

Progress on the Implementation of Recommendations made by the POC on recent Reviews

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REASON FOR ITEM

To enable Members to monitor progress made in relation to recent reviews undertaken by this Committee and the progress made in implementing recommendations which have been adopted by Cabinet.

OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE COMMITTEE

1. Members note the updates provided and request further information if appropriate.
2. Members identify areas where further information and evidence is required to help greater understanding of the issues.

INFORMATION

1. To enable Members to monitor the progress of reviews which have been recently undertaken by this Committee and where the recommendations have been adopted by Cabinet, Members are provided with information relating to recent previous reviews and the progress made in implementing some of the recommendations.

A Wireless and Business Friendly Borough

2. The Committee chose 'Hillingdon: A Wireless and Business Friendly Borough' as a review topic in 2008/9 to examine if the Council could do more to support the Hillingdon economy and therefore improve the well being of local residents. The review was timely in view of the challenging economic conditions and the impact this has had on local businesses.
3. The aim of the review was to look at how the Council could undertake its community leadership role of supporting businesses in Hillingdon, which included examining whether establishing wi-fi networks in the Borough's town centres would benefit Hillingdon businesses and residents.
4. The recommendations detailed below were agreed by Cabinet at its meeting in June 2009

- a) That the Council's Communications Team be asked to instigate a publicity campaign in relation to the Council introducing pilot schemes for wi-fi into town centres with the intention of encouraging people and businesses into the Borough's town centres.
- b) That a full quotation be sought from providers for wi-fi pilots to be run in two town centres; namely Hayes and Ruislip.
- c) That a full quotation be sought from providers for a roll out to all LBH town centres.
- d) That statistical data be collected for 1 year to see how, when and where the free wi-fi is being used.
- e) That subject to the use and operation of the pilot and the roll out costs being acceptable, the scheme is rolled out to all LBH town centres.
- f) That the wireless broadband be provided free to use but without service guarantees.
- g) That cooperation is sought with The Chimes operators to seek possible joined up implementation for an Uxbridge Town Scheme.
- h) That external funding be sought from the Local Government Association, from 2012 Tourism Funds or other possible funders.
- i) That work takes place with Business Link to promote wi-fi to businesses in the area.
- j) That officers ensure that the scheme be undertaken as part of a wider wireless strategy in the Borough i.e CCTV.

5. Following on from the completion of the review officers tendered for potential suppliers. However, no suitable, cost effective tenders were received and it was agreed not to pursue with the pilots.

Impact of a Pandemic in Hillingdon and Effects on Council Services

- 6. This Committee began its review into the impact of a Pandemic in Hillingdon and the effects on Council services at its meeting on 7 July 2009. The review was topical as in the summer of 2009 the World Health Organisation had issued an alert over a Swine Flu virus which had originated in Mexico and spread to all parts of the world, including this country.
- 7. This review was therefore timely in that it sought to examine whether the Council could do more to mitigate the effects of a Pandemic on Council services. Part of the review examined the existing arrangements the Council had in place for dealing with Pandemic Influenza as detailed in the

London Regional Resilience Flu Pandemic Response Plan and the work carried out by the Council's Civil Protection Service. The review contributed to ensuring preparations were in place to enable the Council to provide essential services to residents, particularly the most vulnerable, during a Pandemic.

8. The recommendations detailed below were agreed by Cabinet at its meeting in December 2009. Updates are provided below each recommendation:
- a) That important appropriate information regarding a Pandemic be communicated to all staff and not just to managers, to ensure the full cascading of important information during a Pandemic.

The Communications Team reported that important appropriate information would be reported to all staff, particularly information relating to preventative and hygiene measures. The team briefing which is produced is intended to cascade information to all staff. The Council's Intranet, Horizon, would be updated with any fast moving events/information.

- b) That a skills and knowledge audit be undertaken of the Council's workforce to build up a computerised database. This information to include details about staff who have been vaccinated against the swine flu virus, those who have had swine flu, those with children and childcare responsibilities, those staff who were front line staff and those that come into contact with the public.

Strategic HR wrote to all staff to collect information on staff skills which are not reflected in the duties they perform in their day to day jobs, and which could be called upon in an emergency. The skills audit provided a snapshot of the skills currently held by Council staff. The skills information would allow the emergency management team of the Council to quickly identify staff with appropriate skills to backfill front line staff absences. The data collected was held by Business Support Units and the Civil Protection Team and was securely stored, in line with relevant data protection rules. It is envisaged that over time the skills information will be electronically stored on Resourcelink or something similar, to enable staff to update their information.

- c) That enhancements be considered to be made to the Council's Constitution to provide further contingency arrangements for the decision making processes of the Council, in consultation with the Leader.

Having reviewed this matter, Democratic Services report that there is sufficient flexibility in the Constitution for the continuity of executive decision-making during major incidents. For example, Special Urgency procedures allow for very urgent

executive decisions to be taken within a few hours. In addition, the Leader can authorise other Cabinet Members, including himself, to take whatever executive decisions are required. This would be done in tandem with any actions being undertaken by the Civil Protection Team at the time.

In a major incident where the Council has lost the use of all or part of the Civic Centre, Democratic Services has in place an approved contingency plan to keep Members informed and continue the critical aspects of the decision-making process.

Members will also note that in September 2010, Cabinet approved this Council's participation in the amended Gold Resolution procedures which formalise the role of the Local Authority Gold Chief Executive in lower-impact, emerging incidents (such as Flu Pandemic) where there is no Gold Command enabling them to co-ordinate any local authority response as necessary on a pan-London level.

d) That, subject to the longevity of the present swine flu Pandemic, consideration be given to preventative measures being taken in Polling Stations and at the Election Counts, for both the Local and General Elections in 2010.

Although the Swine Flu Pandemic did not impact too severely on the Council, arrangements had been put in place for the May 2010 Local and General Elections, should the situation have worsened. Hygiene and mitigation measures would have been introduced for the staff the Council employed to work in the Borough's Polling Stations and at the venue for both the Counts.

This would have included information regarding hygiene and the placing of hand gels at the entrances to Polling Stations and at the venue for the Counts. Contingency arrangements and procedures were also considered to include having arrangements in place for Polling Station staff who failed to turn up due to illness at Polling Stations to perform their duties as Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks, ensuring there were reserve staff on stand by who were fully trained for Polling Station duties and verification of ballot papers and counting duties.

e) That the Council and Hillingdon Primary Care Trust continue to give urgent consideration and priority to administering the swine flu vaccine to essential front line Council staff, including teachers and ancillary staff in schools, to ensure the continuity of the delivery of services.

During the Winter of 2009/10 the Council's Occupational Health service offered the swine flu vaccine to eligible staff, in line with the national eligibility criteria, and encouraged other staff to

receive the vaccine from their GPs. The top priority for the vaccine are health and social care staff who provide care for, and come into direct contact with, vulnerable residents (predominantly staff from ASCHH and ECS). Also, the pupils and staff at the council's special educational needs schools were vaccinated by the PCT at sessions held in the schools. Thanks to the vaccines and other preventative measures the levels of swine flu among staff remained low.

This year, Occupational Health is offering the new combined seasonal and swine flu vaccine to the aforementioned eligible health and social care staff. In addition this year, the vaccine is also being targeted at the Council's priority 1 services - as identified through our Business Continuity process - with the aim of reducing staff absence in these priority services over the winter period. This includes such services as waste, building control, housing repairs, ICT and facilities. For further information on the Council's vaccine programme please refer to Horizon by following this link

<http://horizon.hillingdon.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=21552>

- f) To mitigate the impact of a major Pandemic, officers ensure that business and continuity plans are in place at the Borough's educational and care establishments. This includes but is not limited to playgroups, nurseries, schools, further education and higher education establishments as well as social care homes.

The Council's Civil Protection Service worked with the ECS Health and Safety team to draft a 'swine flu appendix for school emergency response plans' (appendix A). This paper included advice to schools on how to make arrangements to maintain the continuity of their education provision.

The Civil Protection Manager attended the Head Teacher's termly meeting (September 2009) to introduce the paper, which was warmly received by Head Teachers. The Civil Protection Manager also worked with school clusters/collaborative groups when drafting the paper to ensure their support and to advise that the suggested continuity options would work affectively across cluster areas.

The paper was rolled out by the ECS Health and Safety team and the Directorate Support Unit to all education settings across the borough. The ECS Health and Safety team also made adjustments to the temporary school closure policy, which is available for Head Teachers on the Hillingdon Grid for Learning (HGFL).

The Civil Protection Service's Business Continuity Officer has worked with the Council's Priority 1 Life and Limb services, which includes ECS and ASCHH care settings, to ensure they have

robust Business Continuity arrangements (please refer to appendix B and C).

New Business Start Ups within Hillingdon and Business Support on Industrial Estates

9. The Committee agreed to undertake this review at its meeting held on 10 February 2010. The review was timely because of the economic downturn which has affected businesses, particularly small businesses. The Council and its partners provide a range of measures which support businesses and the particular focus was on the micro-businesses located at Hayes Business Studios.
10. A second area of the review was looking at businesses on Industrial Estates. The review focused on North Uxbridge Industrial Estate which has over 2,000 employees and is part owned by SEGRO (Slough Estates Group). The Council in partnership with SEGRO wants to facilitate more business to business support on the estate which will support these businesses during this difficult economic period.
11. The recommendations detailed below were agreed by Cabinet at its meeting in June 2010. Updates are provided below each recommendation.
 - a) That the London Development Agency when reviewing business support funding be asked to give consideration to how business networks can be facilitated at local level.

Following the comprehensive spending review (CSR) undertaken by the Coalition Government, there are still a number of unanswered questions around the business support budget . Notably around support for exporters and schemes that help both new and existing businesses to grow. The CSR is also likely to signal the scaling back of the LDA to a unit within the Greater London Assembly.

- b) That consideration be given to providing a core central service facility, possibly located at the Studios, which would provide finance and administrative support to the new business start ups.

The Hayes Business Studios Manager has put a portfolio of services with favourable rates together for tenants. He will also be inviting some suppliers to attend the tenants meetings to promote their services.

- c) That Uxbridge College be asked to look at providing business networking events at the Studios which would facilitate greater interaction between businesses and lead to business to business support.

Hayes Business Studios have organised monthly business start-up open days starting from 2nd November 11am to 1pm offering free

advice, information and assistance. West London Business events team has visited Hayes Business Studios and will include the venue in their events for 201.

LBH have introduced Hayes Business Studios to Basepoint who manage serviced office space in Eastcote to facilitate shared networking events.

- d) That the Hillingdon 4 Business website, on-line Hillingdon Business Guide and Business Link be used for wider promotion of business support and grants available from UK Trade and Investment.

On-line 2010-2012 Hillingdon Business Directory went “live” in August and LBH e-communications are updating on-line web content.

Some 270 businesses subscribe to the Hillingdon 4 Business 6-weekly news email which has been used to promote this recommendation. Information has also been promoted via the Hayes Business Studios quarterly newsletter.

- e) That officers investigate with Further Education and Higher Education establishments, measures to replicate the Hayes Business Studios model on other sites within the Borough as well as other initiatives based around entrepreneurship.

Some 80 individuals participated in the recent 2-day Enterprising Attitudes workshops, held in Uxbridge Sept and Oct funded by the Higher Education Funding Council and organised by Brunel University.

- f) That officers be asked to explore a partnership with SEGRO on the North Uxbridge Industrial Estate looking at introducing initiatives which would provide support to the businesses on the estate.

LBH facilitated a meeting between Uxbridge College and SEGRO who are now working together to promote training and other support services to SEGRO’s customers.

SEGRO hosted a breakfast meeting/ information event for their tenants to promote the Heathrow Area Supply Chain programme. Currently in the process of following up leads including a buyer for the event.

PAPERS WITH THE REPORT

Appendices A, B and C relating to the Pandemic review and Business and Continuity Plans for the Borough’s educational and care establishments.

Appendix A – swine flu appendix for school emergency response plan

(Double click on image of the paper below to open the whole document)

Swine flu appendix for school emergency response plan

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Appendix B – ECS Priority 1 services

Directorate	Service	BCP	Notes
ECS	Asylum Services	Done	Complete
ECS	Charville Lane Children's Home	Done	Complete
ECS	54 Howletts Lane, Residential Respite Unit for Children with Disabilities	Done	Complete
ECS	Merrifield House, Residential Respite Unit for Children with Disabilities	With Mgr	Sent 20.10.10, due 03.11.10*
ECS	Children's Resources - Adoption Permanency, Fostering, Placement and Admin	Done	Complete
ECS	Family Support Services	Done	Complete
ECS	Hillingdon's Children's Resource Centre (Mulberry Parade)	Done	Complete
ECS	Looked After Children (LAC) Services	Done	Complete
ECS	Children's Specialist Services	Done	Complete
ECS	Youth Offending Service	Done	Complete

* note this service only became a P1 service in October. In its draft state this plan still provides an excellent platform from which to maintain service continuity.

Appendix C – ASCHH Priority 1 life and limb services

Directorate	Service	BCP	Notes
ASCHH	1 Colham Road (Challenging Behaviour Unit)	Done	Complete
ASCHH	3 Colham Road (Complex Needs Unit & Small Respite Centre)	Done	Complete
ASCHH	3 Merrimans House (Adult Respite Care Unit)	Done	Complete
ASCHH	Access	Done	Complete
ASCHH	Chapel Lane (Small Residential Care Unit)	Done	Complete
ASCHH	Charles Curran House (Large Residential Care Unit)	Done	Complete
ASCHH	Goshawk Gardens (Small Supported Housing Unit)	Done	Complete
ASCHH	Hatton Grove (Large Residential Care Unit)	Done	Complete
ASCHH	Personalised Services - Older People	Done	Complete
ASCHH	Safeguarding	With Mgr	With Mgr*
ASCHH	Specialist Services	Done	Complete
ASCHH	Standale Grove (Small Supported Housing Unit)	Done	Complete
ASCHH	Swakeleys Road (Small Supported Housing Unit)	Done	Complete

* Plan at final draft stage and with manager for sign off. In its draft state this plan still provides an excellent platform from which to maintain service continuity.