

Minutes

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

6 September 2023



Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillor John Riley (Chairman), Councillor Wayne Bridges (Vice-Chairman), Councillor Kishan Bhatt, Councillor Adam Bennett, Councillor Narinder Garg, Councillor Kamal Preet Kaur and Stuart Mathers (Opposition Lead)</p> <p>Officers Present: Ian Anderson (Business Manager, Complaints & Enquiries Team), Andy Goodwin (Head of Strategic Finance), Chris Mayo (Capital Accountant), Suzie Horn (Head of Human Resources), Ryan Dell (Democratic Services Officer), and Rebecca Reid (Democratic Services Apprentice)</p>
19.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Kaushik Banerjee, with Councillor Adam Bennett substituting. Apologies for absence were also received from Councillor Gursharan Mand, with Councillor Kamal Kaur substituting.</p>
20.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
21.	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting dated 18 July 2023 be approved as an accurate record.</p>
22.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED AS PART I WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS MARKED AS PART II WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items of business were in Part I and would be considered in public.</p>
23.	<p>ANNUAL COMPLAINTS AND SERVICE MONITORING UPDATE REPORT (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>Members heard from officers the highlights of the annual complaints and service monitoring data. There had been substantial growth in the volume of informal complaints, from 4,473 to 5,176. This represented an increase of 703 informal complaints, which was attributed to two main service areas – namely, waste and repairs. With regards to waste, this was mainly related to a change of crews covering the routes and there had been some teething issues, resulting in a fair number of reports of missed bin collections. There were also quite a few repair issues, largely</p>

concerning the time taken to complete repairs and the time taken to fix appointments with service users.

At Stage 1, there were 816 complaints in 2022/23, up from 802 complaints in 2021/22. At Stage 2, there were 121 complaints in 2022/23, up from 101 complaints in 2021/22. In relation to the Ombudsman investigation for 2022/23, there were 46 complaints, down from 75 complaints the previous year in 2021/22. Officers explained the main reason for this was due to the Ombudsman, during the COVID-19 period, holding back some investigations which caught up in that year, leading to slightly higher figures for complaints in 2021-22.

Members also heard from officers that there had been a slight reduction in the number of compliments. In 2021/22, 349 compliments were received, but in 2022/23, only 245 compliments were received. The primary reason for the decline in compliments was the introduction of wildflowers in 2021-22 that attracted a vast number of compliments from both Councillors and residents writing to compliment the appearance of the wildflowers and to keep it going.

In respect of Members' Enquiries (MEs) for 2022/23, the figure was 7,805. The Members' Enquiries for 2021/22 was 9,769. To the members' enquiries for 2022/23, 1,023 service requests also needed to be added to the equation because on the 01 January 2023, the recording of members' enquiries through the GOSS system was introduced, from which two different terms were devised. A Members' Enquiry was defined as one where a 'clear question had been asked that now required investigation by Council Officers, or the supply of information from a Council department'. Service requests were defined as 'one-off actions that did not require action by an officer and not investigative activities or supply of information'. In effect, this meant although the figures were by and large the same, the difference lay in the different definitions that had been introduced into it.

Attention was drawn by Members to concerns around the number of complaints not being responded to within 10 days within the Directorate of Place. Members were reassured that Hillingdon Council offered shorter timeframes for responses to complaints than their neighbouring Local Authorities. Officers cited other Council's targets for responding to complaints at Stages 1 and 2. Harrow Council's Stage 1 target was 15 working days and 20 working days at Stage 2. Ealing Council took 20 working days to respond to complaints at Stage 1 and 20 working days at stage 2. Hounslow took 15 working days to respond at Stage 1 and 20 working days at Stage 2.

Members were advised that different service areas could need more time to respond to complaints depending on their nature. Planning complaints, for example, usually involved in-depth enquiries and required more careful consideration in terms of providing a response than that of waste complaints. The importance of the quality of the response that dealt with different issues was also noted. Members were reassured by officers that they would look into further addressing this concern going forward.

The Chairman acknowledged the inevitability of some responses being more detailed than other responses, thus requiring more time for comprehensive responses by officers to be put together. It was suggested that providing some explanation to service users about the nature and complexity of responses which would determine response times might be a good idea.

The Chairman sought clarification from officers on whether there was an immediate

response of acknowledgment upon receipt of the enquiry from service users, to which the response was that as soon as an enquiry came through, there was an immediate automated acknowledgment. In the event that officers were approaching the deadline to respond, a further communication would be sent to keep enquirers/complainants updated on the status of their enquiry or complaint. Further to this, the GOSS complaint system was said to help keep service users abreast about the progress of their complaint as they were able to check through 'My Account' the progress of their complaint.

Members enquired about what feedback had been received (if any) from Councillors themselves about the ME system that was recently introduced. Some Members viewed using automated systems as a step in the right direction, though there was sometimes frustration around requests not being tailored to Councillors' needs or that of their residents. This information had been provided as feedback on a number of occasions to improve the service and was shared with Ward colleagues.

Officers were asked to provide feedback and updates on the new Members' Enquiry process for the Committee's attention at the next meeting.

Members enquired about the breakdown statistics for complaints in person, in writing, by telephone, website and email, and from which Wards in order to ascertain what kind of ways people were using most to make complaints. The vast majority of complaints made were by email. The breakdown data for complaints could not be broken down by Ward, but officers would provide the breakdown by method outside of the meeting.

There were three different complaints procedures, namely: the corporate complaints procedure; children's complaints procedure; and adults and social care complaints procedure, which all operated in different ways. The adults and social care complaints procedure had only a Stage 1 process. By contrast, the children's complaints procedure had a Stage 1, Stage 2, and Stage 3 process.

Members sought further clarification about why there were so few Stage 3 complaints. Explanations for this surrounded the Council's corporate complaints process. There was a review conducted around six years ago as regards the process in place to deal with corporate complaints, where a decision was made to keep the three-stage complaint procedure. Stage 3 investigations were seldom used, largely because individuals were offered the Ombudsman direct, after Stages 1 and 2 had been followed correctly by officers.

Members raised questions about the financial implications of when a complaint was escalated to the Ombudsman. For the children's complaints procedure, a senior level officer would respond to the children's complaint response at Stage 1. If the children's complaint response progressed to Stage 2, two independent people would be commissioned to undertake an investigation which costed on average between £5,000-£6,000 per complaint and this had to be paid for by the Council. Where the children's complaint response escalated to Stage 3, each review would cost between £7,000-£8,000. Where maladministration was identified, the Council had to consider whether if they could not put the person back to the position they enjoyed before the error, whether financial redress should be offered.

Questions were raised about what the dividing line was between residents seeking assistance and a resolution as opposed to a complaint, and how such complaints were categorized. This was often a judgement call. Waste collection would almost always be

treated as an informal complaint which would then be passed to the service to deal with. More formal complaints would be where an investigation was needed to resolve an issue that had been complained of such as a planning issue, Housing repair, Council Tax, etc.

Officers referred to the Complaint, Compliments and Members' Enquiries for 2022-23 table, which underlined the total number of complaints progressively reducing as it moved through the different complaint stages, from 5,176 informal complaints all the way through to only 46 complaints at the Ombudsman level. This demonstrated that the complaints procedure was operating in the way it was designed by reducing the complaints as it went along because officers were managing to resolve the complaints at the different stages.

It was noted that the total number of informal complaints deriving from the Place Directorate was considerably higher than the other Directorates, but this contained the most number of services in this area i.e. planning, waste, housing, Anti-Social Behaviour, etc.

Members stated that the introduction of Service Requests was a positive step forward, but that the process had been designed around how each department worked, rather than the user. This was comparable to how the resident function of the website operated, where each department preferred to work in slightly different ways to the effect that it was made difficult for IT to arrive at some commonality and consistency across the board. It was suggested that there needed to be more of a shift towards putting the user at the heart of the system in order to get a better grasp on the easiest way Councillors could report service requests.

Members noted it might be a good idea to explore the views of some Councillors who had not embraced the Members' Enquiry/ Service Request system in order to ascertain whether this was a fear of the system or rather, that the system was too difficult to use and was therefore a barrier that blocked their adoption of the system.

Members changed focus to note about compliments received. Although the number of compliments had declined, Members highlighted the amazing work of the Repairs and Maintenance team which accounted for nearly 80% of the compliments received for Housing Services. Members questioned what the Repairs and Maintenance team were doing differently to receive a larger volume of compliments as compared to other teams.

The Committee heard from officers that the Repairs and Maintenance team had made a concerted effort to ensure that every compliment they received was recorded. Officers acknowledged there needed to be wider communication about ensuring that other services highlighted where a compliment was received. However, it was recognized that some teams were perhaps generally better at raising the profile of compliments received than other teams.

The Chairman conveyed there was sometimes a reluctance to trumpet success, but that it was important where officers were helpful to service users that this was acknowledged, recorded, and passed up the managerial line so that work undertaken by teams could be appreciated.

Members asked about the extent to which mediation or conciliation had been used to get to the root of a problem and achieve resolution, and whether there was any data

available regarding this. Mediation was rarely used in terms of resolving complaints, but this was more useful in application when it came to Children's Services work.

Members also asked about whether there was any data to indicate that some complaints lead to litigation. Where there were ongoing litigation proceedings, officers would not commence a complaint process. Therefore, once litigation was in place, officers would withdraw complaints to allow the litigation to proceed. The Ombudsman would also take the same view that if there was litigation in place, they would not investigate the complaint until litigation proceedings had concluded.

On Google reviews, the London Borough of Hillingdon was rated at 2.4 stars. Members wondered if it was possible to translate the compliments received by Hillingdon Council into the Google reviews, by allowing residents to promote their compliments on Google review to increase the Council's rating. In respect of the new GOSS system, residents were offered as a first option, the chance to submit a compliment and a second option to make a complaint. Though not many, there were a few compliments that had been submitted through the GOSS system since it was introduced on 3 July 2023.

Members emphasised the point about how there might be flexibility for officers to set clear expectations to residents for those departmental areas that needed more time to respond to queries due to the nature of the issue and not necessarily because of a business performance issue.

Members were made aware that both the children's complaints procedure, and adults and social care complaints procedure were set by statute and therefore, could not be changed. Officers were willing to put forward a proposal in relation to complaint response times as necessary.

In relation to the Detailed Complaint Report for Informal Complaints, Members observed that the increase in informal complaints was in the Repairs and Maintenance area, where residents were dissatisfied with the time taken to undertake repairs. However, it was earlier reported that the Repairs and Maintenance team accounted for nearly 80% of the compliments received for Housing Services. Members therefore questioned if officers had also fed back to the Repairs and Maintenance team by how much significantly the informal complaints had increased.

Compliments were much harder to come by because there was nothing to be gained from someone sending a compliment so when a compliment was received, this was a real bonus for teams. Though there was an increase in the volume of complaints, this was mainly due to issues surrounding time for appointments and the time taken for repair work to be completed. Sometimes the reason for the increase in the volume of informal complaints was as simple as some officers being better at recording the complaints received which subsequently meant that the figures also increased.

The Maintenance and Repairs team kept a spreadsheet to record all the complaints that were received with specific notes about the complaint. Enquiries were observed at management meetings to determine what needed to be done in order to find a resolution. Complaints also tended to be seasonal. In the winter months, the focus of complaints were about heating systems not working whereas in summer, the nature of complaints focused more on damp and mould issues in properties as people did not want to keep their windows open.

Members observed that perhaps the number of complaints and compliments could be

attributed to the fact that the number of jobs were still quite backlogged from the pandemic. The number of jobs could be significantly higher compared to previous years.

Officers confirmed that during the pandemic residents were reluctant to allow work within their properties and it was also hard to source material to do the work and this resulted in a backlog of work. Once the restrictions were eased, the backlog of work had to be cleared but materials were in short supply (fencing, bricks, etc) as other organisations were also trying to source these materials. This meant that appointments were being given further ahead and this resulted in complaints, sometimes to try and jump the queue.

RESOLVED: That the Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee noted the contents of the report and provided comments to officers as appropriate.

24. **MID-YEAR BUDGET UPDATE** (*Agenda Item 6*)

In relation to the Mid-Year Budget and the Council's revenue monitoring position, an underspend of £23,000 was forecasted, with the services within the remit of the Committee underspending by £900,000 owing to £600,000 within the Finance portfolio. This was driven by a reduction in the Council's energy requirement. A further underspend of £300,000 within Corporate Services had been driven by several minor staffing underspends and additional income across the portfolio. Within those Services, there were £1.6 million worth of savings to be delivered in 2023-24 but the majority of this was recorded as either banks or in progress.

The £595k savings which were recorded at Amber included £356k being driven by the business service review, where a zero-based review had been undertaken and a new operational model was currently in discussion. A further £171k related to additional income which was being reported at Amber whilst officers monitored the impacts of the uplifts on demand and the recovery from the pandemic on the income streams for the Council.

In terms of the medium-term financial forecast in February 2023, officers noted the council saving requirement 2027-28 was estimated to be £55.4 million, with the single largest driving force behind this being the exceptionally high inflation that had been observed at both a global and national level. This added £60 million to the budget gap. Within the remit of the Committee £5 million of that amount was driven by energy and fuel with other areas including workforce and contracted inflation.

Service pressures were forecasted to add £23 million which was predominantly from the impact of demographic growth across the Borough. £90k of that amount rested within the remit of the Committee, which related to the Council looking towards boosting cyber security.

Officers noted corporate items added just under £12 million of the budget gap, with £6.5 million of that amount being driven by the Council's borrowing requirement for the capital program, which was an element that sat within the remit of the Committee. The remaining balance was predominantly TfL concessionary fares, which related to the recovery from the pandemic due to travel numbers for the over 65s.

Officers were to continue working on assessing the budget gap, with inflation remaining stubbornly high and demand pressures linked to the cost-of-living crisis impacting on

the Council. In addition, officers were to explore ways to reduce the Council's expenditure, looking towards driving efficiency gains whilst protecting frontline services and using the Council's transformation process to formulate budget proposals that would be presented back to the Committee in January 2024.

The government settlement had not been reopened so there was no offer of additional grant funding to compensate the Council for the additional inflation that the Council had to pay out over the last few years. The government settlement currently ran at the end of 2024-25, so from 2025-26 onwards it was still unclear as to how much funding the Council would be likely to receive. This was a position across all local authorities nationally and was one of the key risk areas that had been flagged within the Council's MTFF report that came to Cabinet in February 2023.

Some local authorities were struggling, and officers reported there was an estimated £5 billion gap across the sector over the medium term. The focus for the Council in the short to medium term, considering high inflation and additional costs for the Borough such as unfunded pay awards, was to ensure that the MTFF and budget strategy was a low-risk strategy so that inflation and demographic growth assumptions could be built into the strategy to know what funds could be afforded going forward.

Other officers added that the demand lead pressures within the Adult Services and Children's Services portfolios were attributable to inflation, which was the single largest pressure in the MTFF.

Questions were asked about the increasing cost for the provision of services. Officers were challenging the increasing cost for the provision of services in a robust process by challenging requests from providers of an inflationary uplift. With longer term contracts and where there were fixed costs, the Council was protected marginally from inflationary uplifts. In several contracts and placements spend, the Council built in inflationary uplifts as part of the contract which were effectively unfunded.

The Chairman commented that there was a vicious circle as the inputs of pay requirements or pay inflation was increasing and trying to balance that set against the spend proved to be complex.

Members stressed there was a desperate need to see more local government funding, and also wished to catch sight of a general picture of the departments that were overspending and those that were under spending in significant ways with explanations beyond a table illustration in order to understand what the impact could be on the wider Council's finances, and the Council's approach to succeed in obtaining a balanced budget. Concerns were raised about the savings gap with many unidentified savings. Members also wished to hear about how the government was being lobbied in a non-political sense in terms of what departments were pushing for certain grants because this demonstrated a financial modelling that was income generating.

In terms of inflation, officers observed a various range of inflation forecasts and had their own treasury advisors. They also had access to external data from other partners they worked with in order to gain financial data. It was mentioned that budget gaps were assessed on a low-risk basis.

Members asked if there was an audit to assess how efficiency savings were affecting the delivery of services. Officers responded that technology was a good example of looking at ways of being more efficient, where technology could be maximized. In the

finance department over the last few years, new financial systems were introduced to enable work to be more effective and therefore, drive efficiencies in processes. There was no audit currently that set out how efficiency savings were affecting the delivery of services.

The Corporate Director of Central Services added that the Council's drive was on improving services to Borough residents, such as through the report aforementioned on compliments and complaints. The Council was also on a journey to continue to improve different ways of using technology, such as the transition from using email to the new Goss system, which was a more modern way of working. In relation to demand lead services, the emphasis was on applying a consistent model of prevention and early intervention throughout the Council's services to avoid service users' needs escalating which would therefore require a higher cost response.

Officers added that new AWS connect technology was explored to transform the Council's initial point of contact. This had been applied to a whole gamut of different services, including Social Care, Waste Services, and the Housing Department. This new system had been embraced very positively by residents as a means for much more convenient communication.

RESOLVED: That the Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee noted the contents of the report and provided comments to officers as appropriate.

25. **STAFF SKILLS, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT** (*Agenda Item 7*)

Officers reported on the highlights from the Staff Skills, Learning and Development report.

Talent was a key pillar to the Council's HR strategy which helped to deliver services to residents. Considerations to identify what the current talent was and what talent was needed for the future was significant to inform of talent development offerings to employees. Talent development offerings to employees was key for future talent needs and to adjust skill shortages. It was also a key retention technique to impact on employees' longevity in the role and with the Council.

Officers had recently relaunched an induction program which featured a face-to-face session and had visibility of the CEO and Corporate Directors so that the senior management of the Council could be visibly seen. There was online mandatory training as well as service specific induction to equip new team members with the tools to perform their roles.

Throughout an employee's time at the London Borough of Hillingdon, there was also Performance Management around giving employees aims and objectives in order to identify the training needs of employees and meet the needs of job roles going forward.

The Council's Early Careers offering was fast becoming a highlight of the Talent team. There was a wide range of apprenticeships offered to both new and existing employees. A feature of apprenticeships included looking at management and leadership training to ensure that managers had the skills needed for the present and future.

Talent was pivotal for the purpose of identifying who the top talent was and succession plans for critical roles. Effective talent development also enabled the workforce and

leadership to be diverse, which demonstrated a link to improved performance decision making and effectiveness.

Learning Zone was a learning management system (LMS) that tracked learning and also offered a suite of free online courses to employees that could be completed at any time on any device.

The Council's talent offering needed to be inclusive for everyone to have the opportunity to grow in their role. It also needed to be diverse to be able to meet needs.

Officers expressed they would continue to work with Early Careers to support vulnerable people into paid employment.

Members asked officers to what extent staff training was in-house and the extent to which training was external through procuring other providers that offered watching online videos and tests. Officers responded that the system of courses on the Learning Zone were generic courses that usually did not offer a test at the end. However, when looking into upgrading the training system, officers noted they were currently exploring more bespoke courses. It was important to acknowledge that there were many different ways and resources from which people learnt but officers would look into upgrading the functionality of the current Learning Zone system, noting Member feedback.

Members noted secondments were a great way to develop staff and wondered how this was used within the Council. It was confirmed that many internal secondments were used and proved beneficial. Officers had broached the possibility of offering secondments internally with other London councils and would investigate further into this.

Members questioned the degree to which trade unions had been involved in drawing attention to the staff voice to help shape the learning design. Members also asked questions around agency and senior management programs.

Officers highlighted, in respect of trade unions and the staff voice, there was an Employee Engagement Working Group that was becoming an employee voice with the trade unions combined that actively focused on discussions and feedback from teams. Trade unions had lesser involvement with the Learning and Development courses. For staff needing wider development outside of their role or through redeployments, there were several 10 to 15-minute short, sharp training courses available by way of the Learning and Development system. However, engagement in online learning proved a challenge for those who struggled with using IT. As much training was conducted either online or in person, it was important that training and development offered to employees was inclusive as people learnt in different ways.

Agencies were relied on to train agency workers to the required level. Talent and Development learning was offered only to employees, but agency workers were welcomed to engage in Talent and Development learning through the Council rather than through an agency, where there were vacancies.

With regard to senior management, the Early Careers Officer was reported to have focused much work on level 5 to level 7 apprenticeships available for Team Leaders, managers and Directors. This was carried out externally through the apprenticeship levy to put managers onto training for leadership and development. Mentoring was also expressed as being a great resource.

	<p>Members questioned whether there was a desire to rebrand HR, as according to HR Monthly, it was reported that 85 of HR Leaders and Executives felt it was an outdated term.</p> <p>Officers noted their objective to rename HR to People with a talent development team and talent acquisition team. A larger shift was needed from adopting an old school element of training, learning and development of recruitment to talent development and talent acquisition.</p> <p>Following discussions around attracting prospective employees, officers drew attention to developing the Council's Employee Value Proposition (EVP), which was an important piece of attracting potential employees and concerned the promotion of the Council's values and working environment. The employee engagement survey was expected to be launched in October 2023.</p> <p>HR Resources adopted a hybrid working model as an important part of their Employee Value Proposition and was a notable retraction technique because there was a growing desire for employees to flexibly work around their daily lives.</p> <p>The Chairman raised questions about whether there was some form of Member input to the information provided around a newly joined employee's induction with the Council at different levels of seniority. The response was that this idea was not currently in operation, but officers would investigate this for perhaps further discussion.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee noted the contents of the report and provided comments to officers as appropriate.</p>
26.	<p>PROCUREMENT REVIEW - RECOMMENDATIONS (NO REPORT) <i>(Agenda Item 8)</i></p> <p>The Chairman introduced the Draft Final Conclusions and Recommendations for consideration by Members.</p> <p>Members raised it was difficult to engage with the final draft conclusions and recommendations, considering the late notice upon which the document was received by the Committee.</p> <p>The Chairman acknowledged this and confirmed that the full, finalised report was due to appear at the next Committee meeting on 19 October 2023.</p> <p>Members proposed submitting written feedback on the final draft conclusions and recommendations to the Chairman and Democratic Services team for detailed observations and comments.</p> <p>The deadline for written submissions was agreed for 23 September 2023.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the draft recommendations be noted, and that written feedback be sent to Democratic Services for feedback and review.</p>
27.	<p>POLICY REVIEW DISCUSSION AND GUIDANCE <i>(Agenda Item 9)</i></p> <p>With regards to Policy Review Discussion and Guidance, HR Staffing Recruitment and Retention as well as Customer Service were noted with interest by Members for future</p>

discussion and review.

In respect of the Customer Service proposal for future review, Members wished to concentrate focus on how new technologies encouraged a user-friendly experience, and how customer services could be improved for residents.

Some Members agreed and added that tailoring technology to residents to improve user experience was a significantly beneficial topic that could be worth delving into for a more in-depth investigation.

A further information report within the remit of the Committee regarding First Aid Awareness and Training was also suggested by Members. This would be with a view to finding out if this would be a suitable major review topic.

Committee Rooms were public focused rooms. However, beyond the first aid sign that was present in Committee Rooms to contact security in the event that a sick or injured person required first aid care, there were no first aid kits nor any defibrillators. Greater first aid awareness coupled with training opportunities offered to both staff and Councillors in their public facing roles could be assessed to explore whether there was adequate first aid training available. The offering of first aid training to staff and Councillors could be extended to a wider pool of people to enrol and become better equipped on life-saving and essential first aid tools.

The Chairman observed that first aid training and a clearer understanding of medical conditions would be beneficial and posed the question to officers about what first aid training was currently offered.

Members were informed that in terms of first aid training, there was a requirement imposed from a health and safety perspective that meant there needed to be a certain number of first aiders within the Council building. In addition, there were certain roles that automatically required first aid training by virtue of it being mandatory within their own role. However, upon reflection, greater significance of the need to offer life-saving skills to many more staff, as previously advocated in a campaign by St John Ambulance, was noted.

Though not physical first aid, officers were particularly excellent when it came to offering mental health first aid training, where many staff were put on courses to better equip themselves with the understanding of the mental health element of first aid training that would be extremely beneficial for use in public facing roles.

Officers were asked to investigate the delivery of first aid awareness and training for the Committee's attention at the next meeting to get some scoping around the topic area for further exploration, with focus including equipment, responsibility, and training.

The Democratic Services Officer clarified if the Committee was happy with the 4 recommendations listed under no.1 to no.9, with no.3 taken as developing a short list for future topics for further consideration. This was agreed.

Members referred to page 58 of the Guidance on Undertaking Policy Reviews and made comments that the wording in the guidance could be used to dilute scrutiny creating a reduction of transparency.

RESOLVED: That the Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee noted the contents of the report and provided comments to officers as appropriate.

28.	<p>CABINET FORWARD PLAN (<i>Agenda Item 10</i>)</p> <p>Members considered the Forward Plan.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee noted the Cabinet Forward Plan.</p>
29.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME (<i>Agenda Item 11</i>)</p> <p>The Chairman noted that the draft Final Review report would be considered at the October Select Committee meeting. An item of First Aid would be added to the Work Programme for October.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Considered the Work Programme report; and 2. Added an item on First Aid to the Work Programme for October 2023
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 9.15 pm.</p>

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Rebecca Reid on rreid@hillingdon.gov.uk. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.