

**JOINT MEETING OF THE LIFELONG LEARNING
SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE AND HEALTH AND
SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

18 JANUARY 2006

Chair: * Councillor Mitzi Green

Councillors: * Nana Asante * Vina Mithani
* Bluston * Janet Mote
* Gate * John Nickolay
* Mary John * Mrs Joyce Nickolay
* Kinsey * Osborn
* Jean Lammiman * Mrs R Shah
* Myra Michael

Advisor (non-voting): * Jean Bradlow

* Denotes Member present

[Note: Councillors Mrs Bath and C Mote also attended the meeting in a participatory role].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL

PART II - MINUTES

14. **Appointment of Chair:**

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mitzi Green be appointed Chair for the meeting.

15. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting.

16. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
Councillor Nana Asante	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of Harrow Association of Voluntary Services.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a Member of Black History Month Forum.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of the African SANG and although not a member of the Somali Family Support Group, the Somali Family Support Group was a member of the African SANG.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was Chair of the Community Consultative Forum.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee.
Councillor Mrs Bath	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of Harrow and Wembley Sea Cadet Corps.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of Harrow Volunteer Police Cadets.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a school governor.
	Declared a personal interest in that her husband was a member of Harrow Family Learning.

Councillor Bluston	Declared a personal interest in that he was Chair of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee.
	Declared a personal interest in that he was Chair of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Northwick Park.
	Declared a personal interest in that he had one daughter who was a Learning Support assistant in a Harrow school and another who was on a fast-track course at the Institute of Education.
	Declared a personal interest in that he was a member of Edgware Masorti Synagogue.
Jean Bradlow	Declared a personal interest in that she was the PCT lead for Harrow services.
Councillor Gate	Declared a personal interest in that he was a Member of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee.
	Declared a personal interest in that his wife was a nurse practitioner for Harrow PCT.
	Declared a personal interest in that he was an LEA representative of ST. Dominic's Sixth Form College.
	Declared a personal interest in that he was a member of the Harrow Citizens' Advice Bureau.
Councillor Mitzi Green	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of Edgware Reform Synagogue.
	Declared a personal interest in that a relative was in receipt of benefits from Social Services.
Councillor Mary John	Declared a personal interest in that she was a trustee of Harrow Carers Centre.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of Harrow Association of Voluntary Services (HAV).
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of Harrow Association of Disabled People (HAD).
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of Harrow in Europe.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of League of Friends at Northwick Park Hospital.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a governor at Woodlands First and Middle School.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of Harrow Agenda 21 Environmental Forum.
Councillor Jean Lammiman	Declared a personal interest in that she was an observer of Arts Culture Harrow Board.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of Harrow Parents' Association for Hearing Impaired Children.
	Declared a personal interest in that she sat on the board of Harrow Young Musicians.

	Declared a personal interest in that she was a board trustee of Relate North West London.
Councillor Myra Michael	Declared a personal interest in that she was Vice-Chair of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Northwick Park.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a retired Health Visitor.
Councillor Vina Mithani	Declared a personal interest in that she worked for a Health Protection Agency.
	Declared a personal interest in that she was a reserve Member of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Northwick Park.
Councillor C Mote	Declared a personal interest in that his wife was a teacher at Peterborough and St Margaret's School.
	Declared a personal interest in that his sister was a teacher at Marlborough School.
	Declared a personal interest in that he was a member of Diabetics UK.
Councillor Janet Mote	Declared a personal interest in that she was a teacher at Peterborough and St Margaret's School.
	Declared a personal interest in that a relative was in receipt of benefits from Social Services.
	Declared a personal interest in that her sister-in-law was a teacher at Marlborough School.
	Declared a personal interest in that her husband was a member of Diabetics UK.
Councillor John Nickolay	Declared a personal interest in that he was a member of Harrow Council for Racial Equality.
Reverend Reece	Declared a personal interest in that he sat on the London Board for Schools.
Councillor Rekha Shah	Declared a personal interest in that she was a member of Harrow Anti-Racist Alliance.

17. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following agenda items be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency detailed below:-

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Special Circumstances/Grounds for Urgency</u>
11. Update on the Development of People First	This report was not available at the time the agenda was printed and circulated due to staff absence. Members were requested to consider this item as a matter of urgency as the next scheduled meeting would not take place until 12 July 2006.
14. Children and Young People's Plan	The Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee, which had met on 10 January 2006, requested that the Plan, which had only been made available to members of the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee at the meeting on 10 January, be submitted to the Joint Meeting of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committees so that the Members could comment on the Plan. Members were requested to consider the report and comment on the Plan.

(2) all items be considered with the press and public present.

18. **References from Council and Other Committees:**

The meeting received a tabled reference from the meeting of the School Organisation Committee held on 18 January 2006 on the Children and Young People's Plan. Following advice from the legal advisor it was

RESOLVED: That the reference be considered by the Lifelong Learning and Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committees separately at their next meetings.

19. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting held on 13 December 2005 and the minutes of the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting held on 10 January 2006 be deferred to the next ordinary meetings of the relevant Sub-Committees.

20. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8.

21. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions had been received under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 9.

22. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.

23. **Preparation for the Joint Area Review:**

The Sub-Committees received a report of the Director of Children's Services which updated Members on action taken in preparation for the Joint Area Review (JAR). The Director reported that during the last year there had been eight inspections in Children's Services. The JAR would be brought in to rationalise the inspection of Children's Services.

The Director explained that the JAR would involve 18-20 inspectors being on-site in November 2006 for a two-week period. Inspectors were required to give 12 weeks notice of their intended date of inspection. It was noted that this would be a demanding and comprehensive process. A corporate assessment would be carried out at the same time and the final report would be embargoed until Cabinet approved it.

The inspectors would be site-based but were also expected to visit neighbourhoods and service users. Harrow Council would submit three local areas for the inspectors to visit which would give a realistic view of the Borough. The Director informed the Sub-Committee that the inspectors would choose which neighbourhood to visit in June 2006, however it should be recognised that the inspectors could choose to visit another neighbourhood.

The Director explained careful planning would be required to ensure a balance between delivering services and giving the inspectors an understanding of how services were delivered. As the project manager would need to spend the majority of their time working on the JAR, their position would need to be back filled and a shortlist of project managers had not yet been drawn up.

The Director explained that there would be a web-based survey accessible to all children, and inspectors would use this to target specific groups of service users.

The Director referred the Sub-Committees to a letter from OFSTED that was attached to the report. This letter included the Annual Performance Assessment Final Judgements 2005 and these explained what Harrow Council needed to achieve.

Members were concerned that no glossary of terms had been provided with the reports and the Chair asked that this be provided in future.

The Director explained that the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) would take place at the same time as the JAR and that this would be a joint inspection. Members expressed concern that the two inspections would be undertaken simultaneously and although it was recognised that there would be some synergies between the two

inspections, it was felt that it would be preferable to have the inspections separately. Members were concerned about the impact on the delivery of services if the two inspections were to take place simultaneously.

In response to a Member's concern that Local Authorities with larger resources would perform the best in the inspection, an officer explained that preparation would be vital to a successful inspection as the inspectors would have a tight timescale.

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be noted;

(2) the Sub-Committees refer their concerns about the two inspections running concurrently to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

(3) the inspectors be informed of the Sub-Committees' concerns;

(4) the Joint Committee consider the inspection report as part of the work programme, following approval at Cabinet.

24. **Development of a Children's Trust:**

The Sub-Committees received a report of the Director of Children's Services which updated Members on the action taken to develop a Children's Trust approach. The Director explained that, following the promotion by the Government of Children's Trust Funds in 2003, the delivery of the Green Paper "Every Child Matters", and the Children's Act, there was a need for Local Authorities to develop Children's Trusts.

The Director outlined the eleven key deliverables expected by the Government and explained that joining services of Harrow Council and the PCT would involve aligning budgets and making joint decisions.

In response to a Members' question about whether the key developments were realistic, the Director assured Members that they were and that Harrow's Children's Trust Approach was currently in its final stage of development of the formal process.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

25. **Update on the development of People First:**

The Sub-Committees received a report of the Executive Director, People First, which outlined the realignment of the departments within the People First directorate. The Executive Director explained that it was necessary to reconsider the People First Senior Structure, following the establishment of the two Statutory officer posts of Director of Children's Services and Director of Adult Community Services.

The Executive Director referred the Sub-Committees to the Appendices which showed the current and proposed structures and reported that the proposed structure aimed to clarify lines of accountability and officers' titles. The Sub-Committees were informed that the structure would need to be approved by Cabinet before being implemented. The Executive Director informed the Sub-Committee that she had proposed that a review of the structure be carried out after it had been implemented for six months.

In response to a Member's question, the Executive Director explained that the Sports and Leisure service which had been moved to People First from Urban Living would be placed within Cultural Services.

In response to a Member's question, the Executive Director explained that the Area Director post had been deleted and the person who had previously filled the position was on secondment. The Area Managers had been placed in Community Development and the word 'Area' would be incorporated into their new titles.

The Chair commented that Mental Health was included with Learning Disability Services in the current structure, but this had not been transferred to the proposed structure. The Executive Director responded that it would be added to the proposed structure.

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be noted;

(2) the Sub-Committees be informed of the structure, once approved by Cabinet.

26. **Adoption Inspection, September 2005:**

The Sub-Committees received a report of the Director of Children's Services which updated Members on the action taken in response to the Commission for Social Care Inspection Adoption Report. The Director reported that the inspectors had maintained contact with officers and were very supportive of the action taken in response to the

CSCI Adoption Report. The Director explained that Harrow had a relatively low number of children looked after, with approximately 160-169 at any one time.

In response to a Members' concern that there was a high number of agency staff employed, the Director explained the adoption process was a lengthy, complex process and that where possible, qualified, experienced staff were recruited.

The Director reported that the action plan would be completed by the end of March 2006.

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be noted;

(2) the action plan be considered at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

27. **Children and Young People's Plan:**

The Sub-Committees received a report of the Director of Children's Services which updated Members on the drafting the first edition of the Children and Young People's Plan. The Director explained that the Children and Young People's Plan was a requirement of the Children Act 2004. The plan which would be a three-year rolling report would be used in inspections and by other organisations. The report would focus on key areas where progress could be made. Consultation with statutory agencies and the voluntary sector was taking place to establish the key issues and how they would be addressed. The Director explained that few organisations had responded but that there had been 462 hits on the website to date.

A Member, who was also a member of one of the organisations listed as having been consulted, informed the Sub-Committee that the organisation had not been consulted. The Director reported that he understood the list to be accurate but apologised if an oversight had occurred. A Member commented that until responses had been received from a significant number of organisations, the key issues could not be identified. The Director reported that he and another officer would visit co-ordinating bodies to get a consensus. Officers were asked to consult Norwood and Relate North West London and add them to the list of consultees.

A Member expressed concern about the level of dental decay in children under the age of five and asked if there was a problem with access to dentists. An officer responded that the problem was mostly caused by a lack of health promotion, poor diet and oral health. These would be addressed through the development of community dental services and a dental health plan which was being drafted.

A Member expressed concern about the number of children not using their free school meals entitlement and schools not meeting the proposed school meals standards currently being introduced to help improve children's nutrition. It was reported that the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee, in 2003, had produced a report which reviewed the Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles in Mainstream Schools which made recommendations about how to resolve the issues surrounding school meals. The Director explained that all Harrow primary schools received free fruit for the children and many schools provided the children with water on the tables. The Director emphasised the need for a healthy eating ethos to be incorporated into lessons, with children being encouraged to eat more fruit and vegetables. It was reported that the Council's catering service which supplied many schools with school meals, was currently being reviewed.

It was reported that an update on the implementation of recommendations of the review would be received by the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee at its next meeting on 4 April 2006. Members asked that the Advisor to the Health and Social Care Scrutiny be invited to attend the next meeting of the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee to advise the Sub-Committee on this item.

A Member asked officers how a rise in sexually transmitted infections would be addressed. An officer reported that a new chlamydia testing service would be introduced and that the services offered needed to be in line with the requirements of young people.

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be noted;

(2) the advisor to the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee be invited to the next meeting of the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

28. **Extension and Termination of the Meeting:**
In accordance with the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 6.7(ii)(b), it was

RESOLVED: At 9.57 pm to continue until 10.10 pm.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.35 pm, closed at 10.08 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MITZI GREEN
Chair