

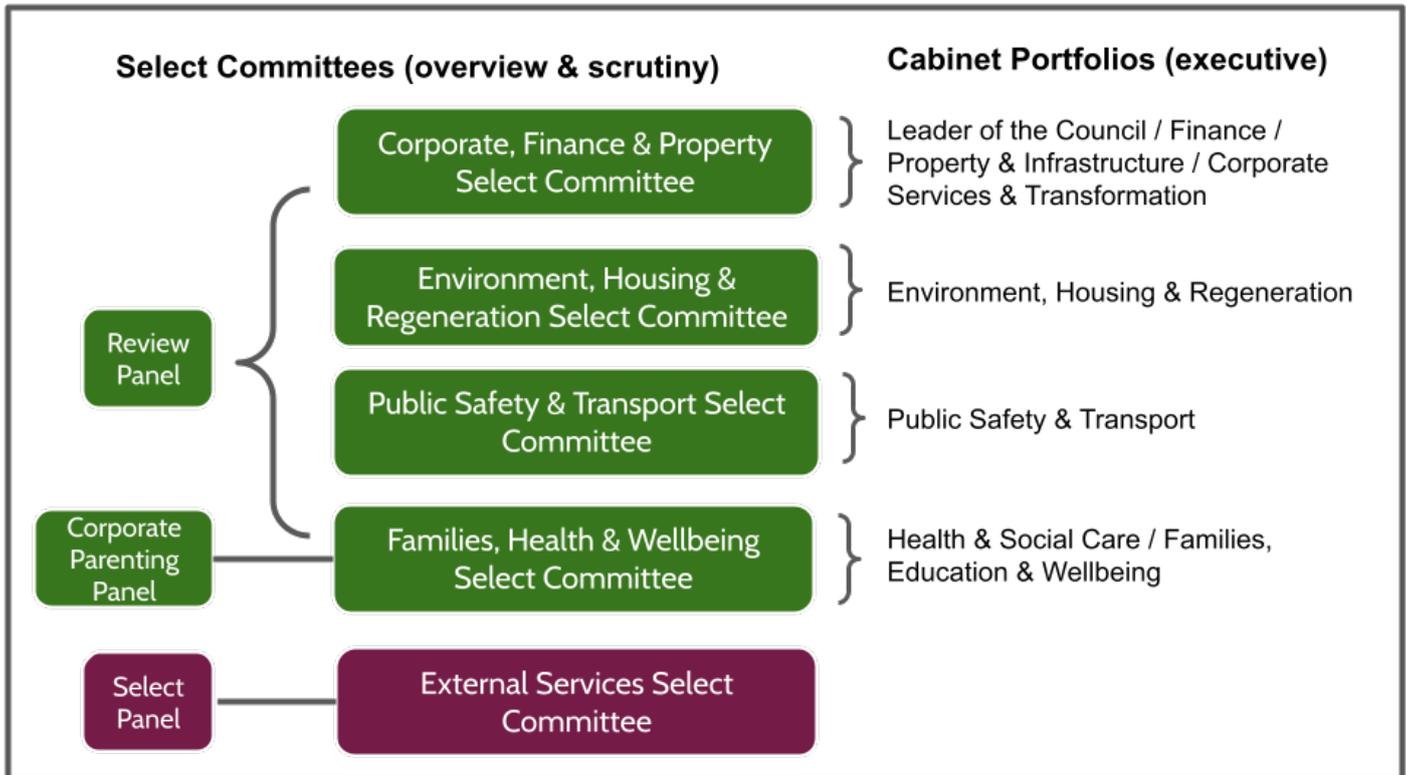
Select Committee Annual Report

2021 - 2022



Introduction

This has been another robust year for overview and scrutiny in Hillingdon. In May 2021, the Council established all new select committee arrangements to undertake this statutory responsibility, which more closely mirrored Cabinet Member portfolio and also service areas within the Council:



In summary, the purpose of these committees is to:

- Assist in the development of Council policy;
- Question and evaluate the actions of the Cabinet before and after decisions are taken;
- Have the power to make reports and recommendations on such matters;
- Scrutinise, externally, local health services and crime and disorder reduction.

In the midst of the recovery phase of the COVID-19 global pandemic, Councillors on the select committees returned to physical meetings but contact with witnesses still continued with a hybrid approach - both in person and virtually, delivering a more accessible and modern approach to scrutiny.

Councillors have continued to perform their role monitoring and reviewing both council and external services in the best interests of Hillingdon residents. The committees have conducted 4 major policy reviews this year which have raised important recommendations to move services and the Borough forward. This year there has been excellent witness and service user participation throughout.

This annual report provides an opportunity to note the breadth of activity and achievements of overview and scrutiny in Hillingdon during the 2021/22 Municipal Year. Such focus will, no doubt, continue as the committees start work following the local elections. On behalf of the Committee Chairmen, this annual report is commended to Council on 12 May 2022.

How select committees work

Select committees are responsible for monitoring council services and recommending changes to Cabinet on a range of areas to shape future policy direction, along with the statutory call-in power. Another 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 are able to request information reports on particular matters of resident interest, which are ably reviewed through the valuable insight of local councillors. Committees also provide comments 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.

The Council's corporate parenting responsibilities are also an integral part within Hillingdon's overview and scrutiny arrangements. The Corporate Parenting Panel actively engages young people in the development of council services, ultimately with a direct line to the decision-making Cabinet.

All select committee meetings are broadcast live on the Council's YouTube channel to increase democratic awareness of overview and scrutiny. Along with live broadcasting, Democratic Services also provides the professional support and advice to councillors on the select committees.

Constitutional compliance

Budget and Policy Framework

Select committees are required to be consulted on any budget and policy framework document prepared by the Cabinet for consultation. During 2021/22, the Environment, Housing & Regeneration Select Committee considered the Housing Strategy twice, helping shape the final document adopted by full Council. Select committees also were part of the statutory consultation on the Cabinet's budget proposals for 2022/23 and provided comments on it.

Councillor Calls for Action

Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, select committees can consider 'Councillor Calls for Action' submissions. These powers enable any councillor to ask for a discussion at the relevant committee on a local issue where all other methods of resolution have been exhausted. Democratic Services can confirm that no such Calls for Actions have been requested and thereby considered during 2021/22.

Protocol on Scrutiny & Cabinet relations during 2021/22

Following the publication of Statutory Scrutiny Guidance in 2019, Councillors reviewed the overview and scrutiny arrangements and adopted a new Protocol on Scrutiny & Cabinet relations, setting out how these two key arms of the Council's governance arrangements work well together. The Statutory Scrutiny Officer can report there has been general compliance with this protocol during the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

Scrutiny call-ins during 2021/22

Select committees (other than the External Services Select Committee) have a statutory duty to scrutinise executive decisions that have been taken but have not yet been implemented. This acts as the statutory 'checks & balances' upon decisions taken by the Cabinet and Cabinet Members. This action is widely known as the 'call-in' power, where during a period of 5 working days after an executive decision is taken, it may be called-in by the relevant select committee to be considered further, and ultimately referred back to the Cabinet or Cabinet Member to reconsider.

During 2021/22, this process was undertaken using a new Scrutiny call-in App, accessible on computer and mobile devices. The App enables a councillor on the relevant select committee to request a call-in of a particular decision online, where an automated email is then sent to other committee members to agree, or not, to the call-in request.

Should a majority of the committee agree with the request via the App, then this is deemed a valid call-in, Democratic Services are automatically alerted, and the Cabinet or Cabinet Member decision is immediately put on hold. If this happens, then the matter is formally considered by the committee and referred to Cabinet, if required, to be reconsidered.

During 2021/22, there were 3 call-in requests, but upon not reaching a majority there was no valid call-in of any Cabinet or Cabinet Member decision.

Urgent decisions

Chairmen of the four-service based select committees have a constitutional prerogative of being able to decide whether to waive the pre-decision publication period and/or the post decision scrutiny call-in period (as described in the section above). This is 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 waivers are exceptional and carefully considered. When approved by the relevant chairman, this enables a decision to be implemented quicker and often with immediate effect, so the Council can be responsive in residents' best interests. These are constitutionally known as 'urgency' or 'special urgency' decisions through the formal executive decision-making process depending on the necessity of the matter in question.

During 2021/22, there were 8 such decisions where the relevant select committee chairman exercised this constitutional prerogative in the affirmative.

Corporate, Finance & Property Select Committee

Councillors on the committee:

Richard Mills (Chairman)
Vanessa Hurhangee (Vice-Chairman)
Farhad Choubedar
Raymond Graham
Richard Lewis
Tony Eginton (Opposition Lead)
Lindsay Bliss

Lead Officer: Liz Penny, Democratic Services



Remit

The Committee is responsible for the policy overview role for a broad array of Council services. These include strategic internal functions, such as finance, property, partnerships, human resources, democratic services, legal services, ICT and economic development. Further responsibilities also include community engagement, local commerce and job creation, equalities, energy use and carbon reduction. The Committee has undertaken one in-depth review this year and has also monitored a number of service areas as set out below.

Review into Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Noting the importance of effective monitoring of performance to ensure the delivery of good quality services to meet the needs of residents, the Committee elected to conduct a comprehensive review of Performance Monitoring and Reporting within Hillingdon Council. This review investigated the Council's current arrangements in the use of data to manage operational delivery and drive service improvements and sought to:

- compare and contrast arrangements in Hillingdon with peer authorities and other public organisations and to understand areas of good practice and further improvement and developments required;
- Investigate short-medium term improvements in data reporting and presentation to decision-makers, e.g., Corporate Management Team / Cabinet Members / Select Committees; and
- provide Members with an insight into the future of data collection and reporting, along with

associated technology and its practical application for decision-making.

The Committee noted that, whilst Hillingdon was required to gather data for the purposes of statutory returns (including in Adult Social care, Children's Services and Housing) - the primary purpose of data collection was to ensure the Council was appropriately discharging its responsibilities and to aid future service development.

Suggested areas identified for improvement included:

- Use and sharing of data across the authority including Members
- Use of up-to-date tools for managing data and performance
- Utilisation of dashboard reporting
- Presentation and data visualisation
- Use of predictive analytics to help shape strategic change.



During the Committee's information gathering sessions, a wide range of views was sought, including those of Hillingdon Council senior officers and external experts. Based on the evidence received it was apparent that the service had generally been performing very well. Resultant recommendations therefore focused on how to make further improvements to ensure consistency in data reporting to key decision-makers - CMT, Cabinet Members and Select Committees - whilst noting the importance of presenting data in a user-friendly manner. The Committee also agreed that an important next step would be to consider bringing in new tools and ways of working.

It was anticipated that the implementation of the recommendations set out in the report would ensure the provision of user-friendly, timely, reliable and cost-effective performance monitoring and reporting systems across the Council, which would in turn assist in measuring Council performance, driving strategic decisions and meeting the needs of local residents.

This review was presented to, and approved by, Cabinet in February 2022.

Monitoring activity

Annual Complaints Update

The Committee received a comprehensive report on Resident Complaints and Enquiries within its remit, noting the trends and providing appropriate feedback to officers. The Committee was informed that these numbers suggest the complaints procedure continues to work well.

Engagement with the Armed Forces

The Committee was presented with an update on the Council's Engagement with the Armed Forces.

Members heard that Hillingdon had the largest number of serving Armed Forces personnel of all the London Boroughs and there were an estimated 8000 veterans living in Hillingdon, along with 855 war pensioners. The London Borough of Hillingdon had signed the Armed Forces Community Covenant in June 2012 and Cllr Sir Ray Puddifoot MBE had become the new Armed Forces Champion on 14 January 2021. Armed Forces Day was celebrated annually in the Borough.



Members were informed that, given the disadvantage often faced by Service personnel in accessing public services, Hillingdon Council provided additional priority in its Social Housing Allocation Policy. The Council had invested £6m in the Education and Visitor Centre at the historic Battle of Britain Bunker on the former RAF Uxbridge site. Moreover, local Normandy Veterans were supported in making several trips to the Normandy beaches and had been awarded the Civic Medal of the Borough in recognition of their wartime contributions. The Council also supported the work of the Polish Air Force Memorial Committee and had jointly funded the cleaning of the Grade 2 Polish War Memorial in conjunction with the Polish Embassy.

It was confirmed that Remembrance Sunday events across the Borough and a Two Minute Silence Ceremony on the Civic Centre Forecourt were held annually. The Council had also compiled a detailed record of the background behind every named individual on WW1 war memorials in Hillingdon, publishing the results as a book 'We will remember them' which was displayed in each of the Borough's libraries.

Budget Review and Cabinet's Budget Proposals

As a statutory consultee to the Cabinet's 2022/23 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 three Select Committees to Cabinet. During the year, the Committee also received an update on the 2021/22 budget.

Disability Access in Public Buildings

Members were advised that the Equality Act 2010 was further supported by the Equality Duty which required public bodies to consider the needs of all individuals. It encouraged public bodies to understand how different people would be affected by their activities and recognised that disabled people's needs may be different from those of non-disabled people. Officers had liaised with the LBH Principal Access Officer who carried out accessibility assessments and reported that all Council sites visited were fundamentally accessible and raised no concerns in terms of satisfying the Equality Act 2010.

Data Protection

Members received an update on how the Council ensured full compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (“GDPR”) and the Data Protection Act 2018. It was confirmed that the Council did everything possible to ensure that there was a robust data protection regime in place across the whole spectrum of its services. To date, the Council’s data protection policies and practices had ensured that it was able to satisfactorily address any challenges which had arisen. It was confirmed that training was ongoing with all staff required to undertake an annual GDPR electronic training module.

Members heard that the Hillingdon Information Assurance Group (HIAG) comprising senior representatives from all Council departments met on a quarterly basis to discuss any information governance issues. HIAG had authority to implement any changes that were necessary to ensure full compliance with the legislation. In addition, HIAG was responsible for sharing best practice across the Council and ensuring that lessons were learnt from data protection breaches and other problematic cases.

Digital Connectivity Strategy

The Committee received an update regarding the Council’s Digital Connectivity Strategy, approved by the Cabinet. The strategy sought to ensure the Council was ‘investor ready’ to capture the national progress of digital technologies and infrastructure locally to ensure that Hillingdon was a place with great digital connectivity for residents and local businesses to thrive. It was recognised that Digital Connectivity was increasingly becoming an important consideration in domestic and business location choices. Current data for the Borough was showing the level of Full Fibre at 5%, compared to the average of 13% in West London. Some residents were being impacted with slow and capped speeds due to old infrastructure, which had been highlighted by the pandemic.

As more residents and local businesses operated from a home environment, good connectivity was vital for their daily tasks, but this was also placing huge burdens on the current infrastructure. By uplifting the current copper connections to Full Fibre, this would enable ultra-fast broadband so that residents could work, shop, learn and entertain without limitations. Members heard that Hillingdon’s proposed Digital Connectivity Strategy was the enabling vehicle by which the Council would seek to achieve these aims for the Borough working with partners and the private sector.

Cyber Security

A confidential update on Hillingdon Council’s Cyber Security was provided to the Committee detailing the security systems, controls, measures and policies in place to prevent unauthorised access and attacks to the Council’s IT networks and systems and to protect residents’ data.

These controls and policies had proved to government, via annual audits and submissions, that they were sufficiently rigorous to allow the Council to interact with the Public Services Network (PSN).



Repairs and Maintenance

The Committee received a report regarding the Council's repairs and maintenance. It was confirmed that responsive repairs and maintenance of the Council's residential housing were undertaken by the in-house Repairs Service supported by several specialist contractors and suppliers.

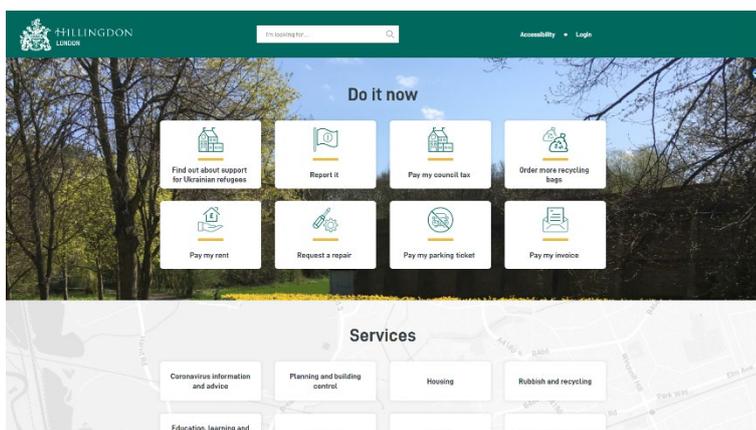
Members heard that the Repairs Service had a Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) of 44 trades operative, plus works planners, supervisors and managers who dealt with 35,000 - 40,000 repair requests annually. Responsive repairs were supported by several approved term contractors who undertook larger and/or specialist repairs such as roofing, drainage, plumbing, fencing, building, plastering and ground works.

The Committee was advised that the Repairs Service also managed the re-servicing and repair of all void housing properties, delivered via two term contractors. Moreover, it delivered repairs and maintenance to the Council's corporate buildings stock and carried out minor disability adaptations and minor fabric remedial works associated with fire safety risk assessments.

Website Performance and Improvement

The Committee received a report which provided an overview of the Council's website provision together with details of the ongoing development of the website platform and associated resident contact initiatives via the Council's Business Improvement Delivery (BID) transformation programme.

Councillors were informed that, as part of the Digital Transformation project, the ICT team, in collaboration with the Contact Centre, the Corporate Communications team and GOSS Interactive, are utilising web forms, the web platform, modules and technologies, to continue to modernise and standardise the look and feel of the Council's website, transform its processes, reduce unnecessary complexity and improve the overall take-up and online experience for residents.



Members heard that the Council's website served two main purposes; it provided information to residents and enabled them to transact with the Council, for example by making a payment, ordering recycling bags or reporting an incident. The quality of information provided on the website was ensured through a content management process while transactions were completed using the My Hillingdon Account or through third-party applications and portals. The Committee was interested to learn that, since 16 June 2021, 39,057 users had registered a new My Hillingdon Account, equivalent to 40% of the residential properties within the Borough. Since this date 46,533 incidents had been recorded through a My Hillingdon Account, 77% of which had been directly raised by residents online, significantly reducing the need for the contact centre to record incidents. In addition, My Hillingdon Account enabled assisted digital support for those residents who require telephone assistance to complete a request.

There were currently 211 separate self-service 'report it' functions and over 300 online forms providing residents with 24/7 service.

Ways in which the Council helps Local Small Businesses

Members received an update on the work undertaken and the opportunities that existed going forward for Hillingdon Procurement Team to support local businesses. The Committee was advised that, whilst there were no direct legal requirements to support local business, a wider perspective of value needed to be considered in the procurement of goods, works and services. Historically, the Council had taken a more focussed view of value for money based on direct costs and market dynamics. The present Administration had shown a keen interest in expanding that perspective where it could be demonstrated to deliver some of the following benefits:

- Support the recovery from Covid and stimulate prosperity in local areas through the direct or indirect investment in jobs, training, plant, community etc.
- Relieve pressure on other Council services as employment grows and wealth increases in Borough.
- Reduce commercial property voids contributing to a nicer area and promoting business rate growth.
- Support net carbon zero ambitions by reducing travelling time from out of Borough providers and contractors commuting into Hillingdon.
- Encourage successful businesses to tender for work outside of the Borough and further promote success of Hillingdon business.

It was recognised that there would be risks and challenges involved in supporting local businesses and a pragmatic approach was key; however, Members heard that there had been a number of success stories to date. Over the coming months, there would be a continued operational, tactical and strategic drive to further develop the Council's support for local businesses.

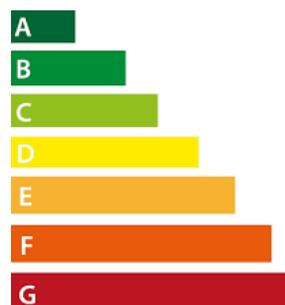
Grants to Hillingdon's Local Voluntary Organisations

The Committee was informed that Hillingdon Council had been a proud supporter of the Borough's voluntary sector for many years. The core grant programme ensured that Hillingdon had a vibrant and thriving voluntary sector providing support, guidance and services for local residents. The Council sought to maximise the benefits from investment in the Borough's voluntary sector to encourage activity that supported residents, reduced demand on Council services and provided value for money.

Members heard that the ongoing commitment of significant financial support to the Borough's voluntary sector had served to sustain a wide range of voluntary sector activity. The certainty of core funding provided a platform for many groups to expand activity, diversify to meet new demands, pursue new initiatives and bid for additional external funding.

Energy Efficiencies in the Civic Centre

An update on the initiatives the planned works, repairs and maintenance teams were exploring to reduce the carbon footprint of the Civic Centre and actions that supported the Council's overall Climate Action Plan was received by the Committee. In terms of energy saving initiatives implemented to date, Members heard that LED lighting had been retrofitted to the first and second floors of the Civic Centre building. Moreover, LED lighting had been installed in the car park – all lamps in the Members, Basement and Mezzanine car parks were now LED – and 6 Electric Charging Points had been installed. Additional



sustainability interventions were under consideration including the installation of cavity wall and roof insulation, photovoltaics across southeast and southwest roof areas, refurbishment / upgrading of ventilation systems, replacement of chillers and cooling tower with air sourced heat pumps or a full system replacement incorporating “air to air” and water source heat pumps with hot water stores, full system pipework and electrical system replacement.

Corporate Communications

The Committee heard that communications across a range of external channels played a key part in the effective delivery of services and priorities, and ensured that residents, businesses, the Council’s workforce, partners and other stakeholders (including the media) were well informed about the work the Council did and the services it provided. High quality and timely communications were imperative in building a positive reputation that the Council was putting residents first.

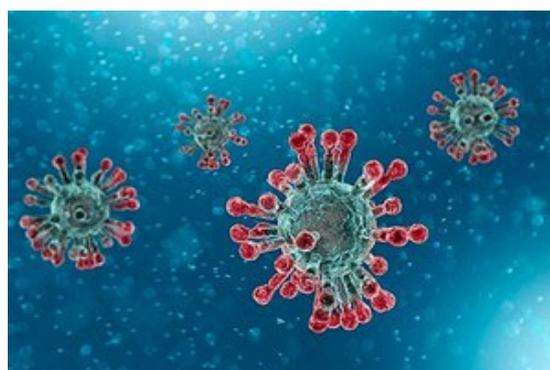
The Council’s core external communications channels, were:

- Hillingdon People – the Council’s Residents’ Magazine
- Media relations
- Publications
- Social media
- Other marketing/advertising materials
- Website.

In terms of social media, Members were interested to learn that, since 2018/19 the Council’s Facebook followers had increased by 88%, Twitter followers had gone up by 4.87% and those who followed the Council on Instagram by 227%.

Past Review Update: Voluntary Sector Response to the Covid-19 pandemic

The Committee received an update on the recommendations approved by Cabinet in June 2021. Members were informed that progress was being made in respect of all the recommendations. However, it was noted that, since completion of the review, the focus for action with Voluntary and Community Sectors (VCS) had shifted from emergency food provision and support towards encouraging greater take up of vaccines and working within communities to ensure health messages were clear and understood.



Members heard that foodbanks continued to see demand but at lower levels than during the compulsory lockdown periods. Former operating models had been reintroduced, such as referrals to foodbanks by partners for collection of emergency food, rather than delivery.

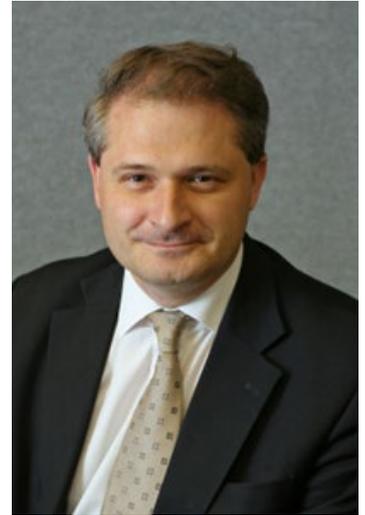
The community hub had evolved to respond to new challenges in supporting residents most in need. The Council had announced its core grants programme 2022/23 in December 2021; this programme reflected the Committee’s recommendation 3, that VCS be supported to deliver services and to provide support and guidance for groups to increase resilience.

Families, Health & Wellbeing Select Committee

Councillors on the committee:

Philip Corthorne (Chairman)
Heena Makwana (Vice-Chairman)
Judith Cooper
Becky Haggar
Paula Rodrigues
Kerri Prince (Opposition Lead)
Jan Sweeting

Mr Tony Little (Education Co-opted Representative –
Roman Catholic)



Lead Officer: Anisha Teji, Democratic Services

Remit

The Families, Health and Wellbeing Select Committee is responsible for undertaking the overview and the scrutiny role in relation to Children's Services (including Corporate Parenting), Adult Social Work, Safeguarding, Provider and Commissioned Care, SEND, Public Health, Health Integration/Voluntary Sector, Education, Children and Families Development and Green Spaces, Sport and Culture.

In addition to monitoring performance of services over the year, considering the Budget and receiving several scrutiny reports, the Committee undertook an in-depth review into the Council offer of Assisted Living Technologies (ALT).

Corporate parenting – championing children

Corporate Parenting is a significant responsibility for the Committee and also for all our Elected Members who are all 'Corporate Parents'. Therefore, all Members have a duty to safeguard the best interests of our Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

The Corporate Parenting Panel, established by the previous Social Care, Housing and Public Health Committee in March 2019, provides for greater integration of Corporate Parenting within the Council's governance arrangements. The purpose of the Corporate Parenting Panel is to champion Corporate Parenting across the Council by directly engaging with our Looked After Children and Care Leavers,

and directly involving them in the democratic and decision-making process, working alongside them to monitor services and improve outcomes.

The Panel has reviewed a wide range of topics over the last year, including annual reports from Independent Reviewing Officers; the LAC Health Team; the Virtual School; and the Fostering and Adoption Service. The Panel has heard presentations from young people in relation to needs, services and feedback from the Care Leavers Conference; the Kids in Care Awards (KICA); and a summary 'Quiz of the Year'. These have been well received by the Panel as they have enabled direct engagement with young people, who have also co-chaired Panel meetings.

The Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman have regularly attended the Corporate Parenting Panel keeping them up to date on the work of the Panel. The Vice Chairman often provided the Committee with detailed updates of what took place at the Panel's meetings ahead of when the minutes were made available to the Committee.

The Panel's work programme has been tailored to include thematic topics, such as Safeguarding, and Health & Education. Moving out of the pandemic, the Corporate Parenting Panel has explored ways the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the way services are now delivered to children and young people.

The Corporate Parenting Panel consists of Councillor Nick Denys (Chairman), Heena Makwana and Kerri Prince. The Panel includes young people, service officers, fostering, nursing and virtual school representatives.

During this municipal year, in addition to the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel, the Committee also heard directly from officers when it received a refresher report on the Overview of Corporate Parenting Responsibilities. This proved to be a valuable and informative reminder to the Committee about the role of Councillors being Corporate Parents. The Committee have ensured that this focus continues after the local elections with the new Councillor intake and Member training plans. The Committee has also importantly covered lessons learned from abuse cases from other local authorities and how they are being applied to Hillingdon's approach to child safeguarding.

Review into adult and community education

In 2020/21, the (now retired) Residents, Education and Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee (REESPOC) carried out a review into adult and community education within Hillingdon. The final report detailed the information received throughout the review and the Committee's subsequent findings and recommendations. The report was passed to the Members of REESPOC for comment, and endorsed by the former Chairman, Councillor Wayne Bridges.

Following the move to Select Committees in May 2021, the report was submitted to the



Families, Health and Wellbeing Select Committee for endorsement to Cabinet. This report was endorsed by the Committee on 26 October 2022 and recommendations approved by the Cabinet.

A key recommendation was to re-brand the service and be named 'ACE'.

Review into the Council's Offer of Assisted Living Technologies

In June 2021, the Committee commenced its review on examining the Council's offer of Assisted Living Technologies (ALT), technology innovation and potential opportunities to create a more tailored and beneficial service experience for our residents enabling them to maintain independent lives.

The Committee met with a wide range of stakeholders including different service providers, various technology providers and service users. Member discussions were informed by the observations made at the site visit to one of the Borough's extra care settings. The Committee was able to gain a real understanding into the thoughts and experiences of people that most relied on ALT such as people with learning disabilities, people with dementia and children and young people through its virtual headset session (see pictures). As part of the review, a survey was sent to a variety of residents within Hillingdon ranging to people already in receipt of services to parents and carers in receipt of direct payments.



The survey was extremely insightful and, most importantly, identified areas that worked well, areas of development and how support could be provided to our residents and their families and carers.

Arising from this review, the Committee made recommendations around strengthening collaborative working, developing training, improved communications and the development of a strategy. With these recommendations, it was hoped that there will be more opportunities available to support residents to live more independently and at home for longer. what opportunities may exist to create a more autism-friendly service experience for residents.

The findings and recommendations arising from the review were considered by Cabinet in April 2022.

Monitoring activity

COVID-19

During 2021/22 the Committee received important updates from the Council regarding coronavirus and the latest position and advice from Public Health England. The Committee was informed of the initiatives that had been brought in as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

More recently the Committee received a verbal update from the Consultant in Public Health. The update set out how the Council was working with residents, businesses and partner organisations to prevent and control the spread of the Covid-19 virus now that the national restrictions had ended.

Public Health Integrated Service Contracts

An update was provided to the Committee on the following commissioned Public Health contracts:

- Universal 0-19 Healthy Child Programme
- Integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Integrated Community Substance Misuse (Drugs and Alcohol)
- Stop Smoking

In respect of the four contracts, the Committee heard about current public health funding, what each service was commissioned to deliver, contract performance, improvements, future plans for 2022/23 and post covid changes.

Carers' Strategy

The Committee received an update on the implementation of the 2018-21 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. The Committee resolved that reporting on the delivery of the strategy should be annual and precede the annual progress report to Cabinet. The Committee reviewed the reports, questioned officers about performance and submitted useful comments to the Cabinet.

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. This year the Committee received an update on the Children's Safeguarding and Partnership which detailed the work undertaken and evidence about the standard to which the agencies responsible for safeguarding children and adults had performed.

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's Children and Young People's Social Care service. The Committee was able to question officers and was pleased to hear about the Young Inspectors programme and its proactive approach.

Better Care Fund – Learning Disabilities/ Autism

As part of its monitoring function, the Committee explored the delivery of the Better Care Fund scheme entitled Integrated Care



and Support for People with Learning Disabilities and Autism. The Better Care Fund was a national initiative intended to deliver integration between health and social care to improve outcomes for residents. This was a good opportunity for Members to question officers on how the roll out of scheme was going and any learning practices.

Youth Services

Members considered a report on Youth Services and heard about the wide range of services and events for young people in Hillingdon. A programme of activities delivered is also targeted at young people to support their transition into adulthood, where they can discuss concerns, seek confidential, impartial advice and take part in fun activities, which for some young people will be a diversion.

The youth services the Council provides and those operating independently of the council deliver a range of life-long benefits and outcomes for those young people taking part, including:

- Keep young people healthy and active
- Enable young people to develop and learn new skills
- Support young people to play an active part in the community
- Keep young people safe and well

Over the last decade or so, the focus and interests of young people has evolved and their needs, social requirements and how they engage with the wider community has changed. There are now the risks of knife crime, child exploitation, bullying and peer pressure that young people face. The Committee reviewed the reports, questioned officers about performance and welcomed an update on the matter later in 2022.

Early Years Provision

Members were presented with an update following the BID review and subsequent staffing restructure of the Child and Family Development Service, incorporating the Council's directly managed Early Years provision and the Children's Centre programme. The Committee heard that the revised staffing restructure provided the required resources and leadership to modernise the Early Years and Children's Centre services, increase the capacity of the frontline teams and enabling the service to take a more commercial approach to Early Years provision.

Th report also highlighted the work underway to evolve the children's centres delivery offer in line with national agendas of The Best Start for Life and Family Hubs. Members asked questions and added this item to the work programme to hear an update on this area in the future.

Promoting Health Lifestyles Sports and Physical Activity

The Committee was provided with an overview of the Sport and Physical Activity Team programmes and activities in 2021 and the forthcoming Hillingdon Sport and Physical Activity Strategy was highlighted.

The Sport and Physical Activity Team's programme offers a wide range of places for participation, such as



community halls, sport clubs, young people's centres, libraries, open spaces and parks. It was believed that by providing opportunities for everyone to participate in sport and physical activity, the Council was encouraging healthy lifestyles which will in turn make Hillingdon an even more attractive place to live and work. Work with residents, sports clubs and specialists, National Governing Bodies for Sport, local partners and services was underway to ensure that the Council was providing the opportunities to participate that reflected local needs.

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 2022.

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 commended the updated format and comprehensive nature of the report, and the work of the officer team during the course of this unprecedented and challenging period of the pandemic working to raise the standards and quality of education in Hillingdon.

The Committee welcomed the establishment of a partnership model with schools and the opportunity it brings to drive improvements across the sector in Hillingdon.

Improvements in attainment of looked after children, the reduction of schools at risk of underperformance, and the development of mental health support capacity in schools were welcomed. The Committee noted the approach to ongoing challenges in areas such as exclusions, attendance, NEETs and welcomes efforts to continue to raise standards.



Schools Admissions Criteria

The Committee heard that Hillingdon Council had a statutory responsibility to secure sufficient early years and school places for children resident in Hillingdon. A review of admissions to reception school places at Hillingdon schools over the last four years evidenced that there is a residual risk that our current admissions criteria may no longer serve the purpose of reducing the risk of applicants not receiving a school placement. As a local education authority, the Council planned for sufficient school places and efficient use of resources.

Following review and discussions with relevant community primary schools, the Council proposed consultation changes to the Published Admissions Numbers (PANs) for relevant schools to address the findings of the review to provide continuing access for residents to their local school and improve stability of pupil numbers and budgets. The Committee had an opportunity to put forward comments

for Cabinet's consideration. The consultations have now concluded, and PANs have been reduced by Cabinet.

Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) provision within Hillingdon

The Committee heard about the Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) provision within Hillingdon and the support available for children and young people with Special Educational Need (SEN) Support. This report was presented following the completed transformation of the SEND and Inclusion Service and response of the service in light of COVID-19.

Despite the on-going financial pressures over the past few years, compounded by the challenges of COVID-19, the transformational work had continued to develop at pace, with more education settings now accessing pre-statutory pathways. The service is now starting to realise some of the benefits from the foundations being put in place to support early intervention with an increase in children and young people accessing pre-statutory support.

Whilst an increase in early intervention is being evidenced, there are still systemic funding pressures in SEND which are being challenged locally and nationally. The Committee was keen to add this item back on the work programme to hear about progress in the future.

Elective Home Education

The Committee was provided with an overview of the Elective Home Education Policy and an update on the new policy implementation. Over the last two years there has been significant fluctuation in the numbers of parents choosing to electively home educate their children. These numbers are now starting to reduce to those seen pre-pandemic.

Budget Review and Cabinet's Budget Proposals

As a statutory consultee to the Cabinet's 2022/23 budget proposals, published in December 2020, the Committee reviewed the proposals within its remit and submitted comments to the Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee. During the year, the Committee also received an update on the 2021/22 budget planning report.

Annual Complaints Update 2020/21

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

Ukraine Refugee Update

The Committee received a verbal update on the Ukraine refugee situation in Hillingdon. It was reported that a resident could apply to be a sponsor through the national website, they would then have to undergo Home Office checks and, if they were approved, they would then need to undergo further local authority checks. The London Borough of Hillingdon carried out anti-fraud, housing, DBS and welfare checks on both the sponsor and arriving families. The Council had commissioned the charity Trinity to support arrivals to settle into the Borough and help make applications for housing, welfare and access to employment. Members welcomed the initiatives put in place to support new arrivals in these

incredibly difficult times. Members were pleased to see the multi-agency approach that had been adopted to manage the refugee situation.

Making the Council More Autism Friendly (1 year on)

The Committee heard that the Social Care, Housing and Public Health Select Committee completed a report on "Making the Council more autism-friendly" in April 2021.

The outcome of the report included 8 recommendations to Cabinet that were made by the Committee. The recommendations were around adopting a practical cooperate standard checklist, training for frontline staff, improving online accessibility, seeking Autism Accreditation, development of e learning training, reviewing processes in place and creating strong partnership relationships. Members heard about the progress of each of the recommendations and future plans were highlighted.

It was noted that the National Autistic Society was not currently accepting applications for accreditation and the Autism Friendly Award had also been closed to applications. Services will continue to review the accessibility of the national accreditation and apply when it is available.

The Committee was keen to hear about further progress in the future and thanked officers for their work thus far, particularly in light of the pandemic. Members were also pleased to hear about the Autism Partnership Board and how it was a valuable resource in allowing feedback and learning to be shared between different partners and agencies.

Environment, Housing & Regeneration Select Committee

Councillors on the committee:

Wayne Bridges (Chairman)
Alan Chapman (Vice-Chairman)
Allan Kauffman
Alan Deville
Nicola Brightman
Scott Farley
Janet Gardner

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 climate change and air quality, highways, transport, footpaths, green spaces, planning, waste and recycling, sport and leisure, housing, and beyond. The Committee has undertaken a major review this year into improving engagement with Council tenants and leaseholders.

Review into improving engagement with tenants & leaseholders

In November 2020, the Government published its draft 'Charter for Social Housing Residents' White Paper, which set out the actions central Government will take to "ensure that residents in social housing are safe, are listened to, live in good quality homes, and have access to redress when things go wrong."

The Select Committee therefore approved, as its first review, the topic of how to improve feedback from residents of social housing, in order to support the work of the Council's landlord function to help shape and update its approach to tenant and leaseholder engagement under the terms of this new Charter. Through all information gathering, the Committee was mindful of the need to find cost-effective, workable solutions, and the recommendations subsequently endorsed by cabinet were selected as prudent, effective actions to grow engagement and fulfil the terms of the Charter.

The Committee recommended that officers should develop a 3-year Engagement Strategy and Delivery Plan, in consultation with a selection of tenants, leaseholders, service managers and stakeholders. The strategy is to consider the common barriers to resident engagement, hard to reach

groups, BMEs, single parents and young people, and is to be an evolving document with elements of further feedback, monitoring and review. It was recommended that this is to be delivered over three years, fulfilling regulatory requirements of social housing providers.

It was recognised that the strategy should avoid a 'one size fits all' approach but instead should tailor its strategy to resident needs, together with their willingness or availability to become involved. It is accepted that many of the residents willing to engage with the Council are retirees who have more free time, so the Strategy should therefore carefully consider how to engage with people with more limited time, tailoring engagement actions to fit with their own availability.



Key interaction methods identified include various assemblies and group meetings, direct contact via 'Meet the Manager' sessions, increased digital engagement including enhancements to the Council's website to ensure accessibility, and collaboration on the service's annual report. It was noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has inevitably steered engagement with residents towards digital / on-line approaches and this should be considered when developing the strategy and delivery options.

Alongside this new Strategy and Delivery Plan, the Committee recommended that officers engage with the Council's Corporate Communications team to review how best to further raise awareness of the options for engagement available to Hillingdon's Council tenants and leaseholders.

Regarding the Better Neighbourhood Fund, the Committee determined that the Fund was delivering positive outcomes for residents but suggested that officers review new ways to seek resident input into how the fund is allocated to projects through better consultation as part of the 3-year plan.

On the understanding that resident feedback, though the STAR survey and other methods outlined, would continue throughout the 3 years, it was recommended that the Committee receive further update reports at regular intervals on how the strategy was being delivered and what feedback was being captured and used by services.

Cabinet approved the recommendations from the Committee's review in February 2022.

Monitoring activity

Strategic Climate change Action Plan - Consultation and Updates

In June 2021, the Committee received a report detailing the Council's draft Strategic Climate Action Plan, as part of the consultation process prior to the strategy's formal submission for adoption by Cabinet in July 2021. The Committee was advised that the Council had made three corporate commitments as part of the Plan:

1. To lead and inspire the Borough's residents, businesses and schools to reduce their own carbon emissions;
2. To become carbon neutral by 2030; and

3. To achieve 100% clean energy across the Council's services by 2030.

Measures to achieve these commitments included adoption of a carbon neutral approach with a reduction in the use of fossil fuels, the purchase of green energy, and carbon offsetting measures. Figures demonstrating the Council's efforts to reduce its carbon emissions through the purchasing of green energy and fuel showed a 42% reduction in emissions since 2009.

The Committee made comments for inclusion within the report to Cabinet, before receiving an update on the progress of the Strategic Plan in January 2022, where it confirmed that since the Strategy's formal adoption, officers were undertaking briefings with the Corporate Management, Senior Management, and Departmental Service Manager teams, with a view to steering future actions through their incorporation into service plans. Cabinet's proposed budget had made provision for funding of £25m over 5 years to address climate change, though officers continued to review other potential sources of funding, such as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Future actions under consideration included decarbonising the Borough's top 25 buildings, incorporating solar arrays, flood mitigation, and investment in the Council's fleet of vehicles, to move away from the use of traditional fossil fuels. Forthcoming capital works included construction of new school buildings and other large-scale projects, with energy efficiency and consideration of environmental impact (such as emissions/heat loss etc.) built into the development plans through adherence to the current building regulations. This included the use of government funds when constructing new Council housing stock, and officers were working to embed such considerations within private housing stock.



The Committee was reminded that, following a motion at the Council meeting in November 2021, the Borough's young people would be included in the developing action plan, via partnership working with schools, Social Care, the Corporate Parenting Panel, and Looked After Children, among others, to embed climate change awareness and actions at an early age (including within school curriculums).

Housing Strategy Development and Consultation

The Committee received a report detailing progress made in preparing the draft Housing Strategy 2021/22 to 2025/26, including the timetable for delivery, the current policy environment and key challenges, emerging strategic direction, and priorities and consultation plans.

The policy and legislative context for housing had a focus on addressing fire safety and other health and safety concerns, housing conditions, social housing landlord's relationships with tenants and leaseholders, climate change and environmental concerns, domestic abuse, and changes to planning such as permitted development rights, the new London Plan and reforms set out in the planning white paper and the forthcoming planning bill.

Proposed housing strategy priorities related to Place Shaping, increasing access to affordable homes, improving housing standards, support for the Charter for Social Housing Residents, and supporting independent living, together with addressing climate change and normalising service delivery

following the pandemic. Place Shaping involved Housing Services contributing to ensuring inclusive, greener and sustainable places across a wide range of services which included collaboration between health, social care and housing sectors. The Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy was currently under development and would be informed by housing issues identified following the pandemic, such as overcrowding.

The Council's need for affordable housing remains, but the profile of the homes needed has changed, with an increased demand for family housing. Housing Standards in the Council stock would be a key element of the Council's Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, which would include compliance with new building safety requirements. Regarding meeting the Borough's need for more 3 and 4 bed homes, the Committee was informed that officers worked closely with planning officers, developers and housing associations to promote housing that would meet such needs as identified by strategic market assessments. Implementation of the strategy would include continuing to explore further innovation in this area.

Homelessness was expected to rise following the ending of the ban on evictions, which would increase pressure on the homelessness prevention service. Improvements to housing services would include improved joint working with social care, Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation, further support for older people, and support for residents with autism or dementia.

A further update was received in September 2021, detailing the results of the wide consultation process undertaken. Themes from the responses received included concerns regarding:

- measurable targets;
- local strategic approaches;
- communication with community groups;
- sustainability and infrastructure to accompany development (e.g., provision of schools, GPs, etc);
- affordable housing;
- time on the housing register before rehousing;
- prices of houses versus flats;
- overcrowding;
- communication with tenants prior to their moving in;
- the Council's role as leader and its responsibility to support landlords and tenants;
- unsustainable debt and concerns regarding Universal Credit;
- support for independent living, with a focus on differently abled or older residents; and
- support for mental health, debt, and drug and alcohol dependency
- work towards DAHA accreditation is seen as positive.



The Committee thanked officers for their work on the strategy and was pleased to see that the wide consultation had resulted in meaningful responses. The Committee requested that the report to Cabinet include a key focus on bringing empty homes back into use, potentially linked with the Council's Buy Back scheme, building relationships with key stakeholders such as housing associations, and downsizing/upsizing tenancies where required. The Strategy was subsequently endorsed by Cabinet in November 2021, before approval at Full Council in January 2022.

Revised Statement of Community Involvement - Consultation

The Committee was informed that, as the Local Planning Authority, Hillingdon was required to review its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) every 5 years. The Committee was requested to comment on the proposed SCI ahead of the report to Cabinet, and the Statement was subsequently agreed for adoption by Cabinet in October 2021.

New Planning Polices – Proposed Planning Reforms in England

The Committee received a report detailing proposed planning reforms in England, and the concerns expressed regarding those proposals, following the government’s white paper published in August 2020.

The proposals centred around the ‘three pillars of change’ and which aimed to overhaul the outdated planning system, streamline the process to deliver homes faster, protect valued green spaces, and build beautiful homes.

The consultation on these proposals opened on 06 August 2020, and Hillingdon Council had submitted a response, approved by Cabinet in October 2020, detailing concerns relating to the potential negative impact of the changes on residents, businesses, and other service users. A government response to the consultation was not expected until Autumn 2021.

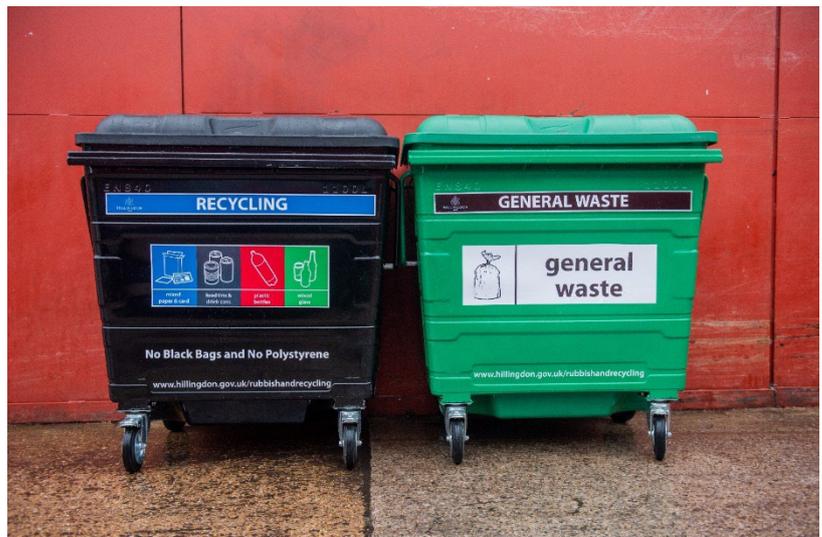
Recycling in Hillingdon

The Committee received a report regarding recycling within Hillingdon, detailing food waste recycling, recycling roadshows, recycling within flats, and partnership working with the NHS. The Committee was informed that the service had recently won an award for its work to process clinical waste, such as used needles.

The processing of food waste was confirmed to result in electricity as well as fertilizer material, and the use of food waste bags was being promoted during all interactions with residents.

The changes to the processing of Dry Mixed recycling (DMR) to reduce waste contamination had resulted in significantly lower costs to the Council.

In terms of waste statistics, overall refuse being collected had risen, with a household recycling rate of circa 44%. This was felt to be a very positive number, though work remained to increase this further. As part of further promotion, a video on the subject of ‘what happens to your waste’ was being produced to help inform residents and promote good recycling behaviours.



The Impact of COVID-19 on the Borough's Green Spaces

The Committee was provided with an update on the work of Green Spaces to address the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's parks and open spaces during 2020-21.

The importance of the Borough's parks and open spaces to resident mental health and physical wellbeing during the pandemic and periodic lockdowns was acknowledged. Throughout the pandemic, parks and open spaces had remained open, and had seen a significant increase in visitors. To address the challenges that came with such an increase, staff numbers had also been increased to provide additional litter picking efforts alongside the installation of further bins and commercial waste units.

Opportunities for residents to take part in sport had continued as restrictions allowed, and Green Spaces had worked closely with various sporting associations including the Lawn Tennis Association, the Football Association, and the English Cricket Board to ensure equipment and locations were suitable for safe use. A new booking process for tennis courts had been introduced, sporting equipment such as goals and pitch markings had been provided, and further work was underway regarding a bid for funding for artificial wickets and practice nets. Children's playgrounds had been made available once restrictions had been lifted.

Ruislip Lido was seen as a key attraction for the Borough, and an important site for residents throughout the pandemic. To promote visitor and resident safety, and reduce traffic congestion, a one-way system around the Lido had been introduced alongside a limit on visitors on site at any one time. Additional staff were also on site to manage the increased number of visitors and their impact, including the increase in dog fouling, while a consultation was underway with nearby residents regarding potential parking measures.



The work to enhance green spaces and promote environmental benefits had continued, including an increase in the planting of trees, plants and wildflowers, and floral displays, alongside innovations regarding maintenance and selection to promote better survival rates and biodiversity. Partnerships and advice had been sought with Trees for Cities, as well as Trees for Streets and Plantlife. Hillingdon had once again been granted the highest number of Green Flags nationally, retaining its title as the UK's greenest borough.

Homelessness in Hillingdon

The Committee received a report detailing homelessness within Hillingdon. Performance figures for Hillingdon versus other London boroughs showed Hillingdon to be performing well, and it was expected that other boroughs would contact Hillingdon requesting the sharing of best practice.

Rough sleepers in Hillingdon had seen a reduction, with the lowest ever number recorded in November 2021. A monthly count, compiled through officer walks, the use of CCTV, and partnership working was being conducted, which provided a snapshot of rough sleeper numbers on a given night.

Officers were working with Heathrow Airport/Travel Care, Transport for London, the Police, the Home Office and other partners in order to help encourage rough sleepers or the homeless to enter

accommodation. Work was also ongoing with landlords to extend tenancies and avoid making residents homeless in the first instance. A number of separate options were available to former members of the armed services who had since become homeless. It was confirmed that an emergency service was available 24/7 for residents to contact the Council out of hours.

Houses of Multiple Occupation

The Committee received a report detailing Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) within Hillingdon. It was confirmed that, as of December 2021, there were approximately 650 licensed HMOs within Hillingdon, with 172 new applications processed since April 2021.

The Committee considered the processes for inspection of HMOs and enforcement action within Hillingdon, and were advised that best practice was being highlighted to landlords, with enforcement action available to address untidy gardens, antisocial behaviour, fly-tipping etc. The service maintained a rolling programme of inspections, alongside responding to specifically reported issues.

The various licensing schemes across West London were highlighted, with options for Discretionary and Selective licensing confirmed as being under consideration for future adoption within Hillingdon. The Tenancy Deposit Scheme was referred to and confirmed to be under review, incorporating regular engagement with landlords, including through the Landlord Forum.

Empty Properties in Hillingdon

The Committee received a report providing information on empty homes within the Borough, with current figures for empty properties, how Hillingdon applied incentives to fill these properties by way of increased tax, and how the Council was looking to update its strategy to further address the issue, all highlighted. A review of how other London authorities were addressing the issue within their own boroughs would also be used to inform Hillingdon's updated strategy.

Officers advised that the ability for the Council to repair damaged homes and bring them back into use was at times complicated by insurance claims, together with the significant level of disrepair seen at some properties (e.g., fire damage). The Council was focussing on addressing void Council homes, and the average time homes were unoccupied was seen to be reducing. It was likely that some empty homes in the private sector were due to absent, foreign and other investors.

Redevelopment of High Streets following the COVID-19 pandemic

The Committee received a report detailing the work undertaken by the Council to help regenerate the Borough's High Streets following the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee was advised of the various actions taken by officers, with events and promotions designed to incentivise increased footfall and promotion for local businesses. These included Town Centre improvements via the use of grant funding for the 'Welcome Back' initiative, including the trial of temporary public realm changes, the installation of 'parklets' to help restaurants/cafes maximise available outdoor seating and ensure patron safety, temporary street furniture hire, and themed events such as the Christmas Lighting Programme, arts and crafts festivals, and family food days.



Additional funding from the GLA and central government had been used in Hillingdon to commission research on residents and their use of the High Street, with the research to be evaluated and used to inform further actions to promote the High Street moving forward.

Regulatory actions throughout the pandemic had included visits and inspections, enforcement action for those in breach of pandemic restrictions, risk assessments, support and guidance for activities, and the processing of licences and permissions for street markets and events. As restrictions had eased, the service had moved to carrying out a programme of catch-up inspections, as well as fact-finding and advice for the promotion of local businesses.

Officers advised that the events and activities were trials, to be evaluated and iterated upon. Feedback was recognised as important for identifying improvements, and where available, resident associations and groups such as the Hayes Town Partnership were being consulted regarding potential events.

Update on previous reviews: Littering and Fly-Tipping

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

On the review into Littering and Fly-Tipping commissioned by the former Residents, Education and Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee in 2019/20, the Committee received an update on the implementation of the recommendations resulting from that review.

The Committee was advised that all recommendations had either been fully implemented or were in various stages of implementation. Exceptions included actions that had been reviewed but that had been deemed unfeasible (such as reference numbers for individual bins), or actions that had been delayed due to the pandemic (such as liaising with schools).

The Committee was advised that litter picking activities were active in all wards, though resources were aligned to areas of greatest need. Regarding littering and fly-tipping hotspots, these were plotted onto maps following repeated reports, and used to identify areas requiring action. Moving forward, street cleansing teams were to be fitted with real-time tracking software which would allow further analysis and actions.

Regarding prosecution of offenders, it was highlighted that this was lengthy process that required specific evidence to secure a successful prosecution, such as catching an offender 'in the act'. Waste officers were in regular contact with the Council's Legal team on such matters. It was accepted that some residents were unwilling to identify offenders, possibly for fear of reprisals. The service was endeavouring to encourage such reporting through resident engagement at roadshows, social media, etc. to drive such behaviours.

The Committee placed on record its thanks to officers for their work on this matter.

Budget Review and Cabinet's Budget Proposals

As a statutory consultee to the Cabinet's 2022/23 budget proposals published in December, the Committee reviewed the proposals within its remit and submitted comments to the Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee. During the year, the Committee also received an update on the 2021/22 budget.

Annual Complaints Update 2020/21

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

Annual Community Infrastructure Levy Reporting

The Committee received a report detailing the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), a charge which allows the Council to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects, and which supports 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 each year, in respect of the previous financial year.

CIL monies were confirmed to be distinct from S106 monies, in that they were not site specific and could be used for wider improvements across the Borough. The neighbourhood proportion of CIL spend (minimum 15%) were spent through the Council's Chrysalis programme, driven by requests from residents and/or Ward Councillors.

Public Safety & Transport Select Committee

Councillors on the committee:

Keith Burrows (Chairman)
Teji Barnes (Vice Chairman)
Kuldeep Lakhmana
Richard Lewis
Colleen Sullivan
Jan Sweeting (Opposition Lead)
Steve Tuckwell



Lead Officer: Steve Clarke, Democratic Services

Our remit

2021/22 was the inaugural year for the Public Safety & Transport Select Committee. The Committee is responsible for scrutinising the Council's work areas under the Public Safety & Transport Cabinet Portfolio, in addition to Council-wide enforcement activities. The Select Committee's overview and scrutiny remit includes the Council's Licencing Policies and Procedures, Community Safety and Community Cohesion, the Council's CCTV operations, Traffic, Transportation, Highways, Parking and Local Safety Schemes.

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

Review into Electric Vehicles, EV infrastructure and future policy directions for the Borough

The primary purpose of the Select Committee's first major review was to support the Council in developing its future policies to account for EVs and to highlight how Hillingdon may need to adapt to the ongoing and growing societal shift from Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles to EVs.

Driven by climate change and recent government mandates to manoeuvre away from fossil fuel-based transportation, interest in providing low and zero emission vehicles has thrived in the 21st century. The number of newly registered, fully electric EVs in the UK between 2006 and 2010 was just 1,096; this has risen to 190,727 in 2021 alone. Spurred on by this, the Select Committee agreed that its first major review should be a forward-looking exploration of Electric Vehicles and EV infrastructure in Hillingdon.

In addition to the Council's own zero-carbon commitment and climate emergency declaration, the review tied in with related deadlines set by central government such as the proposed ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans in the UK from 2030.

Through witness sessions with Council officers, Electric Vehicle Charge Point (EVCP) Operators, a Hillingdon resident and the Cabinet Member for Public Safety & Transport, the Select Committee received information as to the current EV charging landscape across the Borough. Members were informed that, as things stood, the Borough's charging infrastructure would be insufficient for future needs; where one in 16 new cars registered in London were EVs in 2019, one in eight new cars registered in the capital were EVs in 2021.



In response to the growing need, the Council has progressed a contract with a partner to supply, install and maintain EV charging points in public car parks and to establish a scalable EV charging infrastructure across the Borough and the Committee welcomed this move. The Select Committee sought to monitor the implementation of this contract going forward through its scrutiny activities.

Although it was noted that a mixture of government and private sector measures would be needed to support the general longer-term transition from Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles to EVs, in order to keep on top of the growing public demand for EV charging infrastructure, the Select Committee understood that the Council would need to play more of an enabling role and to put measures in place soon to help ensure that a robust charging offer was in place.

The Select Committee found the current level of engagement with residents regarding the prospective implementation of EV infrastructure to be lacking. Members felt that the need for residents to have access to consistent information and to have their expectations managed regarding the provision of EV charge points in their area was vital; it was suggested that a standard operating procedure for when residents expressed interest in a prospective on-street charging point could be introduced to avoid any confusion and a mechanism allowing residents to suggest locations for publicly available EVCPs should be developed. The Council's website was seen as an integral tool for improving resident engagement and a useful platform for displaying any necessary information on the implementation of EV infrastructure in Hillingdon, both under the Council's purview and infrastructure installed by the private sector.

The primary motive for the impending societal shift towards EVs is climate change and the need to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. The Select Committee felt that the Council's Strategic Climate Action Plan was an important instrument in outlining the necessary actions the Council should take in playing its part to reduce fossil fuel use and sought to endorse strategic objective C8.6 – "To develop an electric vehicle charging action plan that will commit to increasing the availability of electric charging points across the Borough". The Select Committee were also encouraged to hear of plans to replace all diesel-powered vehicles 3.5T and smaller within the Council's own fleet with EVs ahead of

the 2030 ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel powered cars.

This review was presented to Cabinet in March 2022, the final report was well received, and all of the Select Committee's recommendations were accepted.

Monitoring activity

Annual Complaints Update 2020/21

The Committee received a comprehensive report on Resident Complaints, Compliments and Members Enquiries within its remit, noting the trends and providing appropriate feedback to officers. The Committee was informed that these numbers suggest the complaints procedure continues to work well.

Members' attention was drawn to the detail around Ombudsman investigations which had concluded in 2020/21. It was highlighted that many of the cases were closed by the Ombudsman without a formal investigation due to insufficient evidence. Members highlighted that residents may not always know what is meant by insufficient evidence and suggested that having the information available online as to what may constitute sufficient evidence would be useful, particularly where residents are disappointed with the Ombudsman's choice not to investigate and believe that they had supplied sufficient evidence.

Trading Standards, Environmental Health & Licensing

The Committee received a comprehensive overview of the Council's Environmental Health Service, Trading Standards Service and Licensing Service.

Under Environmental Health it was noted that the team's public health and disease control duties had been an integral part of the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic whilst continuing to conduct around 1,600 food hygiene inspections per annum amongst other responsibilities. A number of recent successes were highlighted including an ongoing gas safety compliance project whereby the team would be checking the safety of gas installations within approximately 1,000 commercial kitchens; this project was introduced following a commercial kitchen gas explosion in the neighbouring borough of Ealing.

Within the Trading Standards Service, the Committee were informed of some recent successes relating to the Trading Standards team including the seizure of 60,000 counterfeit cigarettes and 20kg of counterfeit rolling tobacco hidden in boxes labelled as children's toys and other paraphernalia.

In relation to the Council's Licensing Service, an overview was given with regard to the service's responsibility for licensing a variety of activities across hospitality, entertainment, retail, close contact and animal businesses. A recent success was highlighted whereby a two-and-a-half-year legal battle to bring criminal charges to two individuals for the unlicensed



breeding and sale of dogs and cats from a house in West Drayton had resulted in fines in excess of £340k, £280k of which came to the Council to cover expenses.

It was also highlighted that the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted this work area significantly, the Licensing Service and the Food Health and Safety Team had been leading the enforcement and compliance operation to ensure that business were operating in accordance with all Coronavirus and lockdown restrictions. Further to this, since lockdown restriction had started to ease in April 2021, the Council had offered a range of support to businesses to reopen and was working on a programme of events in town centres in an effort to welcome residents back to the High Street.

Budget Review and Cabinet's Budget Proposals

As a statutory consultee to the Cabinet's 2022/23 budget proposals published in December, the Committee reviewed the budget proposals within its remit. Initially, a general budget planning report was presented to the Committee in July as part of the early stages of the budget setting process. Following this, in January 2022, the Select Committee received a more detailed report including a breakdown of the budget proposals for services within the Select Committee's remit. The Committee commended officers on the well-constructed budget proposals despite the uncertainty posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and felt encouraged by the continued investments in many works' programmes. Members accepted that an increase in fees and charges was not ideal but when benchmarked against neighbouring local authorities, Hillingdon provided more affordability for residents.

Parking Services

The Committee received a presentation from the Parking Services Team highlighting the service's key role in ensuring road safety and keeping congestion clear.

Members were encouraged by the work undertaken by the Parking Services team who administered and processed around 16,000 residents parking permits per year. The Team also operated the Council's 33 car parks, including all on-street pay and display areas. Further to this, the Team processed the older persons Brown Badge Scheme, of which there currently were around 13,500 brown badge permits on issue.



Community Cohesion

The Select Committee scrutinised the work of the Council's Stronger Communities Team which sought to:

- Provide a strategy and policy lead on community cohesion, integration and preventing violent extremism (the Prevent Strategy).
- Advise and give guidance on community cohesion, integration and preventing violent extremism across the Council.
- Give guidance and support to external partners

- Hold a community engagement and community development role in relation to community cohesion and integration and building stronger communities.
- Take a leading coordination role towards partnership working related to community cohesion, integration and preventing violent extremism in the Borough.

Core aspects of the Stronger Communities Team’s work lay in establishing relationships with the Borough’s diverse communities, building trust and enabling partnership working. This was carried out through the Prevent Partnership who tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism; safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation through early intervention, identifying them and offering support; and enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate. It was highlighted that Hillingdon was not designated an area of priority by Prevent.

Transportation

The Committee received a detailed presentation regarding the Council’s Transport Planning & Town Centre Projects work areas.

The Committee discussed at length the ongoing financial burden experienced by Transport for London as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was highlighted that TfL’s revenue stream had been extremely impacted by the pandemic and the Mayor of London had been seeking funding from central Government to keep TfL operating. Unfortunately, as a consequence of this, the funding received by all London Boroughs from TfL had either been withdrawn or deferred; and discussions were ongoing with TfL as to the level of funding that could be expected going forward.

Topics such as the ‘Safe Drive, Stay Alive’ courses, the prospective wider impact that the Borough may experience as a result of the newly opening Elizabeth Line, and selection criteria for the Council’s Town Centre Improvements Programme were scrutinised by the Committee.

Members discussed what actions the Council could take in steering HGV’s away from high streets and smaller residential streets. A number of the logistics and distribution depots in the Borough were serviced by larger depots which meant large HGVs were regularly using the Borough’s road network. Members were told that the Council would be re-joining the London Lorry Control Scheme (LLCS) administered by London Councils; the London-wide scheme is aimed at striking the right balance between the freight needs of London and residents’ right not to be unduly disturbed.

Highways

A comprehensive presentation was delivered to the Committee by the Council’s Highways Team. The extent of the work undertaken by the team included:

- Road and pavement maintenance (700km of roads and 905km of pavements)
- Streetlighting – 31,200 streetlights and other illuminated street furniture
- Highways structures – 260 bridges and structures
- Road Drainage – 34,000 road gullies
- Street Works Coordination



- Highways Insurance Claims
- Highways Design and scheme delivery

With regard to streetlighting in the Borough, Members were informed that a Borough-wide column replacement programme was in progress following a Borough-wide LED upgrade completed in 2019. It was noted that the streetlighting columns in the Borough were old and deteriorating, any columns deemed a risk would be prioritised for replacement.

Anti-Social Behaviour

During a transition period for the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour & Enforcement Team, the Select Committee received a detailed presentation and scrutinised the changes that would be taking place to the service. With a move towards proactive prevention in the first instance rather than reactive enforcement, the team would move towards a geographical patch-based model, allowing officers to dedicate their resource to designated wards and areas and build a relationship with local Ward Councillors and give officers an improved understanding of the complexities of their specific area. This new model of working would be rolled out in a phased approach.

The Committee heard how enforcement would still be a key part of the service particularly where early intervention methods may not be achieving results.

With regard to fly-tipping, Members discussed whether the clearance of instances of fly-tipping by the Council could set a precedent for repeat offenders. It was noted that the speed of the response was the top priority for public health reasons, each incident was plotted and where trends were formed and evidence found, action could be taken against perpetrators.

Fines and Prosecutions Data

Members received a report from the Anti-Social Behaviour and Enforcement Team detailing the process surrounding the issuance fixed penalty notices and the various types of offences which can be dealt with by authorised officers. The Committee also received information as to how these offences are addressed when an alleged offender is under 18 years of age.

The impact of Covid on the footfall around the Borough saw a decline in the issue of fixed penalty notices and changes in the types of offences committed.



Road and Footways Resurfacing

The Committee were informed that the Highways department had a forward planning programme of roads and footways that were scheduled to be resurfaced. This was based on a "worst-first" approach to asset management, identifying the worst condition roads and developing a one-year programme of resurfacing and reconstruction. In 2021/22 there were 44 roads and 66 footways scheduled to be resurfaced. The 2022/23 forward planning programme was under development

with the department having commissioned a condition survey, the data from which would identify the roads and footways for resurfacing and categorise the proper surface treatment.

The Select Committee received confirmation that preparation would begin on a new 5-year work programme which would include both major resurfacing and preventative maintenance from 2022/23 onwards. This would be the first step towards long-term programme development for roads and footways resurfacing.

Abandoned Vehicles

A report was received by the Committee with regard to abandoned vehicle data in the Borough. Members heard how the Anti-Social Behaviour and Enforcement Team processes and classifies reports of abandoned vehicles and where appropriate, works with partner authorities in the investigation and collection of vehicles. 2021 had seen 1,209 reports of abandoned vehicles from residents and Councillors.

External Services Select Committee

Councillors on the committee:

Nick Denys (Chairman)
Devi Radia (Vice Chairman)
Simon Arnold
Darran Davies
Heena Makwana
Peter Money (Opposition Lead)
June Nelson

Lead Officer: Nikki O'Halloran, Democratic Services



Remit

The External Services Select Committee has a broad remit to scrutinise all non-Hillingdon Council organisations whose actions affect residents. This means monitoring those bodies outside the Council that provide public services to us. The Committee scrutinises the performance of these bodies and undertakes in-depth reviews and witness sessions on topics. It 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.

The Committee held witness sessions on the following topics during the last year:

Scrutiny activity

Hillingdon Hospital Trust Regulatory Performance: The road to improvement

The CQC inspected Hillingdon Hospital in August 2020 (and returned in September 2020) in response to concerns around infection, prevention and control at the hospital. At that time, the CQC rated Hillingdon Hospital overall as 'Inadequate' and conditions were placed on its licence. This came on top of CQC inspections in 2015 and 2018 that both concluded that the Trust was underperforming and required improvement. Following a CQC inspection in May 2021, the Trust had hoped to have conditions removed from its licence. As specific services had been inspected in relation to infection prevention and control (where there had been some improvements) but not rated, Surgery and Urgent & Emergency Care continued to be rated as 'Inadequate', leaving the Hospital's overall rating as 'Inadequate'. The Trust continued to put measures in place to address the issues raised in the CQC reports and Members look forward to seeing the results.

During the pandemic, the Trust had not been able to achieve the 4-hour standard target for seeing the sickest patients presenting at A&E, achieving around 50% against the 70%-80% target. There had also been a backlog in elective care with 47 patients having waited for 104 weeks which the Trust was working to reduce. Action was also being taken by the Trust to reduce the cancer services waiting times.

Crime and Disorder in Hillingdon: Safer Hillingdon Partnership performance

As part of its powers under the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009, the Committee held two evidence sessions with representatives from the Safer Hillingdon Partnership (including the local police and fire brigade leadership) to discuss local safety. As it was an area of interest to the Committee, Members heard about the work of the Safer Schools Team (SST) that worked with secondary schools in the Borough to tackle safeguarding issues and take diversionary and preventative action. As well as setting up two clubs in Hillingdon to break down barriers and build relations with young people, the team had been working with police cadets to undertake test purchases of alcohol from off licence premises.



The summer of 2021 had proved busy for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). It moved to 12 hour shifts to cope with the increase in demand on the service, such as the bank holiday weekend and Extinction Rebellion protests. The shift to autumn saw the launch of a campaign to advise residents on how to protect their homes from burglary as the days got shorter. Although there had been reductions between 2019 and 2021 in the number of offences overall (burglary, robbery, gun crime, knife crime, shoplifting, etc), concern was

expressed that there had been an increase in domestic abuse, rape and sexual offences. Hate crimes had also increased by 20% (March 2022) and it was acknowledged that further investigation was needed to understand this increase. Ask Angela (which provided a secret code for women to find help if they were feeling unsafe on a night out) had been relaunched, targeted resources had been made available and other initiatives were being introduced to help women feel safe.

Professional standards and community confidence

Insofar as professional standards were concerned, it was recognised that there had been unacceptable behaviour and language used by a minority of officers in the MPS which needed to be addressed. Every officer in the West Area BCU had received two briefings to identify what was acceptable behaviour and to set out how unacceptable behaviour should be challenged. Following the Danny Morgan report, changes had been made to how the police dealt with property and to declarable associations with journalists and individuals with a criminal record.

Following the Child Q safeguarding report, further work was being undertaken with regard to stop and search procedures to ensure that all officers were aware of the correct procedure. A community monitoring group had been set up in Hillingdon to look at the stop and search process and to monitor performance. Improved stop and search supervision had been put in place to make the process more rigorous and a briefing had been provided to all police officers locally. The MPS was keen to consult with young people about the stop and search process to understand how they felt. The MPS was aware that it needed to continue to try to engage with these young people and maximise the opportunities for residents to question the police directly. It was hoped that broadening the outreach, a continued visibility and a willingness to listen / act on feedback ('you said/we did') would build the community's confidence and trust in the police.

Since it was introduced in May 2018, around 17,000 Hillingdon residents had signed up to the Online Watch Link (OWL) Network which sends out targeted digital messages to subscribers in a specific geographical area. The OWL Network linked with Hillingdon Neighbourhood Watch which was able to provide information about CCTV and crime prevention. Residents were also able to sign up to CCTV Watch which was estimated to save the MPS around £½m-£1m per year.

The Committee raised concerns that, if there was no police presence following the report of low-level crimes (which could resonate into violent crimes), how could residents be confident that there would be a response to reports of higher-level crimes. As there were not enough police officers to send out to each report of crime, the MPS had to prioritise its resources.

The Safer Hillingdon Partnership (SHP) Board had commissioned a review of the SHP in the Autumn to identify better ways of working in partnership. The review also looked at: how data could be enriched and better used to help shape priorities; and how engagement with Safer Neighbourhood Boards, Ward Panels and Neighbourhood Watch could be improved. It was anticipated that the Committee would receive an update at its meeting in September once the results had been collated. In the meantime, the SHP priorities from 2021/2022 would be rolled into 2022/2023 as the reduction of violent crimes was likely to continue to be a priority for the police.

Licensing

There were a number of challenges faced in Hillingdon with regard to licensing in relation to things that were outside of the local authority's control. Hillingdon had a very effective Pub Watch scheme in place which provided a consistent and transparent approach to collaboration. Although partners could help pubs to set up a Pub Watch, the trade would be responsible for organising and maintaining the group. The scheme enabled member premises to communicate with each other and with the Civic Centre CCTV room via radios and had provided the Council with an invaluable network through which it had been able to disseminate information about restrictions during the pandemic. Benefits to the publicans included a reduction in undesirable activity on their premises and the "banned from one, banned from all" approach often curtailed inappropriate behaviour. Although there was no similar Pub Watch scheme for off licences, a Bet Watch scheme was in operation in Hayes. There was no data recorded in relation to anti-social behaviour incidents that were directly related to licenced premises.

Concern was expressed that there were times when the licence holder did not comply with the requirements, despite early intervention having been undertaken. A stepped approach was used which meant that this situation would be escalated but that sufficient evidence needed to be collected to prove beyond reasonable doubt that a crime had taken place. The principle in granting a licence was similar to that of a driving licence - applicants had to demonstrate a level of knowledge and once

granted, would get to keep their licence if they adhered to the rules. Any action taken to address any flouting of the rules needed to be proportionate.

Members also heard from the London Fire Brigade about the home safety visits being undertaken. The visits had been publicised on the side of fire appliances, on banners at the station, and via social media, podcasts and television adverts. Referrals could be made by the householder, local authority, relatives, etc, and could be made over the phone or through the website (high risk and vulnerable residents had been prioritised).

The Fire Brigade

A new service had been initiated in the Borough whereby the Fire Brigade provided small business premises with advice, guidance and support (unannounced visits were also undertaken to ensure that these small premises met the fire safety regulations). The Fire Brigade also undertook regular visits to blocks of flats to ensure that sufficient mitigation measures were in place and fire officers had attended virtual meetings with these tenants to deal concerns about fire safety. This preventative action had helped to reduce the number of fires in Hillingdon from around 700 in 2018 to just over 500 in the last year.

Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, fire stations had been unable to welcome any members of the public inside. Now that restrictions had been lifted, the Uxbridge station was starting to open up to the public again with an open day organised for May 2022 and plans being developed to hold a tea party during the festive period.

Hillingdon Hospital Redevelopment: Delivering modern health care for residents

The current Hillingdon Hospital is an old building with parts of the estate built in the 1930s as emergency wartime accommodation. Some of the older wards have become unsafe and have been closed to protect patients and staff. 81% of the hospital building will require major repair or replacement soon. This is the impetus that is pushing for a full redevelopment of Hillingdon Hospital to happen as soon as is possible.

At a national level, investment in new hospitals is run by the New Hospitals Programme team (“the team”), jointly based at the Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England. Last year, the team allocated Hillingdon Hospital one of eight available places in the New Hospitals Programme (NHP). A team at the Hillingdon Hospital Trust is working to deliver a rebuilt hospital that will provide the same range of services that are currently available at the hospital, but in a high quality, 21st century state of the art building.



In designing this, the Trust will continue to work with system partners to improve the integration of care across Hillingdon. To inform the development process, engagement events had continued to take place with residents, staff and other stakeholders, both online and in person. Areas for further engagement would include dementia friendly facilities, access for different disabilities, layout of waiting areas and reception areas and staff facilities.

The Committee held an evidence session with the team at the Trust in charge of securing, designing and delivering the new hospital building. The project involved a three-stage business case process: Strategic Outline Case (SOC); Outline Business Case (OBC); and Full Business Case (FBC). The SOC had been completed and development of the OBC had started in late 2020 and was expected to be finalised and taken through internal governance processes in May / June 2022. Subject to Trust Board approval, this would then be ready for submission to regulators - the submission date would be subject to agreement with the NHP team. As it was anticipated that the project would be in a stronger position if the OBC was completed with planning approval already in place, it was likely that the planning application would be submitted in the spring.

Decant plans were already in place and a number of service moves would be undertaken so that the build site was completely isolated from the working hospital entrances and the site was ready to be built on once the funding had been agreed. Although the funding had not yet been agreed, the nuance had now changed to 'when' the new hospital would be built, rather than 'if'.

Members were advised that there would be no change to the services that would be delivered from the new hospital but that they would be delivered differently as they would be more joined up with things like mental health services and social care. It would be important to ensure that the hospital was part of the local system of care rather than a stand-alone entity so that patients could avoid going there if the services provided by different partners were synergised.

Mount Vernon Cancer Centre Review: Improving cancer care for our residents

The NHS in the East of England and in North London is working together to review the services at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre (MVCC). MVCC is run by East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust and delivered from Mount Vernon Hospital which is managed by The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (THH). It is a standalone cancer centre and primarily serves a population of over 2 million people in Hertfordshire, South Bedfordshire, North West London and Berkshire. The patient pathways involve a large number of other hospitals and arrangements with several other NHS trusts.

The review team have recommended the full relocation of the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre to the Watford Hospital site, with enhanced local access to services where possible. To secure capital to fund the project, an expression of interest has been submitted for the new cancer centre to be considered as one of the eight new hospital schemes that will be added to the Government's health infrastructure plan with a decision expected in the spring of 2022. Following feedback from Hillingdon residents about increased travel times during the focus group activity, blood tests have already been made available in primary care settings closer to home (where possible) and it is proposed that a chemotherapy centre be established at Hillingdon Hospital.

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. As well as The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, the Committee scrutinises the work of the North West London CCG, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust, Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust and London Ambulance Service. 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.

Children's Dental Services: Improving Children's Oral Health



On 21 May 2015, the Council's Social Services, Housing and Public Health Policy Overview Committee presented a report to Cabinet on children's oral health. Given that children's oral health continues to be a matter of 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. In light of the evidence received, it was agreed that the Committee would undertake a review of 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 Committee's report and nine recommendations were endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting on 14 October 2021.

Members discovered that, in London, about 1 in 4 five year olds have tooth decay with an average of four teeth affected. In 2017/18, this resulted in about 7,000 children in London under 10 years old having one or more teeth extracted in hospital because of tooth decay. In that same year in Hillingdon, more than double the number of 5-9 year olds were admitted to hospital for dental decay than for tonsillitis.

The review heard from key witnesses and considered how partners could work together to help improve residents' oral health, in particular the oral health of children in the Borough. Because of the restrictions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, Members embraced new methods of investigation through virtual means. Through a range of informal information gathering sessions and formal witness sessions, the Committee gained an understanding of the nature and extent of action that was being taken in the Borough to address poor oral health in children. Considering all factors, the Committee has made recommendations to build on the positive work already being undertaken by partners and to ensure that there is oversight of the progress made. These recommendations were:

1. That the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care write to the Department of Health and Social Care / Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, to request that a proportion of the Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL) be ringfenced for dental health initiatives;
2. That the North West London Clinical Commissioning Group (NWL CCG) be asked to liaise with NHS England regarding the collection and carry forward of any unused Units of Dental Activity (UDAs) in Hillingdon within the year for redistribution to local dental related action programmes / initiatives such as fluoride varnishing in schools;

3. That the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care liaise with pan London counterparts to encourage the fluoridation of water supplies across London;
4. That the Council's Early Years team liaise with private and local authority run nurseries (as well as school nurseries and Children's Centres) in Hillingdon to encourage routine supervised brushing after meals;
5. That the North West London Clinical Commissioning Group be asked to liaise with dentists locally to agree a way that children under the age of 11 can be guaranteed an appointment;
6. That the Corporate Director of Social Care & Health be asked to ensure that health visitors provide new mothers with information about free NHS dental services and brushing kits at their first contact and ask the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health to include oral health information in the Personal Child Health Record ('red book');
7. That Corporate Director of Social Care & Health ensure that training be made available for health professionals such as health visitors and school nurses on the promotion of good oral health;
8. That the Families, Health and Wellbeing Select Committee receives annual updates from Public Health on the performance of dental health services commissioned by the NHS in Hillingdon; and
9. That the Health and Wellbeing Board oversee a comprehensive communications and education plan on oral health coordinated by a Children & Young People's Dental Health task and finish group.

Journalism & Local Democracy: Promotion and engagement

The Committee held an evidence session with Brunel University, which ran journalism courses and published the monthly local Hillingdon Herald newspaper each month, and a freelance journalist from OnLondon to discuss the role of journalism in the promotion of local democracy. Members heard that the Hillingdon Herald news team included around 15 Masters students, 25 third year students, 20 second year students and 20 first year students. The print run for the third issue of Hillingdon Herald in December 2021 was likely to be around 20,000 and would be put out on new stands in libraries across the Borough as well as being distributed to various faith venues.

The journalism course provided at Brunel University includes a number of units directly related to local governments as it is thought that councils are the 'bread and butter' of journalism. These units covered capital and revenue expenditure, the different council structures, electoral processes, roles and responsibilities to give students an understanding of the role of Councillors. The Committee suggested that the local government element of the Brunel University journalism course include a section on "if not me, then who" to introduce the concept of public service. The importance of the need to check every fact had been impressed on the students and the Committee heard how printed news needed to survive as an alternative to the increasing availability of click bait journalism.

The Committee regularly looked at a range of interesting issues and the Council routinely released information about a range of topics and journalists were able to publicise these issues to residents in a potentially more accessible language. It was suggested that hyper local websites, newsletters and newspapers such as Hillingdon Herald could help with information dissemination and public engagement. Scope might also be available for local newspapers to pool resources with groups such as Residents Association and community groups to collate local wisdom on specific issues. OnLondon covered a range of issues that might span more than one borough but did not provide coverage of local breaking news issues.

GPs: Online Consultations and Phlebotomy

The online consultation system was currently going through the re-procurement process. Although GPs in NWL and Hillingdon had been using online consultations for 3-4 years, each practice had had to develop and transform its own procedures and online consultation facility to meet patients' needs during the pandemic and patients were now being asked to provide feedback on their experience of online consultations, both good and bad. It was recognised that not everyone liked online consultations and that some patients did not like using the telephone to contact their surgery. Members were reassured that patients would still be able to see a GP face-to-face if requested as about 50% of the appointments being delivered online (34% of the eConsult contact had been in relation to admin assistance rather than medical issues). Investigations were underway with regard to the introduction of a digital triage that was translated into other languages.

The Committee received an update following a previous meeting where they had been advised that changes were being made to the provision of the phlebotomy service to make it more accessible to residents. The transfer of phlebotomy services to general practice had been well received by residents as every practice now had a practice-based phlebotomist. Consultation would be undertaken with the practices and a detailed engagement plan was being finalised. In July and August 2022, patient feedback would be sought in relation to the benefits and impacts of the service changes. Once analysed, this feedback could inform any necessary changes needed to improve the service.



HHCP & ICP: Improving patient outcomes, developing joined up models of care and delivering NWL ICS priorities

The Committee held an evidence session with representatives from Hillingdon Health and Care Partners (HHCP) which comprised a range of organisations (including The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (THH), Hillingdon GP Confederation, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) and H4 All) who had been working together for approximately two years under an alliance agreement. In addition to these partners, HHCP worked very closely with London Borough of Hillingdon (with regard to work such as Joint Health and Wellbeing, older adults and children and young people) and North West London Clinical Commissioning Group (NWL CCG).

HHCP had developed three strategic aims which had stemmed from the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy: improving outcomes for Hillingdon residents; delivery of sustainable, person-centred, joined up models of care aligned to the new hospital plans; and delivery of the NWL Integrated Care System (ICS) priorities through local models. The national health and social care policy was now focussing on integration at 'place' level (e.g., Hillingdon Borough) which meant stronger partnerships in local places between the NHS, local government and primary care and the development of strategic commissioning with a focus on outcomes.

The direction of travel for integrated care had been set out at a system (NWL) and place level. This would include establishing shared outcomes and priorities at a local level alongside national commitments and effective local leadership with governance in place by spring 2023 with a single

individual accountable for shared outcomes working with partners. HHCP had been working with NWL ICS to shape and align to the governance that would be required for spring 2023.

Population data and engagement work undertaken across health and social care had started to build on partners' joint understanding of communities to develop the offer to residents. Supportive and effective relationships were being strengthened across all partners with shared outcomes and joint ownership but each of the partners retained its sovereign identity. Instead of teams working around existing structures and processes to try to join care up, individuals were now being put at the centre of their health and wellbeing, with proactive plans in place and services structured around residents and their needs. To support this, the grounding for all of the Hillingdon hospital development work had been at a place level to ensure that the new hospital was able to house the new system of care that was being developed.

North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

At the Council meeting on 18 November 2021, Members agreed to join the North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (NWL JHOSC) which had originally been set up to respond to the NHS review, 'Shaping a Healthier Future'. The JHOSC currently comprised representatives from the boroughs of Brent, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hounslow, Kensington & Chelsea, Richmond, Wandsworth and Westminster. It met with representatives of NHS North West London to consider matters concerning health care that are subject to consultation. With changes proposed in the Health and Care Bill, it was thought that now would be an opportune time for the Council to join the JHOSC and, as such, Council appointed Councillor Nick Denys (as the Chairman of the External Services Select Committee) as the Council's representative.

Participation & witnesses

Councillors on 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 provided, and continues to provide, added verifiable value to the Committee's findings presented ultimately to the Cabinet for approval. 2021/22 was no exception, with the following voluntary groups, organisations, private sector companies, groups or specific witnesses engaging in this important aspect of Hillingdon's governance process:

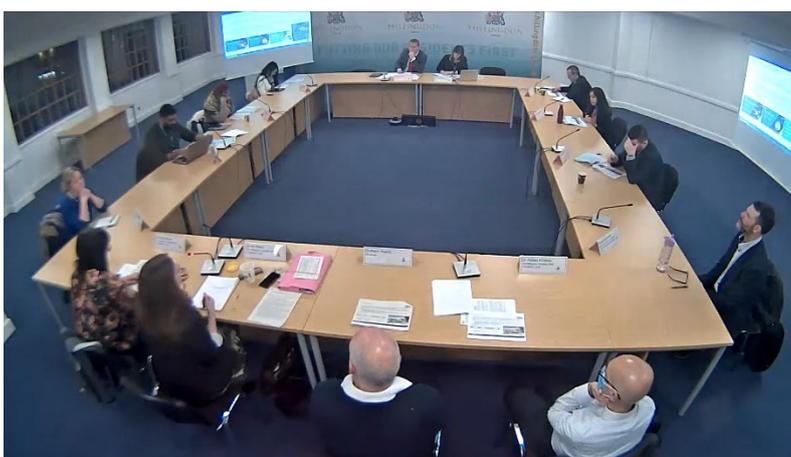


1. **Brunel University (various stakeholders)**
2. **Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust**
3. **Harlington Hospice / Michael Sobell Hospice**
4. **Healthwatch Hillingdon**
5. **Hillingdon GP Confederation**
6. **Hillingdon Health and Care Partners**
7. **Hillingdon Local Dental Committee**
8. **Hillingdon Neighbourhood Watch**
9. **IBI Group (Global Architecture & Engineering Firm)**
10. **London Ambulance Service NHS Trust**
11. **London Fire Brigade**
12. **MD Key Intelligence (Business Intelligence)**
13. **Metropolitan Police Service (West Area Basic Command Unit)**
14. **NHS England / NHS Improvement**
15. **North West London Clinical Commissioning Group / North West London Integrated Care System**
16. **OnLondon (Online News)**
17. **Public Health England**
18. **Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust**
19. **The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**
20. **Whittington Health NHS Trust**
21. **Hillingdon Parent Carer Forum**
22. **Hillingdon Autistic Care and Support**
23. **Adult Learners**
24. **London Borough of Ealing - Adult Education Service Manager**
25. **London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham - Adult Education Service Manager**
26. **Hillingdon Foodbank**
27. **UB7 Foodbank**
28. **Hillingdon Mind**
29. **Age UK, Hillingdon, Harrow & Brent**
30. **Carers Trust Hillingdon**
31. **Hillingdon Youth Council**
32. **Children in Care Council**
33. **Parent and Carer Group**
34. **Hillingdon MIND**
35. **H4All**
36. **Alzheimer's Society**
37. **Carers Trust**
38. **Hillingdon Autistic Care Services (HACS)**
39. **Hillingdon Carers Partnership**
40. **Comfort Care Services**
41. **Buddi (ALT provider)**
42. **Appelo (ALT provider)**
43. **Tunstall (ALT provider)**
44. **Secretary of the Hillingdon Association of Council (Domestic) Leaseholders**
45. **Tenant representatives**
46. **Resident perspective on Electric Vehicle Infrastructure**
47. **Qwello GmbH (EV company)**

Evidence gathering

In addition to verbal testimony, the following methods and technologies were also used to gain insight and evidence during 2021/22:

- User survey – Assisted Living technology
- Virtual reality headsets for a user's experience
- Site visits to extra care settings – Assisted Living Technology
- Informal chats in a comfortable setting to encourage honest and open communications
- Hybrid committee meetings steamed live using Microsoft Teams & YouTube Live, permitting witnesses to attend from as far as Germany.
- Informal briefing meetings with witnesses to gather evidence
- Online surveys and questionnaires



Democratic Services

London Borough of Hillingdon
Council AGM – 12 May 2022