



**Haringey** Council

Agenda item:

**[No.]**

**Overview and Scrutiny**

**On June 30<sup>th</sup> 2008**

Report Title: **THE CABINET'S PRIORITIES FOR 2008/9**

Forward Plan reference number (if applicable): **N/A**

Report of: **COUNCILLOR GEORGE MEEHAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

Wards(s) affected: **ALL**

Report for: **INFORMATION**

**1. Purpose**

1.1 To report to the first ordinary meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the new municipal years that Cabinet's priorities for the forthcoming municipal year and beyond.

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 To note the report and comment on the priorities for 2008/9 as determined by the Cabinet.

2.2 To confirm Overview and Scrutiny Committee's active participation in research and policy through its formal Reviews and consideration of the Forward Plan.

Report Authorised by:

**COUNCILLOR GEORGE MEEHAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

3.1 The administration realises the many benefits successful scrutiny can bring.

Scrutiny is a key role for Councillors and provides for an authority to engage with and consult the public, experts and service providers. Overview and Scrutiny has an important role in contributing to the development of better policies and performance.

While the Cabinet makes all the Council's decisions within the budget and policy framework set out by Full Council, it is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee role to provide the checks and balances in our governance structure. Scrutiny's role is to ensure that the Council's services are held accountable for actions taken, and that the decision making processes are robust and transparent.

The Cabinet values the Overview and Scrutiny function and I am happy for this opportunity to outline the Cabinet's priorities for 2008/9 and beyond.

### **Introduction by the Leader of the Council**

I am pleased to have the opportunity to present to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee what the council has achieved in the past and what will be the priorities for the coming year.

Along with my Cabinet colleagues we remain clear in our commitment to provide high quality services across the Council. The firm focus of the Council has to be on ensuring the delivery of services to local people improves and that is what this report sets out.

We want Haringey to be a council we can all be proud of, and I am delighted that Haringey Council is rated as 3 star council, out of a possible 4 stars, and assessed as 'improving well' by the Audit Commission.

This short report sets out how the council has continued to improve its performance over the past year, and the progress we have made towards meeting our five priorities:

- Making Haringey one of London's greenest boroughs
- Creating a Better Haringey: cleaner, greener and safer
- Encouraging lifetime well-being at home, work, play and learning
- Promoting independent living while supporting adults and children when needed
- Delivering excellent, customer focused, cost effective services.

These priorities were agreed following extensive consultation with local people, and together with our partners – the police, local health services, voluntary organisations and other agencies and groups in the area – we have achieved success in a number of different areas.

Highlights include:

- More children and young people aged 14 to 19 gaining qualifications
- More young people aged 16 to 18 participating in education, training or employment and continued improvements in GCSE results
- Improvements to our environment with eight parks achieving a green flag award
- Cleaner streets and more recycling.

For the coming year we will continue to prioritise excellent, value for money services, and work more closely with our partners, with a new Local Area Agreement setting out

clear targets for further improvement. Although the Council has clearly improved over the past year there are areas for us to intensify our efforts in improving performance across the board. These are reflected in the 2008/09 priorities which I outline in the rest of this report.

### **Cabinet priorities**

This report set's out the performance by each Cabinet portfolio over the civic year 2007/08 and then what the key priorities will be for each area. This could never reflect the scale of the work that the Council undertakes with partners but provides members with an overview of what the specific focus will be for the various portfolio areas during the coming 12 months.

## **Housing**

### **2007/08 performance**

- In February 2008, the government awarded £198.5m to Haringey's decent homes programme: the biggest allocation of funding in Haringey's history. The money will be used over the next five years to improve council homes in all parts of the borough.
- The funding was made possible following a successful Audit Commission inspection of Homes for Haringey in May 2007, which awarded them two stars.
- In 2006/07 the council facilitated the delivery of 204 new homes and in 2007/08 the council delivered a further 250 new homes.

### **2008/09 priorities**

- Homes for Haringey to make improvements to council homes, delivering Year 1 of the Decent Homes Programme.
- Homes for Haringey will decrease the proportion of tenants living in properties with more than seven weeks arrears.
- Housing Strategy and Needs will continue to provide a sustainable, long term rent deposit scheme through the accredited lettings schemes.
- To maximise the development of affordable housing by attracting investment and through effective partnership working.
- To make the best use of social housing, tackling multiple occupation and overcrowding.
- Reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation in line with the Governments 2010 target.

## **Environment and Conservation**

### **2007/08 performance**

- The expansion of plastic bottle and cardboard collections from residents' green boxes has helped to increase the borough's recycling rate to 25% for the first time ever.

- We have continued to improve our recycling bring sites. Five of the 75 bring sites across the borough now accept “Tetra Pak” drinks cartons as part of a London-wide trial; 16 locations can now receive textiles and shoes.
- We have increased the number of schools with travel plans to 100%, making Haringey one of only four London boroughs with 100% participation rate. Travel plans promote sustainable transport in schools, reducing pollution and congestion. Since 2005 they have led to a 5% decrease in the number of car journeys being made to Haringey schools.
- We have continued to invest in street lighting with the highest level of investment in recent years. Over 1200 streetlights have been replaced or repaired in 2007/8.
- We planted a total of 665 new trees during the last planting season (November 2007 to April 2008), which is 143 more than the previous year;
- We successfully piloted a new litter picking service, in addition to our usual street cleaning service. We targeted 5 wards with extra litter pickers resulting in significant improvements in street cleanliness.
- Our street and environmental cleanliness has improved with the percentage of sites not meeting set standards reducing from 40.1% to 27.5%
- Principal roads requiring maintenance work reduced from 21% to 9% putting us in the top 50% in the country

#### **2008/09 priorities**

- Provision of new contracts for public realm and parking services.
- Expand multi-material collection service at all homes with a green box.
- Extend estates doorstep and near-entry recycling collection to more households on estates.
- Increase the number of schools (including secondary and special schools) participating in the Schools Recycling Scheme to 100%.
- Improving street cleaning, reducing the level of litter and detritus on streets in the borough.
- Continue to reduce the levels litter and detritus on streets in super out put areas (Northumberland Park, Bruce Grove and Noel Park).
- Maximizing 20 mph schemes and Safe Routes to School schemes as part of the LIP – BSP submission.
- Continue to reduce the number of killed or seriously injured in line with achieving our PSA target.
- Continue to deliver programme to reduce the number of potholes in the Borough.
- Deliver sustainable communities through a Local Development Framework and a Transport Strategy.

<b>Community cohesion and involvement</b>
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#### **2007/08 performance**

- The Customer Services Centres’ performance improved significantly on the previous year, finishing on 71% of visitors seen within 15 minutes (target 70%) showing an increase on the 48% on the previous year.

- Performance for call centre telephone answering has improved with 57% of calls answered in 30 seconds (target 70%), which was an improvement on the 39% in 2006/07. Although this was below the target, the target was achieved for 3 months of the year, in November 2007, December 2007 and February 2008.
- Haringey Council's website is one of the top 10 websites in London according to the Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITM). The site's innovative interactive map pages which residents can use to find their nearest services were praised as "best practice - and extremely unusual!"

### **2008/09 priorities**

- We aim to maintain the performance at our customer service centres and achieve the target of speed of answering at the call centre for the whole year.
- Increase the number of pages per issue of Haringey People to accommodate more 'Focus On' issues.

<b>Enterprise and regeneration</b>
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### **2007/08 performance**

- During 2007/08 £1.5million of funding from the London Development Agency was secured to support Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest in tackling worklessness across the Upper Lee Valley.
- The Haringey Guarantee aims to address worklessness in the Borough. Between September 2006 and December 2007 190 residents have started work and 176 businesses have been involved in the scheme. Employment Advisers are now operating from a number of Council settings and GP surgeries. We've worked with 198 different employers, supported 986 residents and helped 235 into jobs.

### **2008/09 priorities**

- Raise the cultural profile of Tottenham, using the campus of the Bernie Grant centre and Tottenham Town Hall, Tottenham Green Leisure Centre, Haringey Sixth Form Centre, Marcus Garvey Library and the College of North East London. Hornsey Town Hall will become the cultural centre for Crouch End.
- Increase job opportunities for resident on incapacity benefit for 6 months or more.
- Protect Haringey's open spaces through the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the development of the Local Open Spaces Standards for 2008.
- Take forward development opportunities in Tottenham Hale and Wood Green and create further employment, housing and prosperity.
- Continue to develop innovative solutions to help people, especially families and those on incapacity benefit into work.
- Work with London boroughs, Enfield and Waltham Forest to make the Upper Lee Valley a centre of growth in North London.
- Improve our outwards facing services to businesses by improving efficiency and eliminating red tape.

## Children and young people

### 2007/08 performance

- In August, schools across Haringey celebrated the boroughs best-ever A-Level and GCSE results. The overall rate for five or more A\* to C GCSE passes went up from 51.7 per cent last year to 57 per cent. At A level, the overall borough pass rate went up from 96.7 per cent in 2006 to 97.1 per cent, above the provisional national pass rate of 96.9 per cent.
- The number of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEETS) has reduced to 319 or 9.1% compared with 13.2% in 2006/07. This has been a significant and sustained improvement and is a record low in Haringey. Contributing initiatives include better and earlier identification of the young people needing intensive support, the opening of the Haringey Sixth Form Centre,
- The number of young people achieving 5 or more A\*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths increased from 34% to 37%
- The adoption rate for looked after children in Haringey has risen from 6.8% in 2006/07 to 8.8% in 2007/08, exceeding our target. In 2006/07 – 24 adoption and special guardianship orders were granted (6.8% of children in care for 6 months or more) and in 2007/08– 28 adoption and special guardianship orders granted (8.8% of children in care for 6 months or more).
- The number of looked after children receiving one or more GCSE has risen from 50% 2006/07 to 58% in 2007/08, exceeding our target.
- Improve the benefit take up rates to reduce child poverty, through the implantation of the Income Maximisation Strategy.
- Primary absence has substantially reduced to 5.7% in 2007 which is well on track to meeting the 2007/08 target of reducing absence to 5.4%. Secondary absence is now reduced to 7.7% meeting the 2007/8 target. Attendance has improved from 91.1% in 2005/06 to 92.3% in 2006/07 and is now above the national average of 92.1% and above our 2009 target. This improvement equates to 75,000 extra half day sessions attended by secondary pupils since 2002 or 250 more pupils attending for a full year.
- Excellent improvement has been made on attainment at both Level 2 and 3 for 19 year olds above the target set for 2007. The Level 2 figure has risen 13% from 53% in 2004 to 66% in 2007 against an England rise of 8% from 66% to 74% over the same period. At Level 3 the improvement in Haringey has risen by 9% from 35% in 2004 to 44% in 2007. The England average has risen by 6% from 42% to 48% over the same period.

### 2008/09 priorities

- Raise standards in Haringey schools and reach the national average for 5+ A\*-C grades at GCSE. This is a 57% average by 2010.
- To continue to reduce the percentage of pupils absent (half day absences) from primary and secondary schools by 2010 and further improve attendance.
- To continue to reduce the proportion of 16-18 years olds not in education, employment or training (NEETS).
- To progress the refurbishing of all our secondary schools through Building Schools for the Future.

- Invest in primary schools and expand those with the capacity through the primary schools capital programme.
- To promote better life chances for care leavers by increasing the proportion in education, employment and training to 78% by 2009/10.
- To further develop recreational opportunities for the young people of the borough.
- To continue to promote adoption and special guardianship to improve life chances of children in care.

## **Adult social care and well-being**

### **2007/08 performance**

- Overall performance in Adult Social Services have improved well compared with 2006/07. We now have 16 out of 22 performance indicators in top banding and 20 out of the 22 performance indicators have shown an improvement.
- We provided 214 adults with direct payments to pay for their social care packages, putting us in the top 25% nationally. This is an 11% improvement from 2006/7
- The Supporting People service is continuing to help older people to live independently in their own homes. Thirty fewer people were admitted into residential care in 2007/08 through a combination of better community support and individual care packages. Positive feedback from service users resulted in the Day Care service winning three WOW! Awards for excellent customer service.
- The Healthy Eating project has targeted older people (50+) living in the 3 most deprived wards, namely Northumberland Park, Noel Park and Bruce Grove to increase access to healthy foods and provide nutrition education. Programmes have included 'Shape-Up Weight Management Programme', 'Cook and Eat Programme' and 'Community Nutrition Assistants Programme.'

### **2008/09 priorities**

- Continue to reduce waiting times on assessments and care packages.
- Implement rehabilitative strategies to reduce admissions to hospital.
- Help older people to live independently in their own homes.
- Ensure that vulnerable people have access to a flexible range of housing and support options.
- Promote the use of direct payments as widely as possible.
- Provide support for unpaid carers, including preparing for when they are no longer able to care by increasing the number of high quality carers' breaks.

## **Resources**

### **2007/08 performance**

- In April 2007 we introduced a new system for online tendering and contract management across the council, aimed at reducing costs, improving value for money and providing better management information.
- Benefits maintained a CPA score of 3\* for 2007/08, together with an improvement of 5 days in the time taken to process benefit claims and 5 day reduction in days taken to process Changes of Circumstances. Council tax and business rate collection both achieved their target.
- The partnership initiative between Benefits and Local Taxation and the Pension Service (launched last year) has proved productive and is being developed to help with a new national performance indicator the 'right benefit' national indicator.
- The Council retained its Investors In People status representing the councils continued commitment to our workforce.
- We revised the council's risk management framework to enable the council to demonstrate a corporate and consistent approach in all areas where risk needs to be effectively managed, including risk registers, project management, health and safety, business continuity planning and performance management.
- At the start of 2007/08, we re-let the council's contract for the delivery of internal audit services in order to improve the quality and performance of the service to all departments. The contract is now output based; focusing on delivery of the final audit reports and advice to clients and it has been successful in its first year of operation in delivering increased performance and improved completion rates for audit projects.

### **2008/09 priorities**

- In March 2008 we adopted a sustainable procurement policy and strategy - the policy is to use the councils spending power to deliver outcomes that support sustainable development. Our aim is that during 2008/09 we will achieve level 2 of the Flexible Framework developed by the UK Sustainable Procurement Taskforce.
- We aim to introduce a number of energy efficiency initiatives such as the upgrading of gas and electricity meters on key Council sites, including schools and that will enable daily monitoring of energy usage. Another example is the reduction in mains voltage levels in three corporate buildings and two libraries that aims to save 9% of energy in these buildings.
- A review of the commercial property portfolio has commenced, the aim being to report on ways in which we can improve the contribution the shops and industrial estates make to the council.
- We continue to work on a range of key strategic site developments and regeneration projects, using the council's assets to support the council's regeneration programme.
- In 2008/09 there will be a new approach to inspection of benefit services placing greater emphasis on service outcomes and contributions to area-based priorities, such as tackling poverty and inequality and reducing worklessness. The service will now be assessed against more challenging criteria. To meet these challenges the focus this year will be on maintaining and developing strong links with key internal and external partners to ensure an effective and



modern service.

## **Leisure, culture, Lifelong Learning Priorities**

### **2007/08 performance**

- Haringey Council's sports and leisure centres were visited by 1.2million people in 2007/08 an increase of 91 thousand compared with 2006/07;
- In 2007 we secured Big Lottery funding to improve the quality and range of play provision across the borough. The funding is being used to create and sustain approximately 560 supervised play places in each year of the programme.

### **2008/09 priorities**

- Increase the proportion of adults taking part in sport and recreational activity.
- Develop a greater range of social activities within community settings.
- Increase the number of parks with Green Flag status or green pennants. In our LAA we have made a commitment to increase the number of parks with Green Flag awards to 12 by 2010.
- Plant 1000 additional trees by 2010.
- To complete major refurbishments to Markfield, Chestnuts and start works to Lordship recreation ground by 2010.

## **Enforcement and Community Safety**

### **2007/08 performance**

- In 2007/08 our Befriending and Community Development volunteers made 1240 visits and 1611 phone calls to 74 of our older socially isolated friends.
- According to the British Crime Survey there were 1.2% fewer crimes committed in 2007/08 than the previous year; Personal robbery reduced by 24.8% and wounding by 8.8%.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Action Team and the Police have closed 139 Crack Houses, the highest nationally.
- The Q-cars initiative, managed by the Haringey Strategic Partnership and delivered by the Haringey policy Q-Cars team, has achieved further success in reducing street robberies. The initiative, which involves a rapid response car driving the robbery victim around an area the area to try and spot the suspect, has helped reduce street robbery by 25% compared to 2006/7. That's 448 fewer victims.
- In 2007/08 personal robbery reduced by 24.8% from 1804 cases to 1356 and theft of a motor vehicle by 10.3%.

### **2008/09 priorities**

- To continue contributing to the reduction of domestic violence crimes in Haringey through the extended work of Hearthstone.

- Undertaking a rolling programme of test purchasing of under age sales to catch traders that sell knives, alcohol, cigarettes, aerosol paint and solvents to our children.
- Launch an improved out of hours service that targets nuisance and criminal behaviour in particular intervening and stopping noise nuisance at night.
- Reduce alcohol and drug misuse amongst young people, together with the effects of parental alcohol and drug misuse on children and young people.

From what I have reported you can see a sample of our many achievements in 07/08 and the commitment to further improvements in 08/09.

### **Working with Overview and Scrutiny**

Finally and importantly I would like to thank the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the work that it too completed during the last civic year. A number of reports provided a robust challenge to the work of the Council and were welcomed by Cabinet members. In particular the reviews completed on:

- Access to Services for older people
- Waste Collection
- Safer Communities

The work of the Committee is important in ensuring good governance and accountability of the work of the Council and increasingly that of partners. I look forward to the work that the Committee is developing and the growing involvement of local partners in that work. I know that the following reviews are planned for 08/09:

- Stroke Prevention
- Support and treatment to school age children with drug/alcohol problems
- Mental Health services
- Support for carers
- School exclusions

I have asked the Cabinet colleagues and the Chief Executive to ensure that information is provided to reviews in a timely manner and that there is engagement across the Council.

I would like to wish the Committee well for the coming year.