

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE FORUM

2 JULY 2003

Chair: * Councillor Navin Shah

Councillors: Arnold * Gate (1)
* Bluston * Omar
* Janet Cowan * Anjana Patel

* Denotes Member present

(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

[NB Attendance at this meeting by representatives of community organisations and representatives of the Local Authority is recorded at Appendix 1].

25. **Appointment of Chair:**

RESOLVED: To note the appointment under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 2 of Councillor Navin Shah as Chair of the Forum for the 2003/2004 Municipal Year, as agreed at the meeting of Cabinet held on 20 May 2003.

26. **Introduction by the Chair to the Forum:**

The Chair extended a warm welcome to the community representatives and Members present and outlined the programme for the evening and introduced the speakers for those items.

27. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Currie	Councillor Gate

28. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interests made by Members of the Council arising from the business transacted at this meeting.

29. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.

30. **Appointment of Vice-Chair:**

Further to the agenda item in this matter and the nomination now made it was

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Currie as Vice-Chair of the Community Consultative Forum for the Municipal Year 2003/2004.

31. **Presentation on Library Service Provision for Minority Ethnic Groups:**

Bob Mills, the Library Services Manager, gave an oral presentation on library service provision for ethnic minority groups.

He explained that, in the Borough as a whole, there were 11 static libraries as well as a housebound library service. These services were very popular and well-used – when calculated by loans per person, Harrow was consistently ranked as one of the top three London boroughs in terms of usage.

The library service catered for the ethnically diverse community it served by stocking books in a range of languages. These included books in Bengali, Chinese, Gujarati, Hindi, Panjabi and Urdu. It was noted that books in Tamil were also shortly to become available. 'Dual language' picture and reading books for children, which combined two languages in one book, were also stocked. It was noted that, although a great proportion of members of the ethnic community were active library members than the majority community, English language books continued to make up approximately 98% of all books loaned.

Aside from books, the libraries also stocked a range of magazines and newspapers, such as the Caribbean Times and Asian Voice, and a culturally diverse range of CDs.

Community representatives were further reminded that the public could access the internet free of charge at borough libraries. It was indicated that the service would shortly begin stocking DVDs and videos, initially in English only and later followed by Asian languages. It was emphasised that the service endeavoured to respond to user feedback and requests for particular titles.

Following the presentation, a number of issues were raised and discussed. In response to a question from a Member of the Forum, it was confirmed that, upon request, libraries could arrange for books to be transferred from other libraries within the Borough and could also request transfers from outside the Borough. It was also noted that, whilst libraries could advise schools in choosing books, they did not have any power over the types of books included on the school syllabus.

A representative of the Sangat Centre offered to donate a number of Asian language videos to the libraries to help them to build up their stock of videos.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

32. **Review of Social Services for Older People from Black and Other Minority Communities:**

Further to a report considered by the Forum at its meeting on 2 April 2003 which advised of Social Services' intention to undertake a review of services provided to older people from the black and other minority communities, and the Forum's decision, at that meeting, to establish a sub-group of community representatives to act as a consultative group for the review, the Forum now received a further report presented by the Head of Community Care which updated the Forum on progress with the review.

It was noted that the sub-group had now met and had, in particular, discussed the 'meals on wheels' service currently provided to the ethnic community. Several suggestions for a new approach to provision of the service had come out of the meeting, including the establishment of a vegetarian luncheon club as an adjunct to the service, and it had also become apparent that publicity of the service needed improvement.

During the discussion which followed, a community representative expressed concern that the 'meals on wheels' service did not adequately cater to the African-Caribbean community. The Head of Community Care pointed out that the Authority, in association with HACAS, did run a luncheon club aimed at the African-Caribbean community, but acknowledged that the 'meals on wheels' service was not currently geared towards their needs. For this reason, he was keen to recruit a member of the African-Caribbean community to join the sub-group to input into the review of services, but had not yet been able to do so.

It was noted that the Forum would be regularly updated on the work of the sub-group.

RESOLVED: That the above information be noted.

33. **Presentation by Harrow Mencap:**

The Forum received a presentation from Varsha Bavishi, an Outreach Worker with Harrow Mencap, on the work of Harrow Mencap. She explained that the organisation, which worked to support people with learning disabilities and their families in Harrow, had been established in 1987 and, whilst affiliated to the national Mencap organisation, received no funding from them.

Support was provided through three residential care homes, three supported living homes and one day centre, as well as 10 clubs, which operated mainly at the weekends and evenings and which involved activities ranging from football to computing. Mrs Bavishi advised that she spoke a number of languages including Hindi and Gujarati and was in this way particularly equipped to provide support to the Asian community. She emphasised that the organisation was heavily dependent on volunteers and also spoke of the difficulties in raising adequate funds to finance their work, and the consequent difficulties in long term planning. She appealed to members of the community to contact her if they were interested in volunteering.

The meeting also heard from a Mencap client and the parents of two of clients who referred to the invaluable support provided by Mencap and who appealed for more support from within the Asian community.

Following the presentation, community representatives raised a number of questions regarding, inter alia, the organisation's funding and Local Authority co-operation with Mencap.

RESOLVED: That the above information be noted.

34. **Presentation regarding After School Activities for Young People in the Borough:**
The meeting received a joint presentation from Carol Stewart, the Arts and Leisure Manager, and Mark Gillet, the Community and Youth Services Manager, regarding after-school activities for young people in the borough.

The officers began by outlining the leisure facilities which the Authority was responsible for. These included a number of sports and leisure facilities, Harrow Arts Centre, and 3 youth centres. The Authority also employed outreach workers and supported work in schools and in a range of community organisations such as the Brownies, Scouts, Red Cross, Boys Brigade and other religious groups, youth clubs and sports and leisure groups. The diverse range of schemes and activities provided or co-ordinated by the Authority were also outlined. These included school holiday playschemes, writers' groups, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, residential international experiences and a summer university programme. It was noted that a leisure card scheme which was also shortly to be launched.

Information setting out details of activities available was distributed at the meeting. The meeting were informed that the activities were publicised through a range of mediums, such as the Connexions Youth Service, the Harrow Live website and literature distributed to, libraries, schools, colleges, council buildings and supermarkets. It was noted that the post of Community Sports Development Worker had recently been established and filled and this officer would be responsible for pro-actively encouraging youth participation in after-school activities.

During the discussion which followed, Members made a number of suggestions of ways to further promote the opportunities available to young people. It was suggested that the Authority could distribute brochures to all parents via schools, utilise Harrow People and also inquire about using a 'colour sleeve' in a local newspaper.

RESOLVED: That the above information be noted.

35. **Presentation regarding Harrow Council's Identity:**
Kate O'Malley, the Communications and Publications Manager, attended to seek the meeting's views on a new logo for Harrow. She explained that the Authority was looking to replace its current logo, the Borough crest, with a new, strong symbol to enhance awareness of Council's services and information, and create a more professional image. The current logo would be retained for limited use.

A number of options were presented to the meeting. It was explained that a logo predominantly constituted of text, rather than an image, was favoured as it had proved difficult to identify one image which symbolised and represented all of Harrow. It was also important that the logo be striking and distinctive, reflecting something of the personality of Harrow, but not be too detailed in order that it be possible for it to be reduced to a small size but remain legible. A brief questionnaire which sought feedback on the options displayed was distributed and several representatives outlined their preferences and ideas.

RESOLVED: That the above information be noted.

36. **Open Forum:**
The Chair called for suggestions of topics for discussion at future meetings. A community representative requested a presentation on how the National Curriculum was structured to ensure that pupils learnt about different cultures.

It was noted that information regarding community lettings and grant funding would be presented to the Forum in due course, as previously requested.

RESOLVED: That the above information be noted.

37. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no public questions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

38. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no petitions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4B

of the Constitution).

39. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no deputations to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

40. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Community Consultative Forum held on 2 April 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record of that meeting.

41. **Matters Arising from Minutes of the Last Meeting:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

42. **Any Other Urgent Business:**

- Vote of Thanks to David Burnell, Acting Chief Social Services Officer
It was noted that David Burnell was shortly to leave the employ of the Authority. Members of the Forum wished to express their appreciation of his contribution to the work of the Forum. They wished him well for the future.
- Venue of meetings
It was suggested that the possibility of holding meetings at an external community venue with the aim of encouraging greater attendance by community representatives be re-investigated.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.53 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR NAVIN SHAH
Chair

APPENDIX 1

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE FORUM - 2 JULY 20031) **Representatives of Community Organisations:-**

AK Aggarwal	Indian Association of Harrow
G Ali	Pakistan Society of Harrow
M Ali	Pakistan Society of Harrow
V Bavishi	Harrow Mencap
N Desai	Harrow Women's Association
S Fearal	Crime Prevention Harrow
YK Merali	KSIMC
I Janmohamed	KSIMC
P Perinparaja	Kala Anjali Arts Circle
D Reuben	Harrow Black Parents Sub group

2) **Guests:-**

Mr W Siddiqui
Mrs S Siddiqui
Alex Manek
Mr Manek

3) **Officers of the Council:-**

Bindu Arjoon-Matthews	Manager, Strategic partnerships Section
David Burnell	Acting Chief Social Services Officer
Mark Gillet	Community and Youth Services Manager
Bob Mills	Library Services Manager
Kate O'Malley	Communications and Publications Manager
Carole Stewart	Arts and Leisure Manager