




Haringey Council

Report for:	Cabinet - 14 July 2015	Item Number:	
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Title:	Community Strategy
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Report Authorised by:	 Zina Etheridge, Deputy Chief Executive
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Lead Officer:	Charlotte Pomery, Assistant Director of Commissioning
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Ward(s) affected: All	Report for Key/Non Key Decisions: Non Key
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1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 Working Together with our Communities: Making Haringey an Even Better Place to Live is the vision of the Council's Corporate Plan 2015-18. The purpose of the Community Strategy is to lay out how the Council and partners will engage more deeply with communities, to build the resilience, skills and capability of local residents and communities and to strengthen the joint ability to achieve the vision and outcomes set out in the Corporate Plan. At a time when traditional ways of supporting communities, and working with the voluntary sector, are changing, the Community Strategy is a positive strategy for achieving outcomes in a different way.
- 1.2 The Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework and the Community Buildings Review are presented within the strategic framework of the Community Strategy as a manifestation of the Council's changing approach to shaping and developing its relationships with local communities. Other reports are likely to be brought to Cabinet in future within this framework which lays out a set of principles and a practical tool kit to guide all parts of the Council and partners as we develop different, collaborative and joined up relationships with residents which offer the opportunity for positive change in local communities.



2. Cabinet Member introduction

- 2.1 Haringey is a place of opportunities and growth with a diverse population and vibrant communities. There are huge amounts of talent and resources in local communities and neighbourhoods. At a moment of great change, challenge and opportunity, it is vital that these resources are unleashed.
- 2.2 The Community Strategy presents an opportunity to transform the way in which we work in partnership with our residents. It is about building on the successful, innovative projects that are already underway and embedding new ways of working in everything the Council does.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Community Strategy for wider public engagement focussing particularly on the principles and toolkit.

4. Alternative options considered

- 4.1 Much of the work set out in the Community Strategy is planned or underway currently – what the Strategy aims to do is to co-ordinate existing and strategically develop new activity. An option of not pursuing the Strategy was considered but the opportunity for an over-arching strategic framework for current and future activity would have been missed.
- 4.2 Two important policy documents – the Voluntary Sector Commissioning Strategy and the Community Buildings Review are linked to the Strategy as ways in which the Council shapes and develops its relationship with local communities. The alternative would be to implement these policies without an over-arching strategy, this was not pursued because it was felt important to establish the broader principles and vision that lie behind their development.
- 4.2 It is also the case that the Voluntary Sector Commissioning Strategy and Community Buildings Review only cover two specific ways in which the Council can work with communities – commissioning voluntary sector organisations and the provision of Community Buildings – two ways where the Council's scope is increasingly limited by financial considerations. The Community Strategy plays an important complementary role in laying out a wider variety of ways in which the Council can work with communities, the positive steps the Council can take as a facilitator, enabler and capacity-builder to work with communities in a time of reducing budgets.

5. Background information

- 5.1 As resources available to the public sector are reducing across the country and locally, we have to work differently and collaboratively to deliver better outcomes for



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local residents. Capacity building is at the heart of this approach. We believe that with the right framework of support, communities are often best placed to solve the issues facing them. This means acknowledging that some issues are best addressed not by the Council supplying or commissioning services but by being an ‘enabler’ or ‘facilitator’ and helping residents make things happen in their communities. Sometimes this means providing support to build capacity and sometimes it means stepping aside and removing the barriers preventing people from acting. Where the Council does commission and deliver services it needs to do so in ways that capture and reflect the views, experiences and ideas of residents and service users.

5.2 These imperatives are reflected in the Corporate Plan 2015-18: Building a Stronger Haringey Together under the cross-cutting theme ‘working with communities’:

“Haringey will work with communities to achieve their ambitions, by making best use of the strengths of the borough and ensuring that we build capacity and foster independence and self-reliance”

The five strategic priorities already developed through the creation of the Corporate Plan provide the framework for the Community Strategy:

- Increase community participation by providing opportunities to connect people to their communities
- Deliver open and customer-led services that enable residents to participate in their design and delivery
- Increase independence and self-reliance within communities
- Facilitate positive community conversations enabling residents to make socially responsible and sustainable choices
- Become an engaging, collaborative organisation that creates the culture where communities are confident to lead positive change and have a ‘can do’ approach to problem solving

The Community Strategy unpacks the idea of ‘working with communities’ through the five priorities, for each priority describing what the new way of working will look like and what outcomes we want to see.

6. Community Strategy

6.1 The Community Strategy builds on the work already underway across Haringey to provide a joined up approach that will inform all activity in the Council so that it is conducted in partnership with our communities. Through the Strategy we want to:

- Build the resilience, skills and capability of our local residents and communities
- Develop different, collaborative and joined up relationships with residents
- Change the way we work as a Council
- Strengthen our ability to achieve the outcomes set out in the Corporate Plan through the input and creativity of local residents and communities



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- Use our assets transparently and consistently to strengthen communities
- Co-ordinate existing and strategically develop new activity
- Offer tools to the workforce across the Council and partners to work differently
- Develop thinking and offers platform for implementation

- 6.2 The Strategy lays out a set of series of principles and a practical tool kit to serve as guidance for the Council, partners and local communities. The principles and tools are intended to support engagement with communities, to involve residents in commissioning and to prompt resident-led initiatives that shape neighbourhoods, provide mutual support and build resilience. The importance of Councillors' community leadership role is emphasised in the Community Strategy and many of the principles and tools will be valuable to Councillors as well as to residents and communities as it sets out the opportunities, roles and support that they can respond to and take advantage of.
- 6.3 The principles and tools for working with communities have been informed by best practice and innovation identified at other local authorities. They have also been informed by insights and experiences gained from previous and ongoing work in Haringey that have sought to pioneer new ways of working with communities.
- 6.4 The Community Strategy provides an over-arching strategic framework for two current policy documents – the Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework and Community Buildings Review. Both documents reflect the Community Strategy's emphasis on capacity building and working differently with local communities to achieve optimal community impact and social value. The Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework sets out how the Council will work to support the wider voluntary and community sector and describes its core commissioning intentions, whilst the Community Buildings Review sets out how the community buildings portfolio can be used more equitably to deliver our vision and outcomes.
- 6.5 It is proposed that a public consultation exercise be carried out to gather feedback on the principles and toolkit featured in the Community Strategy. The aim would be to determine whether residents feel the tools for community engagement will be effective and whether residents think they would respond positively to them. It will also be useful to find out what capacity building support residents feel they need to engage with specific tools of engagement.
- 6.6 Post-consultation an action plan will be created to embed the revised principles and toolkit across the Council – in terms of the commissioning process, specific capacity building projects, community leadership from councillors, training of staff and business-as-usual functions, for example.



7. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

- 7.1 This report presents the community strategy, which will provide a framework for the Council to engage and work with the residents and communities of Haringey. The strategy does not require any additional resources and will influence how our existing resources can be used to best effect.

8. Comments of the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and legal implications

- 8.1 The draft Community Strategy is within the Council's legal powers and would facilitate the discharge of the Council's functions.

9. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

- 9.1 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:
- tackling discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;
 - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
 - fostering good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.
- 9.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out (see appendix 2). It found that adequate mitigation is in place to address the equalities risks raised by the Community Strategy. The main risks were around the possibility that some people with protected characteristics might lack the capacity to engage with and benefit from the new ways of working – including the risk that a greater role for residents in commissioning could lead to unrepresentative voices dominating, and the risk that the needs of protected groups are overlooked when communities set neighbourhood plans or develop resident-led initiatives for mutual support.
- 9.3 The Council will take steps to mitigate these risks: equalities considerations will guide the Council's approach to capacity building (with early pilots focusing on Tottenham), commissioners will be trained and equipped with tools to reach all groups, and the Council will continue to commission voluntary and community sector organisations to meet the needs of vulnerable residents/protected groups when needs are going unmet by resident-led initiatives.
- 9.4 The EqIA noted that there is significant scope to advance community cohesion objectives by promoting and supporting community events and initiatives that bring communities together.



- 9.5 It is recommended that an annual review be carried out to monitor the cumulative impact of the new ways of working, the effectiveness of mitigation measures and whether further mitigation is required.

10. Head of Procurement Comments

- 10.1 The recommendation of this report sets out a community strategy which will provide a framework within which the Council will engage and work with the residents and communities of Haringey which will be supported by the Central Procurement Unit where a procurement is required.
- 10.2 Where a procurement is required these will need to comply with and adhere to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the contract procedure rules of the Council and other relevant legislation including the Social Value Act.

11. Policy Implication

- 11.1 The Community Strategy will enable new ways of working across the borough between communities, partners and the Council. The Strategy will influence future policy development but there are no direct policy implications arising from this report.

12. Reasons for Decision

- 12.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Community Strategy for wider community engagement on the principles and toolkit featured within the Strategy.
- 12.1.1 Working with communities already features as a cross-cutting theme within the Corporate Plan 2015-18, and the strategic priorities within the Community Strategy also feature within the Corporate Plan.
- 12.1.2 Approving the Community Strategy is the first step in embedding new ways of working with communities across the Council. A public consultation will enable an action plan to be created to embed the revised principles and toolkit across the Council – in terms of the commissioning process, specific capacity building projects, community leadership from councillors, training of staff and business-as-usual functions.

13. Use of Appendices

- 13.1 Appendix 1 – Community Strategy
Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

14. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985



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14.1 See the papers 'Voluntary Sector Commissioning Strategy' and 'Community Buildings Review' - Cabinet (14th July 2015)