

Minutes

**Corporate Services and Partnerships Policy
Overview Committee
Tuesday, 24 July 2012
Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW**



	<p>Members Present: Councillors Richard Lewis (Chairman), Timothy Barker, Lindsay Bliss, Beulah East, Neil Fyfe, Carol Melvin, Richard Mills and Michael White.</p> <p>Apologies: Councillors Lynne Allen (Councillor Lindsay Bliss substituting) and Raymond Graham (Councillor Timothy Barker substituting)</p> <p>Officers: Kevin Byrne (Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships), Fiona Gibb (Council's Stronger Communities Officer), Gemma McNamara (Group Finance Manager – Central Services) and Khalid Ahmed (Democratic Services Manager).</p>	
7.	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2012</p> <p>Agreed as an accurate record.</p>	
8.	<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>It was agreed that all items of business would be considered in public.</p>	
9.	<p>BUDGET PLANNING REPORT FOR CENTRAL SERVICES 2013/14</p> <p>The Group Finance Manager for Central Services introduced the report and informed Members that the report set out the main financial issues which faced Central Services Group and the work being undertaken to responds to those issues.</p> <p>Reference was made to the following uncertainties within the budget for next year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The responsibility of public health being transferred to local government in April 2013;• The abolishing of Council Tax benefit from April 2013 which was to be replaced with a new local support scheme with an immediate 10% cut in funding;• The reform of education funding was in progress and due to be implemented from April 2013 and• The business rates retention scheme which would reform the allocation of local government funding	<p>Action By:</p>

	<p>Members were informed that Central Services had been given a savings target for 2012/13 of £1.781m and of that £1.603m had been banked with the remaining £178k on track to being delivered. For 2013/14, Central Services would have a target of £586,000 of savings.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>1. That the development of the financial planning process undertaken to date together with the responses to the issues being developed by the Group be noted.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>COMMUNITY COHESION WITHIN HILLINGDON – FIRST MAJOR REVIEW</p> <p>Members were provided with a briefing paper and introductory presentation from the Council's Stronger Communities Officer on the policy context and national picture on Community Cohesion within Hillingdon. She set out some of the challenges (risk factors) and positive factors that impact on cohesion within all communities, as a model for discussion.</p> <p>Challenges (Risk Factors) included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapidly changing demographics and diversity within localities. • The perception of the fairness of allocation of resources and provision of services to meet the needs of the whole community. • Socio-economic pressures on individuals, families and localities. • Inequality of opportunity for individuals to achieve in education and employment. • Perceptions of crime and anti social behaviour within communities. • The influence of extremist groups within communities that can promote tensions and influence individual's perceptions of fairness and inequalities in communities. <p>Positive factors which could build and strengthen community cohesion included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing and understanding what comprised the Borough's community and what their needs and concerns were. • Positive engagement through social, sport and cultural activities. • Ensuring local people had a voice and a say in how services were delivered. • Ensuring fair access to services. • Open and transparent decision-making. 	

- Designing services that enabled individuals to take responsibility for their own well-being.

The Stronger Communities Officer provided details on the range of activities and approaches being undertaken in Hillingdon to address risk factors and promote the preventative factors.

Hillingdon’s approach to Community Cohesion was to recognise where the positive contributions were taking place and to build on those in order to underpin the resilience within communities. Improving knowledge of what works and what would help would reduce these risks.

The Committee was informed that the Strong and Active Communities Partnership which was established in April 2009 as a theme group to the Hillingdon Partners Executive, was responsible for delivering the key priorities around strong and active communities. This partnership had established strong working relationships between the Council and its partners in responding to local community cohesion issues and developing pro-active and positive models of community development activities and engagement.

Reference was made to the Partnerships priority areas of work which included:

- targeted local area partnership working,
- the promotion and increase of residents’ involvement in leisure and cultural activities across the Borough,
- Monitoring of community tensions and local issues, working with partners to respond accordingly and appropriately and to inform future priorities.

During discussion of examples of work on Community Cohesion in Hillingdon, reference was made particularly to the importance of working with local schools, driven through Carole Jones, Chair of Strong and Active and local Head Teacher, and also, of working with women’s’ groups such as was being undertaken through the Women in the Community Network.

The Committee agreed that the views of representatives from these groups be sought during the review.

Scope of Review

The Committee agreed that the aim of the review should be around examining how Council services were working in order to mitigate community cohesion risk factors and building upon the positives that underpinned resilience in communities. Including a particular focus in relation to the perception of fairness, transparency and equality of access.

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	<p>Members requested that suggested witnesses included an officer from Corporate Communications, to enable the review to assess how the Council's Proud campaign was promoting community cohesion through the provision of information to residents about the Council's services. Also to invite officers from Adult Education, libraries and sports and leisure centres to examine how the Council was enabling local residents to be more actively involved in their communities.</p> <p>Carole Jones, Chair of Strong and Active and Head Teacher to explore outcomes in schools and also to invite members of the Women in the community network to provide a community perspective.</p> <p>Members also agreed that it would be useful to Look at how the Council was gaining feedback on Community Cohesion risk factors / positive factors through feedback from residents such as in the Residents' survey.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That officers, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, be asked to draft a scoping report based on the discussion which took place at the meeting. 2. That officers be given the authority to invite relevant witnesses to the next meeting of the Committee to help with the review. 	<p>Khalid Ahmed / Fiona Gibbs</p> <p>Khalid Ahmed / Fiona Gibbs</p>
11.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME</p> <p>Noted.</p>	
12.	<p>CABINET FORWARD PLAN</p> <p>Noted.</p>	
	<p>Meeting commenced at 7.30pm and closed at 8.30pm Next meeting: 18 September 2012 at 7.30pm</p>	

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.