

## REPORT OF THE POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEES 2014/15

Policy and Accountability Committees (PACs) are an innovation introduced by the Council's new administration following the election in May 2014. They implement the following commitment made by the administration in its manifesto:

*"We will open up council decision-making and policy-making by setting up new Policy and Accountability Committees, cutting all but the statutory scrutiny committees. Each new Policy and Accountability Committee will have sufficient support to hold the administration to account and take a full part in developing policy. We will give residents and users' groups co-opted roles on the relevant Policy and Accountability Committees".*

As agreed by Full Council in July 2014, PACs have the following key responsibilities:

- To hold the Cabinet to account
- To be a critical friend to the Executive and to challenge the assumptions behind the policies and actions of the Council and other local service providers
- To amplify the voice and concerns of local residents and to give residents a mechanism to comment on, participate in and determine Council policy
- To improve the Council's services by listening to residents and user groups
- To scrutinise decisions made by partner organisations in the interest of the residents of the Borough
- To be independent of party politics and ensure an informed evidence-based approach to policy development

There are five Policy and Accountability Committees:

1. Children and Education
2. Community Safety, Environment and Residents Services
3. Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts
4. Finance & Delivery
5. Health, Adult Social Care and Social Inclusion

In their first year, the PACs have all delivered engaging work programmes and have given residents the opportunity to be heard on the issues that matter to them. They have also established the following groups to look at issues in more detail:

1. Childcare Task Group
2. Parking Task Group
3. Taskforce on Social Value Procurement
4. North End Road Action Group
5. Empty Shops Action Group

The activities of the PACs and their related groups in 2014/15 are described in detail below.

## **POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEES**

### **1. Children and Education PAC**

Following the introduction of the new-style PACs, we have engaged with a wide range of members of the public relating to different areas of interest or concern.

At the first meeting in July, a large number of parents, school representatives and passenger transport drivers and escorts gave shocking evidence about serious and continuing problems with the new passenger transport contract for disabled children and vulnerable young people and adults. This was a tri-borough procurement that took place under the previous administration. At the meeting, the Leader of the Council committed the new administration to sorting this out as a priority. The Council then set up an ongoing working party involving parents, teachers, councillors and officers to resolve the problems with the service. The working party has redefined the service as being principally about care and support, not transport, and has put it on a new footing.

We also received a report on SEN arrangements, which outlined the key developments since the last update provided to the Committee. The report reflected on what worked well in terms of the implications of the changes following the introduction of the Children and Families Act, included feedback from parents and what needed to be done further in respect of the changes. Representatives from special schools and some parents attended the meeting to express their views about the changes.

Childcare was identified as a key priority for the Committee and formed the main focus of the September meeting. A number of children's centres and early years representatives were invited to the meeting and the purpose of the discussion was to listen and learn from them and to hear what the Council did well in terms of childcare provision and what it could learn from the representatives. The Committee set up a task group to review the provision of childcare in the borough and identify possible improvements. In April the task group presented three detailed recommendations aimed at improving the Family Information Service. The recommendations included; improving the website to make it easier for families to find high quality local child-minders, dedicating more resources to the team to improve response times, and better promoting the service to residents. Also as part of the childcare focus, the Committee received reports updating on the Task Group's work throughout its review and also on the Two Year Old Offer.

Public participation has been introduced to all PAC agendas, to give members of the public an opportunity to raise any items of interest at the PAC meetings. Parents and representatives from the Fulham Boys School (FBS) used our PAC meeting to express their concerns over the uncertainty that had occurred over the school's potential site. In respect of the news that funding had been withdrawn for the new FBS, parents of pupils who were due to attend the new school, thanked the Council for its support in addressing this problem. The Leader reported that the Council would do the best it could and was ready to assist FBS.

Another key priority to scrutinise was the area of adolescent mental health. This was the main focus of the November meeting where the Committee received a report giving an overview of child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) in Hammersmith and Fulham (H&F) and particularly services for young people aged 13 years and above. It also included information on the current CAMHS initiatives, both local and national, local need and services for H&F young people. A representative from Healthwatch, kindly attended the meeting to present the findings of a survey done by Healthwatch on the user experience of mental health services, which had consulted young people, schools, families etc. The Committee collaborated with the Health and Wellbeing Board to form a Task Group, led by Councillor Alan De'Ath, to investigate and present improvements to local mental health provision.

The views of looked after children and care leavers continues to be a focus for members and an annual report on this area was considered. It was reported that at the end of March 2014, there were 200 Looked After Children (LAC) which was a decrease from previous years and was different to the national figures where there had been an increase; the decrease in numbers was largely due to the early intervention measures in place in H&F. There had been substantial success this year in the Key Stage 4 results for LAC; there had been a year on year increase in the results. A representative from Barnardo's London Service for Sexually Exploited, Missing and Trafficked Children, also attended the meeting to talk about the work she was doing with young people, which included looked after children, in the borough.

A session was held before the above meeting with a number of care leavers, committee members and cabinet members, to give members an opportunity to hear first-hand about the experiences of care leavers. The young people were assured that the key points raised during the session would be followed up. The Committee was kept updated on the progress of this and was informed that laptops had been provided to 100 looked after children and care leavers in education, Wi-Fi in independent living arrangements was being commissioned and dongles were being provided until the Wi-Fi had been set up, the £30 limit for books had been removed and the parental contribution to university had been increased from £3K to £5K. The Chair was pleased how quickly the concerns of the young people had been addressed and hoped that this would encourage young people that they would be listened to.

The H&F Youth Parliament Member, the deputy Youth Parliament Member and a member of the Youth Council came along to the April meeting to update the Committee on the current and proposed arrangements for 'youth voice' (consultation and engagement of young people) in Hammersmith and Fulham. A DVD that the young people had prepared was shown which outlined the Youth Council's manifesto. It was noted that the top 5 issues identified by the young people were the living wage at work, giving young people a voice in improving communities, mental health, work experience and voting at age 16. The Committee and the Youth Council have identified key areas of work to collaborate on such as; skills for young people, adolescent mental health, and support for bilingual and multilingual families. The Chair is attending Youth Council meetings is committed to working closely with them to ensure young people have a voice in developing policy in H&F.

During the year the Committee considered other reports relating to social care which included Safeguarding and Looked After Children Performance Information report on activity during 2013-14 and the Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual report.

Other items also considered included the 2015 Medium Term Financial Strategy, the School Organisation and Investment Strategy, the implementation of the requirements in the Children and Families Act from September 2014, proposals for the commissioning of school meal services, responding to child sexual exploitation in Hammersmith and Fulham, E-safety for children and young people and the school performance report. The Executive Director of Children's Services and Cabinet Members have kept us updated on any relevant information through their regular update agenda items.

Outside of the meetings, some of the members have visited schools that have recently had an Ofsted Inspection, to see the school in action and to have the opportunity to discuss with the head teachers any issues raised in the Ofsted reports.

As highlighted above, we have considered a varied work programme in 2014/15 and we hope to keep engaging with members of the public, and continue to review areas of importance, such as childcare and looked after children and care leavers. We will also look at other areas of interest, such as reviewing support for children who are multi lingual and young carers. I would like to thank the Councillors and co-opted members for their support and participation throughout the year.

Councillor Caroline Needham (Chair)

## **2. Community Safety, Environment and Residents Services PAC**

The Committee's first year has been engaging and productive as we have looked at a wide range of issues included within our remit. We started the year at our July meeting when we looked at cycling in the borough. In Hammersmith & Fulham we have one of the highest cycling rates in London with 4% of all journeys completed by bike, as compared to 2% across London. However with the Council committed to increasing cycling rates as much as possible, it is clear that more can be done to make travelling by bike easier, safer and more appealing for as many people as possible. We have looked at cycling at two of our meetings and have had many members of the public and representatives from the hfcyclists user group attend and describe their experiences. These have been invaluable and have helped the Council to understand residents' needs, and helped residents understand our plans and the challenges we face. One of the improvements that we heard that cyclists want is a Borough-wide 20mph speed limit, and we'll be hearing about the Council's plans to implement this at our first meeting in 2015/16.

Our first meeting also considered the improvement works that were underway at Wormholt Park. Residents raised concerns such as for nesting birds and suggestions such as a drinking fountain and the location of benches in the park, and these were all considered by the Council during the planning process. The same meeting also looked at the air quality in the Borough and the work of the Council to

address this vital issue. The Committee welcomed initiatives such as working with GPs and hospitals, promoting travel plans to reduce car journeys and requirements for electric car parking spaces in new developments. We will continue to monitor air quality in the borough in the next municipal year.

Another key issue we have looked at this year is parking in the borough, specifically on football match days. In September our meeting was attended by a number of local residents who described the challenges they face when large numbers of visitors try to park in our streets. The same meeting also considered the administration of parking permits and discussed with residents issues such as costs, the difficulties for residents trying to renew or amend their permits and the reductions for vulnerable users and carers. It became clear during the meeting that there was a wide range of conflicting issues and opinions related to parking, and so the Committee agreed to establish a Parking Task Group, which would look at all parking issues including football match days and the parking permits.

In September we also looked at the Council's use of RIPA legislation (the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act) which outlined how the Council used its surveillance powers. We discussed the interception of telephone calls and were reassured to hear that the Council could not listen to calls but only get access to subscriber information and phone bills, and that to do so required permission from a magistrate. We also heard from officers with regard to the Surface Water Management Plan and the Council's proposals to develop more detailed mapping of all of the critical flood risk areas in the borough to help guide future planning policies.

In November welcomed over sixty members of the public to our meeting to discuss proposals to expand Heathrow airport. Residents explained that they were extremely concerned about the proposals, specifically on health and noise grounds. It was agreed that a resident-led Commission would be established to make an impartial and independent assessment of the proposals and help guide the Council's response to the national consultation. In January we received the final report of the Commission and welcomed the huge amount of work carried out by the Chair, Ms Christina Smyth, and her colleagues. We also supported the Commission's finding that

*“if Heathrow were to expand under either of the options, Hammersmith & Fulham would enjoy some economic and leisure benefits, although economic developments elsewhere in the borough mean it is not dependent on them. In any case, these benefits would be far outweighed by the adverse effects of additional flights overhead, additional flight paths over the borough, additional noise, road and public transport congestion, worse air quality and uncertainty about precise impacts for many years.”*

The development at Old Oak Common will likely have a significant impact on residents of the Borough and transport links will be important. In November we welcomed a representative from Transport for London (TfL) to discuss the plans to build a new overground rail station at Old Oak Common. Members and residents expressed concern that one of TfL's options would have a severe detrimental impact on the natural environment of Wormwood Scrubs and we also expressed our reservations regarding the second option which would require trains to reverse.

Despite TfL's third option not being ideal as it required a double station split over 650m, the Committee agreed that this would be preferable among the three options.

Recycling is another key challenge for the Borough and we have looked at the ways the Council can increase the amount of waste it recycles. The Committee supported the exploration of offering incentives to encourage residents to recycle more and the ways we communicate with people to emphasise the importance of recycling as much as possible. The transience of the local community was recognised as a key challenge for the Council and so the Committee asked officers to look into ways we can encourage people moving into the area to recycle correctly.

The Committee has also looked at developing planning policies, such as the draft Local Plan in February. The Committee welcomed new policies in the document such as new restrictions on the clustering and concentration of betting shops in an area and on double-storey basements. In April we also looked at how the local community would be involved in the planning process through a new Statement of Community Involvement. Members welcomed the efforts to keep those affected by developments engaged in the process and made a recommendation that local action groups be highlighted alongside statutory consultees on the materials sent to residents about upcoming developments.

In February we also reviewed the street cleansing service, following comments received by members from residents. The Committee welcomed the news that littering was decreasing and that officers were being instructed to focus on enforcement and tackling domestic littering and fly-tipping. Options such as underground storage and shared bins at the end of roads were raised by residents and the Cabinet Member undertook to consider the feasibility of such suggestions.

Our scrutiny of street cleansing and waste collection continued in April when we reviewed the contract with Serco. News of the regular meetings between the Cabinet Member and Serco officers was welcomed, as was the positive reports of Serco's performance against performance indicators that were standardised across multiple boroughs. At the same meeting we also reviewed the Council's methodology for highways maintenance works and the regular safety inspections that took place to ensure our roads are safe.

Councillor Larry Culhane (Chair)

### **3. Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts PAC**

To ensure genuine resident involvement in Council decision-making and policy-making relating to our PAC's brief, we have made considerable effort to attract local residents, businesses and charities to our meetings and between 50 and 100 people have attended each one.

Council officers and community groups helped identify potentially interested participants and we publicised the PACs through the Council's regular e-newsletter and business e-newsletter. We have now built up our own extensive and growing emailing list of local residents, businesses and the third sector. Even if not everyone

comes to every meeting, this way they are kept informed and involved – as well as enthusiastic and rightly demanding.

At the meetings, we have sought to be informal and welcoming, giving attendees as much of an opportunity to contribute as councillors. We offer tea and coffee and use roving microphones to enable everyone to speak and hear each other without difficulty. We have also held some meetings in the community away from the town hall. Our inaugural meeting in July 2014 was at Melcombe Primary School in Fulham Palace Road and in September 2014 we held a meeting at St John's Church Fulham to discuss the revival of North End Road.

This changed approach to resident involvement was initially quite challenging for the committee clerks and other officers and I much appreciate their flexibility and willingness to adapt.

The PAC met seven times in 2014/2015. We made numerous recommendations and established a Taskforce and two Action Groups. Our activities and results are set out chronologically below under the three headings of economic regeneration, housing and the arts respectively.

### ***Economic Regeneration***

**Business rates and support** – At our first meeting in July 2014, the PAC recommended that the new administration take forward the report of the previous administration's Business Rates Scrutiny Task Group. One result is that a new policy to restrict the concentration of betting shops has been included in the draft Local Plan.

**High street regeneration** – The same PAC recommended that, in line with administration's manifesto, high street regeneration be a Council priority, starting with the two pilot sites of North End Road and Bloemfontein Road. In September 2014, we held a lively PAC attended by some 100 residents, shopkeepers, stallholders, officers and Councillors at St John's Church Fulham. Numerous attendees volunteered to join a new North End Road Action Group (NERAG) of residents, stallholders, businesses and the Council. *(See below for details.)*

**Procurement** – Following a recommendation by the July PAC and in line with the administration's manifesto, a Taskforce on Social Value Procurement was jointly established between this PAC and the Finance and Delivery PAC to look at how more of the economic benefits of Council procurement could be kept within the borough. *(See below for details.)*

**Empty shops** – Following a lively discussion in January 2015 with some 60 local residents and business, and in line with the administration's manifesto, the PAC recommend the establishment of an Empty Shops Action Group of residents, businesses and the Council to look at ways of bringing empty shops in the borough back in to use. This has happened. *(See below for details.)*

## ***Housing***

**Resident involvement** – At our first meeting, tenants and residents associations (TRAs) told us that the Council had not previously listened to TRAs and that the resident involvement process had divided rather than integrated residents and TRAs. In line with the administration's manifesto, we recommended that a wholly new approach be taken to resident involvement, with the Council actively working with residents rather than doing things to them. As a result, a monthly, resident-run TRA Forum was initiated in August 2014 and a strengthened Resident Involvement Team has been in place since March 2015. Also in March 2015, for the first time more than 300 Council tenants organised their own conference, 'Moving Forward Together'.

Other changes driven by the PAC are that TRAs are now able to develop their own constitutions, a simplified process for registering TRAs has been introduced, a new Repairs Handbook is being drafted and the Resident Involvement Team is looking at more ways to involve residents from street properties and gap sites.

**Measurement of contractors** – In July and September 2014, we explored how the satisfaction criteria for housing contractors (particularly Mitie and Pinnacle) were arrived at and assessed. Following a request from residents at the PAC, Mitie's contract was published on the Council's website in January 2015. The TRA Forum is now reviewing in more detail how contractors are and should be measured.

**Mitie's communication with residents** – In July 2014, we urged Mitie to improve its communication with residents. Mitie accepted that improvements were needed and is working with the Council and residents on a joint communications strategy.

**Residents' Housing Commission** – In November 2014, Council tenants told us that they deeply regretted the sale of Council homes under the previous administration. As a result and in line with the administration's manifesto, we requested the administration to establish a Residents' Commission on Council Housing to consider the options for empowering residents to take local control over their homes and for maximising investment in existing and new Council homes.

The Commission was established in December 2014 and held its first meeting in March 2015, with public hearings and calls for evidence planned for after the General Election. The Commission is chaired by Rt Hon Keith Hill MP and comprises six tenants, three leaseholders and three non-voting independent experts. To ensure its independence, there are no Councillors as members. It plans to report in autumn 2015. Residents will be given the final say on any changes to the ownership and management of their homes.

**Criteria for allocating tenancies** – In November 2014, we also requested the Cabinet to bring forward a paper around allocations and new forms of tenancy. As a result, detailed options were included in the draft Housing Strategy. The changes proposed will be brought back to the PAC for consideration.

**Private rented housing** – Also in November 2014, in line with the administration's manifesto, we asked the Cabinet to bring forward plans for improving private rented



housing in the borough. As a result, proposals were included in the draft Housing Strategy and recommendations will go to the Cabinet in May 2015.

**Rents and repairs** – In December 2014, following extensive discussion with tenants, we recommended expenditure of approximately £185 million on planned repairs to Council homes over the next four years and an average increase in rents and service charges of only 2.89%, representing just two-thirds of the increase planned by the previous administration. This has become Council policy.

**Better housing for disabled residents** – In January 2015, we heard from numerous disabled residents and their representatives that the Council should be flexible around lifetime tenancy agreements; make the process of getting on the housing register more disability friendly; do more to ensure that existing properties were suitable for disabled residents; improve the accuracy of data on disabled residents, carers of disabled adults and adaptations; and improve coordination between the Council's Housing, Adult Services and Children's Services departments.

We submitted these demands and a full note of the discussion as a formal response to the Council's draft Housing Strategy. As a result, the housing register application form is being revised and consulted on with Mencap and Action on Disability. Initial work has started with Children's Services and Adult Services to improve co-ordination around housing for disabled people, and a paper for the PAC to consider is being prepared. Given the difficulties inherent in joint working across departmental boundaries, this area will need consistent scrutiny and follow-up by the PAC.

### ***The Arts***

In March 2015, following a lively discussion with some 70 local artists and arts organisations, we requested the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration to lead the development of a new arts strategy for the borough. The draft strategy is under development and will be brought to the PAC for consultation. The meeting also led to better networking between arts organisations present and the Council is holding discussions with several to see how it can work better with them.

Councillor Ben Coleman (Chair)

## **4. Finance and Delivery PAC**

With the Council facing significant financial pressures, delivering a balanced budget and identifying more efficient ways of working was an ongoing focus for the Finance and Delivery PAC. We started the year at our July meeting by reviewing the authority's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and sought assurances that our most vulnerable residents and frontline services were being protected wherever possible.

Even budgets as large as a Council's can only be cut so much, and so we were also interested to hear of the work being carried out by the Innovation and Change Management team, which was to conduct a fundamental review of how the organisation delivered services to our residents.

At the same meeting the Committee reviewed how the Council was making use of capital resources to benefit frontline services. For example my colleagues and I welcomed plans to invest in Extra Care Units for vulnerable residents. Not only would this allow more people to be housed locally with improved access to their family and friends, it would also be a cheaper alternative to paying other providers to house people further away outside of the borough. At subsequent meetings members have discussed the Council's Capital Strategy to make our cash balances work harder for us. The Committee will continue to monitor such initiatives and promote a more sensible use of the Council's resources.

A recurring item on our agendas has been the BT Managed Services Project, which was effectively outsourced to Westminster, to run as part of the old tri-borough approach. Initial performance was inadequate and it was only after the involvement of Hammersmith & Fulham's officers that this joint project was brought back on track.

We have been closely monitoring the delays to implementation and pushed hard to ensure the Council received the maximum compensation it was due. We will now continue to monitor its implementation and seek assurances that all anticipated savings are realised.

Consideration of new ways of working and an objective assessment of how services are delivered continued at our September meeting when we looked in more detail at the Innovation Unit. Many of the more 'straightforward' savings had already been made by the Council, so the Unit was tasked with being more radical and innovative to close the budget gap created by reduced Government spending.

We noted the team's successes, such as the Smart Working IT programme, and welcomed the savings this allowed the Council to make. As an area of work that local Councils are less familiar with, we will monitor the Innovation Unit with interest and look forward to further proposals. In February we also discussed the use of Business Intelligence by the Council to make our services much more responsive and able to better anticipate our residents' needs.

At the September meeting we also began our scrutiny of the finances and governance of the Western Riverside Waste Authority (WRWA). It was necessary for us to insist on their attendance. The Committee was concerned at the lack of clarity over accountability of the WRWA officers and were unclear how the Authority was delivering value for money as Hammersmith & Fulham paid a higher fee for waste collection and processing than many other London Boroughs. Whilst the Committee welcomed many of the initiatives implemented by WRWA, we sought further information such as a detailed savings plan for the medium to long term and greater detail regarding capital receipts.

The WRWA attended our April meeting, but did not respond to our request for ideas for cost saving and increased recycling. We recorded our disquiet at their lack of commercialism, sense of urgency and a desire to always see the contractors side of the argument.

In January we reviewed the Council's proposed Budget for 2015/16. Members welcomed the proposals that there should be no real terms increases in any of the fees and charges for residents, particularly as many were actually being reduced. It was clear that the Council still faced an enormous challenge to deliver future budgets, so the Committee is committed to ensuring the Council looks for more innovative and efficient ways of working.

As a fundamental function and enabler of other services, the Council's IT provision has been a key item we have looked at this year. Whilst performance reports suggest that the authority's IT is performing well, the Committee remain concerned at the overall value for money it provides. With the contract due for renewal over the next two years, we will be looking for assurances that the Council's future IT contract delivers the tools the organisation needs at the lowest possible price.

At our April meeting we looked at the Council's Human Resources policies on senior officer performance related pay and how our staff are being supported through organisational changes. The Committee was of the view that the performance related pay scheme needed to be adapted to reflect the Council's focus on reduced budgets and increased customer satisfaction.

During the year the Committee co-opted four members of the public including; a former board director of Marks and Spencer, a former Group Financial Controller for the London Stock Exchange, and the heads of international businesses and sales teams. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their valuable contributions and recognise the positive impact they have had on the quality of the Committee's work by bringing a commercial perspective and drawing on their extensive business experience.

The financial pressures facing the Council look set to continue for a number of years, and so the work of the Finance and Delivery PAC will be more important than ever. Next year we will continue to review the ways the Council proposes to make savings and seek to ensure that our residents' money is spent as wisely as possible.

Councillor PJ Murphy (Chair)

## **5. Health, Adult Social Care and Social Inclusion PAC**

During the first year of the PAC, we continued the work of our predecessor select committee in monitoring the implementation of 'Shaping a Healthier Future', the North West London NHS service reconfiguration and health service performance issues. Senior managers and clinicians from both Hammersmith & Fulham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust (ICHT) have regularly attended our meetings. We are pleased that these meetings were well attended by members of the public.

We remain concerned at the closure of Hammersmith Hospital Accident & Emergency Department and have continued to monitor the impact on Charing Cross and St. Mary's Hospitals, and also the performance of the three Urgent Care Centres. In addition, there is evidence of poor performance in a number of areas, most importantly Accident & Emergency waiting times and Cancer Care. We

received some assurance from ICHT in respect of its action plan to improve performance.

A Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection resulted in ICHT being rated as 'Requires Improvement'. We asked ICHT to report on its action plan, and were given some assurance about the actions already put in place. Chelsea and Westminster NHS Foundation Trust, which was also rated as 'Requires Improvement', will be invited to the first meeting of the municipal year to update on its action plan, as a significant number of Hammersmith & Fulham residents are treated at this hospital.

The future of Charing Cross Hospital is of particular concern and we continue to press for information in respect of ICHT's business plan and site strategy. In particular, the revised proposal for the Charing Cross Hospital site that the Independent Reconfiguration Panel recommended in its report in September 2013 on the original Shaping a Healthier Future proposals has not been forthcoming. We have recommended that there should be full public consultation on those revised proposals before any final decisions are made on the future of Charing Cross Hospital.

There has been poor performance across Hammersmith & Fulham in respect of the Under Fives Flu Vaccination Programme. We were not satisfied with the answers given by the three bodies with responsibility for the programme, NHS England, the CCG and Public Health, and asked them to jointly attend a meeting to address the issues raised by our residents and explain what actions they were taking to improve performance during the remainder of the flu period. We were pleased to see greater publicity of the vaccinations, including on the Council's website.

Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust presented to the committee on their five-year plan, including their application for NHS foundation trust status. We have asked for information on what this will mean specifically for Hammersmith & Fulham, and will review in the light of the forthcoming CQC inspection.

There have been a number of evidence gathering sessions, which have helped us to comment on key policy areas, such as Food Banks, Engaging Home Care Service Users, their Families and Carers, Abolition of Home Care Charging and Meals on Wheels.

We have continued to monitor the progress of self-directed support, and specifically the introduction of pre-loaded payment cards, about which we have some concerns. We shall review the pilot evaluation at the beginning of 2016.

Healthwatch gave a presentation on the role of Dignity Champions and we noted our appreciation of their work and the excellent benefits, particularly for service users.

The final meeting of the municipal year considered three policy items: Listening To and Supporting Carers; Learning Disabilities Complex Needs and Developing a Digital Inclusion Strategy. We were pleased to welcome expert witnesses from the Carers Network, H&F Mind, the Citizens Advice Bureau and Age UK and the Head Teacher of Queensmill School, and to take written evidence from HF Mencap.

The Care Act 2014 has provided new rights for carers, and we shall continue to monitor their implementation, together with other significant changes, including the financial implications.

We were assured by officers that the Learning Disabilities service would be flexible to recognise different levels of need, but would like to revisit the actions being taken to recruit and retain high calibre staff. A member of the public provided a specific example of the consequences of a carer having several jobs and raised the issue of respite care for those with moderate needs, to which Adult Social Care will respond. The report on the transition from Children's to Adult Social Care, which is being brought to the first meeting of the municipal year, will pick up on a number of the issues.

We were pleased to hear the progress being made to increase access to the internet and address digital exclusion, which can have a significant impact on employment and social inclusion. The expert witnesses gave examples of good practice and some different ways of engaging with people.

We should like to thank the organisations and individuals who have attended our meetings to give evidence to help us make recommendations, which we shall review at future meetings.

Our co-opted members represent Action on Disability, Age UK and HAFCAC, and bring a range of experience and knowledge to our discussions.

A busy work programme has been drafted for the next municipal year, and we plan to cover a number of areas, which we have not been able to address in any depth this year, including mental health and public health.

Councillor Rory Vaughan (Chair)

## **GROUPS ESTABLISHED BY THE PACS**

### **6. Childcare Task Group**

Following the September meeting of the Children and Education PAC, a task group was set up to review the provision of childcare in the borough. Its members are Councillors Natalia Perez Shepherd (Chair), Elaine Chumnerly and Caroline Ffiske. We were joined by four representatives from children's centres and early years centres who kindly agreed to be involved to give their expert advice. They were Michele Barrett (Head of Vanessa Nursery), Patricia Logan (Head of Bayonne Nursery), Michael Pettavel (Head of Randolph Beresford Early Years Centre) and Andy Sharpe (Masbro Centre).

We heard from a number of witnesses who were invited to meetings to give evidence and express their views on childcare, which included officers from Children's Services and Finance and Corporate Services, and leaders of local and national childcare organisations including the Family and Childcare Trust, the London Early

Years Foundation, the West London Zone for Children and Young People, a representative for the 8-6 Childcare in Schools Pilot and the Hammersmith and Fulham Family Information Service.

The views of local families were gathered by an online survey and a parents' focus group held at one of the children's centres. Local childminders were engaged through group interviews at the Quality Childcare Forums in the north and south of the borough, and local providers fed into the task group through a questionnaire that was conducted either in person or through email.

We also received and considered a range of written documentation and research, including the 'London Childcare Report 2014' (Family and Childcare Trust) and 'Research to Inform the Evaluation of the Early Excellence Centres Pilot Programme' (DfEE).

The Task Group felt it had met its original remit of reviewing the provision of childcare in the borough, but as there was so much more that could be looked into due to the wide remit of childcare, it would continue its review and look at these areas in more depth. An interim report was considered at April CEPAC meeting, which covered the work done so far, including the large amount of evidence gathered. It also focused on the Family Information Service. We have identified several key areas that we would like to investigate in more detail, and then would report back to CEPAC on throughout the next municipal year. These areas are as follows:

- The importance of accurate information for local families and the current performance of the Hammersmith and Fulham Family Information Service
- Improving support for childminders and the effectiveness of the offer of childminding services for local families
- The role of Children's Centres in delivering effective, high quality childcare in Hammersmith and Fulham
- Building on the findings of the 8-6 out-of-core-hours pilot for support in schools
- Innovative solutions for growing a skilled workforce.

I would like to thank all those who have taken part in the review so far, with particular thanks to our expert witnesses who have dedicated a lot of their time to this review.

Councillor Natalia Perez Shepherd (Chair)

## **7. Parking Task Group**

At its meeting in September 2014, the Community Safety, Environment and Residents Services PAC (CSERS PAC) received a report exploring the issues surrounding parking in Hammersmith and Fulham on football match days. The borough has three major football clubs: the Premiership clubs Chelsea and Queens Park Rangers and the Championship club Fulham. Attendances at home matches for the three clubs range from around 17,000 to over 40,000. Whilst some of these attendees arrive by public transport or by foot, a large number travel to the grounds

by car. There is therefore a significant stress on local parking availability around the football stadiums on football match days.

At the same meeting, the Committee heard from members of the public about other parking issues, such as the Smart Visitor Permit (SVP) scheme. Many of the public comments related to the difficulties caused by the SVPs for residents' visitors, especially for the borough's more vulnerable residents, to who carers found it difficult to visit.

The CSERS PAC meeting heard from officers that a public consultation on parking restrictions had been conducted during December 2010 and January 2011. The outcomes from the consultation had not been consistent across the borough and so different restrictions were introduced in each of the 27 parking zones. Match day restrictions have not been reviewed since this consultation. The Committee heard from officers that there were two types of match day restrictions currently in use. In the areas surrounding Stamford Bridge (Chelsea FC), there were blanket restrictions which applied at weekends even if there was not a match taking place. However around Craven Cottage (Fulham FC) the restrictions only applied when a match was actually taking place, with specially designed signage advisors drivers of the restrictions in place on that particular day. The match day only controls around Craven Cottage were introduced following the 2010/11 consultation.

A number of members of the public attended the PAC meeting and many residents left comments complaining about the current parking arrangements on the Council's website. It was therefore apparent that the existing restrictions caused concern for many people and that they were due to be reviewed. The CSERS PAC therefore agreed to establish the Parking Task Group to explore the unintended difficulties caused by the existing restrictions and to seek to find a balanced way of managing the demand for on-street parking across the borough.

The Task Group has so far met four times and has considered the following issues:

- Examples of parking arrangements at other sports stadiums, such as the use of Section 106 funds at the Emirates Stadium in Islington to fund changeable flap signage
- New proposals for match day restrictions in Zone J based on public consultation and a consultation on residents and businesses in Zone D
- The development and expansion of an online system that alerted residents of upcoming football matches
- The results of a survey of all Smart Visitor Permit holders, leading to improvements to the registration and top-up processes
- Green parking initiatives such as reduced costs for parking permits for owners of more environmentally-friendly vehicles, an expanded car club provision and more electric vehicle charging points
- Cashless payment for parking (e.g. by phone or by credit/debit card at machines)

Throughout the work of the Task Group, members have helped form recommendations made to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Residents Services and influenced developing policies. It has become clear that a member sounding board has an important role to play in parking policy as a means of balancing often-conflicting views. The Task Group will therefore be recommending

that an informal meeting of Councillors from both parties be established to help keep all parking matters under review, and to listen to the views of local residents and businesses. It is currently anticipated that the Task Group will finish its work over the summer of 2015.

I would like to thank my colleagues Councillors Steve Hamilton and Sharon Holder for their work with the Task Group, and officers for their contributions.

Councillor Larry Culhane (Chair)

## **8. Taskforce on Social Value Procurement**

In its manifesto, the new administration made the following commitment: *“While still keeping costs down, Council procurement will take a ‘community benefit’ approach that supports local jobs and businesses and develops young people’s skills through apprenticeships. At a first step, we will identify and remove barriers that small firms face in trying to win Council contracts.”*

As a result, in July 2014, the PACs on Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts and on Finance and Delivery agreed to set up a joint Taskforce on Social Value Procurement.

As the Council does not at present have a policy on achieving greater social value through procurement, the Taskforce was tasked with recommending what such a policy might look like.

Besides myself, the Taskforce members were Cllr Guy Vincent and Cllr Greg Smith. Witnesses included local businesses and third sector support organisations, Council officers and procurement officers from other boroughs. I would like to thank my colleagues and all those who took part for their very helpful contributions.

At our first meeting, we reviewed how the Council currently procured and the approach it took to social value and responsible procurement. We also noted the Council’s statutory duties and its interest in procuring jointly with other boroughs.

At our second meeting, we explored local suppliers’ experiences through a discussion with local firms and with business and third sector support organisations.

At our third meeting, we learnt about procurement and social value in other authorities with officers from Croydon, Kirklees and Lambeth councils.

At our fourth meeting, we explored two case studies, seeking to identify social value opportunities in future council contracts for the provision of school meals and for the Janet Adegoke swimming pool and gym facilities at Phoenix High School.

Members also considered a range of written documentation and research.

A draft report has been discussed with the officer Procurement Board and is being finalised for review at the PAC. The final report is due to be published in the summer of 2015.



Councillor Ben Coleman (Chair)

## **9. North End Road Action Group**

The North End Road Action Group brings local residents, stallholders, shopkeepers together with the Council to drive the revival of this run-down Fulham high street.

The Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts PAC (EHRA PAC) of September 2014 recommended the establishment of the group and NERAG has met monthly since October 2014, with between 20 and 40 people attending at a time. It has discussed a range of issues, including enhancing the market, addressing parking, resolving encroachment issues, undertaking a street audit and marketing.

NERAG helped organise a pedestrianised, extended Festive Market of 100 stalls on 6 December 2014. This attracted more than 10,000 visitors and showcased what North End Road could look like as a thriving high street. Some of the additional stalls have become regular traders.

Priorities for 2015 include holding more pedestrianised markets, focusing on encroachment by shops and running a NERAG-led marketing campaign.

Councillor Ben Coleman (Facilitator)

## **10. Empty Shops Action Group**

The Empty Shops Action Group brings together residents, businesses and the Council to devise approaches to bringing empty shops in the borough back in to use. It was a recommendation of the EHRA PAC of January 2015.

At its first meeting in March 2015, the group decided to build a picture of vacancies throughout the borough, including numbers, location, landlord details, length of vacancy, size and state of repair. The group recommended that ready-to-rent properties then be identified and listed on the Council's website. As an interim measure, the group also recommended applying vinyls to abandoned properties in a poor state of repair.

Councillor Ben Coleman (Facilitator)