

Report for: Cabinet, July 2021

Title: Borough Plan update and Fairness Commission response

Report authorised by: Zina Etheridge, Chief Executive

Lead Officer: Jean Taylor, Head of Policy and Strategy

Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** Key Decision

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the Borough Plan and asks Cabinet to agree the council's approach to implementing the Fairness Commission recommendations.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

In 2019 Haringey published a Borough Plan. The purpose of the Plan was to set out for residents, partners and the council a vision for what we were trying to achieve and some of the key things we wanted to do. The ambition when we set out was to make Haringey a fairer and more equal borough by 2023.

We wanted to build more council houses and we are on the way to making that happen and to bring services in-house to make sure that you, our residents, can hold us more directly to account. Only a year into our plan, Covid-19 struck and many council resources have been funnelled into supporting our residents through these dreadful and challenging times.

The pandemic has highlighted the health, social, educational, and economic inequalities throughout the borough. Our least well-off communities have suffered high death and infection rates. Those who worked in front line services like health and social care as well as in supermarkets and home delivery services were particularly affected. Many of our Black and Minority Ethnic communities, the backbone of these workforces, were hard hit.

It was timely then that we received the final report and recommendations of the Haringey Fairness Commission in February 2020. The Commission spoke to more than 1500 residents. These insights and the Commission's conclusions are shaping our thinking about how we those tackle deep structural inequalities including the gap between east and west of the borough and the different life-chances experienced by the children and young people from different parts of our borough.

The pandemic also brought us together in unexpected ways. Mutual aid groups were formed. People looked after their elderly neighbours and you showed enormous courage and resilience. Haringey residents pulled together.

The Council too is slowly learning that we can no longer just sit in the town hall and do things to people. We need to be doing things with people. I feel passionately that we need systematically to plan and design services with our residents. Only then will our local communities truly be at the heart of what we do.

Many of us have family and roots from around the world. My family are from Cyprus and came here in the 1950s and 60s. That's why it is so important for me that we bring people together.

In the next phase of the borough plan we want to embed this concept of working with residents, what we call co-production, into everything we do. I want to make sure that what matters to the people of Haringey is reflected in all our decisions.

I feel strongly too that we must be prepared to listen when you tell us that we have got things wrong. We need to learn from our mistakes. In the last 18 months we have discovered so much about ourselves as a borough, both good and bad, as this report shows.

This autumn we want to start talking to you about what matters most, be it tackling climate change, designing safe, clean and friendly neighbourhoods or supporting families and young people. We want to hear from you about how we can work together to help everyone to live the life they want to within a strong and supportive community.

I grew up in this borough. My father ran a small business. I went to school in Wood Green and I now live with my family in Tottenham. It has been a tough year, but as this report shows, the Council is working hard to be on the side of our residents, businesses and communities. And we pledge to work with you now and in the future to create a Haringey we can all be proud of.

3. Recommendations

3.1. It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) Note the Borough Plan Update Report at Appendix A and agree that the next full Borough Plan should now be prepared for adoption in the financial year 2022/23.
- b) Note the Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment at Appendix B and agree that this, alongside other data insight projects, should inform our ongoing response to Covid-19 and preparations for our next Borough Plan.
- c) Accept the findings of the Fairness Commission; note progress in implementing the recommendations; and agree that the council should

continue to implement these recommendations as explained in the report in Appendix C.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1. The Borough Plan 2019-2023 was adopted in February 2019. The Cabinet Report stated that the Plan should be seen as ‘a living document’. In December 2020, Cabinet agreed that officials should ‘refresh’ and consult upon an updated Borough Plan 2019-2023.
- 4.2. Officers have reviewed the Borough Plan and presented an Update Report at Appendix A. Due to changes in circumstances since the Recovery and Renewal Report, including another wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, continued uncertainty about the pandemic's impact on the borough and the limited time left in the Borough Plan cycle, and with a new Cabinet now in place, it is no longer deemed beneficial to undertake a full refresh of the Plan. Instead, Cabinet is asked to agree that this Update Report should continue to inform the Council's delivery of our current programme as well as the development of a full new Borough Plan over the next 18 months to be adopted in the financial year 2022/23.
- 4.3. The Fairness Commission (‘the Commission’) was launched in July 2018 and made a series of recommendations in February 2020 to address inequality in the borough. Cabinet received an update report in March 2021 on our progress in implementing these recommendations. The Council's Borough Plan Update Report at Appendix A now explains the lessons we have learned around equality and fairness during the pandemic and Appendix C sets out in full technical detail the progress the Council has made so far in implementing the recommendations of the Commission.
- 4.4. Cabinet is now asked formally to accept the findings of the Fairness Commission and agree that the council should continue to implement these recommendations as explained in Appendix C. Not every recommendation can be accepted in full for practical reasons. Where this is the case, alternative options are being explored.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1. Publish and consult upon a refreshed Borough Plan
It would be possible to refresh the Borough Plan 2019-2023 in full and consult as originally envisaged. However, given the continued uncertainty caused by the long-tail of the Covid pandemic, and the limited time left on the current Borough Plan cycle, this is no longer deemed feasible or desirable. The Borough Plan Update Report and the Council's delivery planning and Performance Monitoring processes (explained in paragraph 6.4) will achieve the necessary purpose.
- 5.2. Not accept the findings or recommendations of the Fairness Commission
It would be possible not to accept the findings or recommendations of the Fairness Commission. However, this would run counter to the council's strategic objectives. The Commission was launched to better understand the causes of unfairness in our borough and to reconsider the actions that we could take to counter this. The evidence and findings are robust and have already informed a

number of our significant organisational agendas and should continue to do so going forward.

6. Background information

- 6.1.** The Borough Plan is the overarching strategic plan for the Council. It sets out the vision for the borough and how it will be delivered, including what will be prioritised and why, and how the council will deliver the political priorities of the administration.

The Borough Plan 2019-2023 was published for consultation in October 2018 and formally adopted in February 2019. Feedback from the consultation showed that in the main, the priorities identified in the draft document reflected what is important to residents, but the document was also revised to incorporate feedback from the consultation. The Cabinet Report noted that the Borough Plan should be seen as a 'living document'.

Since it was formally adopted, we have continued to talk to our residents and partners about our priorities through a range of channels, such as our Citizens' Panel and partnership forums. We have also undertaken two sustained engagement processes with residents and partners:

- The Fairness Commission spoke to over 1500 people in the borough (November 2018-March 2019) and local stakeholders and community groups. The Commission's findings and recommendations were presented in a final report in February 2020.
- The Recovery and Renewal Programme (April-September 2020) was informed by interviews and surveys with residents, partner conversations, and data analysis. This evidence was presented in a final report in December 2020.

When Cabinet approved the Recovery and Renewal Report in December 2020, they agreed that the Borough Plan should be 'refreshed' based on its findings. Officers have reviewed the Borough Plan and carried out further conversations with partners about our work. This has informed our ongoing strategic response to Covid-19 and the internal organisation of our work. The high-level results of this are set out in our Borough Plan Update Report.

However, due to the continued uncertainty caused by the long-tail of the Covid pandemic, and limited time left on the current Borough Plan cycle, it is no longer deemed beneficial to produce and consult upon a full refreshed Plan. Instead, Cabinet is now asked to note progress made through this Borough Plan Update Report and agree that this should be used to inform ongoing delivery and a full new Borough Plan which should be adopted in the financial year 2022/23. Given the content of this report and the engagement that has underpinned the work to date, there are no plans to formally consult upon this Update Report.

We are ambitious about how we would like to develop the next Borough Plan through collaboration with residents and partners, with further detail set out in paragraph 6.6.

6.2. Borough Plan Progress Report

The Borough Plan Update Report captures (i) how we have implemented the priorities set out in the Borough Plan 2019-2023; (ii) the impact of Covid-19 on our priority areas; and (iii) the high-level lessons learned from the pandemic to date.

6.3. The Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment

The impact of Covid-19 on our residents, communities and businesses has been profound. In December 2020, Cabinet received our first Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment. Due to the fast-moving situation, we have now updated this assessment, the results of which are broken down by council priority area and attached at Appendix B.

Key Covid-19 impacts noted in the report are, among other

- Acute economic impact causing the highest unemployment-related benefits claimant rate for a local area in the UK (11.4% vs. 7.8% London), with 21k+ claimants, an increase of 15k from pre-pandemic
- Intensified existing health, social, education and economic inequalities
- Significant medium-term impacts to unfold: unemployment & poverty, mental health, education, etc

The Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment will continue to inform our strategic priorities, including preparations for our next Borough Plan.

Covid-19 is not the only significant context we face. We know, for example, that the pandemic has intensified some long-term changes that were already in train, such as increasing digitalisation or changing consumer habits that will affect our high streets. In addition, our operating context has been transformed by other major moments. For example, leaving the European Union has affected our local communities (particularly EU nationals) and shaped the national economic and legal context with important local implications. The 'Black Lives Matter' movement has, combined with the unequal impact of Covid-19, brought into sharp focus the unacceptable racial inequality that persists in Haringey and across the country. And the Climate Emergency requires bold, concerted and radical action locally to contribute to tackling this global challenge.

Therefore, alongside our Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment, the Council will continue work to develop a more detailed understanding of need in the borough – including through our 'Community Framework' project. This will provide the evidence base for our next Borough Plan.

6.4. The Fairness Commission

Cabinet established the Haringey Fairness Commission (the 'Commission') in July 2018. The Commission was made up of twenty Commissioners and two Co-Chairs from a range of partner organisations and sectors. In its final report in February 2020, the Commission made a set of recommendations to redress social, economic, and political inequalities in the borough. By this stage, evidence

from the Commission had already made a positive contribution in informing important organisational agendas.

Within weeks of the publication of this final report, the UK went into the first national lockdown. Learning from the Commission helped shape our emergency response to the pandemic, including some of the ways we have worked differently and the issues that we have prioritised in our response.

Cabinet received a full update on our progress in implementing the Fairness Commission recommendations in March 2021. Cabinet also agreed that the Fairness Commission recommendations should be implemented within the overall Borough Plan. Appendix C sets out a full technical update on how we have responded to each individual recommendation for maximum transparency.

Cabinet is now asked to formally accept the findings of the Fairness Commission and to agree that the council should continue to implement the recommendations as set out in Appendix C. It is to be noted that not every recommendation can be accepted in full because some are not possible to deliver as currently stated (for example Recommendation 18). Appendix C attempts to explain this clearly and transparently. Where we cannot implement the exact recommendation put to us, we are exploring the best way to achieve the objectives signalled by the recommendations.

6.5. Delivery Plans and Performance Monitoring

In line with our current practice, we will continue to monitor the implementation of the Borough Plan through our delivery planning and Performance Monitoring processes.

Over the last few months we have reviewed and updated some of the 'Outcomes' and 'Objectives' in the Borough Plan and our 'Performance Indicators' have been reviewed to better reflect and monitor the work that we are delivering. This also reflects the fact that the Borough Plan was always intended to be formally treated as a 'living document' where changes could be made. These updates and our implementation will be captured in Council Performance Wheels. These will be published on the website for transparency and will be the subject of scrutiny.

6.6. The next Borough Plan

The Council is ambitious about how the next Borough Plan should be developed so that it is underpinned by a genuinely collaborative process that builds a shared vision for the borough which reflects residents' priorities and sets out the role of the council in delivering them.

The Council intends to use the foundations provided by the Fairness Commission final report of February 2020 as a starting point to inform the development of this next Borough Plan. Engagement with residents and partners will include focused conversations about how the Council and partners can further mobilise around the issue of inequality in the borough.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 7.1. The Borough Plan sets the overall strategic direction for the Council.

8. Statutory Officers comments

8.1. Finance

The preparation of the next Borough Plan will inform the update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2023/ 2028 and vice versa.

The responses to the recommended actions in response to the Fairness Commission will be undertaken from within existing budgets, with any resultant issues addressed as part of the Council's budget monitoring and planning processes.

8.2. Procurement

Strategic Procurement has been consulted in the preparation of this report. The Public Contract Regulations 2015 require fair, equal and transparent treatment of all bidders. This can prove somewhat challenging when trying to implement some of the recommendations contained within the Fairness Commission Report, especially where we may adopt an incentivisation approach to London Living Wage (LLW). However, it should be noted Strategic Procurement have already made significant progress to date in embedding LLW within the contracts and we will continue to work with colleagues and the business community to further embed LLW throughout local businesses and supply chains where appropriate and within the constraints of the regulatory frameworks.

Strategic Procurement has already started to adopt some of the recommendations in the Fairness Report relating to the use of the Ethical Care Charter and structuring our procurements to enable greater participation of VCS organisations. This is consistent with our Procurement Strategy and we will continue to embed and promote these types of initiatives throughout our procurement/commissioning activity.

8.3. Legal

The Head of Legal & Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report, and in noting the proposal to move away from a refresh of the current Borough Plan in favour of it becoming a document which informs the development of the new Borough Plan which will be consulted on, coupled with the suggestion contained in the Fairness Commission report that the Council monitors the implementation and progress made on its Recommendations, advises that there are no direct legal implications arising out of this report which would stop Cabinet from adopting the Recommendations at paragraph 3 above.

8.4. Equality

The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

This report asks Cabinet to note progress made against the Borough Plan and the Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment. The Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment sets out the disproportionate ways that the pandemic has impacted residents in Haringey, and in particular those with protected characteristics. There are no specific equality implications relating to this Cabinet decision. Responding to these impacts is a stated priority for the council as set out in the Borough Plan Update Report.

This report also asks Cabinet to accept the findings of the Fairness Commission. There are no specific equality implications arising from this decision. Where new policies or initiatives are implemented, they will go through the usual decision-making processes. In general, implementing the findings of the Fairness Commission is expected to have a positive impact on those with protected characteristics.

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix A – Borough Plan Update Report

Appendix B – Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment
Appendix C – Fairness Commission Implementation Update and Next Steps Report

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Cabinet Report: Borough Plan 2019-2023, Cabinet (Cabinet February 2019)

Cabinet Report: Recovery and Renewal (Cabinet December 2020)

Cabinet Report: Haringey Fairness Commission (Cabinet March 2021)