

Minutes**EXTERNAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****30 March 2011****Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW**

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Mary O'Connor (Chairman), Phoday Jarjussey, Judy Kelly, Dominic Gilham and Shirley Harper-ONEill</p> <p>Witnesses Present: CI Alison Dollery – Metropolitan Police Service Colin Gribble – London Fire Brigade David Brough – Chairman, Hillingdon Community Trust Christine Little – Director, Hillingdon Community Trust Carole Jones - Chair of Strong and Active Communities Partnership Keith Bullen - Chief Operating Officer, NHS Hillingdon Professor Ian Campbell - University of Brunel Ted Hill - Hillingdon Association of Voluntary Services (HAVS) Mike Gettleson - Hillingdon Inter Faith Network Lorraine Collins - Uxbridge College</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Kevin Byrne, Fiona Gibbs, Dr Ellis Friedman (in part), Nikki Stubbs and Nav Johal</p> <p>Also Present: Malcolm Ellis – Standards Committee Vice-Chairman</p> <p>Public Present: 1</p>	
34.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO REPORT THE PRESENCE OF ANY SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillors Peter Kemp and Michael White. Councillors Dominic Gilham and Shirley Harper-O'Neill were present as substitutes.</p>	Action by
35.	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - 23 FEBRUARY 2011 (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2011 be agreed as a correct record.</p>	Action by
36.	<p>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That all items of business be considered in public.</p>	Action by

37.	<p>COMMUNITY COHESION: BUILDING STRONG, COHESIVE AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES IN HILLINGDON (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>The External Services Scrutiny Committee last considered the issue of community cohesion at its meeting on 9 June 2010. Representatives from the various organisations present had been asked to provide a summary report on 'building strong, cohesive and active communities in Hillingdon'.</p> <p><u>LBH – Partnerships & Community Engagement</u></p> <p>Ms Fiona Gibbs, Stronger Communities Manager, explained how community cohesion had become increasingly important in the Borough. There were issues in relation to migration, deprivation and inequalities amongst communities. Other challenges which needed to be taken into consideration included extremist views, terrorism and far right views. The positive factors that cohesion brought to the community were discussed.</p> <p>Community cohesion was widely used to describe a state of harmony or tolerance between people from different backgrounds living within a community. This was linked to the concept of social capital and the idea that, if we knew our neighbours and contributed to community activity, then we were more likely to look out for each other, increase cohesion and minimise cost of dependency on institutional care.</p> <p>Ms Gibbs advised that the challenges to cohesion included tackling issues such as local inequalities, rapidly changing communities and mistrust and misunderstanding. Factors such as hate crime, anti-social behaviour and gangs also needed to be considered as well as perceptions of groups such as the Somali community in Hayes.</p> <p>It was important for communities to have good relations and feel a sense of belonging and pride about where they lived so that they looked out for their neighbours. This could help to ensure a maximised individual and community potential.</p> <p>Ms Gibbs advised that, through partnership working, there had been increased participation in community activities, reduced isolation, increased satisfaction of services, increased aspirations, reduced community tension and an increased sense of belonging. This work had been carried out through the promotion of community engagement.</p> <p>The Strong and Active Communities Partnership goals included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building - National and international links - Strengthening partnership working - Developing models of best practice - Promoting respect and understanding between communities - Community engagement <p>The Partnership had identified key priorities to move forward in 2011 and continue to develop a strong and active community in Hillingdon.</p> <p><u>Strong and Active Communities Partnership</u></p>	Action by
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Ms Carole Jones, Chairman of the Partnership, updated Members on the successful outcomes throughout the year for Strong and Active Communities Partnership. Some key achievements in the year included the work undertaken with schools. Schools had a duty to promote community cohesion and, as such, had established a community cohesion partnership, developed a practitioners group and gained financial support to appoint a development worker.

The Partnership was working on developing a portfolio of models of best practice to share.

The National College (formerly NCSL) was looking to develop community champions and recognition of best practice. The Partnership also had been working with Buckinghamshire New University on its new Institute for Diversity Research, Inclusivity, Communities and Society (IDRICS). IDRICS had been set up to reflect the organisational recognition of the importance of inclusivity, celebration of diversity and community engagement in all aspects of University's work.

Work within the community had included Week of Peace, Week of Faith and engagement work with schools which included Big Fest and Hayes Carnival (which involved the wider community). The Women in the Community group had also enabled women to become more confident and gain employment. Leisure facilities in the Borough had been improved and included the opening of two new leisure centres in Hayes and Uxbridge.

The main focus of the Partnership's work had been targeted at the Peabody Estate in Yeading, West Drayton, Yiewsley and Hayes – specifically areas in the south of the Borough. The organisation was working to strengthen partnership working across the community.

Ms Jones updated Members on the Partnership's priorities for 2011. These included targeting local area partnership working and addressing issues in those identified localities. For example, work could be undertaken to: reduce health inequalities and promote health equalities; promote the positives of local people; look at opportunities for bringing people together; promote a sense of belonging; and promote sense of well-being.

Other priorities involved promoting and increasing residents' involvement in leisure and cultural activities across the Borough. This included work through Hillingdon Inter Faith Network (HIFN), schools, families, communities and community partnerships and other Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) theme groups.

Ms Jones added that the core functions of the group needed to be maintained. This included the following:

- Monitoring of community tensions and local issues, working with partners to respond accordingly and appropriately.
- Reviewing intelligence and information to develop further understanding of our communities and their needs, carrying out research where necessary.

- Ensuring dissemination and sharing of intelligence and information with partners and monitoring how services were responding to meet those identified needs.

Metropolitan Police Service

Chief Inspector Alison Dollery, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), spoke to Committee about the positive things that the MPS in Hillingdon had done. Good work had been carried out by the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) and schools team also, as well as Cadets, and Metropolitan Special Constables (MSC) and the Police Community Safety Team.

Work had been undertaken with Hayes Town Partnership with regard to the Somali community in Hayes. Work had also been done to identify on a potential gang prevention strategy and with vulnerable victims of crime.

The priorities for the next 6-12 months were discussed. There were still a lot of things to do in the future, for example, in relation to 'gangs' of young people who got into trouble with the police. The MPS was looking into preventing those young people becoming part of a gang. It was anticipated that there would need to be a lot of partnership work undertaken with these young people over the next 6-12 months. Chief Inspector Dollery stated that the majority of young people were not trouble makers or part of a gang and she did not want all young people labelled in the same way.

The MPS worked with all communities in the Borough, providing additional support for repeat or vulnerable victims. It would target those communities that were difficult to communicate with.

Work with young people has started and would be strategically based. Schools in the Borough were working together with the Police schools team to target difficult groups of young people and to provide an education programme for the Borough. This programme linked public safety and crime prevention and encouraged communities to support each other.

The MPS would be financially challenged next year and this would have an impact on how the service would be provided. The expectations of the community would remain the same so the challenge for the future was to empower the public and teach them to manage their own issues. It was noted that at a time when the service was tighter with finances it was a time to build relationships with other organisations to work in partnership.

University of Brunel

Professor Ian Campbell, University of Brunel, explained that the emphasis at Brunel was the internal community and how to encourage students to help in the community. The number of student and staff volunteers had continued to increase.

The university had 15,000 students and the Brunel Volunteer Scheme had been extremely successful in getting students and staff to

volunteer. Professor Campbell envisaged this expanding further. A number of activities were organised each year on campus to bring the community on site and show residents what the University did. The feedback received from the community had been positive towards staff and students.

The University had set up a public engagement service which demonstrated that conversations were happening. Around 250 people had attended 6 lectures which were themed around topical areas. The main topic this year was 'Answering the Biggest Questions of our Age'.

The over 50's group on campus was extremely successful. This had over 160 members and contributed towards an increase in the activity levels within the community.

The University provided a large range of sports facilities that were used by the community. A recent Olympics day was held and included themes around cultures. Over 100 primary school children had attended this event.

There had been significant work undertaken over the last 5 years to break down barriers between students and the rest of the local community. The University's aim for the next year was to: look at how it could interact more effectively with schools; work more closely with the community partners; and develop the volunteering further to encourage more students and staff to work within the community.

Uxbridge College

Ms Lorraine Collins, Uxbridge College, explained that the students attending the College tended to be local people. They were local before they joined the College and remained in the community after they had finished their courses. The Hayes campus of the College was known as the 'community' campus.

Uxbridge College comprised 3 communities: staff, students and external. Within the student community, there were two distinctions: the young people and the older age group. The College had more adult students than 16-18 year olds. Part of the College's role for the older students was to support them back into work.

The College aimed to try and encourage young people to be outspoken and develop as a person rather than just go to college to get qualifications. The focus was on a whole person and the generation. The College had been involved in events such as 'One World' and 'Big Fest'.

There were challenges for the future to consider. As there was less money, the College had the opportunity to think about things differently in order to provide the service. There were also changes around people who wanted to learn English as a 2nd language and barriers that were being faced in terms of the funding for this. Ms Collins was uncertain about how many would be eligible for the Government grant for this in the future. This was important, especially in the South of the Borough, and in particular in Hayes. The College did not want to

disengage the community so would find ways to meet this challenge.

Hillingdon Association of Voluntary Services (HAVS)

Mr Ted Hill, HAVS, stated that, according to the UK Social Exclusion task force, social inclusion was linked to community cohesion. The work of HAVS was directly linked to this.

Mr Hill stated that the sector locally was very robust and flexible and it had the capacity to deliver results. HAVS was determined to move things forward at a good pace. The organisation was working with the voluntary sector and the following year would prove to be a challenge with the financial difficulties that would need to be faced.

There had been some notable successes for HAVS in the last year: it had met its Local Area Agreement stretch targets; a lot of volunteers had signed up; there was now an online version of the HAVS newsletter, which would help to reduce costs; a very successful equality conference had been held in March; it was winner of the Brunel University Business School Workplace Employer 2009/10; and HAVS had also been reaccredited with Investors in People.

A new interactive website had been launched (Hillingdon Connected - www.hillingdonconnected.org.uk) which further improved communications. HAVS, in conjunction with Nick Hurd MP, had also developed new partnership arrangements with the national charity, Pilotlight. Work was being undertaken in partnership with the Hillingdon Inter Faith Network as part of the Week of Peace.

The organisation had clear plans for the future but it needed to find different ways to deliver due to the financial constraints.

PCT / Public Health

Mr Keith Bullen, Hillingdon PCT, spoke about the chairmanship and membership of groups in Hillingdon and promoting healthcare. The Wellbeing Centre that had opened in Boots in Uxbridge was identified as an example of the good work being done. Work that needed to be undertaken included the development of work programmes, initiatives to improve housing, mental health and wellbeing and health promotion.

The Health Promotions involved going out into the community and providing the service to the Borough. It was anticipated that this would continue into the following year. There had been a year on year improvement in the community in terms of promoting health care.

Key work also included smoking cessation and tobacco control with targeted work with ethnic minorities. Hillingdon was one of the best places in London for immunisation. This issue had been targeted in the last two years and the benefits could be seen throughout the Borough. The learning from the emergency planning work associated with swine flu had also been very beneficial.

The future challenges were discussed. There would be major organisational change which would bring more in-Borough control. The same financial challenges faced by other organisations would also be

faced by the PCT which meant that smarter working was required. More services would be put into a community setting and there would be a big push in the next two years to make improvements. Mr Bullen stated that better collaboration was needed to move this forward, even for the partnership within health. He went on to advise that the PCT was investing and developing in the area and would soon be asking GPs in the area what they required.

It was agreed that the work of the Joint Director for Public Health had been vital since he had been appointed.

Hillingdon Community Trust (HCT)

Mr David Brough, Hillingdon Community Trust, spoke about the projects the Trust had funded over the last year. This organisation had not suffered cuts in its funding as it was still guaranteed to receive £1million per year from BAA Heathrow Limited. Bids for this funding had been received by HCT, in 6 funding rounds per year and there was increasing demand for funding

HCT's overall strategies were discussed. Mr Brough questioned what community cohesion was and stated that a clearer understanding of what was meant was needed. He suggested that the concept was about more than race and ethnicity - it included the perception of travellers and gangs, and bridging the gap between the young and the old. It was noted that there was a north / south divide in the Borough.

Mr Brough suggested that redefinition was required for what was meant by community cohesion and what the aim was. He also suggested that organisations needed to ask themselves if the people in the Borough knew what they did, and what work had been done around community cohesion. It was noted that most people in the Borough would not know about the achievements organisations present. It was agreed that communication and the perception of how they were getting messages across to the ordinary resident were vital.

Mr Brough spoke about Yeading School House and how it was a supreme example of a project of people mixing across the community.

Difficult decisions would be required in relation to priorities for the next year. HCT would need to consider where the hot spots were, and if it was doing enough to meet the demands in these hot spots.

It was noted that the Somali community had been stereotyped and it was important that the Borough address this matter. There were also issues within the Harmondsworth and Sipson community regarding the third runway at Heathrow Airport. Consideration would need to be given to how the community could be rebuilt given that the uncertainty of the third runway had not gone away.

Mr Brough suggested that the Council's overall planning core strategy and social inclusion policy needed to give more prominence to community cohesion. It was stated that community cohesion was not the same as social inclusion.

Ms Christine Little stated that since it started in 2003, the HCT had looked at ways to target financial resources. It now looked at particular issues in the area and focused more on community cohesion. The organisation looked at how it could bring together people of different ages and backgrounds.

When analysis had been carried out of those projects the HCT had funded, it had seen lots of improvements. It had provided funding for projects such as the Hillingdon Inter Faith Schools programme, Minet's One World, Kickz and Yeading Schools.

There was a huge degree of passion in schools to get people involved. A large number of successful projects were based around schools. The Trust believed that projects that engaged young people and their parents were key to improving community cohesion. Schools were able to reach out to a large number of people and enabled groups of people to come together for activities and bring the same groups of people together over a period of time.

The Trust believed that a long term future challenge would be the reductions in public expenditure and funding from other sources. The 'Big Society' was unlikely to be able to replace the reductions as it would take time to develop in disadvantaged communities.

It was noted that community cohesion was a shifting target and this needed to be considered when looking at where resources were implemented. Physical activity and sports were important, including the different types of physical activity offered, e.g., bhangra, yoga, etc. It was noted that sometimes small amounts of money made huge changes to the community.

It was noted that lottery funding had been secured through the London Health Commission for a number of small projects in the 20 most deprived areas in London. A DVD of this work had been produced and copies would be sought for Mr Bullen, Dr Friedman and Ms Little.

London Fire Service

Mr Colin Gribble, London Fire Brigade, explained that many things had changed in the Fire Brigade over the last few years. The Brigade had carried out more activities than in the past and the role of a fire fighter was very different than it had been previously. The Brigade was now getting involved in an increasing number of differing projects.

The Brigade needed to make £60million of savings in the next 3 years. It was difficult to know what the impact of this would be. £1million of the available funding was used for trainers across London to improve the training offered. This £1 million pound was secured specifically for the LIFE project to fund trainers to facilitate the event. This should ensure that officers were secured for the task more effectively and was hence an improvement.

Projects in the last year included:

- Projects in schools: The Schools Officers' core role was to deliver interactive educational workshops on fire safety to

children in primary school years 2 and 5 across London.

- We're in Safe Hands (WISH): This scheme supported London Fire Brigade's Home Fire Safety Visit initiative.
- Junior Citizen (JC): These events were a multi-agency, interactive schemes based on anti-crime messages, citizenship and safety. These events ran very smoothly and the next one was planned for March 2012.
- The Juvenile firesetters intervention scheme: This was designed to address firesetting behaviour among children and young people. Trained advisors were available to meet with the child or young person and their parents.
- The London Fire Brigade was helping to reduce anti-social behaviour by leading the way through the LIFE (Local Intervention Fire Education) programme: a scheme aimed at addressing the problems of young people who deliberately set fires, and their anti-social behaviour.
- School presentations at secondary schools on fire safety which had received very favourable feedback.
- Work was being done with Hillingdon's Road Safety Forum to reduce road traffic injuries amongst young people.

It was noted that Hillingdon Borough came top of the 33 London Boroughs in the 2009/10 End of Year report. The Borough had met 11 of the 12 categories. The only area where the Brigade did not meet its target was with regard to the response time for persons shut in lift - there was however a 35% improvement in this area. At the end of February 2011, Hillingdon was top of the statistics table in London and it was hoped that the Borough would lead the table for the second year running at the end of the year. Members congratulated the officers for this achievement so far.

Hillingdon Inter Faith Network (HIFN)

Mr Mike Gettleson, Hillingdon Inter Faith Network, spoke about the aim of the Network - to promote religious harmony. It was acting as a contact for a link to networking with the faith communities in Hillingdon. HIFN was now recognised as the vehicle for many statutory and voluntary leads in engaging with communities across the whole Borough.

HIFN wanted to get to know and understand other faith groups across the Borough. The work it was doing in Hillingdon was to bring faith groups together for the greater good. Mr Gettleson stated that it was crucial to understand other faiths in order to reduce the animosity amongst other faiths.

HIFN started in April 2007. Hillingdon was a diverse Borough which covered many religions and it was noted that it included over 100 active faith groups. There were more than 900 community activities taking place for these faiths including those for elderly and the young.

The organisation was proud of its website which contained a large database and catalogue of what went on in the 100's of faith buildings/activities in the Borough. The database could be searched online. The importance of visibility was discussed, to show that was

happening.

Mr Gettleson mentioned that, during the Week of Peace which promoted community cohesion, around 300 people had taken part in the peace walk. During the Week of Faith in November 2010, there were daily programmes of activities. The success of this programme meant the 'week' had been extended to 10 days. Mixing faiths and having open prayer meetings with different faiths coming together had also been very successful.

Although the organisation did not receive Local Authority funding, the Council did provide support and meeting rooms which were very important. The buildings in the Borough were important for the faith groups as they were vital for holding faith meetings and events. HIFN received grants from outside bodies which enabled it to run projects and network meetings.

HIFN worked with young people and had continued its faith in schools programme. Next week, facilitators from different faith backgrounds would be sent to Minet School to talk to different groups of children about their perspective of their own faith. HIFN promoted themselves during elections campaign and invited candidates of 3 MPs to come and talk.

Members commended the organisations present on the work they had undertaken in the last year and noted the good news stories. Members agreed that excellent facilities should be provided around the clock and that continuous improvement was needed.

Members acknowledged comments regarding the North / South divide in the Borough and it was noted that the mortality rate in the South of the Borough was 7 years lower than in the North. Identifying needs and meeting the needs of those that were hard to reach was important.

Members discussed the term 'communities' and felt that the term 'community' was better when discussing community cohesion rather than 'communities'. They stated that the Borough was one community and that the term 'communities' could build boundaries.

Members discussed how the younger generation were taught to be outspoken and think for themselves and it was agreed that drama helped them to gain confidence. It was noted that the North of the Borough was very rich in art and drama venues, whereas the South of the Borough was not. As not everyone wanted to do sports, it was suggested that the arts could be of interest to a lot of young people. Ms Collins advised that there was a theatre in Uxbridge College and suggested that consideration be given to opening up this venue to be used for the community arts as part of the community cohesion work. Officers agreed that expanding opportunities to get involved in the arts in the South of the Borough was something that they would progress.

Members discussed what activities would be scheduled in the run up to the London Olympic Games and the Royal Wedding. It was noted that

	<p>Hillingdon Borough was the London borough with the most street parties for the Royal Wedding.</p> <p>Members spoke about literacy and how parents reading or talking to children from 0 – 2 years would make a huge difference to their lives as they grew up. Members thanked the organisations present for their work over the last year and their presentations to the Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the reports and presentations be noted; 2. Democratic Services arrange for copies of the London Health Commission DVD to be sent to Mr Bullen, Dr Friedman and Ms Little; 3. Ms Gibbs consider how the to rephrase 'The Strong and Active Communities Partnership' so that it was clearer that the Borough was one community; 4. Ms Collins discuss with the other organisations present how arts and drama could be expanded in the South of the Borough; 5. Ms Collins look at how the use of the theatre in Uxbridge College could be expanded to involve more of the community; and 6. the organisations present be thanked for the work they had completed over the last year and their continued effort for the following year, particularly in light of future financial constraints. 	
38.	<p>CHILDREN'S SELF HARM WORKING GROUP - DRAFT FINAL REPORT (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p> <p>Councillor Shirley Harper-O'Neill, Chairman of the Children's Self Harm Working Group, introduced the Working Group's draft final report on children's self harm. Councillor Harper-O'Neill advised that the Working Group meetings had been attended by various witnesses from different organisations and their input at the sessions had been invaluable. Members had found the selfharm.co.uk launch at Channel 4 very interesting and the work undertaken by children who had experience of self harming had been very emotional.</p> <p>Members agreed that improvements were needed around communication and the provision of information for those that needed it: this included teachers, carers, social workers, the children themselves and parents. The report proposed recommendations to build and improve on the work that the Council already did for children that self harmed and their families.</p> <p>Members asked that more statistics from the scoping report be included in the final report to show the scale of the problem for children.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That, subject to the proposed addition, the report of the Children's Self Harm Working Group be agreed and submitted to Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 14 April 2011.</p>	Action by

39.	WORK PROGRAMME (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>) RESOLVED: That the report and work programme be noted	Action by
	The meeting, which commenced at 5.00 pm, closed at 7.45 pm.	

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Nav Johal - 01895 250692. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.