



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Overview and Scrutiny in Hillingdon

Annual Report to Council - 2019 / 2020

Welcome

This annual report provides an opportunity to review the activity and achievements of overview and scrutiny in Hillingdon during 2019/20. This is a statutory, vital part of the Council's non-executive governance arrangements, comprising backbench elected councillors working each and every month to put Hillingdon residents first.

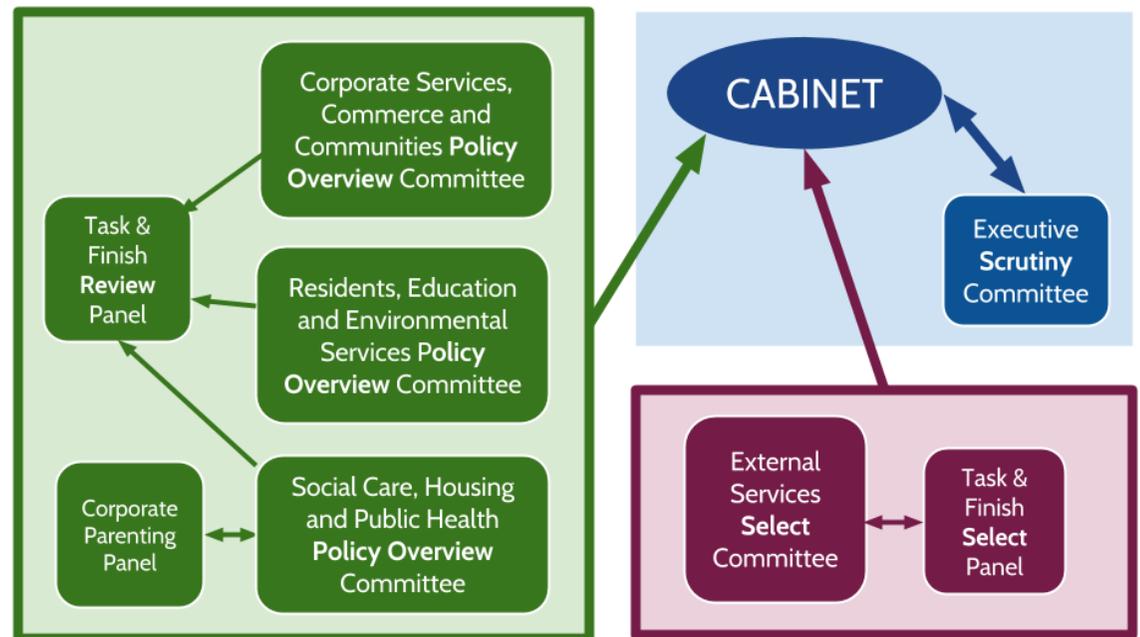
Modern overview and scrutiny

In 2018, modernised overview and scrutiny committee arrangements were approved by Councillors to streamline the number of committees, increase their effectiveness and provide for the operation of multi-year work programmes to give more flexibility in undertaking in-depth reviews on key resident and community topics.

This also provided the ability to set up more focussed 'review' and 'select' panels at any one time. Additionally, key corporate parenting responsibilities of Elected Councillors are now fully embedded within Hillingdon's overview and scrutiny arrangements. This actively engages young people in the development of council services with a direct-line to the decision-making Cabinet.

Nationally, following the publication of new Statutory Scrutiny Guidance in 2019, Councillors further reviewed the overview and scrutiny arrangements and adopted a new Protocol on Scrutiny & Cabinet relations.

The Council's overview and scrutiny structure is shown on the right of this page and is part Hillingdon's strong political governance of the Borough. This report sets out the committees' respective work **putting residents FIRST**.



How overview and scrutiny works

In Hillingdon, there are three Policy Overview Committees (POCs) responsible for monitoring council services and recommending changes to Cabinet on a range of areas to shape future policy direction. In addition, there is an Executive Scrutiny Committee, which is responsible for post Cabinet and Cabinet Member decision scrutiny and the statutory call-in procedure. The final, yet key arm of these arrangements is the External Services Select Committee. This Committee is responsible for holding to account and reviewing those services provided by other public agencies, primarily the local NHS and Police services.

All committees undertake their role through a multi-year work programme of activities which may include single meeting or in-depth policy reviews on specific topics of community and resident importance. These reviews provide the opportunity to directly engage with resident stakeholders, local interest groups and experts to help shape local public services in Hillingdon.

Committees also monitor the performance of local services and are able to request information and reports on particular matters of resident interest, often through the valued insight of local councillors in their wards. Committees provide regular comment on reports to Cabinet for decision and input into Cabinet's annual budget proposals before they are approved by Council each year. These Committees, therefore, play a vital role in ensuring that the Council continues to provide high quality, value-for-money services, putting Hillingdon residents first.

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 requested and thereby considered during 2019/20.

This annual report demonstrates the breadth of work undertaken by Elected Councillors engaged in overview and scrutiny during 2019/20. On behalf of the Committee Chairmen, it is commended to Council on 14 May 2020.

‘Local commerce, community cohesion & budgets ’

The work of the Corporate Services, Commerce & Communities Policy Overview Committee



Councillors:

Richard Mills (Chairman)

Wayne Bridges (Vice-Chairman)

Nicola Brightman

Farhad Choubedar

Alan Deville

Martin Goddard

Jazz Dhillon (Opposition Lead)

Lindsay Bliss

Scott Farley

Lead Officer: *Luke Taylor, Democratic Services*

Our remit

The Committee is responsible for the policy overview role for a broad array of Council services, provided mainly by the Council’s Chief Executive’s Office and Finance Directorate. These include strategic internal functions, such as finance, property, partnerships, human resources, democratic services, legal services, ICT and economic development. Further responsibilities also include localism,

enforcement, community engagement, local commerce and job creation, equalities, energy use and carbon reduction, public safety, civil protection and community safety.

In 2020, the Committee was given a new monitoring responsibility on the Council’s efforts to tackle climate change.

The Committee has undertaken one in-depth review this year, and has also monitored a large number of service areas. This is summarised below.

REVIEWING: Local Commerce, Employment, Skills & Job Creation

This review investigated what drives Hillingdon’s economy and explored the issues surrounding employment, skills and job creation within the Borough and allowed the Committee to have a better understanding of the challenges faced by local authorities both locally and nationally when tackling these issues.

The Committee’s review sought to consider the current local economic environment, and explore the implications of new developments and initiatives in Hillingdon, including their impact on local commerce and job creation.

The review considered how Hillingdon's economy was performing against other Councils, both locally and nationally and what work the Council had taken alongside its partners and local businesses to ensure the economy remained at a high level. The Committee also looked at a number of high-quality and important developments that were currently taking place in the Borough and commended officers on their work with local partners to help lay the foundations for such schemes in Hillingdon.

The focus of the review also centred on local employment and job creation for residents, as well as how young residents can be trained to guarantee that they are ready for employment. By also considering which areas of the economy required further support and training, and which could be better established to provide jobs for local residents, the Committee could also consider how to maximise employment and grow the economy.

The review heard evidence from a range of expert witnesses that helped shape the recommendations that are contained within the report. These witnesses focused on key initiatives and how they impact upon Hillingdon, its economy and its local residents, and there was also the opportunity for the Committee to engage in a site visit to the Central Research Laboratory, located at the Old Vinyl Factory in Hayes, to see the work being done by Brunel graduates who wished to turn their research and postgraduate prototypes and ideas into commercially-viable projects and businesses.

In conjunction with the site visit, the review heard from witnesses at Uxbridge College, which is piloting the new T-Levels exam scheme as well as establishing one of the country's first Institutes of Technology within the Borough. There was also evidence from the local Chamber of Commerce and updates from business leaders on the large quantity of construction work taking place in the Borough.

Furthermore, the Committee heard from professionals who engaged in regeneration schemes, and logistics and employment site providers, in addition to Council employees who focused on the work that the Council had undertaken in these areas.

The witness sessions were well received by the Committee and helped shape the review, along with the supporting information provided by Council officers. This evidence gave the Committee insight into the challenges faced by local authorities on issues such as the local economy and employment, and helped focus the review on where the Council was performing well, and what more could be done to help certain industries and residents.

A strong local economy is vital to any area, and by understanding what drove Hillingdon's economy, the Committee was to make a series of recommendations to best utilise the opportunities that are available to it to maintain and improve the local economy and create jobs for local residents.

This review is due to be presented to Cabinet in 2020.

MONITORING activity

Community Cohesion

Officers provided the Committee an update on the work the Council was taking to promote community cohesion and build stronger communities in Hillingdon. The Committee was informed that these goals were achieved through partnerships, not only with statutory agencies, but also alongside the voluntary sector and diverse communities. Members noted that the Council used events to reach key groups, such as women, faith communities and children and

young people. There was a particular focus on involving isolated women from different community backgrounds, and Members heard that by working with young people, messages often reached parents, families and wider communities. The report stated that it was important to ensure that all communities had access to services, and it was important to encourage involvement, not just from different faiths and ethnicities, but also ages, genders and residents with disabilities, and community events and utilising libraries were good ways to do this. Councillors welcome the report and noted the huge amount of work that the Council does on community cohesion.

Resident feedback and complaints

The Committee received a comprehensive report on Resident Complaints and Enquiries and noted the volume and type of complaints received over the course of the previous year. Members heard that 235 complaints within the Committee's remit were received, with the vast majority resolved at the initial stage. 27 complaints were dealt with formally at Stage 2, with none at Stage 3, and 12 complaints were being processed by the Local Government Ombudsman, who upheld the Council's decision on 11 of these. The Committee was informed that these numbers suggest the complaints procedure continues to work well.

Counter Fraud Enforcement Action

Officers update the Committee with information on how the Council is meeting its duty to safeguard public finances by implementing effective arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption within the Council and its services. Members heard that the Counter Fraud Team's risk-based approach, involving intelligence-led assessments of risks of fraud had been a success, and had made substantial financial savings for the Council of £1.2m through 2018/19,

the first year of the Council's new Counter Fraud Strategic Plan and Operational Work Plan. Officers also commented on the areas where enforcement action was taken, most commonly in cases where there was sufficient evidence to support action and it was in the public interest to do so. The report confirmed that the Council would continue to focus their counter-fraud activities through a risk-based approach, while maintaining the level of proactive counter-fraud measures within the areas of highest fraud risk and expanding the use of preventative measures.

Sports Ground Safety

The Committee was briefed on the action taken by Council officers under the Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975 and the Fire and Safety at Places of Sport Act 1987. Members heard that, while Hillingdon does not have any major sports stadia within its boundaries, the Borough has a number of smaller league sports grounds and facilities that are covered by this legislation. It was noted there were two grounds in the Borough with regulated stands, the Gaelic Athletic Association and Hayes & Yeading FC. Members welcomed the regular inspections which enabled officers to have regular contact with clubs to ensure a better standard of public safety compliance.

Update on review into 'Digital Broadcasting of Policy Overview, Scrutiny and Select Committees'

The Committee was presented with an update on the implementation of the recommendations approved by Cabinet in the 2019 review into "Digital Broadcasting of Policy Overview, Scrutiny and Select Committees". Democratic Services confirmed that the four recommendations contained within the report had been delivered and that all Policy Overview, Scrutiny and Select Committees were

being broadcast on the Council's YouTube Channel, Hillingdon London. The Committee heard that there had been 26 broadcasts of these meetings, starting in June 2019, and had received 13,000 views. This expansion of broadcasting was introduced at no extra cost, and any further enhancements or innovations would continue to be investigated within existing resources.

Budget Review and Cabinet's Budget Proposals

As a statutory consultee to the Cabinet's 2020/21 budget proposals published in December, the Committee reviewed and supported the proposals within its remit. The Committee also agreed a co-ordinated response on behalf of the other two Policy Overview Committees to Cabinet. During the year, the Committee also received an update on the 2019/20 budget.

‘ Corporate parenting, Universal Credit & Autism’

The work of the Social Care, Housing & Public Health Policy Overview Committee



Councillors:

Ian Edwards (Chairman)

Heena Makwana (Vice-Chairman)

Nicola Brightman

Judith Cooper

Alan Deville

Becky Haggar

Paula Rodrigues

Tony Eginton (Opposition Lead)

Janet Gardner

Lead Officer: *Anisha Teji, Democratic Services*

Our remit

The Social Care, Housing & Public Health Policy Overview Committee is responsible for undertaking the policy overview role in relation to the Council’s Adult Social Care, Social Care Services for Children, Young People and Children with Special Needs, Adoption and Fostering, Homelessness and Housing Needs, Asylum Seekers and Public Health responsibilities.

In addition to monitoring performance, considering the Budget and receiving several overview reports on Social Care, Housing and

Public Health matters, the Committee continued its in-depth review into Universal Credit and the impacts on residents. The Committee also formally established the Corporate Parenting Panel to provide strong oversight of the Council’s corporate parenting responsibilities.

CHAMPIONING: Corporate Parenting - Children FIRST

Corporate Parenting is a significant responsibility for the Committee, but also for all Elected Members because we are all ‘Corporate Parents’ and have a duty to ensure the best interests of Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

To assist with this important role, the Committee established the Corporate Parenting Panel in March 2019 which provided for greater integration of corporate parenting within the Council’s core governance arrangements. The first Panel meeting took place in May 2019.

The Panel has a clear purpose to champion corporate parenting across the Council, directly engaging children and care leavers in the



Council's care in the democratic and decision-making process, working with them and partners to monitor relevant services and improve outcomes and life chances.

The Panel has reviewed a wide remit of work including annual reports from the virtual school, LAC health team, fostering and adoption service and independent reviewing officers. The Panel has heard presentations from children and young people in relation to different activities undertaken, projects, achievements, the Young Inspectors Programme and the KICA 2020 awards. This has been well received by the Panel as they have been able to engage and hear from the young people directly, in addition to enabling a young person to co-chair meetings. The minutes for each Panel meeting are also provided to the Committee so that the Committee is also kept updated regarding the Panel's ongoing activities.

Following a change of chairmanship in 2020, the work programme for the Panel has been tailored and amended to include thematic topics at each meeting covering areas such as health, education, housing and participation. This will then enable officers to prepare a summary of the key themes and issues explored throughout the municipal year, which will then be presented to the Committee.

REVIEWED: Universal Credit: likely favourable and adverse impacts, risks and local partnership response

As a topical matter, the Committee has actively continued to explore HM Government's Universal Credit programme and the possible impacts and risks upon Hillingdon residents, in addition to local partnership response.



This review has aimed to gain an understanding of the range of services available, the current steps in place and how Universal Credit was being implemented in practice.

Moreover, the review aspired to reflect on best practice in other local boroughs and organisations by considering policy ideas and obtaining further information via witness sessions attended by relevant parties. As the review progressed, a greater focus was placed by Members on the practicality of the application process and what more could be done to assist claimants that are more vulnerable. This was notwithstanding the significant work already undertaken by the Council and other partners to engage with residents affected.

To investigate this topic, the Committee has held a number of meetings with a variety of witnesses including key officers within the Council that specialised in this area, representatives from the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), MIND, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and other housing providers. The Committee also undertook a site visit to the Job Centre Plus in Uxbridge. The Committee found the site visit to be useful to see the application process in practice and found DWP representatives to be receptive.



During the course of the review, it became evident to the Committee that the Council itself continues to be very proactive supporting residents where Universal Credit may impact on their social housing or accommodation they are in receipt of. However, in relation to the

DWP's application process for Universal Credit, Members' initial findings had drawn out some concerns on the impact it was having on more vulnerable residents, specifically those with mental, disability and physical health concerns.

The Committee extended its investigations to hear again from witnesses and case studies. Following this, the evidence was reviewed and collated. In considering areas for improvement, the Committee made recommendations primarily aimed externally, to strengthen the collaborative working between partners, clearer processes for signposting and support to more vulnerable claimants.

The Committee considered its recommendations would assist the transition for residents moving to Universal Credit and that they feel well informed and supported during that process. Cabinet endorsed the recommendations in November 2019. An update on the implementation of the recommendations is scheduled on the Committee's work programme towards the end of 2020.

REVIEWING: Making the Council more autism friendly

In 2020, the Committee commenced its review on exploring ways to make the Council more autism friendly. The aim of the review is to consider how the Council can improve its customer service to support its local residents with autism. Subject to any findings, the review expects to make practical, feasible and supportive recommendations to promote inclusion when accessing our universal services.

The review is in its early stages with the scoping report recently being finalised. The Committee has decided to take a more hands on approach to the review and is keen to meet with different service

users, organisations and departments that all contribute to the Council's services in relation to autism. Thus far, Members have undertaken site visits to the libraries in the Borough to see the services available to residents and have visited the Autism centre in Eastcote to meet with representatives there.

The Committee has invited representatives from HCAS and the Parent Carer Group to attend meetings and give evidence. The Committee's review remains good work in progress, and the final report, with recommendations, will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration in the coming months.

MONITORING: the wellbeing of vulnerable residents

COVID-19

Prior to the Pandemic in early February, the Committee received an important update from the Council's Director of Public Health regarding coronavirus and the latest position and advice from Public Health England.

Carers Strategy

The Committee received an update on the implementation of the Carers Strategy and the detailed action plan. Members welcomed this opportunity to ask officers questions on the local services provided, including areas working well and also challenges.

Loneliness and Isolation - a previous review

The Committee received updates on a previous review on loneliness and isolation. Members used this opportunity to see what changes had been made since the reviews and noted that recommendations had been implemented.



Safeguarding and Mental Health Services

Each year, the Committee receives the Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report and Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report providing comments on them to the Cabinet. These reports provided detail on the work undertaken by each Board and evidence about the standard to which the agencies responsible for safeguarding children and adults had performed. The Committee reviewed the reports, questioned officers about performance and submitted useful comments to the Cabinet. Nationally, local safeguarding children's arrangements have been restructured, and an update on this work has been scheduled on the Committee's work programme. The Committee will hear about performance, be able to question officers and review how the new arrangements are working.

Members also received an update on Children and Young People Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing services. The Committee heard about the key achievements, recent activities and challenges. The report was presented by The Transformation Project Lead Commissioner Child and Adolescent Emotional Wellbeing, Mental Health and Corporate Director of Adult, Children and Young People

Services and Director of Public Health, which enabled Members to ask questions on the quality and capacity of mental health services for young people in Hillingdon.

Semi Independent Living

The Committee received an overview of semi independent living arrangements for young people aged 16 – 25 years commissioned by the London Borough of Hillingdon, Children and Young People's Social Care. The Committee was able to question officers and was pleased to hear about the Young Inspectors programme and its proactive approach.

TeleCareLine Service



The Committee monitored the performance of the valued TeleCareLine Service promoting independence through modern technology. This review was following its outsourcing to Anchor Trust in December 2017. It was welcomed that this had recently been extended to those residents over 75 years of age.

Better Care Fund Plan

The Committee received the local Better Care Fund Plan, introduced in 2014/15 to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of health and care. Members were updated on the delivery of the Plan in 2019/20.

Housing and Homelessness



Housing related topics have been a significant area of activity for the Committee. Along with undertaking the review on Universal Credit, the Committee also received information reports on the Council's current housing policies and homelessness in the Borough. Members received an overview of the Council's Homelessness Assessment, a key report setting out the Council's response to its statutory duties to manage homelessness in the Borough. The Committee also received an update on the Council's homelessness strategy where it had an opportunity to review the proposed strategy, make comments and submit final comments to Cabinet in support of the strategy.

Budget Review and Cabinet's Budget Proposals

As a statutory consultee to the Cabinet's 2020/21 budget proposals published in December, the Committee reviewed the proposals within its remit and submitted comments to the Corporate Services, Commerce and Communities Policy Overview Committee. During the year, the Committee also received an update on the 2019/20 budget.

Annual Complaints Update 2018/19

The Committee received a comprehensive report on Resident Complaints and Enquiries within its remit, noting the trends and providing appropriate feedback to officers.

‘ Resident payments, schools & the environment ’

The work of the Residents, Education & Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee



Councillors:

Wayne Bridges (Chairman)

Michael Markham (Vice-Chairman)

Allan Kauffman

John Morgan

Devi Radia

Paula Rodrigues

Steve Tuckwell

Jan Sweeting (Opposition Lead)

Stuart Mathers

Tony Little (Co-opted Education representative)

Lead Officer: Neil Fraser, Democratic Services

Our remit

This Committee is responsible for the policy overview role for a diverse range of Council services central to residents' quality of life. Our remit extends to education, highways, transport, footpaths, green spaces, planning, heritage, waste and recycling, sport and leisure,

environmental health, and beyond. The Committee has undertaken a major review this year into littering and fly-tipping. It has also monitored a number of critical service areas.

REVIEWING: Addressing Littering and Fly-Tipping within Hillingdon

During 2019/20, the Committee has undertaken a review aimed at addressing littering and fly-tipping within the Borough.

When considering the topic as a potential review, the Committee was informed that, as at June 2019, the Council's call centre had logged over 19,000 enquiries from Members and residents on the subject of littering and fly-tipping over the preceding 12 months. Such enquiries related to matters such as fly-tipping on Borough highways, fly-tipping on Council owned land, drug-related litter, and refuse on street paths and highways.

The Committee had, in the previous 12 months, received an information report detailing fly-tipping from the perspective of the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment (ASBET) team. However, mindful that the issues had implications for a variety of Council departments, including the Contact Centre, Enforcement

teams, and Waste Services, and understanding that these issues were a source of concern for both Members and residents of Hillingdon, the Committee approved the topic as its next major review. The review then progressed to securing witnesses as part of its work to gather further information to inform any potential recommendations to Cabinet.

The review began with various witness sessions and the Committee heard evidence from key service areas, represented by the Council's Head of Waste Services, and the Antisocial Behavior and Environment Manager. In addition, the Committee heard testimony from representatives of the local community, as well as volunteer groups such as Hayes Town Centre Partnership and Keep Britain Tidy.

Throughout the review, the Committee has sought to understand the scale and impact of the issues, both within Hillingdon, and nationally. As the review progressed, the Committee has sought to understand how residents and local areas are affected by littering and fly-tipping, how the Council is working to address the issues, and what further best practice could be adopted from other local authorities or relevant groups, in order to make relevant and cost effective recommendations to the Cabinet.

The Committee's review remains good work in progress, and the final report, with recommendations, will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration in the coming months.

MONITORING: education & key environmental services

School Places

The Committee receives quarterly updates on the provision of school places to pupils. This enables Members to also review headline pupil projections at both primary and secondary levels, aligned with the Council's School Expansion Programme. Members noted that, in previous years, the Council had successfully offered every child a school place, and understood that work was underway regarding places for September 2020.

Educational attainment of our young people

An annual report is presented each year to Members detailing trends in the academic standards of pupils within the Borough. The Committee was informed that attainment within Early Years had risen, and outcomes at both Key Stages within primary phases showed Borough averages as either in-line or above the national level for all key measures. Within the secondary phase, Members noted that Key Stage 4 outcomes had decreased slightly, but remained above national averages, while some progress had been made regarding outcomes for the post-16 age group.

However, Members did note that challenges remained, including Hillingdon's performance versus statistical neighbours at Key Stages 1 and 2, and requested additional information to allow for further scrutiny. The Committee also requested that the Council looks at ways of improving outcomes for families in areas where schools may be facing external challenges.

Elective Home Education

The Committee received an update on how the Council is supporting elective home education within the Borough.

At the time of publication of the report, 240 children were being educated at home. Reasons for parents electing to home educate their children were many, and could include a lack of places at their preferred school, issues with teaching staff, or issues with pupils at their last school. Often, children would be home-schooled for only a short period of time, as would return to school once whatever issue they have experienced is resolved.

As of October 2019, Hillingdon Council has introduced a new procedure, aligned with the recent recommendations from the Children's Commissioner's report 'Skipping School', which requires all schools to provide the Borough's Elective Home Education Officer with detailed information on pupils now being home schooled, including the reasons for the decision.

Hillingdon continues to contribute to DfE consultations, and officers are hopeful that in the future the DfE will grant local authorities additional powers, including the right to require parents to register their child with their local authority as being home schooled.

New School Improvement Strategy

The Committee received a report detailing the new School Improvement Strategy, which had been updated to reflect new Schools Causing Concern guidance issued by central government, and had been designed to be school-led and collaborative in nature.

The Committee was advised that this updated draft strategy built on the '*Partnership for Success - A Strategy for School Improvement 2015-18*'m and promoted collaboration to raise standards and attainment in Hillingdon schools, building on the success to date.

The Committee understood that some further work remained before the strategy is to be finalised, including further discussion with Hillingdon schools.

Adult Learning

The Committee was informed that the mission of Hillingdon Adult and Community Learning Service (HACL) was to provide every learner with 'an outstanding learning experience that supports them towards a clearly identified and ambitious goal and encourages their economic, social and emotional wellbeing'.

Officers advised that participation was increasing year on year, of which 93% are residents of the Borough. Courses included English, Maths and Digital skills, Learning for Work, Learning in the Community, and Learning for Adults with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.

HACL was inspected by Ofsted in December 2019. The service was found to be well managed with consistently good teaching that is tailored to the needs of the learners. Feedback from 346 students provided 'overwhelmingly positive' comments, with 98% stating that they would recommend HACL to friends.

SEN Service Provision

The Committee was provided with information on the Council's provision of Special Educational Need and Disability Services to schools.

To address the need for specialist provision within the Borough, the SEND Provision Capital Plan has been updated to include a number of school expansions, while Eden Academy Trust has applied to develop two new free schools within the Borough for children with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD). The programme had been agreed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), and the Committee noted that officers were in discussion with Eden Academy and the ESFA to review proposed timetable and delivery options.

With regard to support for mainstream schools, the Service had been newly transformed, resulting in a revised SEND strategy to provide support to schools.

Gambling Policy Statement

In line with the Council's requirements to review its licensing policies every 3 years, the Committee received a report detailing proposed revisions to the Statement of Gambling Policy. The Committee was advised that there had been little change to gambling legislation since 2016, and as a result, there were very few changes proposed to the policy. The draft policy was to be consulted on, with stakeholders including HMRC and the Police. Following this consultation period, the policy was considered by Cabinet with the Committee's comments, ahead of its adoption at Council in November 2019.

Emergency Response Processes

The Committee received a report detailing the Council's emergency response processes. The command structure, which included the roles and responsibilities of officers and Members in the event of an incident, was outlined, including activities to be taken by partners and emergency services such as the Police or Fire brigade.

The Committee was advised that, in the event of an emergency, Ward Councillors had a useful role in advising and assessing the needs of their local residents, particularly in instances of evacuation. Member training courses were being reviewed, and would be rolled out to Members once completed.

Road Safety Around Schools

The Committee received a report detailing the work of the Council's School Travel and Road Safety (STARS) Team to foster a positive road safety climate, attitude and environment at the Borough's schools.

Members were informed that, according to an analysis of 2018 Collision data collated by the Department of Transport, Hillingdon's roads were the safest in London. The data recorded 48 incidents for every hundred miles driven, compared to the London average of 166 incidents per 100 miles, which showed that Hillingdon roads were approximately 71% safer than the average London borough.

The team's work had been recognized in both national transport and London transport awards, and it was noted that Councillor Teji Barnes was the chairman of the London Road Safety Council, which was further evidence of the Council's commitment to keeping Hillingdon roads safe for residents.

Parking Management Schemes

The Committee received a report detailing the Council's extensive Parking Management Schemes. As per data captured from the London Travel demand survey 2011/2012, Hillingdon had the third highest household car access rates in London at 73%. With several major housing developments under construction in Hillingdon, the demand for kerbside space was increasing significantly, together with the demand for parking schemes. In 2018, the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transportation and Recycling had 64 petitions submitted to the Council that fell within his portfolio and of these, 41 (64%) were parking related.

The Committee was informed that, last year, the Transport and Projects team had consulted over 11,500 households on possible parking options in their roads, and at the time of the report, the existing program had over 51 schemes of various sizes that were being managed. This did not include the various petitions that the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transportation would be hearing in the coming months.

Youth Services

The Committee received an update on the provision of services for youth across the Borough, and were informed that Hillingdon Council delivers a wide range of services and events for young people in Hillingdon, including universal youth services led by Residents Services and targeted youth services led by Adults, Children & Young People Services. In addition, there were many voluntary sector and faith groups providing services that the Council has previously supported, or continues to support.

Services available included the popular Fiesta summer programme, as well as all year round engagement activities delivered from a network of Young People's Centres across the Borough. A programme of activities delivered from Young People's Centres is also targeted at young people to support their transition into adulthood, together with the 'Transporter' youth bus delivering targeted services across the Borough. It was noted that these services complemented the wide range of other services available in the Borough, such as sport and physical activity programmes, youth activities offered by faith organisations and uniform groups amongst others.

It was welcomed that such activities and services aimed to keep young people healthy, active and safe, to develop and learn new skills and play an active part in the community.

Community Infrastructure Levy Reporting

The Committee received a report detailing the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), a charge which allowed the Council to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects, and which supported the financing of infrastructure costs across the Borough.

In line with regulatory requirements, a detailed annual report on CIL total income and expenditure is required to be published on the Council's website by 31 December in respect of the previous financial year.

The Committee was informed that CIL formed one of the sources of funding towards the overall capital programme, and as of the end of

December 2019, a total of £3,961k CIL receipts had been invoiced or received within the financial year.

CIL regulations stated that a minimum of 15% of receipts must be allocated to local neighbourhood projects. The Council's popular Chrysalis programme met the criteria for local CIL infrastructure spending, and annual spending on this programme is in excess of the 15%; approximately £1m (fully financed by CIL).

The Committee was advised that, during that time period, Hillingdon had spent all of its CIL funding received.

Update on previous reviews: Air Quality

The Committee regularly monitors the implementation of recommendations resulting from past reviews.

On the review into Air Quality commissioned in 2017/18, the Committee received an update following Cabinet's approval of a new Air Quality Action Plan. The Committee will continue to monitor its past review recommendations and this important topic going forward.

Update on previous reviews: The Council's current and future relationships with Academies and Free Schools

The Committee received an update on the implementation of recommendations that had resulted from the previous review into the Council's current and future relationship with Academies and Free Schools.

Of the six recommendations that had resulted from the review, five had been completed. The sixth, which recommended that the Council

works to review the school improvement framework, was in progress, with a draft School Improvement Strategy under consultation.

The framework would provide clarity on how the Council was providing support to schools, including both schools that were performing well, and therefore have no need for high level support, as well as schools that needed additional support, or support within certain areas.

Budget Review and Cabinet's Budget Proposals

As a statutory consultee to the Cabinet's 2020/21 budget proposals published in December, the Committee reviewed the proposals within its remit and submitted comments to the Corporate Services, Commerce and Communities Policy Overview Committee. During the year, the Committee also received an update on the 2019/20 budget.

Annual Complaints Update 2018/19

The Committee received a comprehensive report on Resident Complaints and Enquiries within its remit, noting the trends and providing appropriate feedback to officers

‘ decision-making scrutiny ’

The work of the Executive Scrutiny Committee



Councillors:

Henry Higgins (Chairman)

John Riley (Vice-Chairman)

Simon Arnold

Wayne Bridges

Nick Denys

Peter Curling (Opposition Lead)

Peter Money

Kerri Prince

Mr Anthony Little - *Roman Catholic Diocesan representative (on education matters)*

Lead Officer: *Mark Braddock, Democratic Services*

Scrutiny of decision-making

A period of 5 working days must elapse before any formal executive 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 acts as the statutory ‘checks & balances’ upon the executive.

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



During 2019/20, there were no call-ins of any Cabinet, Cabinet Member decisions or other key executive decisions.

The Chairman of the Executive Scrutiny Committee has a key constitutional prerogative of being able to decide 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, in accordance with the Council's Constitution. Such decisions are carefully considered and when approved by the Chairman, this enables on an exceptional basis for such decisions to be implemented with immediate effect so the Council can be responsive, primarily to safeguard residents' best interests. These are otherwise known as 'urgency' or 'special urgency' decisions through the formal executive decision-making process depending on the necessity of the matter in question.

During 2019/20, the Chairman has carefully considered and agreed to the waiver of the call-in power for a small number of decisions.

Such actions, which are taken on an exceptional basis, have ensured the Council can deliver critical services and works to safeguard residents.

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 and provides the necessary permissions for these to be considered.

To assist in their wider deliberations, the Committee often request clarification on a number of matters within individual Cabinet reports, which are responded to by officers either at or after the meeting.

‘NHS accountability, GP pressures, dental services Michael Sobell Hospice, Post Office services’

The work of the External Services Select Committee



Councillors:

John Riley (Chairman)

Nick Denys (Vice Chairman)

Simon Arnold

Vanessa Hurhangee

Kuldeep Lakhmana (Opposition Lead)

Ali Milani

June Nelson

Devi Radia

Lead Officers: *Nikki O'Halloran and Liz Penny,
Democratic Services*

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.

Over the past year, Members have continued to develop the reputation of this important scrutiny committee so that the highest, most senior and influential members of outside agencies regularly attend. These witnesses will often seek assurances that they will be included in the meetings so that the Committee can hear what they have to say. They have become used to the Committee's in-depth challenging questioning and commentary and welcome a forum where external agencies can meet in a calm but probing atmosphere in order to demonstrate how their service can improve the lives of residents.

This approach has proved beneficial with regard to the Committee's scrutiny of the closure of Michael Sobell Hospice. Since the impromptu closure of the Hospice in June 2018, Members of the Committee have kept a close eye on the situation to ensure that the service was reinstated as quickly as possible. This involved formal

Holding external agencies to account

The External Services Select Committee has a broad remit to scrutinise all non-Hillingdon Council organisations whose actions

and informal meetings with the various stakeholders and residents as well as maintaining strong communications links outside of these meetings. The Committee is happy to report that Michael Sobell Hospice was formally reopened under new leadership in January 2020.

As well as undertaking light touch reviews and receiving update reports (in relation to the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre review, the provision of post office services in the Borough, congenital heart disease standards, the proposed move of Moorfields Eye Hospital and the Safer Hillingdon Partnership), the Committee has also monitored the performance of the local NHS Trusts (with a view to later providing evidence to the CQC during its inspections).

The Committee is pleased that partners value its scrutiny role and that its work appears to be held in high regard. The strength of the Committee's approach to scrutiny enables it to investigate those aspects of service provision within the Borough that are important to residents and the Council.

SELECT PANEL: Reviewing the Pressures on Local GPs

During 2018/19, the Committee undertook a review into the pressures faced by General Practitioners (GPs) in the Borough. It had been acknowledged that General Practice in England was under significant strain. Many GPs and their teams were struggling to meet the increasing pressures of limited resources, recruitment and retention challenges and the burden of patients with long term health conditions. A Select Panel was set up to gain a better understanding of the pressures faced by GPs and to consider best practice elsewhere through case studies, policy ideas and witness sessions.

A number of useful witness sessions were held during which Members heard evidence from GPs, trainee GPs, representatives of the Local Medical Committee, Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group, Healthwatch Hillingdon, Health Education England, the Council's housing team, the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Director of Public Health.



On completion of the review, the Panel was in a position to recommend a number of changes to alleviate pressures on GPs; these will be to the benefit of local residents as they will improve access to services and will enable GPs to focus on helping their patients to get the right help when they need it.

The agreed recommendations included: the establishment of a single online directory of health, care and wellbeing services; the simplification of processes in relation to GP referrals to Citizens Advice Bureau services; improved signposting to services via information screens in GP surgeries; options to enable homecare to be triaged and deployed more flexibly by Neighbourhood Teams to support the independence of residents and prevent avoidable GP visits and hospital admissions; and the streamlining of GP administrative procedures in relation to patient requests for medical information to support their housing assessments.

The final report and recommendations from the Select Panel were considered by the External Services Select Committee in October 2019 and approved by Cabinet in January 2020, for referral to other external relevant bodies as appropriate. Progress in relation to these recommendations will be routinely monitored in the future.

SELECT PANEL: Reviewing Dental Service Provision for Children and Young People in the Borough



In 2015, the Council's Social Services, Housing and Public Health Policy Overview Committee presented a report to Cabinet on children's oral health. During the single meeting review, Members considered information from witnesses about the work that was being undertaken in relation to children's oral health in the Borough, noting

preventative measures such as the Early Years Programme and Brushing for Life campaign.

Given that child oral health continues to be a matter of considerable concern both nationally and at a local level, at its meeting on 9 October 2019, the External Services Select Committee received an information report and heard from witnesses in relation to this topic. Members of the Select Committee heard concerning evidence regarding the dental health of local children and young people. It was noted that, in London, about 1 in 4 five year olds have tooth decay with, on average, 4 teeth affected. Moreover, Members heard that:

- In London, tooth decay is the top cause of non-emergency hospital admission amongst 5-9 year olds;
- In 2017/18, about 7,000 children in London aged < 10 years had 1 or more teeth extracted in hospital because of tooth decay;
- In Hillingdon, more than double the number of 5-9 year olds were admitted to hospital for dental caries than for tonsillitis in 2017/18 and;
- Oral health impacts profoundly on a child's development.

In light of such concerning evidence, it was agreed that the Committee's next Select Panel review to be undertaken would consider dental services in the Borough; specifically focussing on service provision for children and young people and the effectiveness of preventative measures taken by partners in relation to caries and other oral health issues.

The primary remit of the review is to explore the status quo within Hillingdon and consider possible areas for improvement. It is anticipated that such improvements will result in increased customer

satisfaction and a reduction in the incidences of tooth decay in the young.

The first meeting of the Select Panel was held on 12 February 2020. At this meeting, Members heard from local dentists, representatives of the Local Dental Committee and Public Health professionals. A number of useful ideas and suggestions were forthcoming at this initial meeting; however, these are still in their infancy at this stage and will be fleshed out further as the review progresses.

The final report and recommendations from the Panel are expected to be considered by the Committee, then Cabinet in due course, for referral to other external relevant bodies as required.

QUALITY MATTERS: State of Local Health Services

Each year, there is a statutory requirement for all providers of NHS healthcare services to produce a Quality Account: an annual report to the public about the quality of services delivered and submitted to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care by 30 June each year. Providers are asked to consider three aspects of quality – patient experience, safety and clinical effectiveness - and have a legal duty to send their Quality Account to the overview and scrutiny committee (OSC) in the local authority area in which the provider has a registered office.

Hillingdon's External Services Select Committee reviews these reports annually and provides a statement indicating whether Members believe that the report is a fair reflection of the healthcare services provided. This statement is then included verbatim in the final published version of the report.



‘ involving residents and the community ’

Stakeholder and witness engagement is central to overview and scrutiny in Hillingdon

Councillors on Policy Overview, Scrutiny and Select Committees actively seek to involve residents, interest groups, experts, private and public organisations in the policy reviews and scrutiny activity their respective Committees undertake. Strong witness testimony has, and continues to provide added verifiable value to the Committee's findings presented ultimately to the Cabinet for approval. 2019/20 was no exception, with the following external witnesses engaging in this important aspect of Hillingdon's democratic process:

- Hillingdon Chamber of Commerce
- SEGRO
- Uxbridge College
- Metropolitan Police Service
- U+I
- Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group
- Healthwatch Hillingdon
- The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust
- Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust
- Hillingdon Local Medical Committee
- London Ambulance Service NHS Trust
- Post Office Limited
- Youth Parliament
- Hillingdon Youth Council
- Director of Public Health
- Moorfield's Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- NHS England
- NHS Improvement
- Michael Sobell Hospice Charity
- Harlington Hospice
- Whittington Health NHS Trust
- Dentists
- Local Dental Committee
- Hillingdon MIND
- Catalyst Housing
- The Barnet Group
- Parent and Carer Group
- DASH
- HACS
- Children in Care Council
- ADHD & Autism Centre
- Hillingdon Library Service
- Hillingdon CAMHS
- Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Chairman
- Hayes Town Centre Partnership
- Hayes Town Business Forum
- Oak Farm Residents Association
- Keep Britain Tidy

