central and North West London Foundation Trust, Sunny Mehmi, Service Manager, Mental Health, LB Hillingdon</p> <p>Reference was made to hoarding disorder which manifested itself in different ways. With some people it was part of their personality and choosing to hoard was a personal choice. Some people got into a pattern in life and this was how they chose to live their lives.</p> <p>The Mental Health team and Social Workers got involved in cases after referrals were made from the Anti-Social Behaviour Investigations Team or the community social housing team.</p>	<p>Action By:</p>		

<p>These cases related to residents in need of support or requiring an assessment.</p> <p>There was a need to support people who hoarded and eviction would be avoided as far as possible as it was important that people remained independent in their own homes. Support consisted of dedicated advisors who helped residents with everyday tasks such as helping with household chores and organising finances and the payment of bills..</p> <p>Reference was made to the Mental Health Complex Care Panel which considered cases and tried to offer support, and for individuals to retain their independence by living in their homes.</p> <p>Reference was made to people being given other support such as being offered personal budgets to enable them to purchase activities to get them out of their homes. If individuals had mental health issues and they met the criteria, they were given free discretionary travel.</p> <p>Reference was made to the use of the Mental Health Act to put people into detention if agencies believed that someone was putting theirs or someone else life at risk. Hoarding could be a small part of this overall mental condition and this would be subject to an assessment of the individual.</p> <p>Evidence from David George, Station Manager, London Fire Brigade</p> <p>The Committee was informed that if the Fire Service identified from operational incidents that there was a resident with a hoarding issue, details would be put onto a database because of the hazards sometimes posed by certain hoarding.</p> <p>Reference was made to the community facing side of the force, offering to fit smoke alarms in the homes of people who were identified as collecting clutter. The service had a clutter image rating system from 1-10 and people were rated accordingly to ensure potential danger areas were identified. Anyone who was graded a "6" or over would be categorised as a high fire risk and appropriate action would be looked to be taken.</p> <p>Members were informed that since the Care Act, Hoarding was considered a safeguarding issue. This was perceived as self neglect and referrals would be carried out within 24 hours.</p> <p>Reference was made to the Vulnerable Persons Panel where such cases could be referred to enable various agencies to meet and discuss and offer solutions. Members were informed that in the case of hoarders, the initial action would be to visit the property to assess the fire risk. Smoke alarms could be</p>	<p>Action By:</p>
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	RESOLVED – 1. That the content of the report be noted.	Action By:
31.	WORK PROGRAMME Noted.	
32.	FORWARD PLAN Noted.	
	Meeting commenced at 5.30pm and closed at 6.30pm Next meeting: 12 November 2015 at 5.30pm	

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Khalid Ahmed on 01895 250833. These minutes are circulated to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.

Agenda Item 5

Residents' & Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee - Major Review 2015/16 - Mechanisms for Reviewing Major Developments in the Borough and Identifying Lessons to be Learned for the Planning Process

Contact Officers: Khalid Ahmed
Telephone: 01895 250833

REASON FOR ITEM

This is the first witness session of the Committee's review into Mechanisms for Reviewing Major Developments in the Borough and Identifying Lessons to be Learned for the Planning Process.

OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE

The Committee is asked to receive the evidence of the witnesses and ask questions to help with the Committee's review.

INFORMATION

1. If Members recall, at the meeting of the Committee held on 29 July 2015, discussion took place on the second topic for the Committee's major review for 2015/16. It was agreed that a review take place on the mechanism A scoping report was agreed which is attached as **Appendix A** to this report.
2. The review is intended to consider whether there are any simple post development processes that could be introduced to analysis the successes or failures of major developments in the Borough and secondly how decision makers could try to learn lessons from any post development review processes introduced.
3. For this first meeting, **James Rodger, Head of Planning and Enforcement** will attend the meeting to present the background to the review topic.
4. At this meeting, Members will be provided with information on the current review mechanisms used by the Council. Members will need to understand clearly the aims of the planning process in Hillingdon and identify how well these are met by the existing mechanisms.
5. For Members information, the Local Plan provides a mechanism where officer and public feedback regarding development is given, however, much of the feedback on planning issues of importance stems from views on development already undertaken. The Local Plan is developed over many years and therefore does not represent a targeted qualitative review of whether the Borough's planning decisions are resulting in high quality development.

6. The Planning Department undertakes occasional customer feedback exercises targeted at applicants and agents. This tends to result in customers focussing on whether they liked the service given by a particular officer or the merits or otherwise of phone calls going through a customer contact centre. The feedback given, however, does not tend to provide meaningful responses on the quality of developments arising from the planning process.
7. There are also individual site specific feedback from residents or Resident Associations on development which are being built. This is almost entirely focussed on potential breaches of planning control, rather than constructive feedback on schemes once built.
8. Previously, the Council has undertaken annual mini-bus tours for Planning Committee members. However, these no longer take place but when they did occur they were structured only in so far that officers selected a range of sites and secured access to the sites. The developments were not reviewed by Councillors following a prescribed framework or process.

APPENDIX

Scoping Report for the review



Residents and Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee Review Scoping Report 2015/16

Mechanisms for Reviewing Major Developments in the Borough and Identifying Lessons to be Learned for the Planning Process

BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW

Aim of the Review

The planning decisions made by the Council can have a fundamental impact on our residents. This is primarily through the change in environment that occurs through new development; ranging from impacts on everything from security, drainage, visual appearance, outlook, light, noise, traffic congestion, parking, through to the wider multi faceted impacts on neighbourhoods and town centres from very large scale redevelopments.

It is certainly the case that considerable effort is given to determining planning applications by Planning officers and the Councillors on Hillingdon's Planning Committees. But it is also the case that considerably less effort is given once a decision is made into considering whether the approved development is successful, or once built actually creates a high quality environment for occupiers, users or neighbours.

The review is intended to consider whether there firstly are any simple post development processes that could be introduced to analysis the successes or failures of major developments in the Borough and secondly how decision makers could try to learn lessons from any post development review processes introduced.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following Terms of Reference are proposed:

1. To understand how lessons are currently learned post approval from processing planning applications;

PART I – MEMBERS, PUBLIC AND PRESS

2. To look at suggested models of best practice (such as the Building for Life Standard) that stem from Governmental or professional bodies and to seek advice from local experts in the fields of planning or architecture.
3. To consider, and recommend to Cabinet any improvements to, the Council's present approach.

INFORMATION & ANALYSIS

It is proposed that the review be broken into two key themes, in order that it is managed efficiently and covers all aspects of the review. The structure is offered as a broad outline in order to ensure that all key aspects of the review are covered. Members are welcome to revise this structure and to add additional themes as they see appropriate.

Hillingdon's Current Mechanisms

It is proposed that Members will firstly gather evidence regarding the review mechanisms currently used by Hillingdon Council. Members will need to understand clearly the aims of the planning process in Hillingdon and identify how well these are met by the existing mechanisms.

- The Local Plan to an extent provides a mechanism whereby officer and public feedback regarding development is given, however, much of the feedback on planning issues of importance stems from views on development already undertaken. The Local Plan is also developed over many years and does not represent a targeted qualitative review of whether the Borough's planning decisions are resulting in high quality development.
- The Planning Department also undertakes occasional customer feedback exercises targeted at applicants and agents. However, this tends to result in customers focussing on whether they liked the service given by a particular officer or the merits or otherwise of phone calls going through a customer contact centre. The feedback given, however, does not tend to provide meaningful responses on the quality of developments arising from the planning process.
- Lastly there is individual site specific feedback from residents or Resident Associations on development which is being built. This is almost entirely focussed on potential breaches of planning control, rather than constructive feedback on schemes once built.
- Historically, the Council has undertaken annual mini-bus tours for Planning Committee members. These no longer occur. When they did occur they were structured only in so far that officers selected a range of sites and secured access to the sites. The developments were not reviewed by Councillors following a prescribed framework or process.

Alternative Approaches

An initial review of practices of nearby Councils has not identified any potential models of best practice or usage of post development review processes. There is literature available from professional bodies such as the RTPI (Royal Town Planning Institute), RIBA (Royal Institute British Architects) and RICS (Royal Institute Chartered Surveyors) and from the Design Council concerning post development review. There is a Housing Quality Indicator System used by affordable housing providers (but this has limitations).

The most well known post development quality review process is the Building for Life Standard. Linked to the Building for Life Standard is the 'Built for Life' website. This website allows potential house purchasers to see how a new development rates against 12 quality indicators. The nearest rated developments to Hillingdon are in the London Borough of Barnet, which has a handful of large major developments subject to the 'Building for life' quality standards.

Within the Borough of Hillingdon there are a small number of very experienced planning and architectural practitioners who it is considered would be willing to attend a witness session to share their expert views.

Members may also wish to consider how modern technology can be used in the review of developments, and engaging the public in this process.

Members will want to look at how the Council could constructively review its decisions, and what benefits such approaches could bring to Planning in Hillingdon. Members will wish to be mindful of the resource implications of different review mechanisms.

WITNESS, EVIDENCE & ASSESSMENT

The table below sets out the possible witnesses that could be invited to present evidence to the Committee. Members are reminded that this is not an exhaustive list and that additional witnesses can be requested at any point throughout this review.

Meeting	Action	Purpose / Outcome
RESPOC: 29 July 2015	The scoping report will be presented to the Committee. Members will have the opportunity to agree and/or propose alternative witnesses/topics.	Information and analysis
RESPOC: 12 November 2015	Witness Session 1 Hillingdon's Current Mechanisms Planning Policy Senior Planning Officers	Evidence and enquiry
RESPOC: 19 January 2016	Witness Session 2 Alternative Approaches Expert Planning Consultant Expert Architect Consultant	Evidence and enquiry
RESPOC: 24 February 2016	Agree Final Report and Recommendations	Consider Draft Final Report
Cabinet: TBC	The draft final report will be presented to Cabinet by the Chairman of the Committee.	Cabinet may approve, amend or reject as many of the report's recommendations as it wishes.

It is also proposed that a tour of a few recent developments is undertaken at some point between the two witness sessions.

ASSESSMENT

As is standard practice for a Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee review, once a report's recommendations have been agreed by the Cabinet, officers will be asked to begin delivering the necessary changes. The monitoring of officers' work is a fundamentally important aspect of the Committee's work and, as such, regular reports on progress can be requested by Members and a full update report will be added to the future work programme of the Committee.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

This review will be undertaken within current resources. The plan set out above will be coordinated and delivered by Democratic Services. The additional resource of staff time required to present, collect and format evidence for witness sessions will also need to be considered.

Agenda Item 6

Residents' & Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee - Major Review 2015/16 - Consideration of Draft Final Report on the Hoarding Review

Contact Officers: Khalid Ahmed
Telephone: 01895 250833

REASON FOR ITEM

Members are asked to give consideration to the draft final report of the Committee's review into Hoarding, together with the suggested recommendations of the review.

OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE

The Committee is asked to make comment on the draft final report and the suggested recommendations of the review and to delegate the finalisation of the final report to the Chairman of the Committee, in consultation with Democratic Services.

INFORMATION

1. The Committee's first review of the Municipal Year was on Hoarding and the last witness session took place at the Committee's meeting held 15 October 2015.
2. Officers were asked to prepare a draft final report, with some suggested recommendations for Members to consider at this meeting.

APPENDIX

Draft Final Report - Hoarding

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HOARDING IN HILLINGDON

**A report by the Residents' & Environmental
Services Policy Overview Committee**



Councillors on the Committee

**Michael White (Chairman); Teji Barnes (Vice-Chairman); Mohinder Birah; Peter Davis;
Jas Dhot; Patricia Jackson; Judy Kelly; Kuldeep Lakhmana (Labour Lead); Brian Stead**

NOVEMBER 2015



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CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD



Our review into hoarding has been comprehensive with an insight into both the physiological and physical effects, along with an assessment of ways to improve support to vulnerable hoarders and the environmental effects going forward.

The Committee spent time looking at the type of people who hoard, to understand why they do it and the deterioration caused in the quality of their lives. Evidence was received from a various witnesses and of particular note was Mr Satwant Singh, a recognised specialist who guided Members through the medical background to what has now recently been recognised as 'Hoarding Disorder'.

In Hillingdon 36 hoarding cases have been considered over the last year or so, many Older People. However, this is expected to be a very low figure due to significant under-reporting. It is hoped this review can raise the profile of hoarding locally and strengthen our resolve to improve our support to an issue that can blight the lives of individuals, their families and neighbourhoods.

COUNCILLOR MICHAEL WHITE

Chairman of Residents & Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. That the Council's Performance Team liaises with the Vulnerable Persons Panel to assist in improving the recording of data in relation hoarding problems and incidences in order to improve our intelligence on them.**
- 2. To ensure consistency of approach, that officers develop a hoarding protocol by May 2016 (as an operational document for use by the Vulnerable Persons Panel) with sign-off by Hillingdon's Corporate Management Team, relevant Cabinet Member and other partner agency boards, such as the London Fire Brigade.**
- 3. Recommend a multi-agency approach in respect of budgets associated with hoarding and on the Council's part, requests that the Leader of the Council gives consideration to whether the Leader's Initiative for Older People could play a role in supporting Older People who hoard.**
- 4. That the Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Housing considers with officers whether there is scope for providing more integrated support for those who are vulnerable and with people with mental health problems who hoard.**
- 5. To make enforcement action more flexible, that the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transportation & Recycling and the Leader of the Council consider whether to recommend to Council a change in delegations so officers can determine Section 215 enforcement action explicitly for hoarding.**

ABOUT HOARDING

What is hoarding?

A hoarding disorder, as defined by the NHS, is where someone acquires an excessive number of items and stores them in a chaotic manner. The items can be of little or no monetary value and usually result in unmanageable amounts of clutter. It's considered to be a significant problem if:

- the amount of clutter interferes with everyday living – for example, the person is unable to use their kitchen or bathroom and cannot access rooms and;
- the clutter is causing significant distress or negatively affecting the person's quality of life or their family's – for example, they become upset if someone tries to clear the clutter and their relationships with others suffer.

Why do people hoard?

Hoarding can be a symptom of another condition. For example, someone with mobility problems may be physically unable to clear the huge amounts of clutter they have acquired. People with learning disabilities or people developing dementia may be unable to categorise and dispose of items. Mental health problems associated with hoarding include:

- severe depression;
- psychotic disorders, such as schizophrenia and;
- obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).

In some cases, hoarding is a condition in itself and is often associated with self-neglect. Many people who hoard have strongly held beliefs related to acquiring and discarding things, such as: "I may need this someday" or "If I buy this, it will make me happy". Others may be struggling to cope with a stressful life event, such as the death of a loved one. Most people with a hoarding disorder have a very strong emotional attachment to the objects.

How prevalent is hoarding?

It has been estimated that between 2 and 5 % of adults in the UK may have symptoms of a hoarding disorder. Potentially only 5% of hoarders come to the attention of professionals, however. In Hillingdon 36 hoarding cases have been considered by a multi-agency panel in the last 12-18 months, which

would suggest that there could be between 600-1000 hoarders in the Borough, although the severity of these cases will vary greatly.

Types of hoarding

Generally, there are three types of hoarding:

- Inanimate objects - this is the most common. This could consist of one type of object or a collection of a mixture of objects such as old clothes, newspapers, food, containers or papers.
- Animal Hoarding - this is on the increase in the UK. Often this is because the hoarder is unable to recognise that the animals are or may be at risk because they feel they are saving them. In addition to being unable to care for animals in the home, people are often unable to take care for themselves. The homes of animal hoarders often deteriorate through the accumulation of animal faeces and infestation by insects.
- Data Hoarding - this is a relatively new type of hoarding. Whilst it may not seem as significant and inanimate and animal hoarding, people that hoard data could still present with same issues that are symptomatic of hoarding.


Such hoarding includes the storage of computers, servers, electronic storage devices or paper, e.g. through a need to store copies of emails, and other information in an electronic format (LB Merton, 2014).



WAYS TO TACKLE HOARDING

Being a recognised mental disorder, which also has the potential to impact upon the families and neighbours of sufferers, local authorities and partner agencies can help hoarders manage their properties in a clean and safe condition, and where possible clearance and cleaning can be arranged by consent. Where it is difficult to get consent, local authorities have a number of powers to deal with the effects of the disorder:

Exterior of properties

- Part 3 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 - abatement of a range of problems including 'any premises in such a state as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance' and 'any accumulation or deposit' e.g. smells, flies, pests, putrefaction etc..
- 
- Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - to require the owner or occupier of the land to return it to an appropriate condition, though this is only generally applicable to front gardens and would not cover goods stored within houses or outbuildings hidden from view.
 - Anti Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 - using the Community Protection Order powers, local authorities can use these to prevent anything which is causing a significant and continuing harm to the neighbourhood.

Interior of properties

- Section 83 (aa) of the Public Health Act 1936 - this can require the cleansing of a premises which are either in such a 'filthy or unwholesome condition as to be prejudicial to health or are verminous'.
- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 - can require the removal of harbourage for rodents and for pest control treatment, where pests have been or could be encouraged by hoarded material (LB Merton, 2014).

Local authorities may carry out works under these powers and in some cases, they can charge for them, or if urgent use the powers to clean, charging later.

Animals

Evidence of animal hoarding should be also reported to the RSPCA who can then take any necessary action.

Fire Safety

Local Fire Brigades can make use of their statutory responsibilities given that hoarding can sometimes poses a significant fire safety risk to both the people living in the hoarded property and those living nearby.

The Housing Act 2004 (including the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme) can require an owner or occupier who is hoarding to remove hazards which are assessed on a scale of seriousness, for example fire hazards where there is not an adequate means of escape.

A multi-agency approach / hoarding protocols

Many local authorities have multi-agency panel arrangements and a small number have developed local Hoarding Protocols to provide an integrated framework for agencies to seek appropriate solutions relevant to each case. This is particularly important when dealing with any vulnerable people. The London Borough of Merton has a good example of this.

Such arrangements ensure that all agencies work in a joined up manner, and often provide useful resources such as clutter diagrams, and assessment forms which gather the information needed by all agencies. They also set out at what level enforcement powers will be used.

Professional de-clutterers

Some local authorities and housing associations use professional de-clutterers to help hoarders to part with their belongings. The benefits of this approach are the expertise and time that these businesses can bring to a situation, which may make it easier for a resident to part with their possessions.



However, the costs involved are often substantial, and in many cases other professionals will have to support the work, as well as disposal arrangements being made (LB Merton, 2014).

HILLINGDON'S APPROACH & EFFECTIVENESS

The Committee received evidence from a wide range of witnesses (set out in Appendix C) about how hoarding is tackled in Hillingdon and reviewed the effectiveness of current arrangements in place and other resources.

Multi-agency arrangements

It was noted that the Safer Hillingdon Partnership 'Strategic Assessment and Partnership Plan 2014/15' stated an objective to:

"Deliver and support services to residents who are hoarders."

There was a target to ensure at least 10 cross-agency panels were held annually and effective support plans in place for such people. The lead partner agency was the London Fire Brigade.

The Committee learnt that in 2014 Hillingdon set up a "Vulnerable Persons Panel" chaired by the London Fire Brigade and attended by a range of practitioners including Adult Social Care, Residents Services ASB Investigations Team and mental health services.

The panel had met well over 10 times and about 36 cases had been considered in the last 12-18 months. Clearance work had been taken in some cases, but the gaps identified so far were:

- a suitable budget for clearance where the person has no funds and;
- access to counselling to prepare the person for and deal with the aftermath of the "loss" of possessions, even if to an objective eye it is no more than rubbish.

Members welcomed the role of the Vulnerable Persons Panel as a useful body for all partner organisations to discuss individuals and how their conditions could be managed. However, it was noted that whilst information sharing to Panel Members did take place about individual cases of hoarding, there was not any effective mechanism for recording the data about hoarding cases for business intelligence / local statistical purposes.

The Committee considered recording and logging of such data would not be onerous and could provide for useful information to assist in tackling hoarding.

1

That the Council's Performance Team liaises with the Vulnerable Persons Panel to assist in improving the recording of data in relation hoarding problems and incidences in order to improve our intelligence on them.

Through looking at best practice in other local authorities, Members were made aware that there was no formal protocol or strategy for dealing with hoarding in Hillingdon, but recognised that even this being the case, the fact that the Council made use of a multi-agency 'Vulnerable Persons Panel' still put Hillingdon a long way ahead of many other local authorities.

Witnesses explained that a formal protocol would help to ensure that residents received a consistent level of service, though it would need to be focussed on delivering successful outcomes for residents along with the necessary procedures. It could detail for different agencies the early warning signs and set out relevant treatment options and preventative action. The Committee viewed a protocol would provide a positive effect on the dichotomy of problems associated with hoarding.

2

To ensure consistency of approach, that officers develop a hoarding protocol by May 2016 (as an operational document for use by the Vulnerable Persons Panel) with sign-off by Hillingdon's Corporate Management Team and other partner agency boards, such as the London Fire Brigade.

Insights from Housing & Social Care

The Committee was made aware that Hillingdon officers visiting vulnerable social housing tenants had identified increasing numbers of people were keeping too many items of little use or value, sometimes causing the tenant to live in unsanitary conditions or where there was a risk of falling or fire.

In December 2013, Housing Services announced a new service to improve the lives of vulnerable tenants whose excess hoarding may be affecting their wellbeing. Teams from the Council's housing, independent living support and caretaking services partnered together to help tenants clear out clutter to either 'create space' or undertake a 'one-off' clearance and 'deep clean' within

the tenant's home depending on their need. This service was only available to tenants.

Social Care officers invited as witnesses informed the Committee that hoarding was a condition the team encountered regularly, particularly amongst older people, though through effort they were generally successful in maintaining a suitable living environment for people receiving care.

Whilst hoarding tended to manifest itself amongst older people, Members were informed that although there were younger people who hoarded, they were less likely to be identified. In Hillingdon, loss and bereavement were often triggers for hoarding.

Witnesses outlined some of the warning signs where a resident could start to hoard, but generally it was only when another service visited the property (for another reason) that hoarding was identified. Annual gas safety checks by landlords were a good example as an opportunity to identify hoarding.

The Committee recognised that Older People were more likely to hoard and felt it would be a useful matter to be raised further with the Leader's Initiative for Older People.

3

Recommend a multi-agency approach in respect of budgets associated with hoarding and on the Council's part, requests that the Leader of the Council gives consideration to whether the Leader's Initiative for Older People could play a role in supporting Older People who hoard.

Another factor considered was the protection of children from any maltreatment indirectly caused by the hoarder or hoarding. Growing up in a hoarded property could put a child at risk by affecting their development and in some cases, leading to the neglect of a child, therefore becoming a safeguarding issue.

Health implications

The Committee received expert testimony from Satwant Singh, a Nurse Consultant in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Mental Health who was also a national Hoarding Disorder Specialist.

Mr Singh explained that hoarding had fairly recently been recognised as a disorder in its own right, rather than a symptom of other conditions. This was

as a result of much research done in the UK, although recognition in the relevant practitioner guides used had not yet taken place.

It was noted that there had been a number of TV programmes based on the lives of those with hoarding disorder in recent years, which had led to increased awareness of the condition, but that had also stigmatised it, which made people reluctant to seek help.

Mr Singh explained that Hoarding Disorder was significantly under-reported for a wide range of reasons, whilst many people who had hoarding tendencies did not reach the stage at which intervention was necessary. It was, however, in his opinion, a sizeable problem with a recent study having put the estimated cost of dealing with a person with hoarding disorder at £35-55k.

The Committee was advised that the most important factors in treating hoarding disorder were:

- To engage sufferers and help them to understand that their behaviour was abnormal, and was a problem for them as well as others and;
- To ensure a multi agency approach was adopted, to prevent residents from getting mixed messages, and to ensure that the costs of managing hoarding were shared equitably.

Mr Singh confirmed that in his experience, Hoarding Disorder could affect people of any age, but was more likely to be recognised amongst older people; was more prevalent amongst men but women more regularly sought help. It was noted that, in his experience, there was no correlations with ethnicity, the level of a person's education or where they lived.

Services for treating hoarding disorder were variable, depending on where one lived. It was noted that Hillingdon had an Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) Service, called Talking Therapies, which could be used to help people to address their disorders. However, that such treatment was slow and there was scope for providing a more dedicated service, with integrated support and de-cluttering services.

It was noted that local authorities were in a good position to influence commissioners to improve their support services in respect of hoarding. An example was given where the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham had started a group treatment session for hoarders. The Committee welcomed further exploration of a more integrated approach.

4

That the Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Housing considers with officers whether there is scope for providing more integrated support for those who are vulnerable and with people with mental health problems who hoard.

For those with Autistic Spectrum Disorder, any hoarding behaviour would be recognised as a symptom of their condition and not diagnosed separately. In respect of mental health problems, the Committee noted that some local authorities made use of formal assessments and clutter image rating tools to decide what steps to take. See image below:



Reporting & enforcement

In terms of the reporting of hoarding, complaints would usually be made by neighbours and would normally be investigated by the Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Team, who would then take the case to the Vulnerable Persons Panel and get input from other services. Where residents lacked the ability to dispose of clutter, the Council would seek to first involve their family.

It was noted that reporting could come from a variety of sources. A case study is set out in Appendix A showed Members a referral from the London Ambulance Service.

Whilst the Council was empowered to take enforcement action, it was noted that such action had to be justified and that there were many people who hoard who could be classed as eccentric, but whose accumulations were not causing significant harm. Time limits were set for residents to clear rubbish on a case by case basis. Additionally, as a recognised mental health disorder it meant that in some cases, the Council had to take a more cautious approach than neighbouring residents might like. Public Health and other enforcement powers did exist for those that were assessed not to have any mental health illness problems.

Members were informed that Planning Enforcement did not currently have a major role in dealing with hoarding to date, as the practicalities of enforcement action did not support a larger role when combined with the additional constitutional requirement of reporting such enforcement action to Planning Committees. Although the number of referrals to Committee has been in single digits, it was noted that use of the Council's powers under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act in relation to hoarding had been successful every time in getting a resident to take action before a prosecution was brought. The Committee considered this could be an area where flexibility could be provided for in terms of officer delegations.

5

To make enforcement action more flexible, that the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transportation & Recycling and the Leader of the Council consider whether to recommend to Council a change in delegations so officers can determine Section 215 enforcement action explicitly for hoarding.

Costs

Witnesses indicated that the cost of dealing with hoarding in the Borough was unknown. However, there were plans to create a central budget which could allow the cost to be established, but these had not yet been implemented. It was noted that a multi-agency approach towards any budgets would be best. In relation to enforcement action, it was welcomed that Council officers had tried to ensure that a one Council approach was taken to ensure that work was done. It was noted that sometimes costs could often be recovered from the resident who hoarded, but this was not always the case. It was noted that some use had been made of Community Payback Teams and Blue Sky Regeneration in clearing properties.

CASE STUDY

Person A is 87yrs and lives with her husband in an owner occupied property.

London Ambulance called raising concerns over state of property, rubbish stacked everywhere. No central heating, couple using a calor gas which is a fire hazard.

Person A was admitted to hospital following a fall. Hospital staff raised concerns over filthy dressing on legs and very poor mobility and not being safe to return home due to the hoarding.

The couple have lived in neglected environment for some years. Person A's suffered general deterioration in her health and diagnosis of dementia. There are a number of cats that are allowed to access the property over the years and Person A refers to the cats as her children, the couple had lost a baby. The couple are very isolated and had a tendency to also sleep in the car.

As Person A does not have capacity, a best interest meeting was set up and it was agreed that it would not be appropriate for Person A to return home at that stage and the couple are supported with clean of the property so that Person A can return home.

Professional involvement:

- Referral to Vulnerable Persons Panel
- Joint work with ASBIT team
- Occupational Therapist input in planning move back home.
- Fire Brigade visited to risk assess.

Outcome:

Taken over 6 months to clean up property due to budget constraints.

Now planning to see what repairs required and arranging appropriate care for Person A

TERMS OF REFERENCE

As agreed by the Committee:

1. To understand the prevalence of Hoarding in the Borough, and its impact on residents;
2. To understand, consider, and recommend improvements to, the Council's approach to resolving Hoarding Cases including identifying staff and budgetary resources to do this work;
3. To understand the relationship between Council officers dealing with hoarding and Mental Health Service providers.

WITNESSES

Satwant Singh, Nurse Consultant in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy & Mental Health - representing Hoarding UK

- Treating Hoarding Disorder
- Relationship between enforcement action and Mental Health Services
- Dealing with hoarding without enforcement action
- Interaction between Mental Health Services and other agencies
- Examples of best practice from other local authority areas.

Ed Shaylor, ASBIT Service Manager, London Borough of Hillingdon

- Hoarding cases in Hillingdon
- Taking enforcement action

Sunny Mehmi, Mental Health Team, London Borough of Hillingdon Claudia Meissner and Virindar Basi, Adult Social Care

- Social services interaction with hoarders
- Joint working between social services and other agencies
- Managing Hoarding Disorder

Linda Wharton, Planning Enforcement, Residents Services

- Planning enforcement powers

David George, Station Manager - London Fire Brigade

- Hoarding Lead Partner
- Fire Safety aspects

Jennifer Lewis - Central and North West London Mental Health NHS Trust

- Mental health aspects of hoarding

BIBLIOGRAPHY / REFERENCES

Bibliography

Jones, Singh (2012) 'Visual Research Methods: A Novel Approach To Understanding The Experiences of Compulsive Hoarders: A Preliminary Study'.

Jones, Singh (2013) 'The Experience of Emotional Distancing in the Management of Compulsive Hoarding: A Visual Methods Approach Using the “Hoard” Acronym Tool.

Hooper, Jones, Singh (2015) 'Overcoming Hoarding: A self-help guide using Cognitive Behavioural Techniques'

London Borough of Merton (2014) 'Multi-agency Hoarding Protocol'

Online references

- Hoarding UK - hoardinguk.org
- Association of Professional De-clutterers & Organisers - apdo-uk.co.uk
- Information website - helpforhoarders.co.uk

Forward Plan

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REASON FOR ITEM

The Committee is required by its terms of reference to consider the Forward Plan and comment as appropriate to the decision maker on key decisions that relate to services within its remit (before they are taken by Cabinet or Cabinet Member).

OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE

- To comment on items going to the Cabinet or Cabinet Members for decision.
- Or to note the items and decide not to comment.

INFORMATION

1. The Forward Plan for the following months has been published. Those items that are within this Committee's remit are shown on the attached version of the Forward Plan. The Committee may wish to consider and comment on these items.
2. Committee Members are requested to send in any questions they have regarding the attached Forward Plan or on any reports going to the next meeting of Cabinet, and to notify any officers that they would like to attend to give advice.

SUGGESTED COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

- To consider whether there are comments or suggestions that the Committee wishes to make that will aid Cabinet's decision making.

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Ref Decision Further information

Ward(s)

Council Departments: RS = Residents Services CYPs =Children and Young People's Services ASCS= Adult Social Care Services AD = Administration FD= Finance

Cabinet meeting - 19 November 2015

Ref	Decision	Further information	Ward(s)	Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Officer Contact for further information	Consultation on the decision	NEW ITEM	Private decision?
71	Local Development Scheme	To approve the Local Development Scheme, which sets out the timetable for the production of the Local Plan.	All		Cllr Keith Burrows	RS - James Gleave / Chris Mansfield		NEW	
72	Victoria Court, Linden Avenue, Ruislip	To obtain Cabinet approval to vary a lease at the property.	Manor		Cllr Jonathan Bianco	RS - Michele Henington / Michele Wilcox		NEW	Private (1,2,3)
SI	Monthly Council Budget - monitoring report	The Cabinet receives a monthly report setting out in detail the Council's revenue and capital position.	All		Cllr Jonathan Bianco	FD - Paul Whaymand			

Ref Decision Further information

Ward(s)

Council Departments: RS = Residents Services CYPs =Children and Young People's Services ASCS= Adult Social Care Services AD = Administration FD= Finance

Cabinet meeting - 17 December 2015

Ref	Decision	Further information	Ward(s)	Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Officer Contact for further information	Consultation on the decision	NEW ITEM	Private decision?
61a	The Council's Budget - Medium Term Financial Forecast 2016/17 - 2020/21 BUDGET & POLICY FRAMEWORK	This report will set out the Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF), which includes the draft General Fund reserve budget and capital programme for 2016/17 for consultation, along with indicative projections for the following four years. This will also include the HRA rents for consideration.	All	18 February 2016 or 25 February 2016 (reserve date)	Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE & Cllr Jonathan Bianco	FD - Paul Whaymand	Public consultation through the Policy Overview Committee process and statutory consultation with businesses & ratepayers		
65b	Licensing, Gambling & related licensing policies for approval POLICY FRAMEWORK	Following consultation, Cabinet will consider the responses received on the Council's key licensing policies and decide whether or not to approve them (or recommend them to Council as policy framework documents).	All	14-Jan-16	Cllr Jonathan Bianco	RS - Claire Freeman / Stephanie Waterford	Licensing Committee / RESPOC, the wider public and statutory consultees		
SI	Monthly Council Budget - monitoring report	The Cabinet receives a monthly report setting out in detail the Council's revenue and capital position.	All		Cllr Jonathan Bianco	FD - Paul Whaymand			

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Ref Decision Further information

Ward(s)

Council Departments: RS = Residents Services CYPs =Children and Young People's Services ASCS= Adult Social Care Services AD = Administration FD= Finance

Cabinet meeting - 21 January 2016

Ref	Decision	Further information	Ward(s)	Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Officer Contact for further information	Consultation on the decision	NEW ITEM	Private decision?
64	Pest Control Contract	Officers have tendered the Pest Control contract with the assistance of Corporate Procurement. Cabinet will be requested to review the results of the tender and consider awarding a new contract.	All		Cllr Jonathan Bianco	RS - Shabeg Nagra & Jo Smith	Corporate consultees		Private (3)
SI	Voluntary Sector Leases Report	Regular report on discounted leases to voluntary sector organisations that benefit residents and the wider community	All		Cllr Jonathan Bianco	RS - Michael Patterson / Michele Henington		NEW	Private (3)
SI	Monthly Council Budget - monitoring report	The Cabinet receives a monthly report setting out in detail the Council's revenue and capital position.	All		Cllr Jonathan Bianco	FD - Paul Whaymand		NEW	

Ref	Decision	Further information	Ward(s)	Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Officer Contact for further information	Consultation on the decision	NEW ITEM	Private decision?
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Council Departments: RS = Residents Services CYPs =Children and Young People's Services ASCS= Adult Social Care Services AD = Administration FD= Finance

Cabinet - 11 February 2016

61b	The Council's Budget - Medium Term Financial Forecast 2016/17 - 2020/21 BUDGET & POLICY FRAMEWORK	Following consultation, this report will set out the Cabinet's proposals for the Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF), which includes the draft General Fund reserve budget and capital programme for 2016/17 for consultation, along with indicative projections for the following four years. This will also include the HRA rents for consideration. Subject to Cabinet's decision, the budget will then be referred to full Council for approval.	All	18 February 2016 or 25 February 2016 (reserve date)	Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE & Cllr Jonathan Bianco	FD - Paul Whaymand	Public consultation through the Policy Overview Committee process and statutory consultation with businesses & ratepayers	NEW	
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Ref Decision Further information Ward(s)

Council Departments: RS = Residents Services CYPs =Children and Young People's Services ASCS= Adult Social Care Services AD = Administration FD= Finance

Cabinet - 17 March 2016

Ref	Decision	Further information	Ward(s)	Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Officer Contact for further information	Consultation on the decision	NEW ITEM	Private decision?
38b	Local Plan - Part 2 POLICY FRAMEWORK	Following consultation on additional amendments to the Local Plan - Part 2: Draft Development and Management Policies, Sites Allocation and Designations and the Policies Map, Cabinet will consider the responses before the Local Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.	All	Date in 2016 TBC after examination stage	Cllr Keith Burrows	RS - James Gleave	Various consultees	NEW	
SI	Quarterly Planning Obligations Monitoring report	Regular monitoring report with information about spending on section 106 (developer contribution) monies.	All		Cllr Keith Burrows	RS - Nicola Wyatt		NEW	
SI	Monthly Council Budget - monitoring report	The Cabinet receives a monthly report setting out in detail the Council's revenue and capital position.	All		Cllr Jonathan Bianco	FD - Paul Whaymand		NEW	

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Agenda Item 9

Work Programme 2015/16

Contact officer: Khalid Ahmed
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REASON FOR ITEM

This report is to enable the Committee to review meeting dates and forward plans. This is a standard item at the end of each agenda.

MEETINGS

25 Jun 2015 Venue: CR4	Major Review 1 – discuss potential review topics for first major review
	Update on implementation of recommendations from past reviews
	'Beds in Sheds' – Enforcement and Impact
	Trading Standards Update
	Work Programme – review the annual work programme
Cabinet Forward Plan – review forthcoming decisions	
29 Jul 2015 Venue: CR5	Major Review 1 and Review 2 – consideration of scoping report
	Consideration of Budget Planning Report for Residents Services 2015/16
	Work Programme – review the annual work programme
	Cabinet Forward Plan – review forthcoming decisions
23 Sep 2015 Venue: CR5	Major Review 1 – First witness session
	Work Programme – review the annual work programme
	Cabinet Forward Plan – review forthcoming decisions
15 Oct 2015 Venue: CR6	Major Review 1 – Second witness session
	Licensing Policies Consultation
	Work Programme – review the annual work programme
	Cabinet Forward Plan – review forthcoming decisions
12 Nov 2015 Venue: CR3a	Major Review 1 - consideration of draft final report on Hoarding
	Major Review 2 - Mechanisms for Reviewing Major Developments in the Borough and Identifying Lessons to be Learned for the Planning Process - First Witness Session
	Briefing on West London Coronial Service
	Work Programme – review the annual work programme
	Cabinet Forward Plan – review forthcoming decisions
19 Jan 2016 Venue: CR5	Major Review 2 - Second Witness Session
	Budget Report for consideration
	Briefing on Local Plan Part 2
	Work Programme – review the annual work programme
	Cabinet Forward Plan – review forthcoming decisions
24 Feb 2016 Venue:	Review 2 - consideration of draft final report
	Annual Safety at Sports Grounds Report
	Work Programme – review the annual work programme

CR4+4a	Cabinet Forward Plan – review forthcoming decisions
23 Mar 2016 Venue: CR5	Update on the Council's and other bodies' responses to flooding in the Borough
	Work Programme – review the annual work programme
	Cabinet Forward Plan – review forthcoming decisions
27 Apr 2016 Venue: TBC	Consideration of topics for major reviews for the next Municipal Year
	Update on implementation of recommendations from past reviews
	Work Programme – review the annual work programme
	Cabinet Forward Plan – review forthcoming decisions

OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE

1. To note dates for meetings
2. To make suggestions for future working practices, reviews, and updates.