

Report Title: **Scrutiny Review of Engaging with hard to reach communities**

Report of: **Councillor Bull, Chair of the review panel**

Contact Officer : Melanie Ponomarenko

Email: Melanie.Ponomarenko@haringey.gov.uk

Tel: 0208 489 2933

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **[Key / Non-Key Decision]**

1. Purpose of the report (That is, the decision required)

- 1.1. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approve the recommendations laid out in the attached report.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member (if necessary)

- 2.1. N/A

3. State link(s) with Council Plan Priorities and actions and /or other Strategies:

3.1. This review links with the Sustainable Community Strategy Outcomes of:

- People at the heart of change
 - Promote community cohesion
- Be people and customer focused
 - Provide greater opportunity for civic engagement and participation

3.2. This review links with the Council Plan priority of “driving change, improving quality”.

- Engaging Citizens
- Support communities to influence and shape the quality of services in their neighbourhoods

3.3. This review links with the following Local Area Agreements:

- NI 4 - % of people who feel that they can influence decisions in their locality
- NI140 – Fair treatment by local services

3.4. Priority stated in the CAA self assessment:

- Enhance community engagement and partnership working

4. Recommendations

4.1. Review recommendations are laid out in the attached report.

5. Reason for recommendation(s)

5.1. Reasons for the recommendations laid out in the main report are covered within the main body of the attached report.

6. Other options considered

6.1. N/A

7. Summary

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned a review into what is being done to engage with hard to reach groups across the partnership.

The review had a number of aims:

- Identify Haringey's hard to reach groups
- Identify barriers which prevent these groups engaging with organisations
- Identify improvements which can be made
- Share best practice

Key findings of the review:

- The 'hard to reach' group can be very dependent on the service area which you are focusing on.
- Barriers to engagement include:
 - Lack of contact points across the partnership
 - Staff not necessarily being aware of dual need and cultural aspects
 - Practicalities e.g. the timing of events.
 - Information provision e.g. language used.
- There is a wide range of good data and knowledge across the partnership which should be built on and more widely used.
- There is a strong commitment to improving engagement with hard to reach groups

across the partnership.

- Partners are actively looking at ways in which to improve the co-ordination of engagement with hard to reach groups and progress is being made.
- Greater communication of events and consultations would be beneficial, however this is acknowledged and steps are being taken to address this.

8. Chief Financial Officer Comments

8.1. The Chief Financial Officer concurs that the recommendations set out in the attached report should be able to be contained within existing partnership budgets.

9. Head of Legal Services Comments

9.1. No legal implications are raised by this report.

10. Service Financial comments

10.1. The report focuses on strategic and policy issues arising from partnership activity with regards to engaging with hard to reach communities.

10.2. The recommendations in the report have been consulted on by the panel and it is felt that they can be covered within existing resources as part of the work and work planning processes of the partnership.

10.3. Any specific direct financial implications arising from the recommendations will be included in the formal response to the review by the Council and its partners.

11. Head of Procurement Comments – [Required for Procurement Committee]

11.1. N/A

12. Equalities & Community Cohesion Comments

12.1. Under various equal opportunities legislation, public authorities have a duty to also consult and involve minority groups when making decisions about services and issues that may affect their lives.

12.2. The Council Equal Opportunities Policy adopted in 2008 commits the Council to ensuring equal access to services by all residents and to providing services in a manner that is sensitive to the individual whatever their background.

12.3. In the Equality Opportunity policy statement, the Council also commits itself

to identifying and removing unnecessary barriers which prevent equal access to what the Council has to offer.

12.4. In its Community Cohesion Framework first adopted in 2007, the Council agreed to a number of principles which includes building a borough where everyone, regardless of background, belief or circumstances feels part of the wider Haringey community, is respected and valued and has the opportunity to contribute to the life of the community.

12.5. For a variety of reasons identified in paragraph 7 of this covering report, there are groups in Haringey that face barriers to communication and contact with the Council and other public agency partners, which may impact on their ability to access the services the Council and the partner agency offer. Those barriers in many respects could also be preventing those groups from interactions with the wider Haringey community through civic engagement, thus impacting negatively on the Council's commitment to building a cohesive Haringey community.

12.6. This Scrutiny review has been about identifying those groups (commonly described as 'hard-to-reach', the barriers that render them 'hard-to-reach, and how those barriers could be removed.

12.7. The actions recommended in this report should help removed those barriers and enable better communication between the partnership and those 'hard-to-reach groups', enhance their access to services; improve their capacity for greater interaction with the wider community and contribute to greater cohesion in Haringey.

11 Consultation

11.2 Throughout the scrutiny review process views and evidence was considered from Council departments, NHS Haringey, North Middlesex University Hospital, Whittington Hospital, Borough Police and a number of voluntary and community sector organisations.

11.3 The attached report has been submitted to the relevant officers across Council and other relevant agencies for consideration of the technical accuracy of the report and feasibility of the recommendations.

12 Use of appendices /Tables and photographs

12.2 Please see Contents page in main report for appendices

13 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- Council Plan - Year 3, 2009-10, Haringey Council
- Sustainable Community Strategy, Haringey Strategic Partnership
- Haringey Community Engagement Framework, Haringey Strategic Partnership, 2009
- Use of Resources, Auditor Guidance, Audit Commission, June 2009
- World Class Commissioning Competencies, Department of Health, December 2007
- Strengthening Local Democracy, Department for Communities and Local Government, July 2009
- Real Involvement, Working with people to improve health services, Department of Health, 2008
- Creating Strong and Prosperous Communities, Statutory Guidance, Department for Communities and Local Government, July 2008
- Communities in Control: Real People Real Power, Department for Communities and Local Government, July 2008
- Haringey Borough Profile, www.haringey.gov.uk
- Mid-year Population estimates – 2008, Office of National Statistics August 2009
- 2001 Census, Office for National Statistics
- Haringey Local Area Agreement Refresh, 2009-2011, Haringey Strategic Partnership
- Community Engagement Framework, Haringey Strategic Partnership, 2009
- Community Engagement Framework Equalities Impact Assessment, Haringey Strategic Partnership, 2009