

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE FORUM

10 FEBRUARY 2004

Chair: * Councillor N Shah

Councillors: * Arnold * Lavingia (1)
 * Janet Cowan * Omar
 * Currie * Anjana Patel

* Denotes Member present
 (1) Denote 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].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL

PART II - MINUTES

56. **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 Bluston	Councillor Lavingia

57. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.

58. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

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

59. **Presentation regarding Diversity in the National Curriculum:**

The Forum received a presentation by Patrick O'Dwyer, General Education Adviser (Humanities), regarding cultural diversity in the National Curriculum, particularly in regards to History.

The objective of the National Curriculum was explained to the Forum. It was stated that History was taught as a compulsory subject to children aged between 5 to 14 years' old, after that time pupils decided whether they wished to study it further. The benefits of learning history was described as: developing critical thought, social responsibility, challenging pre-conceptions and understanding political processes.

Forum members were advised that the National Curriculum generally encompassed a great deal of diversity which was not just limited to History but were evident in subjects such as Music, Design and Technology, English and Drama.

Key Stage 3 was explained to members, however, it was suggested that the types of Black studies that was taught was often geared towards American personalities and the experience of Slavery in the US, which was an important aspect of Black studies but not its entirety. It was stressed that more positive portrayals of Black British people and people from the Asian and African continents that had contributed to the world, and to Britain in particular, in inventing technology, theory, science and sports, should be exemplified. Members were advised that this was a shared feeling amongst many teachers. Opportunities to teach Black history with these perspectives were often limited due to insufficient resources. It was also put forward that the community should enter into partnerships with schools so that children could acquire more knowledge of history of their ethnic group.

During the discussion community representatives raised a number of concerns centred around: the amount of Black studies taught in schools, context, accuracy of information and the American focus, in comparison to the proportion of Black and ethnic children that attended Harrow schools. The General Education Adviser responded by saying the concerns expressed were shared by teaching staff and was often dependent upon resources. It was also reported that concerns had been raised about the lack of diversity in the teaching of Welsh, Irish and Scottish history; members were reminded of the large amount of historical content that teachers were expected to cover at Key

Stage 3. He also pointed out that historical studies within Key Stage 3 were always going to be selective and not all aspects of any regional history could be taught. The central focus was the contribution of Black people to Britain although there were some opportunities for non-British studies.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

60. **Presentation by Ethnic Alcohol Counselling Service:**

The Forum received a presentation by Lakhvir Randhawa, Deputy Director and Centre Manager of the Ethnic Alcohol Counselling Service in Harrow (EACH), who explained what the service did.

Members were informed that the service was established in 1991 to provide culturally appropriate counselling service, advice and information, and structured day care service to hard-to-reach groups. EACH's primary aim was to work with individuals, family members and carers primarily from minority ethnic communities affected by alcohol, drug and mental health problems. It was stressed that EACH was a voluntary charity group that acquired funding from various organisations like the Association of Local Government and the Community Fund. EACH's headquarters was in Hounslow but there were centres in Harrow and Brent.

The Deputy Director highlighted to members the service user profile, which illustrated ethnicity, religion, age and problems possessed by clients. It was also mentioned that half of the service users that were seen in 2003 were Asian, and that women who used the service suffered primarily from depression. In relation to men it was an alcohol problem. The reason behind EACH's success was suggested to be linked to the holistic approach in administering help and support, and an awareness of diverse cultures.

The Forum was informed of some of the many achievements that EACH had achieved, which included: negotiating with Ealing Drug and Alcohol Action Team to provide day care services for Ealing residents; partnership working with local agencies and professionals which led to increased referrals; 7100 counselling sessions were offered at all three centres and at 14 GP surgeries; construction of Structured Day Care Programme in Hounslow that lasted 8 weeks and was carried out 6 times a year, which attracted 109 people; creation of support groups and complementary therapies in Harrow and Brent; Outreach programme; and a dual diagnosis programme.

The areas that hampered development were linked to resources to improve access to EACH, cultural appropriate mainstream services and greater partnership working. It was also recommended that the Service Level Agreements between the PCTs and local authorities needed to be more transparent.

Forum members thanked the Deputy Director for her presentation and expressed a number of concerns to do with raising awareness of the charity group, which was taken on board by the Deputy Director.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

61. **Presentation on the New Harrow Project - Progress Report:**

Andrew Trehern, Area Director, delivered a verbal presentation based upon the developments that had so far taken place in the New Harrow Project (NHP), which focused upon Area 1, South and West Harrow, Area 2, Wealdstone, Marlborough and Greenhill and, Area 3, Kenton East and West.

Forum members were reminded of the corporate vision behind the Project, which was to reform the way services were delivered in the borough. In addition to, improving the environment, strengthen local communities and promote a prosperous and sustainable economy.

Some improvements that had been implemented in Areas 1, 2 and 3 were illustrated to members, such as: new CCTV van for use in crime hotspot areas, replaced and relayed pavement in areas, new litter bins, objects re-painted, removal of graffiti and chewing gum, eye-sore objects removed or were in the process of being removed by Harrow Council's Enforcement unit. It was also mentioned that there were more people on the street sweeping, in addition to having 2 new mobile vans that had the capabilities to wash and sweep.

Members were advised that as a result of the work of the NHP, compensation claims paid out by the Council in South and West Harrow for trips and falls on pavement by pedestrians were nil and incidence of crime had also dropped from the past year

(2002). It was also stressed that the Council would be taking a firm line on any form of anti-social behaviour, such as fly-tipping and parking on pavements, and was anticipated that by March 2004 Areas 2 and 3 would be at a stage where it was considered very clean on a daily basis.

The Area Director explained that that the Council was now positioning itself to allow the community and schools the opportunity to think about Harrow's environment in order to keep it clean and viable. For example, one High School had already undertaken a cleaning day whereby pupils collected litter, removed graffiti and cleared land of fly tips. Community representatives were urged to complete a comment sheet with their contact details, which indicated ways in which their organisation could help the NHP.

It was also noted by members that the NHP team had won a national award by the Local Government Network praising the Council for its success in joint working across the Council and with partners.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

62. **Consultation on the Draft Community Strategy - Update:**

A report of the Executive Director (Organisational Development) was presented by Bindu Arjoon-Matthews, Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section, regarding development of the Community Strategy for Harrow.

Members were reminded that consultation on the draft Community Strategy was undertaken late last year with residents and stakeholders in the community to ascertain what they thought the draft Strategy should include. It was explained that the consultation process was divided into two phases. The first phase involved mapping existing priorities and the second phase encouraged consultees to identify any additional priorities.

It was also emphasised that the public consultation was advertised in local papers, libraries, schools, on Harrow Council's website and through direct mailing to existing Partnership stakeholders. Forum members were informed that: questionnaires, focus groups, existing meetings and newsletters were used to acquire priorities, all of which were accessible to partners and residents.

The next phase of the Strategy was for partners to establish how the identified priorities were being addressed through existing work. If it were highlighted that priorities were not being covered, officers would need to devise a way to ensure they were. Members of the Forum were encouraged to take copies of the Strategy and make any comments to the Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section.

The Community Strategy for Harrow would officially be launched on 19 May 2004 at the first summit of the Harrow Strategic Partnership.

RESOLVED: That the Forum noted the consultation process so far and the early results received.

63. **Planning for Black History Month 2004:**

The Forum received a verbal report from Bindu Arjoon-Matthews, Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section, regarding Black History Month (BHM) '04.

Members were informed that the Black History Month Steering Group met on 19 November 2003 at the Civic Centre to appraise BHM '03. It was highlighted that the discussion amongst members revealed mixed feelings on Harrow's coverage of BHM, such as, whether religious festivals should be funded by the Council.

The Manager advised the Forum that the general feeling amongst members on the Steering Group was that they would like community groups to play more of a role in organising BHM, and for a community representative to Chair the Steering Group. It was indicated that the Council's Corporate Management Team was meeting to discuss the Council's role. It was also anticipated that this year would benefit from additional revenue from sponsorship and more schools' involvement.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted

64. **Widening the Community Consultative Forum Membership:**

The Chair asked community representatives to put forward names of other community groups that were not already a member of the Forum in order to widen its membership.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

65. **Open Forum:**
The Chair called for suggestions of topics for discussion at future meetings. Members put forward the following ideas:
- Update report on Community Cohesion
 - Update report on POP
 - Male Domestic Violence
- RESOLVED:** That the above ideas be noted.
66. **Asian Applicants Review Group - Progress Report:**
- RESOLVED:** That the progress report be noted as Information.
67. **Petitions:**
- RESOLVED:** To note that there were no petitions received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 13 (Part 4E of the Constitution).
68. **Deputations:**
- RESOLVED:** To note that there were no deputations received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).
69. **Public Questions:**
- RESOLVED:** To note that no public questions were put at meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).
70. **Minutes:**
- RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2003 having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.
71. **Any Other Urgent Business:**
- **Iranian Earthquake Appeal:** The Chair advised the Forum that the event to launch the Iranian Earthquake Appeal that was held at Harrow High School was a success and thanked Councillors and community representatives who attended. It was also mentioned that the money raised would be used to build a school.
 - **Indian Vegetarian Meals:** Councillor M Davine attended the meeting to state that the Council had been successful in securing transportation to deliver freshly cooked Indian vegetarian meals to elderly people, which would commence on Monday 16 February 2004. It was noted by members that 142 meals would be delivered on Monday to elderly people in the borough as part of the Meals on Wheels programme. It was emphasised that the transport capacity to carry hot meals was 150, which means if there was a further demand for such meals it might present problems in the future. However it was hoped that a long-term strategy would be devised to solve the problem. Vijay Malik, Equalities Manager, advised the Forum that a formal report would be presented at the next Forum meeting.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.01 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR NAVIN SHAH
Chair

APPENDIX 1

Community Consultative Forum - 10 February 2004**(1) Representatives of Community Organisations who Attended**

P Pawar	Harrow Council for Racial Equality
E Challoral	Harrow Council for Racial Equality
Lakhvir Randhawa	Ethnic Alcohol Counselling Service in Harrow
K OumeR	Harrow Islamic Society
K Nagda	Sangat Centre
SMA Farooqi	Islamic and Cultural Society of Harrow
S Mayo	Harrow Association for Voluntary Services
M Shah	Hindu Council Harrow
L Gorasia	Hindu Council Harrow
T Chisholm	Harrow African-Caribbean Association
P Gan	Harrow Interfaith Council
J Lawal	Education for Life

(2) Interested People who Attended

M Mbabazi
 I Attwood
 Councillor Williams
 Councillor Ray
 Councillor M Davine
 Hayley Doyle
 Sarah Walker

(3) Apologies Received by Community Organisations

Harrow Mencap
 Harrow Anti Racist Alliance
 Women's Association
 Pakistan Society of Harrow

(4) Officers who Attended

Vijay Malik, Equalities Manager
 Bindu-Arjoon Matthews, Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section
 Andrew Trehern, Area Director
 Patrick O'Dwyer, General Education Adviser (Humanities)

[Please note that Mrs Desai of the Women's Association was in fact present at the last CCF meeting held on 22 October 2003.]