

# LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

**Report to:** Policy and Oversight Board

**Date:** 11/12/2023

**Subject:** Policy and Accountability Committees' Update Report

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**Responsible Director:** Nicola Ellis, Strategic Director of Corporate Services and Chief Operating Officer

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## SUMMARY

This report outlines the areas of work and reports considered by each of the Council's six Policy and Accountability Committees at their meetings in November 2023.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To note the updates of the Policy and Accountability Committees and discuss any areas for future review or collaboration.
2. To approve the request from the Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Accountability Committee for a Task and Finish Group on improving vaccination rates in the borough.

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**Wards Affected:** All

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<b>Our Values</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the H&amp;F Values</b>
Doing things with local residents, not to them	The Policy and Accountability Committees aim to amplify the voices and concerns of residents and to give them a mechanism to comment on, participate in, and determine Council policy.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	The Policy and Accountability Committees were set up to hold the administration to account and scrutinise decisions in the interest of residents.

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## Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

## **POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE UPDATES**

### **Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee**

The Committee considered the following items at its meeting on 13 November 2023:

- Virtual School Annual Report 2022/23
- Hammersmith and Fulham Local Area Outcomes Framework
- Implementing the Industrial Strategy in Education
- Summer in the City 2023

Members expressed appreciation to the work of the Virtual School, including the collaboration with University College London in enabling care experienced young people to access opportunities made available by local business matched by the local authority. It was noted that through the “Attachment Aware Schools’ programme”, centralised training and individual support had been provided to schools to enable the provision of a clear bridge between education and social care. On capacity for expansion, it was understood that the duty of the Virtual School Head had been extended to include promoting the education of children who had had a social worker within the last 6 years. It was hoped that the stretched efforts could be articulated into sustainable values to shape future service delivery.

On the development of the 5 key outcomes under the second item, the Committee noted that detailed in-person focus groups with children and young people (CYP) with SEND across H&F schools had co-produced an annual survey for schools, parents and other CYPs to respond. The Framework was developed and refined based on the survey outcomes. It was also noted that after setting up the Framework and gaining a clear picture from the data, the local authority would measure the performance against the outcome framework for the two to be more closely aligned with each other. As regards how the performance measures would impact on the education outcomes, the local authority undertook to provide a sample of scorecard which had captured the performance of the CYP with SEND for information.

For the third item, members received briefing on the events held after the conference with teacher co-hosted by Imperial College to kick off the Industrial Strategy in Education, such as interviews of young people with local businesses in White City, and curriculum mapping and delivery by schools and businesses matched to work together. As regards strengthening the accredited teacher training to provide career guidance early, the local authority indicated intention to start industrial education for students at Key Stage 2/3 and develop bespoke curriculum involving new internship and work experience opportunities which shall enable H&F’s CYP to envision a future that might be quite different from now. More information on the oversight of the Industrial Strategy in Education would be provided when the Committee considered the Annual Education Report.

For the last item, members commended the success of the Summer in the City 2023 which aimed to deliver enriching activities and food across the school holidays, despite encountering some difficulties like ghost booking and bad weather. It was noted that a breakdown in attendance would help the local authority to understand the uptake interest among children that might not benefit from summer vacations. There were a lot of promotion of the programmes in social media, including those

posted by the Mayor to motivate young people to join. It might be helpful to encourage the schools to distribute the information leaflets to the parents early to help boost the attendance.

### **Areas of potential collaboration / cross-over with other PACs**

- Matching young people with local businesses for interview and work experience opportunities – Economy Department

### **Work programme**

29 January 2024:

- 2024 Medium Term Financial Strategy

### **Climate Change and Ecology Policy and Accountability Committee**

The Committee considered the following item at its meeting on 21 November 2023:

- Circular economy strategy outline and the introduction of food waste recycling and wheeled bins

The Committee discussed the Council's circular economy strategy which aimed to keep materials in use through improved product design, repair, reuse, sharing and recycling, to reduce the borough's reliance on extraction of new materials. Members heard how the Council was embedding circularity as an organisation and delivering it within the borough. This included examples of future projects and initiatives that could be implemented within the Council to embed circular economy principles.

The Committee highlighted the importance of effectively conveying this message across to residents, including the need to progress community engagement initiatives. Officers would continue to promote what the Council was already offering, including the monthly repair events held within the borough. In addition, residents would be encouraged to participate in workshops and surveys to provide feedback in the overall design of the circular economy strategy and how it was delivered. In relation to construction and the amount of carbon emissions emitted, members enquired if there was any scope to condition the materials which could be used by developers on new builds. It was noted that currently under the London Plan, only operational carbon emissions were regulated. In the longer-term, Officers confirmed that the intention was to move towards embodied carbon within the construction phase.

Members were keen to learn more about the recycling hubs available to residents within the borough. The Committee discussed the use of Livat Hammersmith as its main circular economy hub which offered many opportunities for circularity. Residents also had access to 'library of things' allowing them to rent out useful items. In addition, Officers were in the process of exploring a more permanent space within the borough 5 days a week.

The Committee felt that the repair events were a fantastic opportunity for residents and were pleased to note the learning opportunities available as part of the offering at these events. Training sessions were available for residents to ask any questions and learn the skills to repair their own electrical goods.

The Committee were briefed on the Council's food waste recycling and wheeled bins service. The Council would introduce new food waste collections for more than 50,000 local households in the coming months. In addition, more than 16,000 local households would receive new wheeled bins. Bins would only be given for those with suitable and accessible space and an assisted collection service was available for residents that needed additional support.

Members were pleased to hear about the Council's plans to extend the prototype service and discussed the options currently available for the disposal of batteries and medical blister packs across the borough. It was noted that Officers were working in collaboration with the colleagues in the Communications department to raise greater awareness on the importance of correctly recycling batteries and separating these from general waste.

In relation to water fountains, the Committee were keen to encourage more water fountains in the Council's tube stations. Officers noted that the Greater London Authority was looking at introducing water fountains to public spaces within London. The Committee heard that the Council had relatively low levels of assisted collections within the borough. This was mainly due to the smaller layout and design of the properties. This area would be closely monitored by Officers and the Council would contact residents who used the assisted collection service to ensure that it was still working for them.

The Chair thanked officers for their presentation and provided a summary of the key points discussed. It was noted that further updates would be provided around the disposal of medical blister packs and lithium-ion batteries. The Committee was also keen to learn more about the garden waste scheme going forward.

#### **Areas of potential collaboration / cross-over with other PACs**

- The introduction of food waste recycling and wheeled bins - Housing and Homelessness PAC/The Economy, Arts, Sports and Public Realm Policy and Accountability Committee.

#### **Work programme**

- 2024 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
- Floods and sustainable drainage systems

## **Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Accountability Committee**

The Committee considered the following items at its meeting on 15 November 2023:

- Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2022/23
- Vaccination Services in the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Mike Howard (Safeguarding Adults Board Chair) joined to discuss the Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2022/23. The discussion covered a range of issues highlighted in the annual report including:

- Housing repairs issues in the public and private rented sectors.
- Fire safety training for frontline staff and training standards for partner organisations.
- Guidance for professionals and residents.
- Transitional safeguarding.
- Demographic pressures.

The Committee agreed actions around housing standards and domestic violence training.

For the second item on vaccination services, the Committee was joined by colleagues from the Council's Public Health team, NHS England, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, and the North West London ICB. The Committee discussed:

- Which populations were under-vaccinated and why.
- Efforts to improve the immunisation rate through targeted engagement programmes.
- The use of alternate venues and staffing issues.
- Vaccination rates in care homes and amongst care home staff.
- Why H&F's vaccinate rates were lower than its neighbours.

The Committee asked the NHS to consider Hammersmith & Fulham for a pilot to allow pharmacies to carry out childhood vaccinations and a dedicated vaccine coordinator for the borough. The Chair proposed a working group to look at improving vaccination rates in the borough.

### **Areas of potential collaboration / cross-over with other PACs**

- Housing standards (Housing and Homelessness PAC)
- Domestic violence training (Social Inclusion and Community Safety PAC)
- Policy and Oversight Board suggested item – the use of assistive technologies in day centres.

### **Work programme**

31 January 2024:

- Budget 2024/25
- Dentistry services in H&F

## **Housing and Homelessness Policy and Accountability Committee**

The Committee considered the following items at its meeting on 14 November 2023:

- Homelessness Prevention Update
- Complaints Management in Housing
- Greening of the Housing Stock

For the first item, officers gave an update on the challenges faced by Housing Services, in particular the increasing number of people housed in temporary accommodation in London. The London Government Association was reporting that spending by councils on temporary accommodation had reached a record high in England placing financial pressures on many local authorities. Housing was working closely with the Finance team on an evidence-based approach around budget assessment and resources allocation from the General Fund for 2024/25, including monitoring of the wider situation in terms of homelessness and temporary accommodation across London. To tackle homelessness in the borough, the Council would be building more homes, including more affordable family-sized homes. Officers agreed to provide a demographic breakdown of homelessness approaches received in the current year and to revert after looking at the impact relating to a recent change to Section 21 Eviction Notice.

For the second item, members noted that a dedicated Complaints and Disputes Resolution Team had been set up to handle all housing-related complaints and deliver one-stop services through the Housing Hub. The Local Authority acknowledged that there had been backlog of repairs in H&F, but that the number of outstanding repairs cases, including aged cases, had been substantially reduced in recent months. The Housing team was working systematically to ensure the repairs were done more punctually and to a higher quality with improved customer care. Couple with the reduction in age profile of outstanding repairs, this should result in fewer complaints being made. The more focused approach to complaint-handling was improving the quality and timeliness of response once a complaint had been made.

On Greening of the Housing Stock, it was noted that the “Retrofit Strategy” developed so far would influence council policy in 4 key areas, namely Energy Efficiency, Low Carbon Heat, Fuel Poverty and Adaptation. It was believed that the capital delivery team was the most efficient vehicle to address the retrofit need at the required scale and pace. The low carbon heat networks were likely to be the cheapest option which needed detailed planning over several years, public and private finance and significant changes to Planning policy to be rolled out effectively. Once the approach was finalised, the residents concerned would be consulted on their preference in taking forward the retrofit works. The Local Authority undertook to brief the Committee again in the new year on other policy implications of the Strategy.

### **Areas of potential collaboration / cross-over with other PACs**

- The “Retrofit Strategy” under the item on Greening of the Housing Stock was being developed jointly with the Climate Change and Ecology team.

### **Work programme**

30 January 2024:

- 2024 Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Housing Revenue Account Budget
- Private Rented Sector Policy Statement

### **Social Inclusion and Community Safety Policy and Accountability Committee**

The Committee considered policing in Hammersmith and Fulham following the Casey Review at its meeting on 22 November 2023.

Superintendent Craig Knight, joined by Chief Inspector Tom Orchard, presented the progress update of the 'New Met for London Plan'. £530 million had been invested into policing across London affecting every aspect, from reviewing response times and approach, strengthening local team structure, and increasing visibility by assigning more PCSOs to local areas. Recruitment for Police Community Support Officers and PCs continued to be a challenge, further complicated by the ongoing weekend protests in Central London.

Committee members questioned the Police on several issues, including:

- team structure and tenure;
- allocation of PSPOs and PCs to each ward and their composition in terms of ethnicity and gender;
- pay structure and difficulties in officers' recruitment and retention;
- H&F's asset sharing of the proactive teams reporting to the Basic Command Units;
- strengthening background checks and vetting procedures, and effectiveness of psychological assessments,
- positive promotion of Met and visibility in policing;
- feedback from the police's local engagement events in the North of the Borough;
- role of ward panels and attendances;
- VAWG 100 offenders and better support to victims and survivors to sexual assault;
- Intelligence gathering at Tactical Enforcement Group (TEG) and Tactical Tasking & Co-ordination Group (TTCG); and
- harassment to female colleagues.

### **Work programme**

8 February 2024:

- 2024 Medium Term Financial Strategy
- LET Update including TEG/TTCG
- Third sector on social inclusion

## **The Economy, Arts, Sports, and Public Realm Policy and Accountability Committee**

The Committee considered the following items at its meeting on 20 November 2023:

- An Emerging Approach to Developing and Promoting our Visitor Economy
- Review of Performance of the New Household Waste Collection Contract / Implementation of Wheeled Bin and Food Waste Collection
- London Borough of Culture Bid

The Committee considered a report on an Emerging Approach To Developing and Promoting Our Visitor Economy. Themes to emerge from the meeting included: The need to engage with residents and harness ideas from within the community. The advantages of using a placed- based approach, referencing football clubs, theatres and events spaces.

For data to be gathered to determine the visitor profile to the borough. The need for a website to be created, providing an annual chronology of events being held within the borough and for this to feed into wider engagement through social media and other forms of channels. It was important that the 3-year strategy provided a strong steer to stakeholders, to ensure their actions actively promoted the visitor economy.

In addition, the strategy needed to spell out what the economic advantages of developing the visitor economy would be to residents. Further themes included branding (i.e., distinct themes - the home of Chelsea Football Club), a heritage / cultural trail (of blue plaques and their significance), and the need to utilise the river more. The Committee supported the revival of the Shepherd's Bush Comedy Festival. The committee suggested that businesses, hotels and the conference centre organisers should meet to promote activities within the borough.

The Committee examined a Review of Performance of the New Household Waste Collection Contract / Implementation of Wheeled Bin and Food Waste Collection. Themes to emerge from the meeting included: To make officers aware of missed collections and resultant fines. The issue of bins not being returned to their collection points which highlighted those properties which were vacant and hence at risk of burglary.

Further points included: the need to improve communication with residents so they knew that they needed to contact the Council if there were collection issues. The need for sampling / auditing of collections to assess how it the scheme was working. It was noted that the extended wheeled bin collection implementation had only been rolled out for 2 weeks, so its performance would need to be assessed in the future.

In relation to the London Borough of Culture Bid, following the introduction by officers, this was discussed as an exempt item.

### **Work programme**

#### **February meeting:**

- Budget
- Civic campus general update – communications and affordable workspace
- Industrial strategy – childcare strand



## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

None.