

Minutes

**Corporate Services and Partnerships Policy
Overview Committee
Wednesday, 7 March 2018
Meeting held at Committee Room 4 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge**



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Members Present:

Councillors Scott Seaman-Digby (Chairman)
Richard Mills (Vice-Chairman)
Beulah East
Wayne Bridges
Duncan Flynn
Raymond Graham
Henry Higgins
Robin Sansarpuri
John Oswell (substituting for Cllr Dhillon)

Apologies:

Councillor Jazz Dhillon

Officers Present:

Kevin Byrne, Head of Health Integration and Voluntary Sector Partnerships
Brian Colyer, Building Manager for Council Properties
Luke Taylor, Democratic Services Officer

60. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jazz Dhillon, with Councillor John Oswell substituting.

61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

62. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 FEBRUARY 2018

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

63. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was agreed that all items would be considered in public.

64. VOLUNTEERING IN HILLINGDON

The Council's Head of Health Integration and Voluntary Sector Partnerships was in attendance to introduce the report into Volunteering in Hillingdon. Members heard that Hillingdon enjoyed a wide ranging voluntary and community sector, which depended greatly on volunteers to succeed. It was, however, difficult to quantify a lot of the good work undertaken across the Borough as volunteering was often based on the goodwill and support for others that cannot easily be recorded.

Much would depend on the type of volunteering being assessed and definitions used. Even with more formal volunteering there was a lack of good quality data at a local level. Data was only really obtainable via surveys, which can be expensive to conduct and tend to produce headline figures of levels of volunteering based on definitions; e.g. "once a week formal roles" or "once a year informal roles" would produce widely variable answers. Few authorities, therefore, see merit in investing in this type of work.

Responding to questioning from the Committee, the officer confirmed that a disclosure and barring process has replaced CRB checks, and it was up to each individual voluntary organisation to undertake their own assessments on use of potential volunteers. It was also confirmed that the former Palace Survey was no longer a mandatory requirement, and as it did not offer value to the Council, it was not undertaken.

Members asked whether charities would buy into a shared service led by the Council on volunteering, and heard that the Hillingdon For All consortium already had shared their volunteering, finance, and other functions across six of the largest local charities. This has been encouraged by the Council. Beyond this, it was not clear that the Council providing shared services then recharging would prove viable, and could potentially come at a cost to the Council, even if charities "bought in" to them.

Councillors commented that it could be useful for charities to work alongside the Council when purchasing items such as stationery, and questioned whether bulk purchases in areas such as this could be done using the Council's contracts with goods providers.

The Committee thanks the officer for their time, and noted that it was good to know the Council are keeping tabs on volunteering within the Borough.

RESOLVED: That the report on Volunteering in Hillingdon was noted.

65. ENERGY EFFICIENT LIGHTING AT THE CIVIC CENTRE

The Building Manager for Council Properties introduced the report to Members, and noted that the new energy efficient lighting would result in a reduction of electricity costs for the Council, with Phase One of the programme already completed within budget, saving the Council £21,000 to date, and Phase Two taking place over the rest of the year, leading to further savings.

Responding to Members' questioning, it was confirmed by the officer that the percentage of the electric bill spent on lighting was comparatively low, but the changes made savings and gave the Council some quick wins, including savings of £2,000 per year in taxes under the CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme.

Members noted that while the savings made from the electricity bill were substantial, the new LED lights would not need replacing as often as the previous lights, and questioned what saving the Council would make on maintenance costs by not replacing the lighting so regularly. The Committee heard that the saving would be significant, but an exact figure was not known. Councillors asked if it would be possible to provide the figure, noting that it was another example of the good work that is being done by officers to make the Council more energy efficient.

The Committee noted that LEDs are currently more expensive than regular lights, but the cost gap is closing, and it was recognised that there would be savings in the longer-term. Councillors heard that in some areas, officers were considering refurbishments alongside the new LED lighting, as it could be more cost-effective to make changes related to the lighting at the same time; for example, in some areas, the ceiling may be replaced if a number of lights must be fitted, as this is the most economic way forward for the Council.

The Building Manager for Council Properties confirmed that feedback from staff has been overwhelmingly positive, and while limited issues had been raised, these were easily resolved.

Members commented that the LED lighting is an improvement for the Council and welcomed the savings made. The Committee thanked the officer for taking the time to produce and introduce the report.

RESOLVED: That the report on Energy Efficient Lighting at the Civic Centre was noted.

66. UPDATE ON HOMOPHOBIC, BIPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC BULLYING REVIEW

An update on the review into "Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic (HBT) Bullying" was provided to the Committee, who noted that there had been two meetings between the Chairman and the Fountains Mill LGBT Youth Group regarding the review.

The Chairman informed the Committee of the issues arising from the two meetings, and confirmed that the Youth Group were very supportive of the recommendation to fly the Rainbow Flag on the weekend of London Pride.

The Committee also heard that the Youth Group stated that, with regards to the proposed recommendation to "follow up the five recommendations outlined in the 2012 assessment of HBT bullying in Hillingdon", it would be beneficial to bring extra attention to the recommendation "to explore the option of a designated equality youth support worker to proactively promote LGBT rights for young people and be a

support for relevant professionals, families and relatives", and this recommendation should be given greater weight.

The Youth Group also commented that at some schools, there is an anonymous box that could be used to leave comments or report bullying or homophobic language. It was suggested that this is a helpful tool for students who feel bullied but find it difficult to report such issues, and as such, it would be helpful to add such a suggestion to any potential guidance that was sent out to schools.

The Chairman also reported that the Youth Group commented that the Council has Champions for Domestic Violence and Equalities, and noted that a specific LGBT Rights Champion would be very welcome.

It was also noted that some members of the Youth Group expressed an interest in attending the Cabinet meeting when the report will be tabled.

The Committee were also presented with the responses that had been received from schools with regards to a survey regarding HBT bullying, which was sent out to all schools in the Borough. Members noted that the schools were happy to accept help from the Council in tackling the issue, but did not ask for specific help.

Members agreed that the report would be progressed, and agreed to delegate authority to the Chairman and Labour Lead to agree the final draft of the review.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- 1. Noted the update on the HBT Review;**
- 2. Delegated Authority to the Chairman, Labour Lead Member, and Democratic Services Officer to circulate a final copy of the report to Committee members, agree a final draft of the report, and schedule the review to be presented at a future Cabinet meeting.**

67. CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE REVIEW TOPICS

Members discussed potential topics for future Committee reviews, and noted that any suggestions can be discussed in further detail at the next Committee meeting in June.

The Committee noted that a potential review into "Scrutiny and previous reviews" could be considered. This would focus on the role of scrutiny within the Council, what happens to reviews once they are completed, and how the recommendations of reviews are followed up by officers across the Council.

Members also suggested a review into looking at how the Council accept payments could be considered; for example, how the organisation could move towards electronic or contactless payments for services such as car parking.

Councillors agreed to consider both these topics further, and return to the issue in June with any further suggestions, and a more targeted potential scope for those reviews suggested at this meeting.

RESOLVED: That the suggestions regarding future review topics were noted.

68. FORWARD PLAN

The Committee questioned how many contracts were renewed with current service providers this year, in contrast with how many were put out for tender. Furthermore, Members asked for figures on how many times the contracts had been extended with the current service providers.

RESOLVED: That the Forward Plan was noted.

69. WORK PROGRAMME 2017/2018

RESOLVED: That the work programme for 2018/19 was noted.