

Minutes

**Corporate Services and Partnerships Policy
Overview Committee
Wednesday, 16 March 2011
Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW**



	<p>Members Present: Councillors Richard Lewis (Chairman), Raymond Graham, Anita MacDonald, Carol Melvin, Robin Sansarpuri and Michael White.</p> <p>Apologies: None.</p> <p>Officers: Steve Smith (Facilities Manager) and Khalid Ahmed (Democratic Services Manager).</p>
54.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>Councillor Anita MacDonald declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 5 – Review – The Security of Members of the Council when meeting with members of the public because of a recent ongoing personal safety incident with one of her constituents. She remained in the room and took part in discussions on the item.</p>
55.	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 FEBRUARY 2011</p> <p>Agreed as an accurate record.</p>
56.	<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>It was agreed that all items of business were considered in public.</p>
57.	<p>REVIEW – THE SECURITY OF MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL WHEN MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</p> <p>At the last meeting of the Committee, Members agreed to undertake a short review which would look at the measures which were already in place and which could be introduced to improve the safety of individuals when meeting with members of the public at the Civic Centre. Included in this review would be Members Ward surgeries which took place at a variety of venues within the Borough.</p> <p>A scoping report had been produced for Members which provided background and areas which could be investigated</p>

	<p>The Council's Facilities Manager attended the meeting and provided the following information to Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's new security contract began on 14 March and had resulted in no visible change to the security service which was delivered • Security comprised of 12 staff, who were very experienced in terms of providing the service within the Council • The Civic Offices in theory were open to the public until the last meeting within the building had finished. Members were informed that the main reception to the Civic Centre was manned throughout the night as there were occasions in an emergency when members of the public turned up at the Council offices • The present security cover for the Civic Centre included the main reception area, Housing Reception, Children's Reception, the Multi-Storey Car Park and the Members' Car Park • There was no designated security cover within Phase II of the Civic Centre, in the area where Members usually met with constituents • Security measures could be put in place within Phase II should there be the potential for a disturbance during meetings where outside people were involved. This had been the case with a recent meeting of the Cabinet • There were a number of meeting rooms within the Civic Centre where panic buttons were fitted • The meeting rooms within the Civic Centre reception area were best suited for Members meeting with members of the public as there was a security presence at all times in this area • Security staff provided first aid cover in the absence of the occupational health nurse and designated first aiders i.e. out of hours <p>Discussion then took place on the present procedures which were in place for Members. The Labour Group had recently advised their Members if they were meeting with constituents they did not know, that they should book a room down by the Civic Centre reception area, where security were close by.</p> <p>In relation to Ward Surgeries, Labour Group Members have been advised by Group officers that they should not attend a Ward Surgery on their own. Most of the Labour Group Members adhered to this, although there were Members who felt safe in the environment they held their surgeries if they were held in a very public place with people around all the time.</p> <p>The Facilities Manager informed Members that the meeting rooms in the Main Reception area of the Civic Offices</p>	<p>Action By:</p>
--	---	--------------------------

	<p>contained panic alarms, whereas the meeting rooms within Phase II near to the Group Offices did not have panic alarms.</p> <p>Members were advised that for wider security reasons, members of the public should not be brought into the corporate areas of the Civic Centre where officers worked, or taken into Phase II for meetings close to Group offices.</p> <p>Discussion took place on the personal safety of Members outside of the Civic Centre and the recent incident of a female Member being harassed by a member of the public by text messaging. The Council's website contained contact telephone numbers of all Members of the Council and it was an individual's choice as to which telephone numbers they publicised.</p> <p>Members were advised that an option could be for Members to provide their Group Offices' telephone numbers as their contact telephone number to mitigate against possible bogus telephone calls or messages.</p> <p>Reference was made to Members of the Council who had Council telephone lines which were used by Members for Council business. These numbers were not publicised and a suggestion was made that if possible Members could make this telephone number public.</p> <p>After further discussions, Members asked that the following measures and proposals be considered as part of added security measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consideration be given to ensuring that the front doors of the Civic Centre were locked during the night but that a door bell be available for members of the public in the case of an emergency• All Members of the Council be given a small fact sheet which provided details of emergency security telephone numbers and first aiders. If feasible this could take the form of a small sticker which could be attached to the back of Members' security passes• All meeting rooms within the Civic Centre to have a list of emergency security telephone numbers close by to the telephone in the room• The Groups' Secretariat be asked to ensure that where possible <u>ALL</u> meeting rooms for Members meeting with their constituents and / or members of the public be booked in the Civic Centre's main reception area's meeting rooms• The Groups' Secretariat be provided with details of those rooms where panic buttons were fitted• Consideration be given to how the Council's Restricted	Action By:
--	--	-------------------

	<p>Persons Register was communicated to Members of the Council and the Groups' Secretariat. This was to ensure that access was not given to any restricted person meeting alone with Members of the Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration should be given by both Groups on the Council to holding Ward Surgeries in Council buildings and establishments, during operating hours, to ensure that where possible security were around • That a workshop on personal safety be held on Member Development Day to provide Members with advice and guidance on their personal safety when meeting on their own with members of the public • Consideration be given to Council telephone line numbers, which were used by Members for Council business, being made public if requested by individual Members • Greater use of security be made when lone Members were exiting the Civic Centre from the Members' Car Park after meetings finishing in the evening <p>Members also discussed the issue of those Council meetings which Members of the public attended and the need for instructions to be given at the start of the meeting in relation to the location of fire exits. Officers undertook to take this forward.</p> <p>Members were informed that the recommendations on the review would be submitted to the Whips' meeting.</p> <p>Resolved –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That a report be submitted to the Whips' meeting on this Committee's suggested recommendations to improve Members' safety when they were meeting with members of the public. 2. That a draft of the report be circulated to Members of this Committee to enable their comments to be incorporated into the final report. 3. That delegated authority be given to the Chairman of the Committee in consultation with the Democratic Services Manager to finalise the report prior to its submission to the Whips' meeting. 	<p>Action By:</p> <p>Khalid Ahmed/Lloyd White</p> <p>Khalid Ahmed</p>
<p>58.</p>	<p>WORK PROGRAMME</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Members were asked to email the Democratic Services Manager if there were any items which they wanted on the</p>	

	agenda for the next meeting of the Committee (20 April 2011), otherwise the meeting would be cancelled.	
59.	FORWARD PLAN Members noted that the Cabinet Forward Plan had not been published this month.	
	Meeting closed at 8.45pm Next meeting: 20 April 2011 at 7.30pm.	

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Khalid Ahmed on 01895 250833. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.