

Annual Report of the Policy and Accountability Committees 2016

Policy and Accountability Committees (PACs) were an innovation introduced by the council's new administration following the election in May 2014. They implemented 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:

- Children and Education
- Community Safety, Environment and Residents Services
- Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts
- Finance & Delivery
- Health, Adult Social Care and Social Inclusion

In their second 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 certain issues in more detail:

- The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Taskforce
- The Transitions Taskforce

The activities of the PACs and their related task groups during 2015/16 are described in detail on the following pages.

Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee

Members

Councillor Caroline Needham (Chair)
Councillor Alan De'Ath
Councillor Elaine Chumnerly
Councillor Caroline Ffiske (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Donald Johnson

Co-opted Members

Eleanor Allen, London Diocesan Board for Schools
Dennis Charman, Teacher Representative
Nandini Ganesh, Parentsactive Representative
Philippa O'Driscoll, Westminster Diocesan Education Service Representative
Nadia Taylor, Parent Governor Representative
Vic Daniels, Parent Governor Representative

The Committee was supported by Councillor Sue Macmillan (Cabinet Member for Children and Education), Councillor Sue Fennimore (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion), and Andrew Christie (Executive Director for Children's Services).

Listed below is a selection of the priority areas that the Committee considered during the 2015-16 municipal year.

Support to Multi-Lingual Families

With over 100 languages spoken in Hammersmith and Fulham's schools and 46% of children identified as being either bilingual or having English as an additional language (EAL) the Committee felt this was a key educational priority. While being bilingual had a number of educational advantages, some young people had to act as interpreters for their parents which could cause embarrassment, misunderstanding when talking about adult topics, and safeguarding issues. The Committee recommended that the Council fostered closer links between mainstream schools and supplementary schools and took a more proactive approach to encouraging parents to acquire English language skills.

Childcare Task Group - 8-6 Extended Nurseries Pilot

In September the Committee welcomed Diane Dixon from the Family and Childcare Trust (Regional Extended Nurseries Pilot Lead), Michele Barratt (Head of Vanessa Nursery School and Cathnor Park Children's Centre), and Nikki Pieniek-Jones (Strategic Improvement Leader at Colville Primary School) to discuss the pilot which tested whether a more flexible childcare offer could be delivered in school nurseries, providing additional local placements for two, three, and four year olds between the hours of 8am and 6pm. The Council had a key role to play supporting schools and nurseries to carry out market testing and business planning, ensuring sufficiency when the Government's free childcare offer was increased from 15 hours to 30 later this year.

Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report and Child Protection And Safeguarding Training

When considering the Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report the Committee also requested a special presentation on child protection and safeguarding in the borough from social workers and representatives from the Police and Health services. Members were given a service users perspective of the actions taken to protect and improve the lives of local children and young people to bring the issues raised in the annual report to life and provide a greater insight into areas for improvement.

Action for Change – Breaking the Cycle of Repeat Removals from Birth Parents

In February the Committee received a presentation on Action for Change, a pilot programme that worked with parents coming out of care proceedings where a child had been removed from the family to support them with counselling and education to help them make more informed choices in the future. The programme had improved the lives of a number of the borough's most vulnerable residents and the Committee recommended that the programme continue and be used as a model for other early intervention services.

The Youth Council and Youth Take Over Day

Over the year the Committee has forged close links with the Youth Council and now the new Youth Mayor and Youth Cabinet. In January, Youth Council members gave a presentation about Youth Take Over Day 2015 in the borough. Last year's event was the biggest in the borough's history with 121 young people involved and a number of organisations and businesses taking part. In April the new Youth Mayor presented the new Youth Cabinet's manifesto and the Committee agreed to work to promote their key aims to; encourage local employers to adopt the living wage, tackle racism and racial discrimination, reduce the impact of child poverty, and support young people to be prepared for a healthy, happy and productive adult life.

School Visits Following Ofsted Inspections

Following Ofsted inspections of local schools Committee members visit the school and speak with the Headteacher about any issues raised in the Ofsted report. During the year committee members visited Sullivan Primary School and have another visit planned at Holy Cross RC Primary School. The Committee are hopeful that Ofsted clear their backlog of inspections to enable more visits in the coming year.

Child and Adult Mental Health Taskforce

In response to national concerns about mental health provision for young people, a joint taskforce was set up between the Health, Adult Social Care and Social Inclusion PAC and the Children and Education PAC. Chaired by Councillor Alan De'Ath, the taskforce met with local providers including Rethink, the Centre for Mental Health,

West London Mental Health Trust, and GPs – and schools including the Bridge Academy, Lena Gardens, Brackenbury, and Jack Tizard. They also worked with the Youth Council to produce a survey that yielded over 3000 responses. The taskforce delivered recommendations on the following themes:

- Access to Services, Information and Support Needs to Improve
- Training Needs to be Strengthened and Sustainable
- Transitions Arrangements
- Hammersmith & Fulham Transformation Plan
- Mental Health Challenge

- Councillor Caroline Needham, Chair of the Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee

Community Safety, Environment and Residents Services Policy and Accountability Committee

Members

Councillor Larry Culhane (Chair)
Councillor Iain Cassidy
Councillor Sharon Holder
Councillor Charlie Dewhurst
Councillor Steve Hamilton

The Committee was supported throughout the year by: Councillor Wesley Harcourt (Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Residents Services) and Councillor Sue Fennimore (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion).

Introduction

It's been an important year for Hammersmith and Fulham Council and many of the decisions taken over the past year have been shaped through the work of this committee, with resident involvement again providing the backbone for the work and scrutiny that has taken place.

The committee covers a portfolio of wide and varied areas within the council, listed below is a selection of the important topics that the Committee has considering during the last municipal year.

20 MPH Zones

The Committee held two meetings about the proposed extension of 20 MPH zones within the borough, aimed improving road safety for all users and reducing fatalities and serious injuries on our roads.

The first meeting launched the consultation to the public and we also discussed the merits of the proposal. A second meeting was held to consider the responses to the consultation which had been run, with Councillors and members of the public raising a wide range of considered and detailed points which were passed on by the committee to be considered by the Cabinet when taking the final decision.

Cycling

The Council launched its Cycling Strategy in October 2015, along with the appointment of a cycling Champion, Cllr Iain Cassidy, and the appointment of Richard Duffill, the first ever Cycling Officer within the council.

Since then the committee has considered an in depth report from the new Cycling Officer about the Council's work to promote cycling, and further reports on the consultation for proposed changes to the Hammersmith Gyrotory and a new Quietway linking Kensington and East Acton.

Both of these items generated significant public interest, with resident engagement helping shape the council's position in response to the Hammersmith Gyrotory proposals. Cycling remains a priority of the committee and we look forward to more work in this area over the coming year.

Waste and Street Cleansing Services

Over the course of the year the Committee has held a number of meetings on Waste and Street Cleansing services. Councillors and residents have made a number of recommendations for improvements to the service and many of these have already been implemented by officers.

The Committee will be considering further reports on this service over the coming municipal year as the discussion continues to ensure that improvements are continually being made.

Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS)

In 2015-16 the Committee considered two items on SuDS schemes and heard about the benefits of these programmes and their increased use by Hammersmith and Fulham Council.

Members first heard about the innovative schemes proposed, and were then pleased to learn of the successful implementation of most of these new designs, some of which have been shortlisted for awards of excellence within the industry.

The Council's Budget

The committee discussed the Medium Term Financial Strategy at the turn of the calendar year, looking at the budget pressures council departments are under due to a reduction in central government funding.

Despite this however, the committee were pleased to hear that plans were in place to combat these pressures and that there were no real terms increases in charges, with many being frozen and some even reduced.

Community Safety

The Committee scrutinised the community safety strategic assessment for the year in November, and is due to consider the 2016-17 assessment in the summer allowing councillors and residents to feed into the priorities of officers and the Council's partners.

At the March meeting Councillors discussed the new approach to delivering domestic violence services and heard of the excellent work being done by the Angelou Partnership. Members also discussed the draft Statement of Licensing Policy, which is an important part of the Community Safety policy framework for the borough.

Wormholt Park

This was the first item discussed by this committee back in July 2014. Residents raised concerns with existing plans and as a result of that meeting, further changes and a resident consultation meeting was arranged.

On the back of that work with residents, the park improvement is now near completion, with the inclusion of a wheelchair swing, thanks to the efforts of Hayley Wedgebury of the Parents Active Group, who raised funds which were match funded by the council.

Other Items Considered

The committee also considered items on:

- Sport and Leisure Facilities
- Parking
- Air Quality
- The Planning Annual Monitoring Report.

On behalf of the committee, I'd like to thank all of the residents, stakeholders, partners in other organisations and our officers for their work with the committee this year.

- Councillor Larry Culhane, Chair of the Community Safety, Environment and Residents Services Policy and Accountability Committee

Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee

Members

Councillor Alan De'Ath (Chair)
Councillor Daryl Brown
Councillor Adam Connell
Councillor Harry Phibbs
Councillor Lucy Ivimy

The Committee was supported throughout the year by Councillors Lisa Homan (Cabinet Member for Housing) and Andrew Jones (Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration).

Listed below is a selection of the priority areas that the Committee considered during the 2015-16 municipal year.

Social Value Procurement

The Committee received a report on the Social Value Task force which it endorsed. The report was presented to Cabinet who asked the Cabinet Member for Commercial Revenue and Resident Satisfaction to build on the recommendations of the taskforce. The latest version of contract standing orders includes a section on Social Value.

Housing Allocation Schemes

The Council introduced new housing and home buy allocations schemes in 2015, along with a new tenancy strategy. The committee discussed the new policies in detail during the consultation and its comments were considered when the final policy was developed.

Arts Strategy

The committee considered the proposed Arts Strategy in September 2015 and suggested improvements which could be made to it. The Council subsequently undertook a very detailed consultation on the strategy and the committee is due to consider the issue again early in the new municipal year.

Residents Commission on Council Housing

In November 2014 the Committee recommended that a Residents Commission on Council Housing be established. One year later the commission reported back to the Committee with its proposal for a Community Gateway model organisation. Members asked Cabinet to consider the report, and its findings were accepted. In March 2016 the committee scrutinised the Cabinet's decision and considered the detailed proposals the commission had come up with. The Committee will continue to scrutinise this scheme through the 2016-17 municipal year.

Housing Finance

Councillors reviewed the Council's Financial Plan for Council Homes, considering the impact of the government's proposed reductions to social rents. At the same meeting Leaseholder Billing was discussed and the need to ensure that billing was fair and transparent was emphasised.

The Private Rented Sector

The Committee heard about ways in which the condition of this type of housing stock could be improved. Members considered the options and made comment on them, noting that it was important that the forthcoming consultation on the issue captured views from all affected.

The Use of S.106 for Skills and Training

Councillors considered how S.106 funds were allocated to skills and training and considered the Cabinet's vision for Hammersmith and Fulham's residents to have access to training which gave them access to good jobs in emerging sectors.

- Councillor Alan De'Ath, Chair of the Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee

Finance and Delivery Policy and Accountability Committee

Councillors

Councillor PJ Murphy (Chair)
Councillor Ali Hashem
Councillor Guy Vincent
Councillor Greg Smith
Councillor Michael Adam

Co-opted Members

Tony Boys
Erik Hohenstein
Chris Littmoden
Judith Worthy

The Committee was supported throughout the year by Councillor Max Schmid (Cabinet Member for Finance), Councillor Ben Coleman (Cabinet Member for Commercial Revenue and Customer Satisfaction), and Hitesh Jolapara (Strategic Director of Financial Corporate Services).

Listed below is a selection of the priority areas that the Committee considered during the 2015-16 municipal year.

The Managed Services Programme

During the year members received a number of updates on the progress of the managed services programme following a number of significant operational issues that negatively affected services. Though progress has been made it has been extremely challenging and resolution is still outstanding. Discussions continue between our provider BT and Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster councils. MSP continues to be a high priority for the Committee.

Business Intelligence Programme

In June the Committee received a report on the pilot and future development of the Business Intelligence service that included input from a global business intelligence consultancy and customers. Members continue to follow the progress of the service as it is traded with external partners and businesses, forming a key strand of the commercial revenue strategy.

Increasing Commercial Revenue and Customer Satisfaction

In September 2015 Councillor Ben Coleman (Cabinet Member for Commercial Revenue and Customer Satisfaction) presented his aims for his newly created portfolio. In April 2016 he introduced Michael Hainge (the new Commercial Director) and discussed the commercial revenue strategy and associated projects that were projected to bring in an additional £5,000,000 in 2016-17. Realisation of the revenue uplift and sharing of best practice around the council will be a focus of the committee

in 2016/7. Increasing customer satisfaction is central to the Councils strategy and officers are examining how this can be achieved and measured

Waste Disposal and Recycling

In 2015-16 the Committee continued to scrutinise waste disposal and recycling policy and the performance of the Western Riverside Waste Authority. The committee was concerned that the WRWA was not giving sufficient focus to potential savings and whilst the recent revenue uplift is welcome there is still more to be done.

2016/17 Budget Proposals and Medium Term Financial Strategy

Throughout the year the Strategic Director of Financial Corporate Services and the Cabinet Member for Finance have kept the Committee up to date on the 2016/2017 budget preparation process, the new smarter budgeting process, and any additional financial burdens that had been passed to local authorities by the Government. The funding cut and passing of Government responsibility to councils with little or no funding significantly increases budget and service delivery challenges. The current budget challenge is to realise savings of £55,800,000 by 2019/20, net of any increases in revenue generation or additional funding from the government. The committee strongly supported the new smarter budgeting approach that was now being used for the Council's budget setting process going forward for its potential to drive service improvement across the Council.

Changes to Electoral Registration

In February the Committee received a report outlining the implementation of the transition to the new Individual Electoral Registration system, and the steps taken by the Electoral Registration Officer to maximise registration in the borough. Members expressed some concerns about the new system and the associated reduction in registered voters and recommended alternate distribution avenues for voter registration forms (including them with council tax letters, working with local businesses etc.) to try and mitigate the effects of the new system.

Review of the Shared Services Arrangements

The shared service arrangements have not delivered to the council's expectations with some procurement and implementation decisions adversely affecting residents. The committee heard that savings attributed to what was formally called 'The Tri-Borough' could not be fully attributed to the initiative. Some of the savings were savings that would have been made in any event and others could still have been achieved through a single borough approach.

The committee also learned that the branding of sharing services under a 'Tri-Borough' banner had been seen as by other councils as exclusive and, as such, inhibited a wider shared service approach. Given that some initiatives were a single borough approach, others a dual borough approach, and still others a tri-borough approach the committee was informed that the 'Tri-Borough' branding did not reflect

the reality of the position and would therefore cease. However, the shared services approach would continue.

April's report on the ongoing review of shared services highlighted a number of key areas for resolution, including; how to retain sovereignty when purchasing and/or sharing services, how to ensure shared services are tailored to meet the needs of residents in different boroughs with different priorities, how to avoid conflicts of interest for officers and members and how to effectively address problems identified in one borough but not recognised in another. These questions and related topics will continue to be considered by the Committee as it seek to understand how the Council can share services with other partners in the future to deliver the best value services for the benefit of residents.

Co-opted Residents

The contribution of the co-opted members has had a significant impact on the committee's work and their experience of both the private and public sector has brought an extra dimension to discussions. Their experience spans being a board member of a FTSE 100 company, a government department non-executive directorship, global sales management, financial controllership of a major financial body, and an entrepreneur working with the public and private sector both in the UK and abroad. Their involvement and commitment reflects the benefits of involving local residents in the council's work.

- Councillor PJ Murphy, Chair of the Finance and Delivery Policy and Accountability Committee

Councillor Attendance – 2015/16	
Councillor PJ Murphy (Chair)	6 of 6
Councillor Ali Hashem	5 of 6
Councillor Guy Vincent	6 of 6
Councillor Greg Smith	4 of 6
Councillor Michael Adam	6 of 6

Health, Adult Social Care & Social Inclusion Policy and Accountability Committee

Councillors

Councillor Rory Vaughan (Chair)
Councillor Hannah Barlow
Councillor Natalia Perez
Councillor Andrew Brown
Councillor Joe Carlebach

Co-opted Members

Patrick McVeigh, Action on Disability
Bryan Naylor, Age UK
Debbie Domb, HAFCAC

The Committee was also supported throughout the year by Councillor Vivienne Lukey (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care), Councillor Sharon Holder (Lead Member for Health), and Liz Bruce (Executive Director of Adult Social Care).

Listed below is a selection of the priority areas that the Committee considered during the 2015-16 municipal year.

Preparing for Adulthood - Young People Aged 14-25 Years With Disabilities

Transition from Children's Services to Adult Services was an important item for the Committee as they felt the process of transition between services should be person centred and seamless for the young person and their families. To understand the issues in more depth and help to improve the service a task group was set up that will be reporting back their findings and recommendations later in the year.

Addressing Food Poverty in Hammersmith and Fulham

In July the Committee received a progress report about addressing food poverty in the borough, which included measures to provide support and Food Bank services. Members highly commended the progress made against previous PAC recommendations on this subject, particularly the opening of a new site in the north of the borough, and recommended that the Council consider how to accommodate the problem of foodbanks being site specific and people being unable to travel.

West London Mental Health Trust

In September the Committee received a report on developments at West London Mental Health Trust focusing on the two key transformation areas; Urgent Assessment and Care Development and Delivery and Planned Care/Shifting Settings of Care Development and Delivery. The Committee highlighted the improving relationships with other organisations and the fact that there would be no reductions in beds but asked that more be done to combat loneliness and isolation, particularly amongst the elderly.

Immunisation Uptake

Following up on last year's work the Committee received an update on flu immunisations, as they were keen to ensure that an action plan was in place for the current year and specifically for the age 2-4 and 65+ priority groups. To improve uptake amongst children, the Committee recommended that the provision of the vaccination in children's centres be explored as a pilot programme. In April 2016 the Immunisation Working Group, which included members from Hammersmith and Fulham CCG, the Public Health team, and NHS England, was commended by the Committee for achieving significant improvements, particularly in relation to immunisation rates for young children and pregnant women.

Care Quality Commission Inspection Report

In November the West London Mental Health Trust and Central London Community Healthcare provided the Committee with responses to the Care Quality Commission's Inspection Report.

Independent Healthcare Commission For North West London

In January the Committee received the final report including key findings and recommendations of the Commission, chaired by Michael Mansfield QC. The Commission was launched in 2014 by five West London authorities in reaction to the closure of two accident and emergency departments. The Committee welcomed the report of the Commission, fully endorsed its recommendations, and called on the NHS to publish a full business case with an Equalities Impact Assessment and other appropriate assessments and to subject it to full public consultation and transparency before approval by the Treasury.

The Future of Charing Cross Hospital – NHS Response To The Mansfield Inquiry

In March representatives from the Imperial College Healthcare Trust presented their vision and priorities for Charing Cross Hospital over the next two years. The Committee asked for an in-depth consultation on the new business case at the earliest opportunity involving each household in the borough and asked for more detail on the shape of the proposed changes and proposals for the Charing Cross accident and emergency department.

NHS Healthcare Trusts

The Committee have also scrutinised the operational work of Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, particularly in the areas of A&E performance, meeting winter demands, and patient discharge delays – and Chelsea And Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, particularly regarding their proposed integration with West Middlesex Hospital which the Committee did not support due to concerns with the financial case.

- Councillor Rory Vaughan, Chair of the Health, Adult Social Care & Social Inclusion Policy and Accountability Committee