

A year in review...



Policy Overview & Scrutiny in Hillingdon

2015 - 2016
Annual Report
Democratic Services



HILLINGDON
LONDON

www.hillingdon.gov.uk

What we do

A welcome from the Chairmen...

Our Annual Report provides the opportunity to review the work and achievements of Hillingdon's Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committees during the 2015/16 Municipal Year and to highlight key achievements.

In Hillingdon, Policy Overview Committees (POCs) are responsible for monitoring of a range of Council services to improve service development for residents.

Hillingdon has an Executive Scrutiny Committee, which is responsible for post decision scrutiny of Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions and has the ultimate 'call-in' power. An External Services Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising those services provided by non-Council organisations, including health agencies, the Police and related community matters.

Each of these Committees undertakes its role through in-depth reviews on specific issues annually. These provide the opportunity to hear directly from residents, service users, and local organisations along with nationally recognised expert witnesses. These reviews make practical recommendations to the Cabinet during the year on how the Council can further its activity to improve the quality of life for residents.

In addition, the Committees are able to request information in response to particular concerns, comment on reports to Cabinet before decision and provide useful input into the annual budget proposals before they are approved by Council each year.

Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Policy Overview Committees can consider 'Councillor Calls For Action' submissions. These powers enable all Councillors to ask for discussions at POCs on issues where local problems have arisen and other methods of resolution have been exhausted. No such Calls for Actions have been considered to date. As an alternative, the Council has a highly regarded Petitions process for hearing such matters.

We thank all those residents and organisations that have been involved in Policy Overview and Scrutiny during the year.

Sincerely

Councillors Lewis, Palmer, White, Bridges, Higgins & Riley

Corporate Services & Partnerships



Councillor Richard Lewis (Chairman)

Councillor Richard Mills (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Robin Sansarpuri (Opposition Lead)
Councillor Wayne Bridges
Councillor Tony Burles
Councillor Nick Denys
Councillor Narinder Garg
Councillor Raymond Graham
Councillor Henry Higgins (from 14 January 2016)
Councillor Carol Melvin (until 14 January 2016)

Officer Lead: Khalid Ahmed

Our brief

The Committee is responsible for the policy overview role for a broad array of Council services provided mainly by the Council's Administration and Finance Directorates. These include strategic policy and internal functions such as finance, property, partnerships, personnel, democratic services, legal services, ICT and economic development.

Primary review: Heathrow Airport Rateable Value



The aim of the review was to investigate means of enabling Council officers to fully analyse the rateable value of Heathrow Airport by engaging with the Valuation Office Agency.

The review examined the difficulties which the Council had in determining the cumulo rateable value for Heathrow Airport due to officers of the Council not being able to access areas of the airport site.

The Committee was informed that the London Borough of Hillingdon is the fifth largest Billing Authority in London with an overall Rateable Value of almost £800m and with responsibility for the majority of the Heathrow Airport.

The Borough's rates risk with the Airport is huge. Over £340m in Rateable Value is contained within just four assessments at the core of the Airport complex, of which the overall "cumulo" assessment is on its own around £243m.

While, under retention, the Borough shoulders responsibility for financial planning for the consequences of change in rating bills of which the main Airport complex represents 42% of the Council's List, there is little independent visibility to the Council of the evidence on the ground.

As a secure facility subject to the usual security restrictions for such premises, the Council has no rights of inspection under current provisions, so all property inspections must be left to the Valuation Office Agency.

One of the main drivers of the review was that from 1 April 2013, there have been significant changes to local authority finance which had been implemented under the Government's localism and devolution strategy. Local authorities have more interest in their business rates revenue as they are now able to retain a percentage of these rates.

Councils have a greater incentive to increase business rate yield within the local authority and to understand potential effects on rate losses through rate appeals, demolition of properties and material changes which may also affect business rates.

The Committee was provided with evidence from staff from the Valuation Office Agency and Heathrow Airport's surveyors that they were content with the current assessments.

The Committee has met in closed session to discuss certain aspects of the review. Recently, it was agreed to investigate the legal powers open to the Council to secure greater transparency in relation to the

Heathrow Cumulo. The Committee's review will continue following the receipt of further specialist advice and report to Cabinet as necessary on any useful recommendations going forward.

Reviewing the budget 2016/17

The Committee reviewed key aspects of the Cabinet's proposed 2016/17 budget and grants and co-ordinated the overall Policy Overview Committee response as part of the budget setting process.

Children, Young People & Learning



Councillor Jane Palmer (Chairman)

Councillor Nick Denys (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Jan Sweeting (Opposition Lead)
Councillor Teji Barnes
Councillor Jem Duducu
Councillor Tony Eginton
Councillor Duncan Flynn
Councillor Becky Haggar
Councillor Peter Money
Mr Anthony Little, Roman Catholic representative

Officer Lead: Jon Pitt

Our brief

The Committee is responsible for the policy overview role in relation to education, schools, the early-years service, the youth service and social care services for children and young people. In addition to its wider remit, the Committee has undertaken a major review and commenced a second review during 2015/16.

Major review: The Effectiveness of Early Help to Promote Positive Outcomes for Families



The Council's Early Intervention and Prevention Service was fully established in September 2015, although a number of the services included within this had previously been provided under a different management structure.

The Committee felt that it was important to undertake a review of the new service to enable it to contribute to the development and delivery of the supporting Early Intervention and Prevention Services Plan.

The review found that it could be challenging to obtain relevant, good quality, up-to-date data. Sharing such data regularly with partners was also problematic. There was also a need to strengthen partnership working. A need for further, more in-depth training was identified to ensure that staff can perform their jobs to the best of their ability.

Promotion of services to families and to partner organisations was key to ensure the efficient use of resources and more importantly, to ensure that the benefit to families, were maximised. A need to further embrace the various available online tools was identified by the review. The Committee's work also highlighted important issues in relation to the funding of Children's Centres and in particular, the question of whether each centre should receive the same amount of funding or whether allocations should be based on local needs.

The provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) within Hillingdon was highlighted as a being a cause for concern, with the Committee requesting that a review of this be taken forward by the appropriate Committee(s) during the 2016/7.

Recommendations made by the review were approved by Cabinet in February 2016. Due to the ongoing development of Early Intervention and Prevention Services, it was agreed that regular progress reports would be brought to the Committee.

Upcoming Major Review: Supporting Educational Aspiration for Disadvantaged Children

This review is looking at how educational aspiration can be supported for disadvantaged children in order to improve attainment. Evidence provided by schools, teachers and other organisations is being considered as part of the review, with a view to recommendations being put forward to help close the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non disadvantaged peers.

The review will also look at the effectiveness of spending of Pupil Premium Funding. This is provided to schools on behalf of disadvantaged pupils.

Government figures show that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are far less likely to get good GCSE results. Within Hillingdon, 2015 figures show that 39% of pupils eligible for free school meals in the last six years achieved 5 A*-C GCSEs (including English and Maths), compared to 64% of other pupils. This gives a gap of 25% in terms of outcomes at age 16 between disadvantaged young people and their non-disadvantaged peers. Whilst the attainment gap is greater at secondary level, evidence at national and local level highlights that disadvantage is a key indicator of academic success and educational opportunity at stages of education.

For the purposes of the review, the following groups of children are considered to be disadvantaged:

- Eligible for Free Schools Meals (FSM) in the last six years; or
- Looked after continuously for 1 day or more; or
- Adopted from care.

The review has heard from a number of witnesses to date and will hear further evidence at the June 2016 meeting of the Committee. This is ahead of recommendations being submitted to the Council's Cabinet.

Residents' & Environmental Services



Councillor Michael White (Chairman)

Councillor Teji Barnes (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mohinder Birah
Councillor Peter Davis
Councillor Jas Dhot
Councillor Patricia Jackson
Councillor Kuldeep Lakhmana (Opposition Lead)
Councillor Judy Kelly
Councillor Brian Stead

Officer Lead: Alex Quayle

Our brief

The Committee is responsible for the policy overview role for a diverse range of Council services often central to residents' quality of life. This remit extends to highways, transport, footpaths, green spaces, planning, heritage, waste & recycling, sport & leisure, environmental health and beyond. Over the year, the Committee considered reports on topics such as trading standards, 'beds-in-sheds', and licensing policies, in addition to two reviews and giving detailed consideration to the Cabinet's budget proposals.

Major review: Hoarding in Hillingdon



The Committee identified the topic of hoarding because there had been no comprehensive review of the matter by Elected Members in recent times. Additionally, the subject had been put back into the national spotlight through related television documentaries and, more significantly, recognition by the medical profession of a “Hoarding Disorder”.

The Committee structured its review to understand why people hoard, the types of hoarding and their prevalence. Members considered both officer and expert witness testimony to review the powers available to tackle the physical effects of hoarding, the social and health care options available when individuals are diagnosed with Hoarding Disorder, along with the consequential effects on family, home and local environment.

The Committee welcomed the partnership approach in place in Hillingdon, which was lacking in many other local authorities. The review made recommendations to Cabinet in December 2015 which were approved and related to consistency of approach and data collection, targeted help for the vulnerable, fostering a multi-agency and integrated approach and use of planning enforcement where necessary.

Upcoming Major Review: Learning from Hillingdon’s Major Developments



Major planning applications by their nature have a significant impact on the built environment and residents' enjoyment of the Borough.

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 and parking, through to the wider multi-faceted impacts on neighbourhoods and town centres from large redevelopments.

The review aimed to understand how lessons are currently learned post approval, and whether there were any simple post development processes that could be recommended to Cabinet to analyse the successes and failures of major developments. It also sought to find methods for decision-makers to learn lessons for any post development review processes undertaken, with the aim that Members could better understand how plans would translate to reality, and ways to make a substantive difference to an application.

The Committee found a wealth of knowledge about development in the Borough; from residents, Ward Councillors, officers, architects and others involved at various stages. Members considered how to incorporate different perspectives on the multifaceted planning environment in the Borough, and how effective evaluation techniques can be introduced, primarily for Planning Committee Members. The Committee's findings have led to several positive recommendations which will be considered by Cabinet in due course.

Social Services, Housing & Public Health



Councillor Wayne Bridges (Chairman)

Councillor Teji Barnes (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Shehryar Wallana

Councillor Peter Davis

Councillor Beulah East (Opposition Lead)

Councillor Becky Haggar

Councillor Manjit Khatra

Councillor June Nelson

Councillor Jane Palmer

Co-Opted Member: Mrs Mary O'Connor (Health, Disabilities and Wellbeing Champion)

Officer Lead: Charles Francis

Our brief

The Social Services, Housing & Public Health Policy Overview Committee is responsible for undertaking the policy overview role in relation to the Council's Adult Social Care, Housing and Public Health responsibilities. In addition to monitoring performance, considering the Budget and receiving several overview reports on Public Health, the Committee will have completed two reviews during 2015/2016.

Major review: Raising Standards in Private Sector Rented Accommodation



Given recognised national housing issues, the Private Rented Sector has become a vital aspect of housing in Hillingdon. The Committee therefore agreed, it was important to investigate how improved standards in the Private Rented Sector could help reduce cases of homelessness by focusing on information advice and guidance and where this was not possible, ensure that any intervention was as effective as possible.

To investigate this, the Committee examined the profile of the sector and its tenants, the effects of overcrowding and the health implications of this, the information, advice and guidance given to tenants and also the enforcement powers available to the Council. The review established that since the last Housing Condition Survey, the number of people using the private rented sector had risen exponentially and so there was clear responsibility on the Council to ensure it took positive steps where possible to assist and improve the quality of life of our residents in this sector.

In terms of its findings, the review suggested that incidences of overcrowding might well be increasing driven by a necessity to accept lower housing standards to minimise costs. However, the Committee also recognised that as the Council had no direct control of the sector, there was no panacea or single action that could be taken to solve all the problems associated with the sector. The Committee welcomed news that the Enforcement options available to the Council would be strengthened by the Housing and Planning Bill when passed, but appreciated these measures would focus on the most serious and severe instances or malpractice. The review was considered by Cabinet in March 2016 and all the recommendations were endorsed.

Major Review: Stroke Prevention in Hillingdon



The Committee's second topic this year was to review and assess what was currently being done to prevent strokes in Hillingdon and investigate best practice from both other Local Authorities and stroke organisations.

According to GP data in 2014/15 there were 3,336 patients in Hillingdon who had suffered stroke. With the estimated average cost to the NHS of a stroke per patient cited as £10,000 and survivor costs reaching £100,000 per year for as long as the person lives, there are some significant ramifications.

The Committee, therefore, felt it was important to focus on raising awareness of stroke prevention and learn lessons from external organisations which would contribute to the Council's preventative agenda, given the long term human and financial costs associated with aftermath of stroke.

As well as hearing about what the Council's role and responsibilities were, the Committee gathered evidence from other local authority Public Health Teams about what work they are doing to inform Hillingdon's approach. The final aspect of the review was to receive and consider evidence from stroke sufferers, related organisations and experts to see how Hillingdon's approach might be improved.

This review will be considered by Cabinet in June 2016.

Executive Scrutiny



Councillor Henry Higgins (Chairman)

Councillor John Riley (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mo Khursheed (Leader of the Opposition)
Councillor Wayne Bridges
Councillor Brian Crowe
Councillor Nick Denys
Councillor John Oswell
Councillor Jan Sweeting
Mr Anthony Little - Roman Catholic Diocesan representative

Officer Lead: Mark Braddock

Scrutiny of Hillingdon's major decisions

A period of 5 working days must elapse before any formal key decision taken by the Cabinet or Cabinet Member can be implemented by officers. The Executive Scrutiny Committee's primary role is therefore to scrutinise such decisions that have been taken but have not yet been implemented.

This is known as the 'call-in' power. If the Executive Scrutiny Committee considers any of these decisions to be deficient, they may refer the decision back to the Cabinet or Cabinet Member(s) for further consideration. The Committee use a set of criteria to guide them in this process. The Committee meets immediately after the conclusion of a meeting of the Cabinet to enable Members to review the decisions taken and, if agreed by a majority, give consideration to the potential for the call-in of a particular matter.

During 2015/16, no call-in of any Cabinet or executive decision was made.

The Chairman of the Committee has the constitutional role of being able to waive the 'call-in' power where a decision is deemed urgent by the Cabinet or Cabinet Member and any delay would prejudice the Council's or the public's interest or could lead to an (increased) risk of damage to people or property. This enables such decisions to be implemented with immediate effect. They are otherwise known as

"urgency" or "special urgency" decisions depending on the necessity of the matter.



During 2015/16, out of over 500 executive decisions, the Chairman carefully considered and agreed to the waiver of the call-in power for 43 such decisions to assist critical service and project delivery.

The Chairman also plays a constitutional role in being notified of any future key decisions, primarily to the Cabinet, where it has been impracticable to give sufficient notice of a decision in the Forward Plan.

To assist in their deliberations, the Committee requested clarification on a number of matters within individual Cabinet reports, which were responded to by officers after the meeting.

External Services Scrutiny



Councillor John Riley (Chairman)

Councillor Ian Edwards (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Phoday Jarjussey (Opposition Lead)
Councillor Allan Kauffman
Councillor Michael White
Councillor Brian Crowe
Councillor John Oswell
Councillor Tony Burles

Officer Leads: Nikki O'Halloran and Kiran Grover

Our brief

The External Services Scrutiny Committee has a broad remit to scrutinise all non-Hillingdon Council organisations whose actions affect Hillingdon residents. This Committee also undertakes the health scrutiny role as required by the Health & Social Care Act 2001 and acts as the Crime and Disorder Committee as defined in the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009.

As well as undertaking light touch reviews and receiving update reports (in relation to Prevent, the Better Care Fund Plan 2016/2017, Shaping A Healthier Future and the Safer Hillingdon Partnership), the Committee has also monitored the performance of the local NHS Trusts (with a view to providing evidence to the CQC).

Major review: Alcohol Related admissions amongst those Under 18 years of age



During the last 12 months, the Committee has completed a review regarding alcohol related A&E admissions amongst young people in Hillingdon. A Working Group was established and chaired by Councillor Dominic Gilham to carry out the review.

Members focussed on the reasons that young people drink alcohol and investigated how local agencies worked in partnership to educate them at an early age about the associated risks and the anticipated additional pressure that future alcohol related health complications could have on the NHS.

The review highlighted areas for further partnership work with a view to educating young people, equipping them to make better choices and preventing excessive alcohol consumption. The Committee's final report and recommendations were agreed by the Cabinet in January 2016.

Upcoming Major Review: Pressures on GPs



One of the main pieces of work undertaken by the Committee is a review of the Pressures on GPs in the Borough. A Working Group was established and is chaired by Councillor John Riley. A series of meetings have reviewed the varied pressures on GPs and witnesses have included the Local Medical Committee, Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS England, Healthwatch Hillingdon, NHS Property Services, Pharmacy London and Health Education North West London, as well as GP Network leads.

Members have examined the issue in detail and focused on GP recruitment, education and training, use of resources, premises and other facilities, patient management and communication. Witnesses

have spoken candidly to identify better ways of working that would reduce the pressures faced by GPs.

It is anticipated that the Working Group's final report and recommendations will be considered by Cabinet at its meeting in July 2016.

Our previous work...

Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committees have undertaken comprehensive reviews of local service provision since 2002, with their findings incorporated into the core work the Council and its partners to put residents first. Details of past reviews over the last 5 years are set out below. Copies of all reviews are available to read online.

2014/15

- Diversifying the Street Champions Initiative
- Tackling Social Housing Fraud
- Review into Family Law Reforms
- Children's Oral Health
- A Review of Hillingdon's Corporate Complaints Procedure
- Policing and Mental Health Services
- Hillingdon's Implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Reforms
- The Cleaning and Maintenance Schedule for Hillingdon's Footpaths and Bridleways
- Hillingdon Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy
- Reducing the Risk of Young People Engaging in Criminal Activity and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Hillingdon's Shared Lives Scheme

2013/14

- Stigma: The Effect on Residents' Mental and Physical Health in the Borough
- Review of Anti-Social Behaviour Partnership Working in the Borough
- The Causes of Tenancy Failure and how it can be Prevented
- Using Our Water: Improving Efficiency and Developing Long-Term Strategies
- Improving Outcomes for Care Leavers Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
- Strengthening the Council's Role as a Corporate Parent
- Reducing our Carbon Footprint

2012/13

- Community Cohesion and the accessing of Council services
- Crime Prevention Resources provided for Hillingdon Police and the free Older Peoples Burglar Alarms Scheme

- Leaving Care Grant
- Safeguarding of Children that go Missing
- Access to Education for Hillingdon's Vulnerable Children and Young People
- Review of the Regulations and Byelaws relating to Cemeteries and Burial Grounds within Hillingdon
- Review of local pest control services and the impact of waste management processes on them
- Review of Adult Community Mental Health Services
- Special Constables

2011/12

- Effectiveness of the Audit Committee and its Terms of Reference
- Operation and Function of Hillingdon First Card
- Elective Home Education
- Adoption & Permanency
- The Review of Mobile Technology and Telecommunications Equipment in Hillingdon Borough and beyond
- Personalisation and Disabilities with Reference to Transition
- Population Flows and the Impact on Housing Services in Hillingdon
- Re-Offending
- Dementia

2010/11

- Census 2011 – To look at how this Council can contribute to improving the Population data for the Borough
- Personal Safety of Members of the Council when meeting with members of the public
- The Hillingdon Khat Review
- Review of Hillingdon's Town Twinning Relationships
- Review of 14-19 Education & Training
- To examine the use of Assistive Technology by Adult Social Care to Support Independent Living
- Hillingdon Centre for Independent Living (Looking at Efficiencies, Services & Fully Costed Options)
- Health Inequalities – Effect of Overcrowding on Educational Attainment and Children's Development
- Children's Self Harm

Residents & partners are essential to our reviews...

Members on Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committees actively seek to involve residents, interest groups, private and public organisations in the policy reviews their respective Committees undertake. We welcome anyone wishing to get involved in shaping public services for the future and thank those participating this year. Strong witness testimony has, and continues to, provide added value to the Committee's findings presented to the Cabinet for approval. 2015/16 was no exception, with the following external witnesses engaging in this important aspect of Hillingdon's democratic process:

Metropolitan Police Service	London Ambulance Service NHS Trust	Valuation Office Agency
Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group	London Fire Brigade National Probation Service	Rates Plus
Healthwatch Hillingdon	Local Community Rehabilitation Company	Stroke Association
The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Care Quality Commission	Cafe Nero's Social Group
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust	NHS England	Children's Centres
Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust	NHS Property Services	Harlington School
London-wide Local Medical Committee	Pharmacy London	The Skills Hub
Hillingdon Local Medical Committee	Health Education North West London	Young People's Academy
		Stroke Association
		Hoarding UK
		London Fire Brigade
		Dale Venn Architects Ltd



HILLINGDON
LONDON

www.hillingdon.gov.uk