

**MINUTES OF THE CROUCH END, HORNSEY AND STROUD GREEN AREA ASSEMBLY
THURSDAY, 13 JANUARY 2011**



Haringey Council



Councillors Butcher, Gorrie, Strang, Weber (Chair) and Winskill

Apologies Councillor Reece, Reid, Whyte and Wilson

Also Present: Councillor **Error! No document variable supplied.**

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTION BY
10.	<p>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS FROM CLLR LYN WEBER, CHAIR OF THE AREA ASSEMBLY - (7.30 TO 7.35PM) The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and gave an overview of the items that would be discussed.</p> <p>She advised that Councillors from the relevant Wards were present if residents had any questions during the break. There was also an item on the agenda where the Councillor Claire Kober, Leader of the Council, would take questions from residents.</p>	
11.	<p>RECRUITING FOSTER PARENTS - (7.35 TO 7.40PM)</p> <p>A presentation was given by Jacinta Bolger from Council's Fostering Team and Phyllis Grant, a foster carer for Haringey.</p> <p>The meeting was advised that there was a significant need for additional foster carers in the Borough. As part of a drive to raise awareness of fostering each of the Area Assembly meetings were receiving a presentation from the Fostering Team.</p> <p>It was noted that fuller information sessions were held at local libraries and a Fostering Fortnight was held in May. In addition an information bus that visited different locations within the Borough and a dedicated website was available where people could obtain information regarding fostering.</p> <p>The meeting was given an overview from Phyllis Grant of her experience of fostering children and the type of commitment that was required from foster carers. In addition to being extremely rewarding foster carers were given an allowance based on the age of the child they were responsible for and ongoing support and training was also provided.</p>	

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In order to become a foster carer you had to be able to provide a spare bedroom that would not compromise the space of existing family members. Candidates also had to demonstrate practical experience of looking after children. In addition potential foster carers were also assessed to determine whether they would be emotionally able to cope with the demands that fostering would place on them.

There was discussion around the reasons for refused and it was noted that potential foster carers were generally refused on eligibility grounds. In some cases people withdrew from the process because they felt unable to commit to the level of work required or to give the emotional support that would be needed.

Applicants were encouraged to be as open as possible during the process and to disclose any information that may affect their application.

In conclusion the Chair thanked officers for their presentation and encouraged anyone who wished to find out more about becoming a foster carer to contact the Fostering Team.

12.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Introductory Comments

Joan Hancox, Head of Sustainable Transport for Haringey Council, advised that the Council lobbied a range of transport providers on transport improvements in the Borough.

An investment plan was being developed for the next financial year that would set out the Council's priorities in terms of transport improvements. Suggestions made by members of the public at Area Assembly meetings would be taken on board.

Trains and Stations

A presentation was given by Larry Heyman, Integration and Partnership Manager and Alison Drabwell, Senior Station Services Manager of First Capital Connect on issues affecting the immediate and wider north London area.

The Great Northern Route (GNR) formed a key arterial route into London Kings Cross and Moorgate stations and this ran through the following stations in the Borough:

- Alexandra Palace
- Hornsey
- Harringay
- Finsbury Park

A key area of concern for local rail users was insufficient capacity and seats for commuters. In order to address this six thousand five hundred

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additional seats had been added during peak times from 12 December 2010.

An additional service into Moorgate had been added during peak hours in the morning and the number of cars on this service had been doubled from the usual three to six cars. In the evening at peak times two of the services had also been doubled from three to six cars running out of Moorgate station.

The refurbishment of Kings Cross station continued and work to platforms and the main concourse would be complete by the end of January. The work would create additional capacity and ease overcrowding at the station and improve the interchange between the underground system, buses and St Pancras station.

In addition to physical improvements new ticket barriers would be introduced and the public information systems would be modernised. Station staff would also be provided with access to the most up to date information available with respect to departures and arrivals. First Capital Connects website would also be updated to include live departure information and line updates.

Provision for winter weather conditions had been an issue of concern for many residents and the company was putting measures in place to improve preparation for this. This included measures such as contingency timetables and improved de-icing fluid that was capable of working at lower temperatures. In addition employees were being provided with refresher training in winter service management.

The company acknowledged that staff shortages had led to the cancellation of some services during 2010 and in order to address a number of new drivers had been recruited. The first wave of new drivers would be in place by May 2011.

Following the presentation Mr Heyman provided a response to a number of pre submitted questions details of which are attached at Appendix 1.

Buses

A written update on the planning and commissioning of bus services had been received from Peter Howarth, Borough Relationship Manager, for Transport for London (TfL), which is attached at Appendix 2.

In addition Bob Pennyfeather, Commercial Manager for Arriva London, was also present to take questions from local residents.

Questions to the Panel

Set out below is a summary of the questions put to the panel and the responses given:

1. Hornsey Train Maintenance Shed

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The New River Residents Association contended that consultation with respect to the proposed maintenance shed at Hornsey had not covered all of the areas affected. Mr Heyman agreed to check with colleagues as to whether there were plans to carry out additional consultation.

2. Access to Harringay Station

Concern was raised with regard to the condition of the bridge at Harringay station. It was noted that the incline was very steep and that adverse weather conditions often led to the bridge becoming very slippery. Mr Heyman noted these concerns and advised that in 2006 there had been a review of access to stations and as part of this stations were identified where step free access should be introduced. This had been determined on the basis of footfall and unfortunately meant that there were stations where there were access issues.

For people who were unable to use their nearest station, due to access or mobility issues there was a travel helpline in place, which operated from 7am until 10pm and arrangements could be made to assist people with in these circumstances. As part of this taxis would be supplied to take people to their nearest accessible station.

Mr Heyman noted that measures to improve the situation such as the addition of grips on steps and better grading of the incline could be looked and he would take this request back to the appropriate officer.

It was clarified that responsibility for maintaining public areas up to the station lay with the Local Authority and the maintenance of the station and the bridge itself was the responsibility of the rail company.

3. W5 Bus Route on Bourne Road, and W3 on Middle Lane

A resident from Bourne Road expressed concern about the narrowness and unsuitability of his street for the W5 bus, telling the meeting that he had witnessed accidents and damage to parked cars on tight corners. In response to concerns raised with respect to the W5 bus route and the inclusion of smaller residential streets within the route the meeting was advised that the route was intended to serve these areas as they were not served by the larger buses.

The resident also referred to congestion relating to the W3 bus route using Middle Lane (close Priory Park and the junction with Birbeck Road), caused by parked cars. Again

The Council's Sustainable Transport Team agreed to review the suitability of Bourne Road for buses, in discussion with Arriva, and whether parking controls could ease the problems in Middle Lane.

4. Noise and Vibrations from Buses

Concern was expressed with regard to the impact that the vibrations from buses on the 41 and 91 bus routes was having upon houses. It was

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acknowledged that some engines caused greater vibrations than others and that the buses used on the 41 route using Volvo engines were responsible for the vibrations. Arriva were therefore looking to replace these buses with less troublesome alternatives.

5. Staffing of First Capital Connect Stations

In response to concerns expressed with respect to the manning of First Capital Connect stations during evenings and weekends Mr Heyman advised that staffing levels were stipulated within the contract documentation of operation of the line. However a consultation exercise was currently being undertaken on the longer-term re-franchising of the line and Local Authorities would be consulted on this. He suggested that residents should contact their local Councillor with comments that they wished to feed into this.

6. Clearance of Snow and Gritting on Hornsey High Street

A resident was critical that on the 18 December, when there had been a large amount of snow, for a period no buses were running between Hornsey High Street and Turnpike Lane. Her key concern was the lack of any updated information on the Countdown boards at bus stops. The meeting was advised that in circumstances like those experienced in December, where a significant amount of snow fell in a very short period of time, measures such as gritting became ineffective. Although every effort was made to keep public transport running there were times when this was not possible.

In conclusion the Chair thanked members of the panel for their contributions.

13. SETTING BUDGETS FOR THE 2011 - 2012 FINANCIAL YEAR

A summary of the financial picture and budget setting process being undertaken by public sector organisations was provided.

Local Authority

Councillor Claire Kober, Leader of the Council, provided an overview of the financial challenges the Council faced moving into 2011/12. Councillor Kober noted that the cuts being made to the Local Authorities budget were the most significant in living memory and that the Council's overall funding would be reduced by 26% over the next three years.

Due to changes in the way Local Authority funding was allocated grant funding, which had previously been delivered on the basis of need, had now been rolled into the overall grant settlement. This meant that Haringey had been also been hit by the loss of grant funding that it had previously received to tackle issues such as deprivation and regeneration.

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In addition the cuts were being 'front loaded' which meant that the Council had to identify approximately £47m of savings during 2011/12 with approximately £20m being required in each of the two subsequent financial years.

To illustrate the severity of the reduction in funding it was noted that previously £7 out of £10 received by the Council had come from the Government, £2.50 from Council Tax and 50p in fees and charges. The funding that would be received by the Government over the next three years would fall from the equivalent of £7 to £4.

Wider policy changes made by the Government, such as the capping of Housing Benefit, would also impact on the Borough as there was likely to be a migration from the inner London Boroughs to Boroughs like Haringey where rents were less expensive. The Council had already seen increases in the number of vulnerable families coming into the area who had cited this as a reason for moving. As the number of vulnerable families was likely to increase so would the demand on the Council services to support their needs.

In conclusion Councillor Kober noted that the Council's priorities in terms of alleviating poverty and reducing inequalities had not changed; however, the scale of the financial challenge necessitated a wholesale review of services in order to ensure that those most in need continued to receive the support they required.

NHS Haringey

Mr Duncan Stroud, Associate Director for Communications and Engagement, NHS Haringey, gave an overview of the organisations financial position.

NHS Haringey's budget for 2010/11 was overspent by £25m and consequently there was significant pressure on the organisation to identify savings.

It was noted that NHS Haringey (as the Primary Care Trust (PCT)) was the commissioning body for health services in the Borough. Following the Government's decision to disband PCTs and move commissioning responsibility to GPs NHS Haringey and five other north London Boroughs were merging. This would also achieve the 50% reduction in management costs required by the Government.

The meeting was advised that it would be necessary to reduce services in order to achieve the savings required and difficult decisions regarding local services would have to be made.

Haringey Police

A written update was received from Haringey Police which is attached at Appendix 3.

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Panel Questions

Set out below is a summary of the questions put to Councillor Kober and Duncan Stroud and the responses given:

1. Cutting Council 'Back Office' Staff rather than 'Front-Line' Services

In response to assertions that senior managers, 'back office' staff and Members Allowances should be targeted as savings areas, Councillor Kober noted that preserving frontline services was a priority for the Council. However such cuts would not alone go far to meet the scale of financial savings required of the Council this year.

A target of reducing back office staff by 50% had been set and approximately one third of the senior managers employed within the top three management tiers would be made redundant. Overall one thousand Council staff would be made redundant before April 2011. Other measures to reduce spending included looking at where services could be provided in conjunction with other Local Authorities and a memorandum of understanding had been agreed with Waltham Forest around this.

In some instances it was difficult to separate back office and frontline services. In cases such as social working where administrators freed social workers to spend their time working in the community, rather than carrying out administrative tasks, making back office staff redundant would be a false economy and consequently a balance had to be struck.

2. The Council's Neighbourhood Management Service

In response to concerns expressed with regard to the loss of the Neighbourhood Management Team (NMT) Councillor Kober advised that no formal decision had been made by the Council with respect to this. The meeting was not the appropriate forum to discuss any potential restructuring of the service as it affected staff present. Councillor Kober noted that the Council remained committed to engaging with local residents and advised that this work would continue regardless of any changes to current staffing structures.

3. Proposed Enhanced Role for GPs in Commissioning Healthcare

Concern was raised that additional responsibility for commissioning health care would detract from the time that GPs had to spend with patients. The resident felt that they may not have the skills to take on this role. Mr Stroud noted that concerns of this nature had been expressed in many quarters, and advised that in the transitional period NHS Haringey would focus on preparing GPs for their new role.

In terms of whether the proposals put forward by the Government within a recently published White Paper on Health would pave the way for privatisation Mr Stroud advised that the Government wanted to drive up standards by creating competition.

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It was noted that the Council was now obliged to establish statutory Health and Well Being Boards that would have a role to play in working with the new GP collaboratives. These would provide a forum for Local Authorities to influence GPs and their commissioning priorities. This would also take the lead on the Council's new responsibilities with respect to Public Health.

4. Accident and Emergency Service at the Whittington Hospital

The meeting was advised that the Whittington Hospital would retain its Accident and Emergency (A&E) facility. In addition a new Urgent Care centre was being established that would treat people with minor injuries that did not require the specialised or intensive treatment provided by A&E.

5. Safer Neighbourhood Policing

In response to concerns raised over the reduction in partnership working undertaken by the Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) the meeting was advised that funding that had previously supported preventative work had been withdrawn. It was anticipated that the valuable work carried out in schools around gun and knife crime would continue.

6. Proposed Closure of Day Centres for Elderly People

In response to opposition that was expressed to the closure of day centres for elderly people in the Borough Councillor Kober advised that this had been a very difficult decision for the Council. However, the scale of the savings that had to be found made it necessary to cut services that affected residents. In order to mitigate the loss of these centres work was being undertaken with VCS groups to determine whether there were voluntary groups that may be able to provide assistance.

7. The 'Haringey People' Magazine

Certain local residents present suggested that 'Haringey People' should be scrapped as part of spending cuts. Whilst Cllr Kober recognised that people wanted the Council to direct resources at preserving frontline services she pointed out that the Council also had a statutory duty to inform the public and that Haringey People formed its primary tool in doing this.

8. The Council's Library Service

Cllr Kober confirmed that none of the Boroughs libraries would be closed as part of the Council's package of cuts. As community 'hubs' the role of libraries would be extended and it was envisaged that a greater range of services would be offered from libraries in the future.

9. Conclusion

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	<p>In conclusion the Chair thanked residents for attending the meeting and the officers and external representatives that had given presentations.</p>	
14.	<p>ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS - (9.25 TO 9.30PM)</p> <p>No items of AOB were raised.</p>	
15.	<p>APPENDIX</p> <p>London Buses (Planning and Commissioning of Bus Services) <i>Presentation by</i> Peter Howarth TfL Surface Transport Borough Relationship Manager</p> <p>Bus routes to the Hornsey Neighbourhood Health Centre</p> <p>The Primary Care Trust considered the accessibility of the Hornsey Central Neighbourhood site in a report published in early 2009, which concluded that around two thirds (64.3%) of residents in the Health Centre's western Haringey catchment live within 20 minutes of the Centre by bus, and nearly all (96.2%) are within 30 minutes. The Centre is served by route W7 directly and routes 144, W3 and W5 stop within 400m. All of these services operate at a high frequency, particularly route W7, which runs every six minutes or more frequently for much of the day.</p> <p>Given the existing provision, there is currently no case to provide a new, additional direct service. However, TfL will of course keep access to the Centre under review as part of our normal process for developing the bus network.</p> <p>Promoting Transport Interchanges – (eg: posting details of train services at bus stops and provision of cycle storage).</p> <p>There is only limited space available to display customer information and therefore the information provided at bus stops is generally limited to bus services. Locations of train interchanges are displayed on the bus maps where provided and the detailed timetable information is provided by the rail operator at the relevant train interchange.</p> <p>In terms of cycle storage, the accessibility of bus stops to allow passengers to safely board and alight is a primary consideration which in most cases would be seriously hindered with cycle storage facilities in the vicinity of bus stops and shelters.</p> <p>TfL are aware that availability of cycle parking plays a major role in helping people decide whether it is convenient to take to two wheels or not. By 2012 we aim to have provided 66,000 new cycle parking spaces across London in addition to the significant cycle storage facilities already provided at transport interchanges (bus and rail stations) across</p>	

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the Capital.

How do London Buses assess the running of a route?

Performance tables for all London's bus routes and boroughs are available on the TfL website. Bus route information is based on up to two years data.

There are a number of Quality of Service Indicators (QSI's) used to assess bus performance. One of the most commonly used to measure performance is how long passengers actually wait when compared to scheduled services. This is known as the Excess Waiting Time (EWT).

How is the information collected?

At this time, a team of data collection staff monitor bus performance. They stand at locations across the Capital in order to record data.

The data is sent to TfL where the results are compared against the timetable. We can then see how long a passenger actually waits, compared to the wait if the bus service ran exactly on time.

Each location is surveyed 16 times over a 12 week period.

We monitor each bus route throughout the course of its journey, not just from where it started.

From April 2011, this type of data will be downloaded from the bus on board navigation systems (iBus).

QSI's are a valuable source of information. They identify poorly performing routes and allow improvements to be made where they're needed.

Why did London Buses press for removal of stop and shop parking bays and disabled bays from Crouch End Broadway?

The Highway Authority for Crouch End Broadway is the London Borough of Haringey. In response to consultation undertaken by the Borough, TfL suggested that the times of the restricted parking be extended particularly during the peak hours which would enable greater traffic flow and also assist in improving the reliability of buses.

The position on reviewing local bus routes, specifically the 144 and W3 routes, and how residents are engaged in the review process.

The way in which TfL reviews, plans the bus network, tenders contracts and consults stakeholders are inter-related. As the majority of contracts operate for a period of 5 years, or extended to seven if performance criteria are met, approximately 20% of all routes are evaluated and in turn tendered each year

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The routes 144 and W3 currently forms part of the ongoing review process. TfL has a statutory responsibility to consult and we write to key stakeholders including London Boroughs, London Travel Watch, Police, Members of Parliament, Assembly Members and any relevant users groups in order to seek their views on our proposals.

The Borough may or may not involve residents in their responses to TfL as the approach taken by individual Boroughs tends to vary.

In certain circumstances, TfL will consult directly with residents, local businesses, schools, colleges, local community organisations and services likely to be affected by certain proposals. These generally include:

- Changing routes
- Introducing new routes
- Operational hours and frequencies

TfL will soon be introducing an improved consultation website that will allow users to comment on all our current consultations. The consultations will allow members of the public to comment directly on our proposals including changes to bus services and other TfL projects.

Recent disruption to bus services because of snow and ice, which led to termination of buses should of their intended destinations. Apparently there were problems communicating the suspension of bus services to passengers who were left waiting for buses that were not running. Councillors are asking why it was not possible to notify passengers through the Countdown boards at bus stops.

TfL are aware that there was an issue during the most recent 'snow day' where some Countdown signs were displaying incorrect bus arrival times for buses that had been severely delayed or suspended. As the Countdown system uses real-time data, when sudden delays or suspensions occur there can, at times, be a slight delay in the information displayed on Countdown signs updating. TfL are able to, and do, display messages on Countdown signs, advising customers of disruptions to bus services. Messages were displayed using the Countdown signs however due to feedback the policy regarding timing of these messages is currently under review.

The following message was displayed on Countdown signs, "Travel Alert: Due to the adverse weather bus services are liable to be delayed, diverted or cancelled".

- **potential new development on the Hornsey Depot Site**

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(immediately to the north of Hornsey High Street) including potentially a new Sainsbury's supermarket; and

- plans to refurbish the Hornsey Town Hall building in Crouch End to create a community arts centre.

Are there any plans to review bus services in the light of these new projects?

TfL constantly review bus services in the light of land-use developments to ensure that resources are being allocated and the service pattern reflects overall travel needs.

All major proposed developments are referred to the Mayor for planning permission and the impact on transport provision is assessed as part of that process. Smaller developments are not necessarily referred and plans to refurbish Hornsey Town Hall would likely fall into that category.

TfL would be pleased to receive the latest information available in relation to these two projects.

STATEMENT TO THE CROUCH END AREA ASSEMBLY, 13TH JANUARY 2011, FROM HARINGEY POLICE

Haringey Review of Safer Neighbourhoods.

Haringey Police recognises the significant contribution our SNTs have made to safety and confidence across the Borough.

We appreciate the great benefits from having dedicated officers and PCSOs that are not abstracted, with the specific remit of improving community confidence and addressing local crime and disorder and we are committed to maintaining dedicated named officers in your neighbourhood.

Last years Comprehensive Spending Review means the public sector faces the challenge of maintaining standards of service delivery whilst making savings. As part of this we are currently reviewing SNTs.

The purpose of the review is to find better ways of using current neighbourhood policing resources to meet the needs of the local community. It will also ensure that local police teams continue to deliver an effective and relevant service in the right place at the right times. The review will focus on the locations of Safer Neighbourhoods teams, what

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they do and how they are structured.

The review will be carried out by gathering the thoughts and feedback of local partners, such as the local authority and members of the community. This feedback will help plan any possible future changes. No changes will be made without talking to local partners and community members.

You can be involved in the review by completing an online questionnaire. The questions will gather your thoughts about neighbourhood policing in your area and will play a valuable part in shaping plans for the future of neighbourhood policing in London.

You can find the questionnaire at <http://www.keysurvey.co.uk/survey/339166/19e4/>. It will be available until the 21st January 2011.

COUNCILLOR Lyn Weber

Chair