

**Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy  
Overview Committee**

**8 September 2009**

**Minutes**



**HILLINGDON**  
LONDON

	<p><b>Members Present:</b> Councillors Richard Lewis (Chairman), Phoday Jarjussey, Liz Kemp, Carol Melvin, Robin Sansarpuri and Michael White.</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Councillor Sid Garg (Councillor Phoday Jarjussey substituting)</p> <p><b>Officers Present:</b> Sarah Harty (Head of Resources, Policy &amp; Performance, Education and Children’s Services), Emma Marsh (Deputy Head of Communications, Deputy Chief Executives), Kevin Mullins (Executive Director for Flu Resilience, Hillingdon Primary Care Trust), Chris Scott (Uxbridge College) and Khalid Ahmed (Democratic Services Manager).</p>	
22.	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
23.	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2009</b></p> <p>Agreed as an accurate record.</p>	
24.	<p><b>Exclusion of the press and public</b></p> <p>It was agreed that all items of business were considered in public.</p>	
25.	<p><b>Major Review: Impact of a Pandemic in Hillingdon and the Effects on Council Services and Residents – Witness Session 2</b></p> <p>This second witness session was to focus on the issues which had been raised at the last meeting which were namely:- communication, schools and their business and resilience plans, the vaccination programme and the possible prioritisation being given to healthcare and social care workers, the carrying out of vaccinations in the Occupational Health Suite and the implementation of additional hygiene measures.</p> <p><b>Steve Smith – Head of Facilities Management, LBH</b></p> <p>Members were provided with a written submission which</p>	<p><b>Action:</b></p>

provided details of action taken during the flu pandemic. This included:-

- Additional cleaning had taken place. The cleaning specification in the Civic Centre had been varied within the terms of the cleaning contract at no additional cost to the Council. This had involved additional touch cleaning of all wc facilities, over and above their usual daily clean
- Notices have been displayed at various locations, particularly in toilets, advising staff to regularly wash their hands and providing details on the correct way of doing so.
- £10,000 has been spent on additional preventative measures which included the procurement and distribution of desk and surface wipes across the Council. This included areas such as Civic Centre Phase reception and toilets plus all Civic Centre public facing toilets.
- Hand gels have been installed in over 40 locations across the Borough in reception areas.
- Sterilisation had taken place in all office areas where there had been confirmed cases of swine flu, using a mist of anti-viral chemicals
- Work was taking place with the Council's Facilities Management provider to ensure they had robust business continuity processes in place to cover for staff absences.
- The Council had offered to provide the swine flu vaccination service to essential Facilities Management employees or those of their partners, providing front line services in key areas such as Children's residential premises, Special Schools and Early Years Centres, recognising the role these staff groups play in the daily functioning of 'life and limb' services to residents of the Borough

**Kevin Mullins – Executive Director for Flu Resilience, Hillingdon Primary Care Trust**

Members were provided with a presentation on the present swine flu pandemic. The main issues raised were:-

- There was an anticipation of a second wave of swine flu in the autumn and preparations were under way with vaccinations ready in mid October
- There were 22 community pharmacists and there would be a number of street pharmacists
- The current planning focuses on workforce issues, communications, prevention, prioritisation and recovery
- Reference was made to the Department of Health

planning assumptions which provided details of the potential effects of the infection and the stand out figures were that the projected case fatality rate was up to 0.1% of clinical cases

- The projection was that 700 plus people would end up in hospital. The treatment of children would be challenging as there was less specialist paediatric staff
- The severity of the pandemic had been downgraded
- Heathrow Airport had their own contingency plans and the PCT was geared up to support them
- The vaccination programme would initially be aimed at at risk individuals aged 6 months to 65 years, pregnant women, household contacts of immuno compromised individuals, people aged 65 + years and in at risk groups and frontline health and social care staff
- The vaccine would be administered in two doses, three weeks apart and school nurses and occupational health staff would be used to give the vaccine
- On one of these occasions the Seasonal Flu vaccine could also be given
- Discussions would be taking place with GPs regarding administering the vaccine as there would be a cost implication but nevertheless it would be given free of charge to the patient
- The vaccination programme would have a significant impact on the PCT's budget and the PCT would have to look at all options in terms of delivering the programme
- The second string of priority groups for vaccinations would involve Council staff such as staff involved in meals on wheels, Facility Management contractor staff, teachers etc
- The local NHS Trusts that provided services for Hillingdon residents were part of the reporting structure which was overseen by the Hillingdon Influenza Pandemic Committee and the PCT would take control once "gold alert" had been reached in the command and control chain
- A skills audit had been undertaken and a number of the Administrative staff had medical skills and expertise and these would be utilised on patient facing services if required

#### **Andrew Scott – Uxbridge College**

Members were provided with the details of the Colleges business and continuity plans for handling a pandemic. The main issues raised were:-

- Risk assessments have taken place to identify essential services which would be required and these would include Teaching and Learning, IT Services, Financial

#### Administration and Payroll

- Flu vaccinations will be offered and paid for by the college once the vaccine was available
- The pandemic would have an impact on transport and Members asked that the College gave consideration to providing additional car parking at the College
- Communication with employees, students and parents would be by email and through the College website
- Actions taken to maintain services would include combining course groups so that one lecturer could cover two classes, greater use of Agency Lecturers to cover sickness, extending the number of staff working from home and accessing the College's IT system and emails.

During discussion the College was asked to give consideration to undertaking a skills and knowledge audit of its staff to ensure that staff could be redeployed during a pandemic if required.

#### **Sarah Harty - Head of Resources, Policy & Performance, Education and Children's Services**

Members were informed of the following:

- That the Head of Resources, Policy & Performance's remit included overseeing schools and children's homes and her role was of leadership and guidance. Schools were individually managed but the department's website included information regarding business continuity
- Work had taken place with the Communications Team and the Civil Protection Team on devising a template for schools to produce their business and continuity plans
- There was an option of schools working in clusters to provide business and continuity in an area and the sharing of roles and responsibilities
- In relation to Children's Homes and Respite Care, the prioritisation of services was being looked as well as prioritising staff for the vaccinations

Reference was made to nurseries and playgroups within the Borough and the need for these to be included in the planning for a pandemic.

#### **Emma Marsh – Deputy Head of Communications, LBH**

Members gave consideration to a paper on swine flu: crisis management which had been written by the Deputy Head of Communications as a result of the death of a pupil in the Borough.

- Both the PCT's and Council's Communications Teams

worked closely during the present pandemic

- The Team had been working closely with civil protection officers since the swine flu virus
- The Council's intranet had information and advice for staff on the present swine flu pandemic. There was a questions and answers section for managers
- Updates were provided at monthly team meetings for managers as well as regular updates on the Council's newsletter which was sent to all staff
- The major learning that had come out of the death of the pupil was that it was important to make sure that contacts and roles had been sorted out to enable quick and effective working with a variety of people
- It was important that staff were aware of the procedures
- The vaccination process would be managed through the Council's intranet
- Re-assurances would need to be given regarding the advantages of the vaccination
- Occupational Health were devising a vaccination strategy to offer vaccinations to all Council staff that fit the national eligibility criteria

Members thanked the witnesses for the information they had provided.

Discussion took place on the issues raised by the witnesses and it was agreed that a sample survey be undertaken of the Borough's educational and care establishments to ask whether they had in place business and continuity plans for a pandemic. These establishments to include playgroups, nurseries, schools, further education and higher education establishments and social care homes.

The survey should include the following information:

- Agreed roles and responsibilities
- A list of minimum staffing requirements
- Essential work which must continue
- Which work was a priority which could be produced
- Is there an agreement on communication processes?

In addition in relation to individuals organisations should be asked whether they had undertaken a skills and knowledge audit to ensure essential services were covered if staff were absent from work due to sickness. This should include:

- Cover arrangements
- A list of staff contact details
- Details of those staff with childcare or care responsibilities
- Working arrangements if there were transport problems

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible working policies i.e. home working, remote-working</li> </ul> <p>Members also asked that an interim report of the pandemic review be submitted to Cabinet containing the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A skills and knowledge audit be undertaken of the Council's workforce to build up a computerised database. Information to include details about staff who had been vaccinated, those who have had swine flu, those with children, those who were carers, those who were front line staff and those that dealt face to face with the public</li> <li>• That changes be made to the Council's Constitution to provide contingency arrangements for the decision-making process. This should also include the option of web casting of Council, Cabinet, and Committee meetings.</li> <li>• To mitigate the impact of a major pandemic, the Council to ensure business and continuity plans were in place at the Borough's educational and care establishments (includes playgroups, nurseries, schools, further education and higher education establishments and social care homes).</li> </ul> <p><b>Resolved –</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the information provided by the witnesses be noted and approval be given to the initial recommendations of the review being submitted to Cabinet in the form of an interim report.</li> <li>2. That a sample survey be undertaken of the Borough's educational and care establishments to ask whether they had in place business and continuity plans for a pandemic.</li> <li>3. That the following witnesses be invited to the next meeting of this Committee: a representative from Brunel University, an officer from Adult Social Care, Health and Housing and representatives from a school and a nursery.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Khalid Ahmed</b></p> <p><b>Khalid Ahmed</b></p> <p><b>Khalid Ahmed</b></p>
<p><b>26.</b></p>	<p><b>Work programme 2009/10</b></p> <p>The work programme was amended to reflect the witness session for 14 October 2009 meeting.</p> <p><b>Resolved –</b></p>	

	1. That the Work Programme as amended be noted.	<b>Khalid Ahmed</b>
<b>27.</b>	<b>Cabinet Forward Plan</b>  Noted.	
	<b>Meeting closed at 9.15pm</b> <b>Next meeting: 14 October 2009 at 7.30pm</b>	

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