

Minutes

RESIDENTS' AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

15 February 2011

Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



HILLINGDON
LONDON

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Michael Markham (Chairman), Shirley Harper-O'Neil (Vice-Chairman), Janet Duncan (Labour Lead), Judy Kelly, June Nelson and Susan O'Brien.</p> <p>Witnesses Present: Cllr Richard Barnes David Brough.</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Natasha Dogra</p> <p>Also Present: Press – Uxbridge Gazette</p>	
1.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>	Action by
2.	<p>DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>	Action by
3.	<p>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 (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items on the agenda were marked Part 1 and were therefore considered in public.</p>	Action by
4.	<p>TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2011 (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2011 were agreed as an accurate record.</p>	Action by
5.	<p>REVIEW 1 - CONSIDERATION OF HILLINGDON'S KHAT CONSULTATION PAPER (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>The Committee welcomed the witnesses Cllr Richard Barnes (Deputy Mayor of London) and David Brough (Chairman of Hayes Town Partnerships) to the meeting.</p>	Action by

Witnesses commended the Committee on undertaking a study into an area which may only affect a minority but had the potential to spread into mainstream society. Witnesses had contacted Scotland Yard regarding the issue of banning Khat and informed the Committee that neither Scotland Yard nor the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) wanted Khat banned, as this would have had huge knock on effects of the substance being sold on the black market and one minority feeling targeted. Witnesses agreed that the Committee's alternative routes of targeting Khat use were commendable, including naming a regulatory body who would be responsible for the safe importation of Khat at Heathrow Airport and classifying Khat as a substance akin to tobacco.

Health effects of Khat were becoming more widespread, with mental health issues emerging but could not be wholly attributed to Khat. There was a significant correlation between the two and was disproportionately more noticeable in this minority group. The Committee discussed the health issues that were uncovered during the Health Witness Session, but recognised that Khat was not the only factor involved with the health issues.

Witnesses informed the Committee that the first generation of Somali people who had settled in the UK were the main Khat users, with some young Somali people chewing Khat along with illegal drugs or alcohol.

The Khat industry was valued at an estimated £460 million in the UK. The rivalry between gangs and dealers was becoming very dangerous due to the vast amount of profit involved with Khat. Witnesses said that some car parks in Hayes and Southall on Tuesday and Thursday nights were full of Khat users and dealers and the amount of money been passed between the two was substantial.

Witnesses informed the Committee that current services set up to help Khat users were insufficient and lacked the knowledge needed to deal with the problem. Services were less than adequate due to the lack of resources and funds available in this difficult economic climate. The Committee agreed that services needed to improve and the information available to these groups also needed to improve. Members agreed that an interagency approach must be taken, with services sharing best practice and knowledge. The Committee agreed that a London Borough wide group should be set up to enable services to share best practice when tackling Khat issues. Members agreed that the police would also benefit from the formation of such a group.

The Committee thought it would be beneficial for the local SNT to write a briefing paper on how to tackle Khat users and issues and present this to a Khat Working Group.

Agreed:

THAT THE LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR LONDON BOROUGHs, COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES OF HILLINGDON COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY, HEALTH AND POLICE GROUPS MONITOR THE USE AND EFFECTS OF KHAT AND OPEN CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION EXIST FOR THE SHARING OF

	INFORMATION.	
6.	FORWARD PLAN (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>) Noted: The Committee noted the Forward Plan.	Action by
7.	WORK PROGRAMME 2010 (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>) Noted: The Committee noted the Work Programme.	Action by
The meeting, which commenced at 5.30 pm, closed at 7.00 pm.		

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Nadia Williamsatasha Dogra on 01895 277 488. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.