

Meeting: Haringey Strategic Partnership

Date: 26 February 2009

Report Title: Haringey's First Community Engagement Framework

Report of: Sharon Kemp, Assistant Chief Executive, PPP&C, Haringey Council

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to:

- Inform the HSP of the development of Haringey's first Community Engagement Framework
- Obtain agreement from the HSP that the Community Engagement Framework can go out for public consultation in early March 2009

Summary

On 3 December 2008 the HSP's Performance Management Group (PMG) agreed that Haringey Strategic Partnership would develop a framework to co-ordinate and strengthen community engagement work, and that a multi-agency group would be formed to take forward this work.

The Community Engagement Framework (CEF) will reaffirm the commitment of the HSP to community engagement and promote a shared understanding of associated principles. It will also identify and prioritise areas which need further development.

This report provides an update on the progress made in the development of the CEF, and the work of the multi-agency project group that has been established to develop the CEF.

A draft of the Community Engagement Framework consultation document is provided in Appendix A, which the HSP are asked to comment on, suggest any amendments and agree for public consultation.

Legal/Financial Implications

The new statutory duty to involve is not well defined legally and there is considerable discretion in how to implement this in accordance with Guidance. This strategic framework should help us to engage a wide variety of community groups in the early formulation of local decisions and policy-making thus fulfilling the underlying purpose of the new duty.

There are no direct financial implications immediately arising from the development a Community Engagement Framework in Haringey. The Action Plan arising from the CEF, when developed, may have resource implications needing detailed consideration at that stage.

Recommendations

That the HSP considers the draft CEF consultation document, and comments on it and suggests any amendments

That the HSP agrees that the draft CEF consultation document (including any agreed amendments) will go out for public consultation in early March 2009.

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1. Background

Community engagement and empowerment are central themes within the legislative and national policy framework and underpin many of the changes currently occurring within public services. Community engagement is seen as a key driver in delivering improvements in the quality of public services. As of April 2009, Local Authorities will have a new duty to inform, consult and involve communities in local decisions, policies and services.

Community engagement is not only seen as a tool for improving and developing public services, but is also increasingly seen as an essential process in achieving wider policy goals and aspirations. Therefore community engagement and empowerment are considered essential steps in helping to renew local democracy, improve trust in public institutions, enhancing community cohesion and encouraging an active citizen culture.

National drivers for partner agencies

There are a number of legislative and policy directives which underpin the need to develop a local community engagement framework. Please see Appendix B for details.

Local drivers

The Framework will build on our responsibilities contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), which provides the overarching direction for the borough. The two SCS outcomes of **People at the heart of change** and **Be people and customer focused** and relevant LAA indicators below show the HSP's commitment to empowering and engaging local people (overleaf):

- NI1 % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- NI4 % of people who feel that they can influence decisions in their locality
- NI 6 Participation in regular volunteering
- NI 7 Environment for a thriving third sector
- NI140 Fair treatment by local services - proxy to what extent does your local council treat all types of people fairly

Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)

The Audit Commission will be testing the level and quality of public engagement and empowerment as part of the CAA assessment process. We will be assessed to see how well vulnerable and marginalised groups are involved in local decision making. One of the three key CAA questions will look at the partnership's understanding of local needs and aspirations and ensure that this knowledge has been used in the development of local priorities. The purpose of this is to ensure that there are clear priorities, based on understanding of need, and that there is a shared commitment to the achievement of these priorities.

The HSP will need to be able to evidence its community engagement work under this new inspection regime, as inspectors will be looking at how effective engagement is, by understanding:

- How well councils and their partners know and engage with their communities, including children, and understand the needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups;
- The extent to which priority outcomes for the area have been defined with the involvement of communities;
- How well communities have been involved in assessing whether priority outcomes have been delivered; and
- The effectiveness of local partners in coordinating community engagement and communicating the impact on their decision.¹

2. Haringey Strategic Partnership's Approach to Community Engagement

On 3 December 2008 the PMG agreed that the HSP would develop a framework to co-ordinate and strengthen community engagement work, and that a multi-agency group would be formed to take forward this work.

On 20 January 2009 the PMG agreed that a draft of the CEF would be taken to the HSP on 26 February 2009 for agreement to public consultation.

Haringey's CEF will reaffirm the commitment of the HSP to community engagement and promote a shared understanding of associated principles. It will also identify and prioritise areas which need further development.

¹ Comprehensive Area Assessment – Framework Document, p.17 (Audit Commission, Care Quality Commission, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, HM Inspectorate of Probation and Ofsted). February 2009.

3. Multi-agency project group

A multi-agency project group to develop the CEF was established in December 2008. Three meetings of the multi-agency project group have been held since December 2008 and representation and involvement from partner agencies has been very strong. See Appendix C for a list of the organisations represented.

The group has developed the aim, objectives, principles and scope of the CEF. The group has undertaken an initial mapping exercise of community engagement work across partner organisations, and will use this to inform the development of the CEF Action Plan.

4. Consultation process

The consultation process is planned to take place in three phases.

An initial consultation process has already taken place to inform the development of the Community Engagement Framework. Details of this initial process are as follows:

Consultation phase 1:

- The first phase of community consultation took place between 19 January 2009 and 13 February 2009.
- 700 voluntary and community groups in the borough were sent a letter from the HSP Chair explaining what the purpose of the CEF and the development process. The groups also received a questionnaire regarding engagement processes, asking for practical suggestions on how HSP partners can engage with different communities in the borough. Please see Appendix D for details.
- These documents were also available online, and the questionnaire could be completed online on the Haringey Council website. The link to this web page was circulated to community groups by HSP partner organisations.
- The CEF has also been discussed and feedback has been given at the following meetings:

Meeting	Date
Haringey Council Policy Network	13 Jan
HSP PMG	20 Jan
HSP Co-ordinators Group	6 Feb
Community Link Forum Event	27 Feb

- 86 community responses have been received. These responses have been used to inform the draft CEF, and will also be used to inform the future development of the CEF Action Plan.

The first phase of consultation has provided the following headline results:

Communities would like to let the HSP know about their needs and interest through:

- Public meetings on specific issues

- Postal surveys

Communities would like the HSP to provide feedback through:

- Features in Haringey People
- Feedback letters

Communities would like councillors and community representatives to gather their views through:

- Meetings on specific issues
- Email

Consultation phase 2:

- The second phase of consultation will take place between 5 March and 21 April 2009
- The consultation document will be sent out to community and voluntary groups and will be available on the Haringey Council website.
- The questionnaire accompanying the document will ask for specific comments on the vision, definition and principles of the CEF – please see Appendix A for details.
- The CEF will also be discussed at the following meetings:

HSP thematic boards:	
Well-Being Partnership Board	2 March
Making a Positive Contribution (sub group of Well-Being Partnership Board)	3 March
Enterprise Board	9 March
Integrated Housing Board	23 March
Safer Communities Executive Board	23 March
Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership Board	7 April
Better Places Partnership	16 April
Haringey Community Link Forum meeting:	21 April

Consultation phase 3:

- The third phase of the consultation will take place later in the year and will focus on the Action Plan to be developed following agreement of the Framework.

5. Next steps

Following the second consultation phase, the following will take place:

- Consultation responses will inform the final draft of the CEF.
- The CEF will be taken to the HSP for adoption on 27 April 2009.
- The final CEF document will be made available on partner websites
- The multi-agency group will continue to meet for a time-limited period in order to develop the CEF Action Plan and accompanying Equality Impact Assessment.
- The Performance Management Group of the HSP will be responsible for monitoring the development of the Action Plan and its outcomes,

and for reviewing progress against the CEF - initially one year after it is adopted after the HSP.

- The multi-agency project group has started this process by compiling a mapping of the community engagement work currently underway.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Community Engagement Framework Draft Consultation Document

Appendix B: National drivers for community engagement

Appendix C: Organisations represented at CEF multi-agency group

Appendix D: Consultation documents – phase 1

Appendix B: National Drivers for community engagement

Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (2007)

This is the key legislative driver for the development of the community engagement framework as it provides context for engaging people at the local level. From April 2009, Local Authorities have a duty to involve local communities in local decisions, policies and services. Specifically to inform, consult and involve.

- Removes Best Value duty but Local Authorities now have a duty to involve representatives of local people in the provision of services; this goes beyond consultation but specifically requires that local authorities inform, consult and involve.
- Establishes Local Involvement Networks (LINks): to promote and support community involvement in local services
- PCTs have a duty to involve representatives in decision making and report annually on activities.
- Requirement for J

Strong and Prosperous Communities

The White Paper promotes community and neighbourhood engagement. It develops the role of overview and scrutiny in relation to external bodies. It provides new requirements on service providers to engage with Sustainable Community Strategies and LAAs. There are changed requirements for council constitutions, and some limited opportunities for new unitary councils and pathfinders of new forms of two-tier working.

Communities in Control: real people real power (2008)

This White Paper recognises and supports representative and participative democracy at both the national and local level.

- New duty for Local Authorities to promote democracy: *promote voter registration, explain voting, explain registration and explain role of the Councillor.*
- Expansion on duty of Local Authorities to involve: *involve people in developing service and involve people in commissioning of services. Must establish and recognise a panel of representatives of local persons and consult this about LA's proposals.*
- Duty of Local Authorities to respond to petitions concerning its functions: *5% of local population will trigger full council debate also must act on PCT petitions.*
- Councillor Call for Action: local champions to solve ongoing community problems or issues.
- Participatory Budgeting: *All Local Authorities to have schemes up and running by 2012.*
- Structure of council meetings: *Overview & Scrutiny required to have more large scale public meetings, more council meetings in the community, public involvement in topic scrutiny selection.*
- Organisational accountability: summoning senior officers to public meetings

Sustainable Communities Act (2008)

The main thrust of this legislation is it give people more control over improving their community. The act seeks ways to empower localised communities in redressing pressing or intransigent community problems. Key new duties:

- Act requires that Community Panel's are established to direct local spending and to improve services and quality of life of residents.
- LA to demand spending plans of central government (and related agencies) and to reprioritise these funding streams to locally determined issues (to turn around social decline in specific areas).

National Framework for Greater Citizen Engagement – Ministry of Justice

The paper makes a number of suggestions for reinvigorating representative democracy. Although this paper is focused at the national level, by implication these can also be applied locally. The premise of this paper is that active participation is central to a healthy vibrant democracy and can lead to a more shared understanding of local issues and how they may be resolved, builds community cohesion and instil confidence in local institutions.

- Referenda although useful democratic engagement tool should be used as the exception: *Can be sued locally to determine there is a need for a local mayor, similar referendum techniques have been used in education and housing (ALMO).*
- Citizens Juries and Citizens Summits as forms of deliberative engagement: *sample of local communities to consider policy issues and give a verdict. Assisted by briefing papers, access to experts and informed by local political leaders.*
- Petitions: *links to CCFA*

Planning for a sustainable future (2007)

Although primarily concerned with consultations with planning proposals at the national level (such as large infrastructure projects) there is more general guidance on public engagement issued:

- Further guidelines on full and fair opportunities for public consultation and engagement
- New proposals for public consultation on major national projects

Policing Green Paper

The 2008 Policing Green Paper makes a number of recommendations concerning police reform. A chapter on improving the connection between the public and the police recommends:

- The introduction of new Crime and Policing representatives, elected locally, to chair the CDRP and sit on the local Police Authority
- A local 'Policing Pledge' to set out what the public can expect from the police.

Appendix C: Organisations represented at CEF multi-agency group

- College of North East London (CONEL)
- Family Mosaic Housing Association

- Haringey Association of Community and Voluntary Organisations (HAVCO)
- Haringey Council
- Homes for Haringey
- London Fire Brigade
- Metropolitan Police
- NHS Haringey