



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Overview and Scrutiny in Hillingdon

Annual Report to Council - 2018 / 2019

Welcome

This annual report provides an opportunity to review the activity and achievements of overview and scrutiny in Hillingdon during 2018/19. This is a statutory, vital part of the Council's non-executive governance arrangements, comprising backbench elected councillors working each and every month to put Hillingdon residents first.

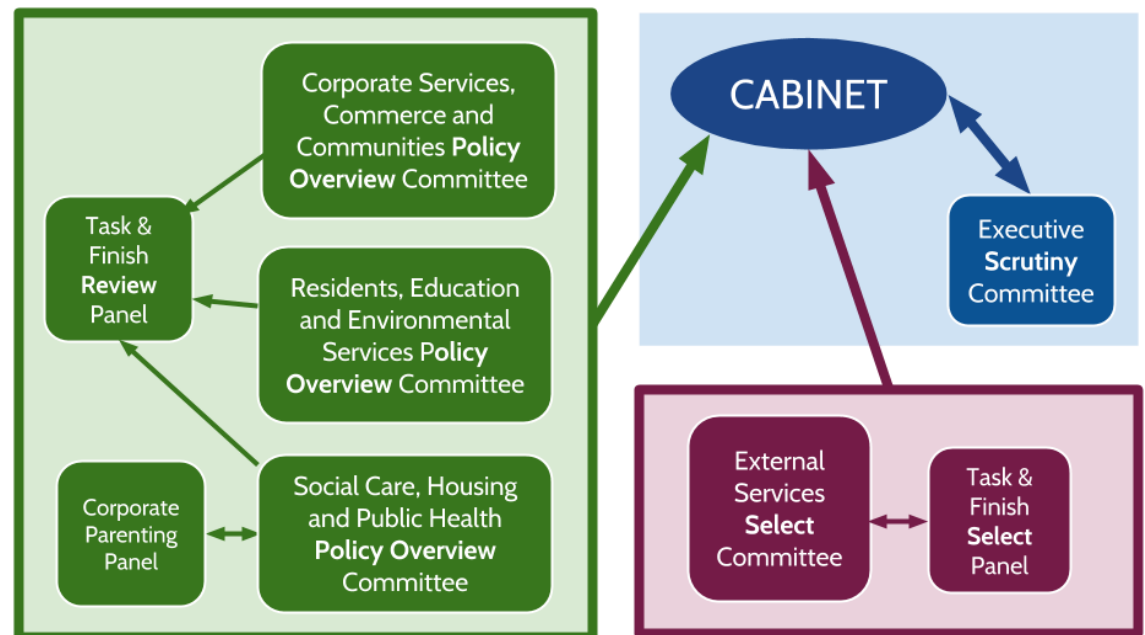
Modernising overview and scrutiny

At the Council meeting on 10 May 2018, refreshed overview and scrutiny committee arrangements were approved by Councillors to streamline the number of committees, increase their operational effectiveness and provide for the operation of multi-year work programmes to give more flexibility in undertaking in-depth reviews on key resident and community topics.

Along with the ability to set up more focussed 'review' and 'select' panels at any one time, the key corporate parenting responsibilities of Elected Councillors were also integrated within Hillingdon's overview and scrutiny arrangements. This positive change will actively engage young people in the development of council services with a direct-line to the decision-making Cabinet.

Nationally, following parliamentary activity on how overview and scrutiny operates in local authorities, the Government is expected to issue updated statutory scrutiny guidance during 2019/20. Hillingdon's advance refresh of overview and scrutiny should enable it to successfully adapt to this.

The modernised overview and scrutiny structure for the 2018/19 Municipal Year and beyond is shown on the right of this page and is now embedded as part Hillingdon's strong political governance of the Borough. This report sets out the Committee's work **putting residents FIRST**.



How overview and scrutiny works

In Hillingdon, there are three Policy Overview Committees (POCs) are responsible for monitoring council services and recommending changes to Cabinet on a range of areas to shape future policy direction. In addition, there is an Executive Scrutiny Committee, which is responsible for post Cabinet and Cabinet Member decision scrutiny and the statutory call-in procedure. The final, yet key arm of these arrangements is the External Services Select Committee. This Committee is responsible for holding to account and reviewing those services provided by other public agencies, primarily the local NHS and Police services.

All committees undertake their role through a multi-year work programme of activities which may include single meeting or in-depth policy reviews on specific topics of community and resident importance. These reviews provide the opportunity to directly engage with resident stakeholders, local interest groups and experts to help shape local public services in Hillingdon.

Committees also monitor the performance of local services and are able to request information and reports on particular matters of resident interest, often through the valued insight of local councillors in their wards. Committees provide regular comment on reports to Cabinet for decision and input into Cabinet's annual budget proposals before they are approved by Council each year. These Committees, therefore, play a vital role in ensuring that the Council continues to provide high quality, value-for-money services, putting Hillingdon residents first.

Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Policy Overview Committees can consider 'Councillor Calls For Action' submissions. These powers enable all Councillors to ask for discussions at POCs on issues where local problems have arisen and other methods of resolution have been exhausted. No such Calls for Actions have been requested and thereby considered during 2018/19.

This annual report demonstrates the breadth of work undertaken by Elected Councillors engaged in overview and scrutiny during 2018/19. On behalf of the Committee Chairmen, it is commended to Council on 9 May 2019.

‘ Local policing, broadcasting, bullying & budgets ’

The work of the Corporate Services, Commerce & Communities Policy Overview Committee



Councillors:

Richard Mills (Chairman)

Wayne Bridges (Vice-Chairman)

Nicola Brightman

Farhad Choubedar

Alan Deville

Vanessa Hurhangee

Jazz Dhillon (Opposition Lead)

Lindsay Bliss

Kerri Prince

Lead Officer: *Luke Taylor, Democratic Services*

Our remit

The Committee is responsible for the policy overview role for a broad array of Council services, provided mainly by the Council’s Chief Executive’s Office and Finance Directorate. These include strategic internal functions, such as finance, property, partnerships, human resources, democratic services, legal services, ICT and economic development. Further responsibilities also include localism, enforcement, community engagement, local commerce and job

creation, equalities, energy use and carbon reduction, public safety, civil protection and community safety.

The Committee has undertaken two reviews this year, and has finalised a third review from the previous year. It has also monitored a number of service areas. This is summarised below.

REVIEWING: Combating Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Bullying amongst Young People

The review, undertaken originally by the Corporate Services and Partnerships Policy Overview Committee during 2017/18, investigated the impact of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying on young people, to improve ways that the Council can both prevent and tackle these forms of bullying, as well as the personal and social problems that can arise from it.

The new Corporate Services, Commerce and Communities Policy Overview Committee in 2018/19 then reviewed the report further and agreed to bring the review forward to Cabinet in due course.

This review was initiated after receiving evidence from Stonewall, which highlighted a number of worrying statistics regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT) young people. The Committee recognised that several thousand young people within the Borough

could potentially be affected by such bullying at some point in their young lives, and reviewed what actions schools, the Council and other organisations could take to tackle it, as well as helping members of the LGBT community who were victims of it.

The review examined the various steps that had already been taken by local organisations to combat this form of bullying, including an official Hillingdon Council report in 2013 that had identified a range of concerns among LGBT young people and the consequential activity that needed to assist the young LGBT community who have been affected.



The Committee also recognised the work undertaken by organisations, such as Stonewall, Hillingdon-based services, and other local authorities in the UK. Fundamental to the review, however, was evidence received from local schools and young members of the LGBT community themselves.

A survey of local schools helped identify actions that were currently being taken by schools to combat HBT behaviour, as well as areas where schools would appreciate further support or guidance. In addition, a series of meetings with LGBT young people helped shape the review along with evidence from those who had been affected by this form of bullying personally. This gave the Committee a real

insight into the matter and to formulate and agree its recommendations going forward.

The review is due to be presented to Cabinet in June 2019.

REVIEWING: New Policing Structures, Community Safety and CCTV improvements in Hillingdon

In February 2018, major changes to the Metropolitan Police's delivery of local policing, through the introduction of cross-Borough Basic Command Units, were announced. These changes have led to the replacement of 32 single Borough Command Units with 12 new Basic Command Units (BCU) that cover between two and four local authorities each.



The London Borough of Hillingdon and the London Boroughs of Ealing and Hounslow now form the West Area BCU. The Committee were keen to examine this new structure's impact on community safety in the Borough. The review looked at the relationship between the Council, the Police and the other local authorities, with evidence from the Council's Community Safety Team and Metropolitan Police Officers.

The review analysed evidence relating to anti-social behaviour to better understand how the new structures had improved cross-borough working to help combat these concerns, and the ability for council officers to liaise with senior Police Officers in this regard. Additionally, the relationship between the Community Safety Team and the Council funded Police Tasking Teams were explored. It was welcomed that the Tasking Team allowed the Council more ownership over local community safety issues, as well as having police officers ring-fenced to Hillingdon. Furthermore, a number of committee members spent time out on patrol with the Tasking Team.

The Council's recent Borough-wide CCTV digital upgrade and new CCTV Control Room were investigated as part of the review, with the latter open to visits from the Committee. Members praised the CCTV upgrades to further combat crime and anti-social behaviour in the Borough.

The Committees findings have sought to recognise the impressive work by Council officers, build on the CCTV upgrades, best practice and information sharing, as well as looking to protect funding for the Borough's Tasking Teams, to ensure that Hillingdon remains a safe place to live for its residents.

Evidence from the review was heard from the Council's Director of Housing, Environment, Education, Health and Wellbeing, the Service Manager for Community Safety, Anti-Social Behaviour and

Environment Manager, Head of Repairs and Engineering, and the BCU's Chief Inspector and Inspector for Neighbourhoods and Partnerships.

This review is due to be presented to Cabinet in July 2019.

REVIEWING: Digital Broadcasting on YouTube of Policy Overview, Scrutiny and Select Committees

This review was initiated following an amended motion to full Council requesting the Committee to consider the expansion of broadcasting to overview and scrutiny committees.



The Committee noted that since 2016, the broadcasting of council meetings on YouTube Live has secured a leap in the number of residents able to see how local decisions are made and how the

Council governs. During a witness session, the Committee gave positive feedback about the Council's current broadcasting arrangements, reviewed the latest upward viewer trends and sought comparisons with other public sector bodies. The Committee was pleased to conclude that Hillingdon was leading the way in this type of digital engagement across local government.

The Committee received a detailed options paper to enable them to fully consider the benefits or otherwise of expanding broadcasting to the policy overview, scrutiny and select committees. Members also took into account the viewer and practical factors, along with the technology and cost implications of any additional broadcasting. Finally, to gain a good understanding of the technology used itself, the Committee participated in the setting up and a live [internal] broadcast of their own meeting.

In conclusion, the Committee recommended expanding broadcasting, which would help raise the profile of the work the Policy Overview, Scrutiny and Select Committees, demonstrating the broader public engagement in Hillingdon's democratic process. The Committee recommended achieving this at zero cost by using Committee Rooms 5 & 6 which are already set-up for live broadcasting.

This review is due to be presented to Cabinet in May 2019.

MONITORING activity

ICT Operations

The Committee received an update on the Council's refreshed ICT operations, following a restructure in 2017/18 and move to agile working. The report noted the direction of travel of the Council's existing infrastructure to modern "Cloud" technology. Members noted

that the service desk portal was due to be upgraded to ensure it was more user-friendly, and amongst other developments, new library management and waste service management systems were proposed benefiting residents. Members heard that printers had been upgraded within the Civic Centre following a new contract with Xerox along with an effort to reduce the level of printing. It was welcomed that there was a plan to standardise IT equipment, which was likely to be introduced with the next corporate computer refresh.

Resident feedback and complaints

The Committee received a comprehensive report on Resident Complaints and Enquiries and noted that the volume and type of complaints received over the course of the previous year. Members heard that 243 complaints within the Committee's remit were received, with the majority resolved at the initial stage. 23 complaints were dealt with formally at Stage 2, with none at Stage 3, and ten complaints being processed by the Ombudsman, who upheld the Council's decision on nine of these. The Committee was informed that these numbers suggest the complaints procedure, which was streamlined following the Committee's review in 2015, is working well.

Facilities Management & Civic Centre Projects



The Committee was briefed on a number of projects that had taken place, or were scheduled to take place at the Civic Centre. These were a mixture of projects that took into account priorities, as well as

some projects to help improve staff wellbeing. Members noted that works had included upgrades to kitchens and bathrooms, and future projects included, but were not limited to, the replacement of carpets and redecorating, roof repairs in the Middlesex Suite and Mezzanine, the replacement of fire doors, improvements to air conditioning within the Middlesex Suite and security upgrades

Update on review into ‘Recruitment in Hillingdon’

The Committee was presented with an update on the implementation of the recommendations approved by Cabinet in the 2017 review into “Recruitment in Hillingdon”. The Head of Human Resources confirmed that the ten recommendations outlined in the review were to be delivered within existing HR budgets, and that these recommendations would be completed as part of a three-year project to help ease financial pressures, which HR was currently midway through.

Members noted that some work had already taken place to successfully implement the Committee’s recommendations, including marketing the Council’s brand and uniqueness, use social media as a tool for recruitment, and changes to exit and entrance interviews for departing and new employees.



The Committee also noted that the apprenticeship talent pool had been a success, with Hillingdon just one of four London Boroughs to have met Government targets on apprenticeships. Members welcomed that a number of apprentices were now employed in permanent roles within the Council. All recommendations are due for implementation by the end of 2019/20.

Budget Review and Cabinet’s Budget Proposals

As a statutory consultee to the Cabinet’s 2019/20 budget proposals published in December, the Committee reviewed and supported the proposals within its remit. The Committee also agreed a co-ordinated response on behalf of the other two Policy Overview Committees to Cabinet. During the year, the Committee also received an update on the 2018/19 budget.

The Committee also received an update on the work by council officers looking at business rates at Heathrow Airport.

‘ Corporate parenting, Universal Credit & housing ’

The work of the Social Care, Housing & Public Health Policy Overview Committee



Councillors:

Jane Palmer (Chairman)

Duncan Flynn (Vice-Chairman)

Judith Cooper

Alan Deville

Ian Edwards

Becky Haggart

Paula Rodrigues

Tony Eginton (Opposition Lead)

Janet Gardner

Lead Officer: *Anisha Teji, Democratic Services*

Our remit

The Social Care, Housing & Public Health Policy Overview Committee is responsible for undertaking the policy overview role in relation to the Council’s Adult Social Care, Social Care Services for Children, Young People and Children with Special Needs, Adoption and Fostering, Homelessness and Housing Needs, Asylum Seekers and Public Health responsibilities.

In addition to monitoring performance, considering the Budget and receiving several overview reports on Social Care, Housing and Public Health matters, the Committee commissioned a review into Universal Credit and the impacts on residents. The Committee also formally established the Corporate Parenting Panel to provide strong oversight of the Council’s corporate parenting responsibilities.

CHAMPIONING: Corporate Parenting - Children FIRST

Corporate Parenting is a significant responsibility for the Committee, but also for all Elected Members because we are all ‘Corporate Parents’ and have a duty to ensure the best interests of Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

In January 2019, young representatives from the Children in Care Council delivered a special presentation to the Committee on their activity. Members welcomed this insight and the opportunity for young people to engage further with the Council.



To assist with this important role, the Committee established the Corporate Parenting Panel in March 2019 which provides for greater integration of corporate parenting within the Council's core governance arrangements.

The Panel has a clear purpose to champion corporate parenting across the Council, directly engaging children and care leavers in the Council's care in the democratic and decision-making process, working with them and partners to monitor relevant services and improve outcomes and life chances.

The first Panel meeting will take place in May 2019.

REVIEWING: Universal Credit: likely favourable and adverse impacts, risks and local partnership response

As a topical matter, the Committee has actively explored HM Government's Universal Credit programme and the possible impacts and risks upon Hillingdon residents, in addition to local partnership response.

The review aimed to gain an understanding of the range of services available, the current steps in place and how Universal Credit was being implemented in practice.

Moreover, the review aspired to reflect on best practice in other local boroughs and organisations by considering policy ideas and obtaining further information via witness sessions attended by relevant parties. As the review progressed, a greater focus was placed by Members on the practicality of the application process and



what more could be done to assist claimants that are more vulnerable. This was notwithstanding the significant work already undertaken by the Council and other partners to engage with residents affected.

To investigate this topic, the Committee held a number of meetings with a variety of witnesses including key officers within the Council that specialised in this area, representatives from the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), MIND, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and other housing providers. The Committee also undertook a site visit to the Job Centre Plus in Uxbridge. The Committee found the site visit to be useful to see the application process in practice and found DWP representatives to be receptive.



During the course of the review, it became evident to the Committee that the Council itself continues to be very proactive supporting residents where Universal Credit may impact on their social housing or accommodation they are in receipt of. However, in relation to the DWP's application process for Universal Credit, Members' initial findings had drawn out some concerns on the impact it was having on more vulnerable residents, specifically those with mental, disability and physical health concerns.

In light of this, the Committee has decided to extend its investigations to hear further case studies and evidence from external charities and the DWP to help it devise focussed, practical recommendations to Cabinet later in 2019.

MONITORING: the wellbeing of vulnerable residents

Carers Strategy

The Committee received an update on the implementation of the Carers Strategy and the detailed action plan. Members welcomed this opportunity to ask officers questions on the local services provided, including areas working well and also challenges.



Child Sexual Exploitation and Early Intervention

The Committee received updates on previous reviews into Child Sexual Exploitation and Early Intervention Services. Members used this opportunity to see what changes had been made since the reviews and noted that recommendations had been implemented.

Safeguarding and Mental Health Services

Each year, the Committee receives the Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report and Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report providing comments on them to the Cabinet. These reports provided detail on the work undertaken by each Board and evidence about the standard to which the agencies responsible for safeguarding children and adults had performed. The Committee reviewed the reports, questioned officers about performance and submitted useful comments to Cabinet.

Members also had sight of the Quality And Capacity Of Mental Health Services report produced by Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group, which enabled Members to ask questions on the quality and capacity of mental health services in Hillingdon.

TeleCareLine Service



The Committee monitored the performance of the valued TeleCareLine Service promoting independence through modern technology. This review was following its outsourcing to Anchor Trust

in December 2017. It was welcomed that this had recently been extended to those residents over 75 years of age.

Better Care Fund Plan

The Committee received the local Better Care Fund Plan, introduced in 2014/15 to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of health and care. Members were updated on the delivery of the Plan in 2018/19.

Housing and Homelessness



Housing related topics have been a significant area of activity for the Committee. Along with undertaking the review on Universal Credit, the Committee also received information reports on the Council's current housing policies and homelessness in the Borough. Members received an overview of the Council's Homelessness Assessment, a key report setting out the Council's response to its statutory duties to manage homelessness in the Borough.

Stroke Prevention

The Director of Public Health updated Members on a previous review into Stroke Prevention, where Members noted that there was ongoing monitoring of people who had had a stroke and a variety of services available to help patients. These services included the Stroke Association which provided advice and rehabilitation. Members noted there was also strong engagement with the CCG in relation to early intervention for people with a high risk of a stroke.

Budget Review and Cabinet's Budget Proposals

As a statutory consultee to the Cabinet's 2019/20 budget proposals published in December, the Committee reviewed the proposals within its remit and submitted comments to the Corporate Services, Commerce and Communities Policy Overview Committee. During the year, the Committee also received an update on the 2018/19 budget.

Annual Complaints Update 2017/18

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

‘ Resident payments, schools & the environment ’

The work of the Residents, Education & Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee



Councillors:

Wayne Bridges (Chairman)

Michael Markham (Vice-Chairman)

Vanessa Hurhangee

Allan Kauffman

Heena Makwana

Paula Rodrigues

Steve Tuckwell

Jan Sweeting (Opposition Lead)

Stuart Mathers

Lead Officer: Neil Fraser, Democratic Services

Our remit

This Committee is responsible for the policy overview role for a diverse range of Council services central to residents' quality of life. Our remit extends to education, highways, transport, footpaths, green spaces, planning, heritage, waste and recycling, sport and leisure, environmental health, and beyond. The Committee has undertaken a major review this year into payment modernisation of key residents services. It has also monitored a number of critical service areas.

REVIEWING: Payment Modernisation and Embracing Future Technology Across Key Resident Services

During 2018/19, the Committee undertook a review into how residents currently, and will in the future, wish to pay for key Council services.

The review began with various witness sessions and the Committee heard evidence from key service areas, the Council's transformation lead, along with private sector experts who specialise in payment technologies and case studies from other organisations innovating in this area.



Undertaking the review, the Committee concluded that residents in the London Borough of Hillingdon enjoyed access to a wide range of valued services provided by the Council and a range of different payment options in operation. Notwithstanding this, the Committee sought to better understand how residents and other users currently

pay for such services and to suggest improvements for the Council to receive and process the payments made.



From the outset, the user / resident experience was at the forefront of the Committee's mind. In this regard, a particular focus for the Committee was how residents and other motorists pay for parking in the Council's car parks, given the high volume of daily payment interaction for this service and that currently only cash could be taken by Pay and Display machines.

The Committee looked at how user habits had changed, noting that residents today expected quick, secure and intuitive payment options. It was welcomed that the Council was refreshing its digital roadmap and beginning to transform and embed the necessary online and website infrastructure to support these expectations going forward. Members also fully endorsed proposals to develop a single online account for residents, with all their interactions and payments for council services in one place, providing a modern user experience.

Members of the Committee explored what emerging payment technologies were coming to market or being developed that may change how residents wish to pay for services in the future. The Committee felt this would provide a useful steer for the Council in shaping its technology and payment methods in the medium to longer-term.



Whilst the Committee recognised the potential for online payments providing more efficiency in operations, it was also mindful, where required, to retain traditional 'cash' options for those residents who did not have access, or had limited skills, using online payment technology.

The Committee's recommendations complement, and help progress, recently announced investment plans by the Cabinet, particularly on website development and new parking machines, where the Committee recommends the roll-out of new machines with new integrated cash and card payment terminals.

The Committee's final report was endorsed at its meeting on 21 March 2019 and is due to be submitted to Cabinet in May 2019.

MONITORING: education & key environmental services

School Places

The Committee receives quarterly updates on the provision of school places to pupils. This enables Members to also review headline pupil projections at both primary and secondary levels, aligned with the Council's School Expansion Programme. Members noted that National Offer Day for places at secondary schools was 1 March 2019 and all children had subsequently been offered a place in Year 7 for September 2019.

Educational attainment of our young people

An annual report is presented each year to Members detailing trends in the academic standards of pupils within the Borough. The Committee was informed that overall, academic performance within Hillingdon was improving and that attainment within Early Years had

risen, alongside improved outcomes at both Key Stages within primary phases. Within the secondary phase, Members noted that Key Stage 4 outcomes continued to improve and were outperforming national averages. Hillingdon had seen marked improvement in overall performance in recent years, and now ranked mid-table against statistical neighbours.

However, Members did note that challenges remained, including the performance of White British pupils, Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training and at post-16 level, Hillingdon schools had academic outcomes lower than national averages. The Committee submitted its comments to Cabinet, whilst encouraged that Hillingdon was working to address these.

Restorative Justice

The Committee received a report on Restorative Justice, an initiative which aims to bring the victims of an offence together with those responsible for the offence and explore how the harm caused might be repaired. This included the victims meeting or communicating with the young person who committed the crime, to explain the impact of the crime, and allow the young person to have the opportunity to take

responsibility and make amends for their actions. Members were shown a video interview of an adult couple who had been a victim of an offence, (in this instance, an assault by a group of teenage girls), and who had subsequently taken part in the process. The victims described feeling overwhelmingly positive about the experience, and the

video concluded with their endorsement of the initiative.



The Crime of Fly-Tipping

Due to regular Members and Residents Enquiries on this anti-social environmental crime, the Committee received a detailed information report and statistical data by ward.



It was noted that the issue was more prevalent in the south of the Borough, but certain wards in the North also had higher instances of fly tipping. It was considered that the number of successful prosecutions could be improved, and a number of current and proposed actions to address this were detailed by officers, including the issuing of fixed penalty notices for littering; the introduction of targeted waste carrier operations, conducted with the assistance of the local Police; the inspection of businesses or premises to ensure

traders were storing and disposing of waste correctly; and joint working with colleagues from Waste Services to inspect regular fly tipping hot spot areas. Members were united in stamping out this anti-social, environmental crime.

Building Control activity in Hillingdon



The Committee were briefed on Hillingdon's Building Control Service and the work it does to keep buildings and structures safe. It was noted that Hillingdon provided a quality service to residents, which included site visits, review of site plans, provision of approved documentation, and advice, for which the Service had won several awards.

Update on previous reviews: Street Lighting & Cemetery and Burial Ground Byelaws

The Committee regularly monitors the implementation of recommendations resulting from past reviews. On the Street Lighting review commissioned in 2009/10, the Committee was informed that work had been completed to replace the existing 23,700 sodium lights within the Borough with new LED lights. It was also noted that work was being undertaken to draft Hillingdon's first Street Lighting policy document, which would aim to strengthen the coordination between the various street lighting stakeholders.

With regard to the review into regulations and byelaws relating to cemeteries and burial grounds undertaken in 2013, the Committee

was informed that all recommendations that had resulted from the review had since been implemented. Members were also informed of new developments including further capacity and improvements to various cemeteries.

Highways Maintenance and Flooding

The Committee was updated on the work the Council does to keep its highways and pavements in safe and good condition. The Committee were informed about the new Highway Safety Inspection Policy recently approved, which had introduced a more risk-based approach to road inspections, assessment of defects and prioritisation of repairs. In addition, the Committee was advised of the actions the Council takes when responding to flooding on public highways, and the lessons learned from previous major flood events, which were incorporated into updated Surface Water Management Plans to identify ways to mitigate future flooding risk.

Budget Review and Cabinet's Budget Proposals

As a statutory consultee to the Cabinet's 2019/20 budget proposals published in December, the Committee reviewed the proposals within its remit and submitted comments to the Corporate Services, Commerce and Communities Policy Overview Committee. During the year, the Committee also received an update on the 2018/19 budget.

Annual Complaints Update 2017/18

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

‘ decision-making scrutiny ’

The work of the Executive Scrutiny Committee



Councillors:

Henry Higgins (Chairman)

John Riley (Vice-Chairman)

Simon Arnold

Wayne Bridges

Nick Denys

Peter Curling (Opposition Lead)

Peter Money

John Morse

Mr Anthony Little - Roman Catholic Diocesan representative (on education matters)

Lead Officer: Mark Braddock, Statutory Scrutiny Officer, Democratic Services

This action is widely known as the ‘call-in’ power. If the Executive Scrutiny Committee considers any of such decisions to be deficient, they may refer the decision back to the Cabinet or Cabinet Member(s) for further consideration. The Committee may make use of a set of criteria to guide them in this process. For Cabinet decisions, the Committee meets immediately after the conclusion of meetings of the Cabinet to enable Members to review the decisions just taken and, if agreed by a majority of Members present, give consideration to the potential for the call-in of a particular decision made.



Scrutiny of decision-making

A period of 5 working days must elapse before any formal executive decision taken by the Cabinet or Cabinet Member can be implemented by officers. The Executive Scrutiny Committee’s primary role is, therefore, to scrutinise such decisions that have been taken but have not yet been implemented. This acts as the statutory ‘checks & balances’ upon the executive.

During 2018/19, there were no call-ins of any Cabinet, Cabinet Member decisions or other key executive decisions.

The Chairman of the Executive Scrutiny Committee has a key constitutional prerogative of being able to decide to waive the ‘call-in’ power where a decision is deemed urgent by the Cabinet or Cabinet Member and any delay would prejudice the Council’s or the public’s

interest or could lead to an [increased] risk of damage to people or property, in accordance with the Council's Constitution. Such decisions are carefully considered and when approved by the Chairman, this enables on an exceptional basis for such decisions to be implemented with immediate effect so the Council can be responsive, primarily to safeguard residents' best interests. These are otherwise known as 'urgency' or 'special urgency' decisions through the formal executive decision-making process depending on the necessity of the matter in question.

During 2018/19, out of approximately 500 executive decision requests to the Cabinet and Cabinet Members, the Chairman has carefully considered and agreed to the waiver of the call-in power for approximately 10% of these for clear urgency reasons. Such actions,

which are taken on an exceptional basis, have ensured the Council can deliver critical services and works to safeguard residents.

The Chairman also plays a key constitutional role in being notified of any future key decisions, primarily to the Cabinet, where it has been impracticable to give sufficient notice of a decision in the Forward Plan and provides the necessary permissions for these to be considered.

To assist in their wider deliberations, the Committee often request clarification on a number of matters within individual Cabinet reports, which are responded to by officers either at or after the meeting.

‘ Hospice services, NHS accountability, GP pressures ’

The work of the External Services Select Committee



Councillors:

John Riley (Chairman)

Nick Denys (Vice Chairman)

Simon Arnold

Teji Barnes

Devi Radia

Kuldeep Lakhmana (Opposition Lead)

Ali Milani

June Nelson

Lead Officers: *Nikki O'Halloran and Liz Penny,
Democratic Services*

Over the past year, Members have continued to develop the reputation of this important scrutiny committee so that the highest, most senior and influential members of outside agencies regularly attend. These witnesses will often seek assurances that they will be included in the meetings so that the Committee can hear what they have to say. They have become used to the Committee's in-depth challenging questioning and commentary and welcome a forum where external agencies can meet in a calm but probing atmosphere.

Holding external agencies to account

The External Services Select Committee has a broad remit to scrutinise all non-Hillingdon Council organisations whose actions affect Hillingdon residents. This Committee also undertakes the health scrutiny role as required by the Health & Social Care Act 2001 and acts as the Crime and Disorder Committee as defined in the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009.



in order to demonstrate how their service can improve the lives of residents.

As well as undertaking light touch reviews and receiving update reports (in relation to The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust CQC report and the Safer Hillingdon Partnership), the Committee has also monitored the performance of the local NHS Trusts (with a view to later providing evidence to the CQC during its inspections).

The Committee is pleased that partners' value its scrutiny role and that its work appears to be held in high regard. The strength of the Committee's approach to scrutiny enables it to investigate those aspects of service provision within the Borough that are important to residents and the Council.

HOSPICE SERVICES: Investigations into the provision at Michael Sobell House, Mount Vernon Hospital

Following news of the closure of inpatient services at Michael Sobell House, the Committee invited representatives from Michael Sobell Hospice Charity (MSHC) to attend its meeting on 10 July 2018. This was followed up with meetings on 30 October 2018, 11 December 2018 and 28 February 2019 where Members questioned witnesses from East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust, The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group, MSHC, Healthwatch Hillingdon and H4All about why the unit had been closed without notice being given to the External Services Select Committee and the measures being put in place to reopen the building. All meetings were well attended by members of the public.

Members challenged witnesses about the reasons for the closure and the action that would be taken to address the issues with regard to

the maintenance and repair of the estate. It transpired that partner responsibilities and reporting lines were unclear as there were no formal contracts in place. At the meeting on 28 February 2019, it appeared that a possible resolution had been found. Partners are currently working together with the aim of reopening Michael Sobell House by the summer of 2019 and will provide the Committee with an update at its meeting in July 2019.

Cabinet will be provided with a full account of the Select Committee's activity in relation to this important local matter and its conclusions later in 2019.

SELECT PANEL: reviewing the pressures on local GPs

A Working Group review into the pressures on General Practitioners (GPs) was originally initiated in 2015/16. Given that this topic continues to be of considerable importance and relevance today, in October 2018 the Committee agreed to revisit this by establishing a **Select Panel** to review the evidence gathered by the previous Working Group and gain a better understanding of the current pressures faced by GPs in the Borough, along with best practice elsewhere through case studies, policy ideas and witness sessions.



It is acknowledged that General Practice in England is under significant strain. Many GPs and their teams are struggling to meet the increasing pressures of limited resources, recruitment and retention challenges and the burden of patients with long term conditions. A number of options are currently being considered to alleviate some of the pressures on General Practice. Some GP practices have already entered into a collaborative arrangement with other practices while others are exploring triaging options to free up GPs' time. It is anticipated that, on completion of the Review, the Panel will be in a position to recommend potential changes to alleviate pressures on GPs; this will be of benefit to local residents as it will improve access to services and will enable GPs to focus on helping their patients to get the right help when they need it.

The first witness session of the Select Panel was held in December 2018 with subsequent sessions being held in January and February of this year. Witnesses thus far have included representatives of the Local Medical Committee, Clinical Commissioning Group, Healthwatch, the Council's housing team and the Director of Public Health. The next meeting is scheduled for 24 April 2019 and will be attended by representatives of Health Education England and the Citizens Advice Bureau.

A number of useful ideas and suggestions have been forthcoming to date; however, these are still in their infancy at this stage and will be fleshed out further as the review progresses.

The final report and recommendations from the Panel are expected to be considered by Committee, then Cabinet later in the year, for referral to other external relevant bodies as required.

QUALITY MATTERS: State of Local Health Services

Each year, there is a statutory requirement for all providers of NHS healthcare services to produce a Quality Account: an annual report to the public about the quality of services delivered and submitted to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care by 30 June each year. Providers are asked to consider three aspects of quality – patient experience, safety and clinical effectiveness - and have a legal duty to send their Quality Account to the overview and scrutiny committee (OSC) in the local authority area in which the provider has a registered office. Hillingdon's External Services Select Committee reviews these reports annually and provides a statement indicating whether Members believe that the report is a fair reflection of the healthcare services provided. This statement is then included verbatim in the final published version of the report.

‘ involving residents and the community ’

Stakeholder and witness engagement is central to overview and scrutiny in Hillingdon

Councillors on Policy Overview, Scrutiny and Select Committees actively seek to involve residents, interest groups, experts, private and public organisations in the policy reviews and scrutiny activity their respective Committees undertake. Strong witness testimony has, and continues to provide added verifiable value to the Committee's findings presented ultimately to the Cabinet for approval. 2018/19 was no exception, with the following external witnesses engaging in this important aspect of Hillingdon's democratic process:

- Metropolitan Police Service
- Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group
- Healthwatch Hillingdon
- The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust
- Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust
- Hillingdon Local Medical Committee
- London Ambulance Service NHS Trust
- Stonewall UK
- Hillingdon CAMHS
- Hillingdon School Nursing Services
- London Fire Brigade
- National Probation Service
- NHS England
- NHS England (London)
- Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Chairman
- Local Safeguarding Children Board Chairman
- HM Courts & Tribunals Service
- Openreach
- Affinity Water
- Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks
- Heathrow Villages resident
- Hillingdon 4 All
- General Practitioners
- Yiewsley & West Drayton Community Centre
- Slough Borough Council
- DASH
- LBH Director of Public Health
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Catalyst Housing
- The Barnet Group
- Hillingdon MIND
- Bath & North East Somerset Council
- Fountains Mill LGBT Youth Group
- CAPITA UK
- Health Education England
- London Borough of Ealing
- London Borough of Hounslow
- Headteachers
- Assistant Headteachers
- Children in Care Council

' a decade of scrutiny '

Recalling ten years of overview and scrutiny in Hillingdon

Policy Overview, Scrutiny & Select Committees have a proud record of reviews of local and external service provision since 2002, with their findings incorporated into the core work the Council, its partners and even HM Government policies to put Hillingdon residents first. As a testament to this work by Elected Councillors, this section of the annual report highlights past reviews over the last 10 years. All are available to read on the [Council's website HERE](#) or individually to download below online:

2017/18

- [Review into Air Quality](#)
- [Review into Loneliness and Isolation in Older Residents](#)
- [External Services Scrutiny Committee's commissioned Working Group review into Community Sentencing](#)
- [Supporting Children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities in their Early Years](#)
- [Hospital Discharge](#)
- [Criminalisation of Looked After Children \(LAC\)](#)

2016/17

- [Shisha Bars, Lounges and Cafes in Hillingdon](#)
- [Housing Benefit Changes In Hillingdon](#)
- [Stroke Prevention In Hillingdon](#)
- [Review of the Council's Current and Future Relationship with Academies and Free Schools](#)
- [Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation in Hillingdon](#)
- [Disposal of Charity Shop Waste](#)
- [Recruitment in Hillingdon](#)

- [Supporting Educational Aspiration for Disadvantaged Children](#)

2015/16

- [Raising Standards in Private Sector Rented Accommodation](#)
- [The Effectiveness of Early Help to Promote Positive Outcomes for Families](#)
- [Alcohol Related Admissions Amongst Under 18s](#)
- [Hoarding in Hillingdon](#)
- [Diversifying the Street Champions Initiative](#)

2014/15

- [Tackling Social Housing Fraud](#)
- [Review into Family Law Reforms](#)
- [Children's Oral Health](#)
- [A Review of Hillingdon's Corporate Complaints Procedure](#)
- [Policing and Mental Health Services \[](#)
- [Hillingdon's Implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Reforms](#)

- [The Cleaning and Maintenance Schedule for Hillingdon's Footpaths and Bridleways](#)
- [Hillingdon Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy](#)
- [Reducing the Risk of Young People Engaging in Criminal Activity and Anti-Social Behaviour](#)
- [Hillingdon's Shared Lives Scheme](#)

2013/14

- [Stigma: The Effect on Residents' Mental and Physical Health in the Borough](#)
- [Review of Anti-Social Behaviour Partnership Working in the Borough](#)
- [The Causes of Tenancy Failure and How it can be Prevented](#)
- [Using Our Water: Improving Efficiency and Developing Long-Term Strategies](#)
- [Improving Outcomes for Care Leavers Not in Education, Employment or Training \(NEET\)](#)
- [Strengthening the Council's Role as a Corporate Parent](#)
- [Reducing Our Carbon Footprint](#)

2012/13

- [Community Cohesion and the Accessing of Council Services](#)
- [Crime Prevention Resources Provided for Hillingdon Police by the London Borough of Hillingdon and the Free Older People Burglar Alarms Scheme](#)
- [Leaving Care Procedure and Grant](#)
- [Safeguarding of Children That Go Missing](#)
- [Access to Education for Hillingdon's Vulnerable Children and Young People](#)
- [Review of the Regulations and Byelaws Relating to Cemeteries and Burial Grounds Within Hillingdon](#)
- [Review of Local Pest Control Services and the Impact of Waste Management Processes](#)
- [Review of Adult Community Mental Health Services](#)
- [Special Constables](#)

2011/12

- [Effectiveness of Audit Committee and its Terms of Reference](#)
- [Operation and Function of Hillingdon First Card](#)
- [Elective Home Education](#)
- [Review of Mobile Technology and Telecommunications Equipment in Hillingdon Borough and Beyond](#)
- [Personalisation and Disabilities With Reference to Transition](#)
- [Re-offending](#)
- [Dementia](#)

2010/11

- [Census 2011](#)
- [Personal Safety of Members of the Council When Meeting With Members of the Public](#)
- [The Hillingdon Khat Review](#)
- [Review of Hillingdon's Town Twinning Relationships](#)
- [Review of 14-19 Education and Provision](#)
- [Use of Assistive Technology by Adult Social Care to Support Independent Living](#)
- [Hillingdon Centre for Independent Living](#)
- [Health Inequalities - Effect of Overcrowding on Educational Attainment and Children's Development](#)
- [Children's Self Harm](#)

2009/10

- [Impact of a Pandemic in Hillingdon and the Effects on Council Services](#)
- [The Impact of Public Funded Business Support and the Success of New Business Start Up Within Hillingdon and How the Council Could Improve Business-to-Business Support within the Borough's Industrial Estates](#)
- [Reviewing Whether Current Arrangements and Future Plans to Support Inclusive Practice in Hillingdon Schools Are Effective](#)
- [Reviewing Current Arrangements and Future Plans for Safeguarding Children at Heathrow Airport as a Port of Entry](#)

- [A Review of Street Lighting](#)
- [A Review of Planning Enforcement \('Homes' in Back Gardens\)](#)
- [A Review of Counterfeit Cosmetics and Illegally Imported Foods](#)
- [The Transformation Agenda and Direct Payments in Hillingdon](#)
- [The Hillingdon Centre For Independent Living](#)
- [Parent Abuse - Children and Young People Who Abuse their Parents and Carers](#)

2008/09

- [CCTV Strategy](#)
- [Heritage in Hillingdon](#)
- [Developing the 14-19 Education Provision](#)
- [Developing the Short Breaks Provision](#)
- [Wireless Town Centres in Hillingdon](#)
- [Transition from Child to Adult Mental Health Services Report](#)
- [The Nature and Role of the Private Rented Sector in Hillingdon](#)
- [Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee Review: Stroke and Major Trauma: Final Report](#)
- [Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee Review: Stroke and Major Trauma: Supplementary Information](#)

Democratic Services

London Borough of Hillingdon
Council AGM - 9 May 2019