

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Notice of Meeting

THE EXECUTIVE

Tuesday, 13 January 2004 - Civic Centre, Dagenham, 7:00 pm

Members: Councillor C J Fairbrass (Chair); Councillor C Geddes (Deputy Chair); Councillor J L Alexander, Councillor G J Bramley, Councillor S Kallar, Councillor M E McKenzie, Councillor B M Osborn, Councillor J W Porter, Councillor L A Smith and Councillor T G W Wade.

Also Invited: Councillor Mrs V M Rush for Agenda Item 3

Declaration of Members Interest: In accordance with Article 1, Paragraph 12 of the Constitution, Members are asked to declare any direct/indirect financial or other interest they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting

24.12.03

Graham Farrant
Chief Executive

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AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 23 December 2003 (circulated separately)**

Discussion Items

3. **Community Empowerment and Engagement Policy Commission (Pages 1 - 46)**
4. **Corporate Performance Assessment Performance Indicators (Pages 47 - 52)**
5. **Home Office Consultation Paper - Policing: Building Safer Communities Together (Pages 53 - 58)**
6. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**

7. **To consider whether it would be appropriate to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted.**

Private Business

The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Executive, except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed. The list below shows why items are in the private part of the agenda, with reference to the relevant legislation (the relevant paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

Discussion Items

8. **Homelessness Act and Houses to Transfers (Pages 59 - 62)**

Concerns a Legal Matter (paragraph 12)

Business Items

Private Items 9 and 10 are business items. The Chair will move that these be agreed without discussion, unless any Member asks to raise a specific point.

9. **Mayor, Members and Fleet Transport (Pages 63 - 73)**

Concerns a Labour Relations Matter (paragraph 11)

10. **Award of Residential Respite Care Beds Contract (Pages 75 - 77)**

Concerns a Contractual Matter (paragraphs 7, 8 and 9)

11. **Any other confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent**

THE EXECUTIVE**13 JANUARY 2004****REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND ENGAGEMENT
POLICY COMMISSION**

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMMISSION	FOR DECISION
<p><i>Final Reports of Policy Commissions are submitted to relevant parts of the Political Structure as set out in paragraph 11 of Article 6 of the Constitution.</i></p>	
<p><u>Summary</u></p>	
<p>This report outlines the work of the Policy Commission and sets out our findings and recommendations.</p>	
<p>Barking and Dagenham Council wants to ensure that all members of the community are fully engaged, empowered and involved in the delivery of local services.</p>	
<p>This report intends to provide a clear action plan to improve community engagement and empowerment. It has been developed by Members and Officers with extensive experience of this work and with the involvement of specialists and advisors.</p>	
<p>The aim of the Policy Commission is to:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● review existing practices for empowering and engaging the local community ● undertake a number of visits in order to identify and improve our knowledge of good practice ● develop recommendations to be presented to the Council ● ensure that this Policy Commission considers the impact on issues highlighted by the Social Inclusion and Anti Age Discrimination Policy Commissions, and ● improve communication 	
<p>The Policy Commission wishes to ensure that the following sectors of the community are empowered and engaged:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the community and its neighbourhoods ● community forums ● black and minority ethnic groups (BME) ● faith groups ● older people ● disabled people ● people with mental health problems ● young people ● voluntary sector ● small community groups, and ● local businesses 	

Recommendations

The Community and Its Neighbourhoods

It is recommended that:

- the Council website be developed to facilitate community empowerment and consultation with all members of the community
- all consultation reports should be available on the internet
- when items are presented at forums it must be specified whether they are for information purposes or open for consultation
- all consultation undertaken must specify feedback mechanisms and timescales at the beginning of projects and the results of all consultation should be feedback to participants within the stated timescale
- the Community Action Plans (CAP's) are used as the basis for all community planning and are disseminated to Community Housing Partnerships (CHP's)
- once a year all forums are updated on the key things that they have achieved.

Community Forums

It is recommended that:

- the Community Action Plans (CAP's) are used as the basis for all community planning within the context of the Community Strategy and are disseminated to CHP's)
- the results of consultation are feedback to the forum within 6 weeks (or at the next meeting)
- the Community Forums encourage active participation at meetings and consider organising workshops
- the Community Forum gives active consideration to the allocation of at least £1,000 to small community groups.

Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

It is recommended that:

- the Council endorse the objectives of the Race Equality Scheme and encourage participation and involvement of BME communities
- the Council will engage with BME groups to ensure services are accessible to the whole community and specific to their cultural needs.

Faith Groups

It is recommended that:

- Community Forum Members and officers should visit local faith groups to promote themselves as identified as best practice in Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames
- the Barking and Dagenham Partnership organises visits to local places of religious worship
- the Barking and Dagenham Partnership review its representation from faith communities.

Older People

Please refer to the Anti Age Discrimination Policy Commission report for full list of recommendations.

Disabled People

It is recommended that:

- a helpline is set up by the Council for disabled people to use when applying for jobs
- all Community Forums organise a presentation on the impact of disabilities upon employment
- all voluntary, community and tenants groups should take into consideration the accessibility of venues when booking meetings.

People with Mental Health Problems

It is recommended that:

- user involvement and consultation is part of the development of new services
- Barking and Dagenham move towards integrating activities that are currently centre based with mainstream activities such as providing support and pathways to employment
- all Community Forums organise presentations on mental health issues.

Children and Young People

It is recommended that:

- a representative from the Youth Forum attends the Barking and Dagenham Partnership meetings
- proposals developed by the Youth Forum are reported to the Corporate Monitoring Group (CMG) where the action taken is monitored and feedback to the Forum.

The Voluntary Sector

It is recommended that:

- the Council signs up to the Local Compact by April 2004
- the Council drives the implementation on the Local Compact through the Executive Lead Member.

Small Community Groups

It is recommended that:

- small community groups are continually given the support and encouragement they need to help them apply for funding or grants
- tenants and residents associations and other related groups are continually given the support they need through the Tenant Participation Compact, to help them apply for funding/grants and to undergo training.

Local Businesses

It is recommended that:

- all Councillors should be encouraged and assisted to meet with local businesses in their ward to engage with them
- the Council should work to empower the Chamber of Commerce to influence Council decisions
- the Council will establish a local business forum to engage local businesses in Council decision making
- local businesses and the Council work together to engage with young people to promote employment locally and offer sponsorships or job related training
- if successful in the Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames area the neighbourhood approach to business receptions should be implemented in other Community Forum areas.

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1. The Policy Commission's Membership and Terms of Reference

- 1.1 In October 2002 the Assembly agreed that the Community Empowerment and Engagement Policy Commission should be set up, that it should commence in January 2003 and report to the Assembly in February 2004.
- 1.2 The membership included Councillors Mrs Rush (Lead Member), Mrs Flint, Mrs Rawlinson, Geddes, Wade and Justice.
- 1.3 The joint lead officers were Jim Ripley (Head of Landlord Services) and Robin Tuddenham (Head of Policy and Performance). Also supporting the commission was Joanne Redwin (Policy and Review Officer), Mick Beackon (Corporate Community Development Manager) and Farooq Malik (Democratic Services Officer).
- 1.4 Our terms of reference were:
 - to identify best practice
 - to create a vision for community empowerment and engagement in the area building on work already undertaken, and
 - to develop some key actions to improve community empowerment and engagement.

- 1.5 Like all Policy Commissions we were also asked to make sure that any general issues relating to equalities and diversity, social inclusion, sustainability and health and safety were mainstreamed into our deliberations. Also, that we should pay particular attention to making sure that appropriate consultation took place with stakeholders and that their views were taken on board when developing the recommendations.

2. The work of the Policy Commission

- 2.1 We met as a Commission 12 times starting with our first meeting on 4th March and ending on 8th December.
- 2.2 It was clear from the initial scoping report that there was much research around the issue of the empowerment and engagement of communities and that there were many examples of good practice.
- 2.3 The Policy Commission identified the mechanisms that were already in place which allow the Council to engage with the community and discussed how these could be improved.
- 2.4 The Policy Commission visited the London Boroughs of Westminster, Tower Hamlets and Camden to identify best practice.
- 2.5 The Policy Commission also developed a set of questions which were used to guide the research.
- 2.6 Witnesses that were consulted as part of the Policy Commission included:

External Witnesses

- Elizabeth Richardson (London School of Economics)
- Rod Hewitt (Chairman of the Local Business Association and representative of the Barking and Dagenham Chamber of Commerce)
- Ayo Jones (Ethnic Minority Partnership Agency)
- Sheila Delaney (Barking and Dagenham Race Equality Council)

Internal Witnesses

- Mick Beackon (The Council's Community Development Manager)
- Daryl Telles (Neighbourhood Management Co-ordinator)
- Sarah Kingston (Neighbourhood Management Co-ordinator)
- Paul Dawson (Tenant Participation Officer)
- Jo Sinclair (Business Development Manager)
- Lawrence Ashelford (Head of Policy, Social Services)
- Jeremy Grint (Head of Regeneration)
- Ndunge Kivuitu (Equalities and Diversity Officer)
- Bill Coomber (The Council's Equalities and Diversity Advisor)

- 2.7 In addition all recent attendees at Community Forum meetings were consulted via a postal questionnaire (the results of which can be found at appendix 2 of the Policy Commission report)

3. Supporting Information

3.1 Community Empowerment and Engagement Policy Commission Report

4. Appreciation

4.1 We wish to place on record our thanks to all those who contributed to this review. Without this valuable input from people in the community, Members and staff, we could not have carried out and concluded our work.

Background papers and information used in the preparation of this report

- Community Empowerment and Engagement Policy Commission agendas and minutes
- Auditing Community Participation by Danny Burns and Marilyn Taylor
- Set of questions around Community Empowerment and Engagement
- The Corporate Consultation Strategy
- The Census 2001
- The Status Survey 2003
- Best Value Performance Indicators
- Council Scorecard and Balanced Scorecard Performance Indicators
- Corporate Performance Assessment Report December 2002
- The Race Equality Scheme Action Plan
- Anti Age Discrimination Policy Commission Report
- Towards a Mental Health Strategy for Barking and Dagenham
- Minutes of Youth Forum Meetings
- The Barking and Dagenham Draft Local Compact.

Consultations

Those consulted on the final draft report were:

- Witnesses to the Policy Commission (listed at point 2.6)
- Barking and Dagenham Befrienders
- Barking and Dagenham Age Concern, and
- Victim Support.

**COMMUNITY
EMPOWERMENT
AND ENGAGEMENT
POLICY
COMMISSION**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT POLICY COMMISSION REPORT

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FOREWORD

Councillor Val Rush – Chair of the Policy Commission

Community Empowerment and Engagement Policy Commission

Early on in our discussions we realised that this could not be a stand alone policy and would have to fit in with the bigger picture. This Policy Commission has strong links to the Social Inclusion and Anti Age Discrimination Policy Commissions.

Do we as a Council start at a low base where consultation with our community is concerned? Through this commission we have discovered that in comparison with other boroughs Barking and Dagenham do very well in terms of consultation, and in some instances actually lead. However, is the consultation that we do relevant and focussed? You will find in the report that we have identified levels that define information, consultation and participation and that we specify timescales for feeding back information, which we feel are relevant and achievable.

Empowerment is not just about consultation. It is about listening and engaging the community. When valid points are made and opinions are voiced the Council must listen and act on them.

There is a low skills base in a large percentage of our community therefore we strongly support the route to empowerment through training and support. We are not suggesting that the Council should be the sole provider of this but the Council should work with voluntary and statutory organisations to broaden the aspirations of the community.

During the life of this commission Members and officers made a number of visits to other boroughs to look at best practice and to bring back workable ideas. In some instances we found that we were actually delivering a better service to our community so we were able to share our working practices with them. The commission feels there is a need to publicise to our community what we do well.

I would like to thank the Members and officers for their active participation on this policy commission and present the report to you for your approval.

Councillor Val Rush

BACKGROUND

Barking and Dagenham Council wants to ensure that all members of the community are fully engaged, empowered and involved in the delivery of local services.

This report intends to provide a clear action plan to improve community engagement and empowerment. It has been developed by Members and officers with strong and practiced experience on how best to achieve this.

The Empowerment and Engagement Policy Commission was established in October 2002 and its Members were appointed in January 2003 to take the project forward. The following scope was agreed for the Policy Commission in October 2002 by the Assembly:

- to identify best practice
- to create a vision for community empowerment and engagement in the area building on work already undertaken
- to develop some key actions to improve community empowerment and engagement.

“At the heart of this agenda (Neighbourhood Renewal) is a commitment to ensuring that local communities’ needs and concerns are given the importance they deserve. Local people know best what the priorities of their own neighbourhoods are. It is essential that they have the opportunity and the tools to get involved in whatever way they want. That means talking and listening to communities and, in particular, trying to include difficult to reach groups – young people, ethnic minority residents, the elderly and disabled people. In many areas, faith groups are playing a leading role in local partnerships.”

Changing neighbourhoods, changing lives – The vision for Neighbourhood Renewal published January 2002

Council Consultation

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham’s Consultation Strategy defines the levels of consultation as:

- public information: here is what we are going to do
- public consultation: here are our options, ideas and what we provide, what do you think?
- public participation: we want you to be part of the process of developing options and making decisions.

The strategy also outlines the Council’s key consultation principles. Consultation should be:

- planned well in advance

- targeted to secure views of the whole community including hard to reach groups
- cost effective and of a consistent high quality
- accessible to the whole Council and its partners
- used to improve policies and service delivery, and
- the results should be fed-back to participants.

A diagram of the current model of engagement can be seen at appendix 1. The results of the engagement questionnaire sent to Community Forum attendees can be seen at appendix 2.

Aims

The aim of the Policy Commission is to:

- review existing practices for empowering and engaging the local community
- undertake a number of visits in order to identify and improve our knowledge of good practice
- develop recommendations to be presented to the Council
- ensure that this Policy Commission considers the impact on issues highlighted by the Social Inclusion and Anti Age Discrimination Policy Commissions, and
- improve communication

Objectives

The Policy Commission wishes to ensure that the following sectors of the community are empowered and engaged:

- the community and its neighbourhoods
- community forums
- black and minority ethnic groups
- faith groups
- older people
- disabled people
- people with mental health problems
- children and young people
- the voluntary sector
- small community groups, and
- local businesses.

Key facts and best practice has been identified, analysed and recommendations have been made for each of the groups listed above.

The Policy Commission will meet again in November 2004 to review and monitor the progress against the recommendations.

THE COMMUNITY AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOODS

Key Facts

- In 2002/03 95.24% of the eligible population were registered to vote
- The percentage turnout for local elections in 2002/03 was 23%
- The number of corporate complaints made in 2002/03 was 1360
- 54% of these complaints were justified
- In 2002/03 five Council decisions or new initiatives were influenced by concerns and aspirations raised by residents through the political structure
- In 2003/04 43% of residents feel involved and consulted with (compared to a London average of 45%). This performance indicator is in the Council Scorecard and is used to measure the Council's performance on an annual basis.

The following statistics are from the Status Survey 2003 (this is a statutory satisfaction survey conducted every three years with Council tenants):

- 63% of households living in Council owned property receive Housing Benefit
- Council tenants living in Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames are the least satisfied with the Council as a landlord (67%) and their neighbourhood (48%)
- Just 19% of tenants have heard of the Community Housing Partnerships (CHP's) although awareness is highest in the Chadwell Heath and Whalebone area (23%)
- 64% of tenants say the Council is good at keeping them informed
- Just 19% have heard of Tenant Participation Compacts

Best Practice

Regionally

- The Policy Commission visited Tower Hamlets to look at best practice within partnerships. The Tower Hamlets Partnership is set up slightly differently from Barking and Dagenham's with the sub groups being based around geographical area rather than the community priorities. One officer works as lead and co-ordinator for each of the partnership sub groups. A free local event was held in one area of Tower Hamlets although the whole of the community was invited to attend. Tower Hamlets consider this event successful and feel it has helped residents engage with the Council and has helped to promote the Tower Hamlets Partnership.
- Waltham Forest's Community based Housing Association has experimented with neighbourhood management and has led to a number of changes in service delivery. The repairs service is now estate based and a community Police Officer holds a weekly surgery in one of the four neighbourhoods. In another neighbourhood a Police Officer is held accountable locally by reporting to the residents' committee. Health staff are also based on estates and they work to improve access for all of the community. In addition tenants have set up their own health charity.
- Chelmsford Borough Council has Beacon Council status for their Town Planning Services. They empower their community by involving them in

writing planning specifications for any unused land in the borough. As a result anyone wanting to purchase the land and build on it has to comply with the guidelines already set out by the community.

Locally

- Neighbourhood Management is being piloted in two forum areas in the borough and is funded by Neighbourhood Renewal monies. There are two neighbourhood managers who work in the Wellgate and Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames areas. They are working with local people to engage with them, build capacity, develop and implement local action plans and co-ordinate service delivery to meet local priorities. The Neighbourhood Management Partnerships report to the Community Forum, and Board Members are nominated by the community.
- The Council and tenants have launched six community Housing Partnerships (CHP's), in each Community Forum area. Management of the Housing Service is now being based upon these six areas, each with its manager and local team. Each Partnership Board consists of an equal number of Council tenants/lessees and local ward Councillors, as well as representatives from the community and its organisations. The Boards meet bi-monthly to hold the local housing service providers to account and make decisions on issues delegated to them.
- Barking and Dagenham have been working on developing Tenant Participation Compacts which set out the structures for tenant and resident involvement, the ways in which tenants can become involved in decisions affecting them and improving and monitoring the services they receive.

Analysis

- It would appear from the examples of good practice that people engage around specific issues that are directly affecting them in their day to day lives.
- The questionnaire/survey method of consultation is useful for getting statistical data on specific issues. However it is not so good for encouraging participation and creating an ongoing dialogue between groups of people.
- The workshop and focus group method of engagement is a more sophisticated, effective tool which can be used to encourage local people to talk to each other and brainstorm ideas together.
- It is felt that the Barking and Dagenham Partnership is the main driver in empowering and engaging the community. The Partnership will be reviewed and re-structured to reflect its development since 2001. This will improve the way in which it involves the local community. The sub groups and their membership will also be rationalised to achieve consistency across all the groups.

- Probably the most essential part of consultation and engagement is providing feedback. This facilitates a dialogue and helps to keep the lines of communication open. Participants should be told what the Council is going to do or change as a result of the consultation, or why their views have not been taken on board. This will put pressure on the organisation doing the consultation to implement the results and develop action plans. The feedback should be timely, relevant and appropriate to the audience.
- There have been 30 meetings of the CHP boards since March 2003, attended by over 360 tenants/lessees. Tenants/lessees are invited to participate during the meetings and help identify priorities and concerns. The CHP's have prioritised £2.75 million expenditure on community safety issues, using their local knowledge and that of the community. Public attendance at recent CHP meetings has been boosted by running workshops which allow tenants to identify priorities in their areas and develop estate plans.
- The Status Survey conducted on tenants of Barking and Dagenham has been analysed by CHP areas and provides area profiles on the basis of age, ethnicity, gender and economic income. The CHP boards will be able to use this information to help them understand the needs, circumstances, priorities and views of their tenants.
- The Council website gets around 40,000 hits per month and has recently been re-published in line with ODPM guidelines on accessibility. The site was re-launched in December 2003. The re-launched site includes translations of the Council's key documents into the community languages. The new accessibility features will also allow people with sensory impairments to browse and undertake transactions with the Council, giving access to many people who have been excluded by the website. The site will be fully e-government 'transactional' by April 2004. At present the Council makes some use of the website to encourage participation and conduct consultation through Youth Forum websites, Youth Forum information, Social Services user forums, online art projects and equalities & diversity information.
- The Council has been successful in bidding for funds for UK Online Centres at Marks Gate, Parsloes, Thames View, Barking and at four Age Concern Centres. These centres, together with the People's Network in libraries make computer access available to anyone in the community that wants it.
- The Street Leaders Scheme is being explored by the Council. It would be based on a similar scheme introduced in Southwark where voluntary leaders would engage with the community on environmental issues such as street litter and anti social behaviour. If the scheme is introduced volunteers would be offered training in how to record notes of environmental crimes that they witness and encourage other members of the community to do the same. This will give local people the opportunity to make a difference to the environment that they live in. The Council is currently researching avenues for funding the scheme.

- The Corporate Monitoring Group (CMG) currently monitors the issues raised at all forums and decides how best to address them via Council policy. Feedback is given to the relevant Forum explaining what action that will be taken by the Council.

Gaps

It would appear from analysis of good practice that there are some gaps around engagement and empowerment of the community:

- The Tenant Participation Compact is being reviewed and possibly amended to take into account new arrangements around Community Forums and CHP's.
- In the past the Council has not been very good at feeding back to the participants of consultation, although an action around feedback does appear in the Council's Consultation strategy.
- At present there are low numbers of young people involved in Community Forum meetings, CHP meetings and Neighbourhood Management Partnerships (see section on young people for more information).
- Although the Council makes some use of e-government to consult and engage the community this needs to be increased. The re-launch of the website has made it more accessible and will enhance consultation and engagement through interactive technology.

Recommendations

It has been recommended that:

- the Council website is developed to facilitate community empowerment and consultation with all members of the community
- all consultation reports should be available on the internet
- when presenting items at forums it must be specified whether they are for information purposes or open for consultation. If it is for consultation the Council must be specific about what has already been decided and what is open to debate
- all consultation undertaken must specify feedback mechanisms and timescales at the beginning of projects and the results of all consultation should be fed back to participants within the stated timescale
- the Community Action Plans (CAP's) are used as the basis for all community planning within the context of the Community Strategy and are disseminated to CHP's
- once a year all forums are updated on the key things that they have achieved.

COMMUNITY FORUMS

Key Facts

- Six Community forums were set up in Barking and Dagenham in 2000
- Six meetings are held each year in each forum area
- The average attendance at Community Forum meetings is 47 residents
- Attendance by BME communities has risen to an average of 11% in 2002/03

Best Practice

Regionally

- The Commission visited the City of Westminster, which organises Community Forums to engage local people. They are run on the following basis:
 - pre-meetings with senior officers and Councillors to deal with individual concerns and service requests
 - mini discussions with short presentations on an advertised topic
 - a main meeting with presentations relevant to the forum area.Supporting the work is a newsletter that is circulated to the attendees covering actions and feeding back information from the meeting.
- These are seen as effective ways to manage the expectations of individuals with personal concerns, clarifying topics to engage those who are interested and ensuring that progress is fed back to participants.

Locally

- Community Forums have been effective in encouraging local residents to bring issues of personal concern to Councillors and officers attention. They have been operating in the same format for three years and have also participated in the development of neighbourhood co-ordination in two forum areas. In the remaining four areas local residents have been working with Groundwork East London to produce area action plans that contain a number of proposals from the community to improve the areas.

Analysis

- Barking and Dagenham's Corporate Performance Assessment Report December 2002 stated that "the Council has made some good progress in establishing six community forums with delegated budgets in parallel to Community Housing Partnerships, the vision and purpose behind this is not as widely shared as it should be".
- A review of Community Forums in Barking and Dagenham is currently being undertaken and a set of proposals has been agreed.
- Westminster's approach of having pre-meetings to deal with individual concerns may be a useful method of assisting members of the community

with personal issues in relation to service delivery and to engage with service providers rather than through the main meeting.

- Advertising agenda topics in advance of the meeting may be beneficial in attracting a wider community.
- Newsletters appear effective in giving the forums an identity which engages local people. The two community newsletters funded through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) have increased awareness and are starting to build an identity.
- Community Forums in Barking and Dagenham have benefited from Neighbourhood Management Co-ordination especially in the Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames area in terms of community engagement, and at Wellgate through focused activity and community partnerships.
- The Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames Community Forum has supported the engagement of local people by using Neighbourhood Renewal Funds to run specific events targeted at specific audiences e.g. the Faith Event and Parents Reception.
- All Community Forums have been allocated a budget of £10,000 to spend on small projects in their area and there are no restrictions on how or what this money is used for.
- The provision of creche facilities and training provided through Neighbourhood Renewal Fund has not noticeably improved attendance at Community Forums.
- Consultation undertaken showed that forum attendees felt that the forums involved “the Council telling you it knows best on how to do things”, “providing people with information” and thought they were “decision making forums with limited powers”.
- The attendees would like the forums to be “conducting genuine consultation”, “providing people with information” and giving people the opportunity to “organise how some services are run”.

Gaps

- Support to undertake outreach work with communities in all areas has not been possible, although where this has been undertaken there has been increased engagement.
- Four Community Forum areas do not currently have Neighbourhood Management Co-ordination.
- It has been recognised that issues that relate to individuals problems are not best served by being raised at Community Forum meetings. The Council may

want to consider “surgery” type pre meetings as these may be a more effective approach.

- Clarifying important issues for local people and encouraging discussion is best served when those who are able to answer questions are able to attend. At present it is often the case that individual responses are made outside of the meeting.
- The forums should consider identifying funding, from the budgets allocated to them, to run specific events or projects that engage local people.
- Young people should be encouraged to take part and attend Community Forum meetings. This may best be done by advertising agenda topics that are of interest to young people in schools and youth clubs.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- the Community Forum Lead Officer should take responsibility for implementing, monitoring and delivering the Community Action Plans (CAP's)
- the results of consultation are fed back to the forum within 6 weeks (or at the next meeting)
- the Community Forums encourage active participation at meetings and consider organising workshops
- the Community Forums give active consideration to the allocation of at least £1,000 to small community groups.

BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS (as defined by the Census 2001)

Key Facts

The following statistics are from the Census 2001:

- The current BME population of Barking and Dagenham is 14%
- There is a higher concentration of BME groups in Abbey and Gascoigne wards (31%)
- Abbey and Gascoigne wards are in the top 10% of most deprived wards in the country according to the 2001 indices of deprivation
- 11% of attendees at Community Forums in 2002/03 were from BME groups
- 6% of BME residents used the corporate complaints procedure in 2002/03
- Community Housing Partnership boards currently have a 22% representation from BME communities
- Just 9% of Council tenants are from BME communities

The following statistics are from the Status Survey conducted in 2003:

- People of African origin make up the largest single BME group of Council tenants (3%)
- BME tenants are more likely than white tenants to rate their rent as poor value for money (20% versus 11%)
- They are also less satisfied with their accommodation (63% satisfied compared to 79% of white tenants), and
- are more likely to describe the condition of their home as poor (25%)

Best Practice

Regionally

- The Westminster Primary Care Trust has set up a BME Health Forum which is an independent multi-agency forum with over 260 BME members from Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster. It also includes representatives from local statutory agencies. The forum focuses on strategic policy issues with the aim of engaging BME community groups in policy developments and initiatives related to health care. The aims are to create an effective and sustainable mechanism for communication and to empower communities to engage in a debate with the local health services.

Locally

- The EMPA (Ethnic Minority Partnership Agency) open day which took place in May 2003 was considered to be a success. It was organised by EMPA, Housing and Health and Leisure and Environmental Services and was aimed at black and minority ethnic residents. This gave these communities the chance to talk face to face to Council officers about accessibility to Council services.
- Throughout September and October 2003 the Council and the community celebrated Black History Month with a very successful programme of events taking place locally. Many local groups took part including six secondary

schools, six primary schools, three diverse community agencies, the Community Music Service, Valence House Museum and the local library service. It was considered such a success that another one is being planned. In order to attract more young people some form of entertainment or performance act will take place.

Analysis

- BME groups enjoy participating when given the chance to talk face to face about Council services.
- Community Forums are moving towards reflecting the 14% BME population of the borough although a 3% increase in attendance is required.
- As part of the Race Equality Scheme all departments within the Council must conduct impact assessments. This will include collecting baseline data from BME groups and assessing the impact of Council services on all members of the community. This will be a good opportunity to engage and develop and an ongoing dialogue with the local community.
- The corporate contract for the Translation and Interpretation Service helps the Council to engage and consult with BME residents.

Gaps

- Currently impact assessments are not undertaken, but by conducting these the Council will have the opportunity to engage with local community groups and develop an ongoing dialogue.
- Barking and Dagenham needs to expand the range of methods of engagement that are used in order to engage more local people. For example, online chat forums would allow more residents to voice their opinions and become part of the decision making process. This method should help to engage younger people and BME groups who may not wish to attend a formal Council meeting. In addition on-line feedback forms will allow service users to give immediate feedback on the quality of services.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- the Council endorse the objectives of the Race Equality Scheme and encourage participation and involvement of BME communities
- the Council will engage with BME groups to ensure services are accessible to the whole community and specific to their cultural needs.

FAITH GROUPS

Key Facts

The following statistics are from the Census 2001:

- 68.99% of the local community describe themselves as Christian and mainly live in Thames ward (75.43%)
- 0.22% describe themselves as Buddhist and mainly live in Abbey ward (0.66%)
- 1.14% describe themselves as Hindu and mainly live in Abbey ward (3.89%)
- 0.33% describe themselves as Jewish and mainly live in River ward (0.65%)
- 4.36% describe themselves as Muslim and mainly live in Abbey ward (21.07%)
- 1.07% describe themselves as Sikh and mainly live in Abbey ward (4.97%)

Best Practice

Regionally and Nationally

- In Hackney, the North London Muslim Housing Association focuses on engaging with the Muslim community about their housing needs. They ensure that housing is not only affordable but also accessible to mosques and community centres and has suitable facilities for washing, food preparation and food consumption. The association has also established a project called Faith in the Future to help involve faith communities in regeneration.
- In Coventry a new community centre is managed by someone of Sikh origin and chaired by the parish priest. The new centre provides space for a 'black majority church' to worship and for Muslim women to meet. It also hosts a centre for refugee support and a choice based local lettings scheme for affordable housing.

Locally

- The Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames Community Forum reps visited the Gudwara Temple and the Mosque. Councillors and officers attended in order to engage with these communities and promote Community Forum meetings.
- The visit to the Gudwara temple led to a faith reception being held at Ripple Hall. Officers and Councillors gathered some interesting information.

Analysis

- The faith event was successful in building relationships and dialogue with the faith communities.

Gaps

- Generally the Council does not engage very well with faith groups. Just one Community Forum has visited faiths in their area. In addition faith

communities are not currently represented on the Barking and Dagenham Partnership.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Community Forum Members and officers should visit local faith groups to promote themselves as identified as best practice in Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames
- the Barking and Dagenham Partnership organises visits to local places of religious worship
- the Barking and Dagenham Partnership review its representation from faith communities.

OLDER PEOPLE

This section has links to the Anti Age Discrimination Policy Commission.

Key Facts

The following statistics are from the Census 2001:

- 14.71% of the population are over 65 years of age
- These people are mainly living in Chadwell Heath (19.97%)
- Older people tend to be the most prominent group attending Community Forum meetings

The following statistics are from the Status Survey conducted in 2003:

- 39% of Council tenants are of retirement age, including 19% who are aged 75 and over
- Pensioners tend to be more satisfied than adults and families with their accommodation (89%), the Council as a landlord (78%), with their rent as value for money (78%) and with the neighbourhood they live in (71%)

Best Practice

Regionally

- Many Council's across London are involved in the Better Government for Older People pilot. This is effective because older people are able to hold senior managers and Councillors directly to account on service issues. They do this through a range of mechanisms such as a Consultative Committee, a Deputy's Panel and through representation on a cross agency officer steering group.

Locally

- The Older Persons Forum in Barking and Dagenham has been run successfully by the Council for five years. Meetings are held once a quarter, an average of twenty five people attend and they are open to any older person living in the borough. Here residents are able to discuss service issues and become involved in consultation.
- The Council holds the National Service Framework (NSF) for Older People's conference annually. Here the Council is able to get the views of older residents on issues such as travel and access to services. An NSF participation co-ordinator has also been recruited to continue this engagement work.

The Anti Age Discrimination Policy Commission has conducted research and analysis of issues around older people and has identified the following gaps and recommendations.

Analysis

- The Council's recruitment, selection, and employment policies and training and development opportunities offer equality across all ages. However the Council has plans to concentrate on various equalities and diversity issues during 2004/05 and specifically tackle age discrimination in the work place during 2005/06.
- The Council currently asks applicants to declare their age by asking for their date of birth on job application forms. This was felt by some staff to discriminate against older applicants as there was a perception that the organisation may not want to take on someone older who would be retiring in a few years time. There is no hard evidence that this is the case but most people felt that they would prefer the date of birth to be removed from the form.
- Some Council staff aged over 50 feel discriminated against because of their age. They find it harder adapt to changes and often feel they are getting left behind. It is sometimes assumed that this does not matter because they are heading towards retirement age. Information technology was a particular concern as they felt less able to adapt.

Gaps

- It is Council policy to not employ staff (including agency staff) over the age of 65 yet there are a few examples of this happening through special arrangements.
- Some people feel that there is not enough provision made to help staff plan for retirement or redundancy. At present the Organisational Development & Employee Relations division are conducting research and exploring the possibility of running an in-house retirement programme.
- The Council's web-site has been identified by some members of the community as not being customer friendly to older people and people who have difficulty reading small print. Some people also thought that it was not particularly interesting to older age groups. The point has been made that older people are increasingly using computers. We were advised by the website staff that there is a facility to alter the font size when viewing our site but this in itself is not felt to be customer friendly.
- The concept of inviting older people into schools to work in a classroom was discussed. It was felt that they could be invited in to talk about historical topics and read with young people to encourage engagement between older and younger people.
- In addition it was suggested that job shadowing across different ages could occur to encourage older and younger people to engage with each other.

Recommendations

Please refer to the Anti Age Discrimination Policy Commission report for full list of recommendations.

DISABLED PEOPLE

Key Facts

- In August 2000 7,380 people living in Barking and Dagenham were claiming disability allowance (the Department of Works and Pensions)
- 24.5% of local residents of working age are disabled (the highest in London)
- In April 1999 5,690 local residents were registered with the Council as disabled (this does not cover all disabled people living in the borough)
- 657 people were registered as having a learning disability
- 834 people were registered as having visual impairments
- 499 people were registered as having hearing impairments

The following statistics are from the Status Survey conducted in 2003:

- 50% of Council tenant households contain a resident with an illness, disability or long-term sickness
- 7% of Council tenant households contain a resident who is a wheel chair user
- 29.14% of Council buildings that are open to the public are currently fully accessible (BV156)
- Barking and Dagenham aims to achieve 40% accessibility of public buildings by March 2004

Best Practice

Nationally

- Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council has a Disabled People's Working Party which advises the Council on all issues affecting disabled people. A sub group called the Access Planning Group reviews all relevant planning applications to ensure that access for disabled people is incorporated into the design. This had led to changes in planning policy.

Locally

- Barking and Dagenham have been running user carer forums for five years as well as forums for deaf and hard of hearing and blind and partially sighted residents since 2002. Accessible venues are always used and times of meetings are varied. In addition free public transport is provided. Members of the Osborne Partnership (who are adults with disabilities) provide and serve the refreshments. These forums have informed people about Social Services and Primary Care Trust integration, consulted on changes in residential care, homecare arrangements and user satisfaction with services. Residents have also had the opportunity to attend training with staff, talk to staff about the issues they face and become mystery shoppers who provide valuable feedback to the Council about the accessibility of services.
- The Disablement Association in Barking and Dagenham has set up the Welfare to Work Project using NRF funding and are the only London borough to do so. There are currently forty three clients on the programme of which ten have gone into employment, nine into work placements and twenty four have received training. As a result of the good work that is being done the

Job Centre Manager has asked the project to lead on a good practice model across North East London.

Analysis

- The Disability Consortium in Barking and Dagenham is currently working with voluntary groups to take the disability agenda forward and overcome the barriers that disabled people face within the community.
- As a result of consultation at the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Forum extra minicom training has been given to staff.
- The Access Forum is held every three weeks and is open to members of the public and the voluntary sector. The attendees are consulted on Council policies and recently, as a result of consultation, the Council has agreed to build railings at dropped kerbs to prevent motorist parking there.
- The Disablement Association has consulted with local disabled people, partner agencies and employers to deliver effective, useful training that will help people to gain employment.
- The Council has produced a Workforce Development Strategy and an Unemployment Strategy to help disabled people get into employment.

Gaps

- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requires all public buildings to be fully accessible to disabled people. The Council has recognised that many of its public buildings are not accessible and are currently undertaking a review of progress in achieving compliance on two levels:
 - physical access
 - access to goods and services (which includes training for staff)

This work is being undertaken jointly by the Corporate Strategy Department and Leisure and Environmental Services.

- The Council's Access Officer has identified some gaps around the accessibility of roads and pavements. He is working closely with the Highways Division to audit main roads and pavements across the borough, prioritise the work that needs to be done and organise the budgets to fund the work.

Recommendations

It has been recommended that:

- a helpline is set up by the Council for disabled people to use when applying for jobs
- all Community Forums organise a presentation on the impact of disabilities upon employment

- all voluntary, community and tenants groups should take into consideration the accessibility of venues when booking meetings.

PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

Key Facts

- Barking and Dagenham has high rates of psychiatric morbidity compared to other boroughs (as measured by the MINI index)
- Barking and Dagenham's mental health services are amongst the most poorly resourced in London (as found from the Dr Foster Survey)
- For many people the onset of symptoms of mental illness occurs between the ages of 14 and 35
- Across the country the highest rates of self harm related to mental illness are in young single men
- There is some evidence to suggest that young black men are over represented within mental health services
- The Government expects to see annual reductions in the rates of suicides related to mental health problems

The following statistics are from the MIND Charity website:

- 30% of people will experience mental health problems every year in Britain
- The most common form of mental illness is anxiety and depression and this is experienced by 9.2% of adults in Britain

Best Practice

Regionally and Nationally

- The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea have been awarded Beacon Status for their Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service which is a joint service run by Social Services, Education departments and the Mental Health Trust. A great deal of work has been done to de-stigmatise mental health problems and promote positive emotional well being. One example of this was moving mental health services and professionals into a non medical environment. They have also developed close links with schools, GP surgeries and family centres to ensure that support and expert care are available for families and young people.
- Surrey County Council have also been awarded Beacon Status for their Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. They have developed a number of initiatives in partnership with Surrey's Health Trusts, schools, the voluntary sector and young people. Working with GP's, schools and young people means that they are able to recognise problems and intervene at an early stage. They have also developed a parent led support group for the parents of children with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder.

Locally

- Barking and Dagenham has developed a Crisis Resolution Team (CRT) staffed by nurses, social workers and medical input. The team provides urgent response to people in mental health crisis 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- Barking and Dagenham have three places in a unit based in Romford that can be used by people who need a short break away from their home environment and may otherwise need hospital admission. It is envisaged that this will be linked to the Crisis Resolution Team who could act as the gatekeepers for this service.

Analysis

- New posts for graduate workers will provide short term evidence based psychological treatment in a primary care setting and the post holders may be trained for a career in psychology.
- New posts for Gateway Workers will be introduced and the staff will work in a primary care setting and in A&E departments to provide triage functions.
- There is currently a programme of recruitment and reprovision of GP's surgeries in Barking and Dagenham.
- Barking and Dagenham has an Assertive Outreach service and additional investment has been provided to ensure the team is able to meet local needs.
- Workskills opportunities are currently provided by The Shaw Trust to residents of Barking and Dagenham and the Rethink Employment Service provides vocational activities and a job club.
- HUBB (the local mental health users' group) provides advocacy for people in hospital and in the community. However it is likely that the demand for this service will increase as the role of advocacy is enhanced in a new Mental Health Act.
- There are currently a small number of services specifically designed to facilitate access for black and ethnic minorities. These are the Translation and Interpretation service, Mental Health Advocacy service, an ethnic minority counselling service and day services and activities targeted at specific groups. We also provide a small amount of "capacity building" funding to EMPA who run small supportive groups.
- There is some evidence that women patients would prefer a single sex environment. Examples of these services in other areas include single sex accommodation, women only crisis houses and women only day centres.
- The Health Scrutiny Panel recognised that the Community Forums have a role to play in de-stigmatising mental health issues. Members have requested that a presentation is given at each of the Community Forums and an article is placed in the *Citizen* magazine regarding mental health. The aim is to dispel the myths and prejudice around mental health issues and promote the social inclusion of members of the community suffering from mental health problems.

Gaps

- It has been recognised that the Mental Health Strategy for Barking and Dagenham needs to address issues around reducing stigma and increasing opportunities in the wider community. This will include “health promotion” activities that will improve the support available for people seeking employment and maintaining tenancies.
- There is a Mental Health Social Inclusion Co-ordinator who works across Havering and Barking and Dagenham Mental Health Services, however it has been recognised that this area of work is underdeveloped.
- Barking and Dagenham currently have an insufficient number of GP’s and practice nurses working from a range of poor premises. This means the borough has serious difficulties meeting Government targets.
- Barking and Dagenham has two Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs) one covering the Barking area and one covering Dagenham. However these are based at the Hedgecock Centre and it has been recognised that the accommodation is extremely cramped.
- Many of Barking and Dagenham’s services are not available to young people. This along with the stigma around mental illness puts many people off seeking treatment.
- There are opportunities for the Porters Avenue day service to strengthen partnerships with other day service providers to maximise benefits for users. In addition the Jessie Dixon Drop-in Centre has inadequate premises. Planning for the future needs to include partnerships with other providers.
- Although there has been successful development of supported living settings to empower people, Barking and Dagenham still needs to ensure that residential care places are available.
- There are currently no woman only specialist mental health services available in Barking and Dagenham.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- user involvement and consultation is part of the development of new services
- Barking and Dagenham move towards integrating activities that are currently centre based with mainstream activities such as providing support and pathways to employment
- all Community Forums organise presentations on mental health issues.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Key Facts

The following statistics are from the Census 2001:

- 23.39% of the population are under the age of 15
- Young people are mainly living in Gascoigne ward (26.02%)

The following data is from Best Value Performance Indicators:

- In 2002/03 88% of 15 year olds achieved 5 or more GCSE's at grades A* to G including English and Maths
- In 2003/04 49.7% of 15 year olds achieved 5 or more GCSE's at grades A* to C

The following statistics are from the Status Survey conducted in 2003:

- 18% of Council tenants are one parent families and tend to be living in the Chadwell Heath and Whalebone area, and
- 17% are living in the Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames area

The following statistics are about looked after children

- In September 2003 there were a total of 380 looked after children in the borough
- 95 of those were asylum seekers, and
- 237 were placed outside of the borough

Best Practice

Regionally and Nationally

- Camden has illustrated a good example of neighbourhood management with one or two Community Development Officers working with each of their forum areas. This structure allows officers to work very closely with the local community by responding to their needs and engaging with them on local issues. One example of a successful project run by local people was the development of a park area by parents for local children. In this particular area of the borough there was no green space for the local children to play. Community Development Officers helped local mothers apply for funding to develop an area of green space where their children could play safely.
- A project has been implemented in Moss Side, Manchester where a partnership of schools, colleges, careers, youth, community and business agencies has been set up. It targets education and training for disaffected and under achieving young people focussing on the needs of African-Caribbean pupils. Over the past 5 years it has enabled 2500 pupils to improve their skills and has provided a new start for 148 excluded pupils. In addition it has helped 55 young people to gain employment.

Locally

- The Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum is a successful example of engagement. It is a participative forum where young people meet every two months to express their views on Council services and get involved in the

decisions making process. Their ideas are fed back to the Council. Some of the most recent things that they have been involved in include consultation as part of the Age Discrimination Policy Commission, developing a Youth Forum website which has links to a discussion board and the Council's website, they have re-written the Children's Charter in "young person friendly" language and the Election Group has been working on publicity to be distributed to schools and youth groups for the Youth Forum elections.

- The Children's Forum also meets every two months to discuss the progress of projects funded by the Children's Fund. These projects include a newsletter (the editorial board for which is made up of children), the design of a website by the children, the Youth Bank where children are allocated a budget and are able to decide how to spend it and The Marks Gate project which addresses some of the youth crime problems in this area.
- The Neighbourhood management website project in Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames and Wellgate involves young people from schools and youth clubs in designing a community website for their area.
- Barking and Dagenham runs two clubs that engage with looked after young people. One is for people aged twelve to sixteen and the second is for young people leaving care. There is also a newsletter that is edited by the children themselves and sent to all looked after children over the age of twelve.

Analysis

- The Children's Fund has been working on allocating grants designed to tackle poverty and disadvantage amongst children and young people (5-13 years of age). Work is being done in four main areas: aspirations and experiences, economic disadvantage, isolation and access, and children's voices. Much useful consultation has been conducted with children and this has been fed into the Participation Strategy.
- Social Services have developed a Participation Strategy for looked after children. It includes three priorities around providing information to children and young people, these include :
 - producing of a pack for looked after children
 - reviewing the complaints procedure for children and young people, and
 - helping young people to develop a set of service standards.
- Work being done to implement 'Viewpoint' which is a speaking questionnaire. This will help to involve looked after young people in their reviews.
- In addition there are plans to form a Children's Champion Meeting Group which will bring together young people, staff, team managers and Councillors to review the progress of participatory work between young people's groups and the Social Services department.
- The newly structured Youth Support & Development Service provides opportunities for young people between 11 and 19 years to engage with

informal education programmes outside the formal curriculum. Programmes are primarily delivered during evenings, weekends and school holidays. The service is increasingly engaged in offering day time opportunities to young people who are disaffected. The service is developing its inclusion programme which emphasises links with schools, colleges and the soon to be introduced Connexions Service. The structure is based on two teams working on providing informal education programmes including advice and guidance and support to Community Based Youth Organisations.

Gaps

- At present the Youth Forum are not involved with the Barking and Dagenham Partnership or the Neighbourhood Management Partnerships.
- Community Housing Partnerships have identified the need to do more to involve young people as there are currently low numbers attending meetings.
- All forums need to carry out work to engage with young people to help break down barriers to participation.
- The Participation Strategy identifies some gaps around information provision for children and young people. A mapping exercise is taking place to identify what information and leaflets are currently available.
- Gaps have been identified around internet access for looked after children and there are discussions about launching a website that will allow them to email their social workers and access guidance documents and complaint forms on-line.
- It has been recognised that the decisions and suggestions made at the Youth Forum should have the same influence on the Council as other consultative methods.

Recommendations

It has been recommended that:

- a representative from the Youth Forum attends the Barking and Dagenham Partnership meetings
- proposals developed by the Youth Forum are reported to the Corporate Monitoring Group (CMG) where the action taken is monitored and feedback to the Forum.

THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Key Facts

- The Barking and Dagenham Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) is an umbrella organisation that represents approximately 600 voluntary and community groups
- The Community Consortium has been running since December 1999 and is an organisation that brings together community and voluntary groups in the Heart of Thames Gateway area

Best Practice

Nationally and Regionally

- A document has recently been published by Government outlining guidelines on developing Local Compacts. The purpose of Local Compacts is to improve working relationships by developing partnerships between local government, the voluntary and community sector and other partners.

Locally

- The Voluntary Sector are currently working on developing Local Compacts in order to improve working relationships and partnerships between the Voluntary Sector and the Council, the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the Health Authority. Local Compacts will offer the means of support to the development of the voluntary sector.
- The Community Consortium is made up of a strong network of community and voluntary groups in the Heart of Thames Gateway area. This group has conducted a lot of work to build the capacity of local groups, to initiate projects for the development of the area and involve local people in the planning and decision making process.
- The Community Champions Awards were introduced in March 2003 by the CVS and celebrate the success and achievement of local people or local groups.

Analysis

- The draft Barking and Dagenham Local Compact sets out some specific aims, these are:
 - to increase understanding, improve working relationships and extend co-operation between the Council and voluntary and community sector organisations
 - to develop the voluntary and community sector's capacity to provide services to the community and achieve high quality outputs
 - to support initiatives to achieve Best Value in the provision of community services by the Council and the PCT

- to enhance the effectiveness of the Council, PCT and voluntary and community organisations in meeting the needs of the community.
- The Barking and Dagenham Local Compact will be open for consultation with voluntary sector and the Council, the PCT and the Health Authority from March to May 2004. Once it has been agreed it will be signed by all parties.
- The Community Empowerment Network (CEN) has recently been established in Barking and Dagenham and is funded by Neighbourhood Renewal money. The CEN Co-ordinator has been appointed and is working closely with the CVS to get local people and community groups involved and engaged in the Barking and Dagenham Partnership. They will also have the responsibility of writing a protocol which will clarify the relationship between the CEN and the Partnership.

Gaps

- One of the main aims of the Local Compact is to identify areas for improvement and set out action plans. The areas that the draft Compact has identified are:
 - investment in volunteering and community involvement
 - premises and funding sub group
 - black and minority (BME) issues
 - communication and partnership
 - consultation and feedback.
- Many community groups were, up until recently, not registered charities and therefore did not officially receive funding. The Council recognised that this could be a barrier for them and has encouraged many of the groups to become registered charities and now supports them to access funding.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- the Council signs up to the Local Compacts by April 2004
- the Council drives the implementation on the Local Compact through the Executive Lead Member.

SMALL COMMUNITY GROUPS

Key Facts

- There are currently 17 community associations based in Barking and Dagenham that are running local community halls and centres
- The Community Association Federation is becoming the umbrella organisation for all local community associations
- There are currently 28 recognised tenants and residents associations in the borough plus a number of similar informal groups

Best Practice

Nationally and Regionally

- The Government and the voluntary sector now recognises the distinctive nature of community groups and have produced guidance about incorporating this into Local Compacts.

Locally

- The Local Compact for Barking and Dagenham will include information on the distinctive nature of community groups.

Analysis

- The Government and the voluntary sector recognise that a range of groups make up the community sector. They tend to be less formal and more community led and are often not funded or registered charities. These groups can include Community Development Trusts, community centres, village halls, parent and toddler groups, playgroups, self help, arts or sports groups, social clubs and tenants and residents associations.
- The Government also recognises that community groups can play a range of different roles. These roles can include providing a voice for local residents and service users, building relationships and networks in neighbourhoods, providing self help and mutual support, delivering services locally and informally based on community needs.
- The Council currently provides small grants to community and voluntary groups and there are other funders that make small grants available.
- The Community Development Trust in the Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames forum area has been set up to lever in funds for the benefit of the local community and is run by local volunteers.

Gaps

- The Council recognises that local groups do not have the relevant skills to undertake all the tasks expected of them. The Council has now agreed a

contract with an organisation called 'Community Matters' to help Community Associations develop themselves and become independent.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- small community groups are continually given the support and encouragement they need to help them apply for funding or grants
- tenants and residents associations and other related groups are continually given the support they need through the Tenant Participation Compact, to help them apply for funding/grants and to undergo training.

LOCAL BUSINESSES

Key Facts

- Currently 200 local businesses belong to the Local Businessman Association in Barking and Dagenham
- There are currently 4,000 businesses in the borough
- The average business in the borough has 17 employees
- There are 1,900 retail businesses in the borough

Best Practice

Regionally

- The East London Business Alliance (ELBA) is a group of 40 East London City blue chip and medium sized forums which have a commitment to the regeneration of East London through community investment programmes. ELBA works in partnership with key public sector agencies at a strategic level and with local community groups and as a result has developed a wide range of volunteering programmes.

Locally

- The Centre of Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence (CEME) has been developed as part of the Heart of Thames Gateway regeneration programme and is located on the borders of Havering and Barking and Dagenham. It is a university that will provide high quality vocational and academic programmes tailored to meet business needs. Subject areas will include engineering, manufacturing, computer science, business management and enterprise. Its partners include Fords, Barking College, Havering College, Heart of Thames Gateway and the London Development Agency.
- The Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames Neighbourhood Management Partnership and the Community Development Trust are planning to hold a reception for local businesses to help them find out more about the Community Forums, Development Trust and to support the community newsletters.

Analysis

- The borough's young people are leaving education with good qualifications and more young people are going on to further education. In 2002/03 88% of 15 year olds achieved 5 or more GCSE's at grades A* to G and 49.7% of 15 year olds achieved 5 or more GCSE's at grades A* to C grade.
- The Regeneration Best Value Improvement Plan makes recommendations to establish a business forum which will meet six monthly to work to improving communication and build capacity.

- The Wellgate Neighbourhood Management Partnership is also working with local businesses to develop projects which will tackle community issues.

Gaps

- The Council and Chamber of Commerce is ineffective in promoting the borough as a good place for businesses to locate themselves.
- Local employers are still not using local labour. They are also ineffective in engaging with young people and encouraging them to seek employment within the borough.
- There are opportunities for local businesses to sponsor young people to go on to further education.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- all Councillors should be encouraged and assisted to meet with local businesses in their ward to engage with them
- the Council should work to empower the Chamber of Commerce to influence Council decisions
- the Council will establish a local business forum to engage local businesses in Council decision making
- local businesses and the Council work together to engage with young people to promote employment locally and offer sponsorships or job related training
- if successful in the Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames area the neighbourhood approach to business receptions should be implemented in other Community Forum areas.

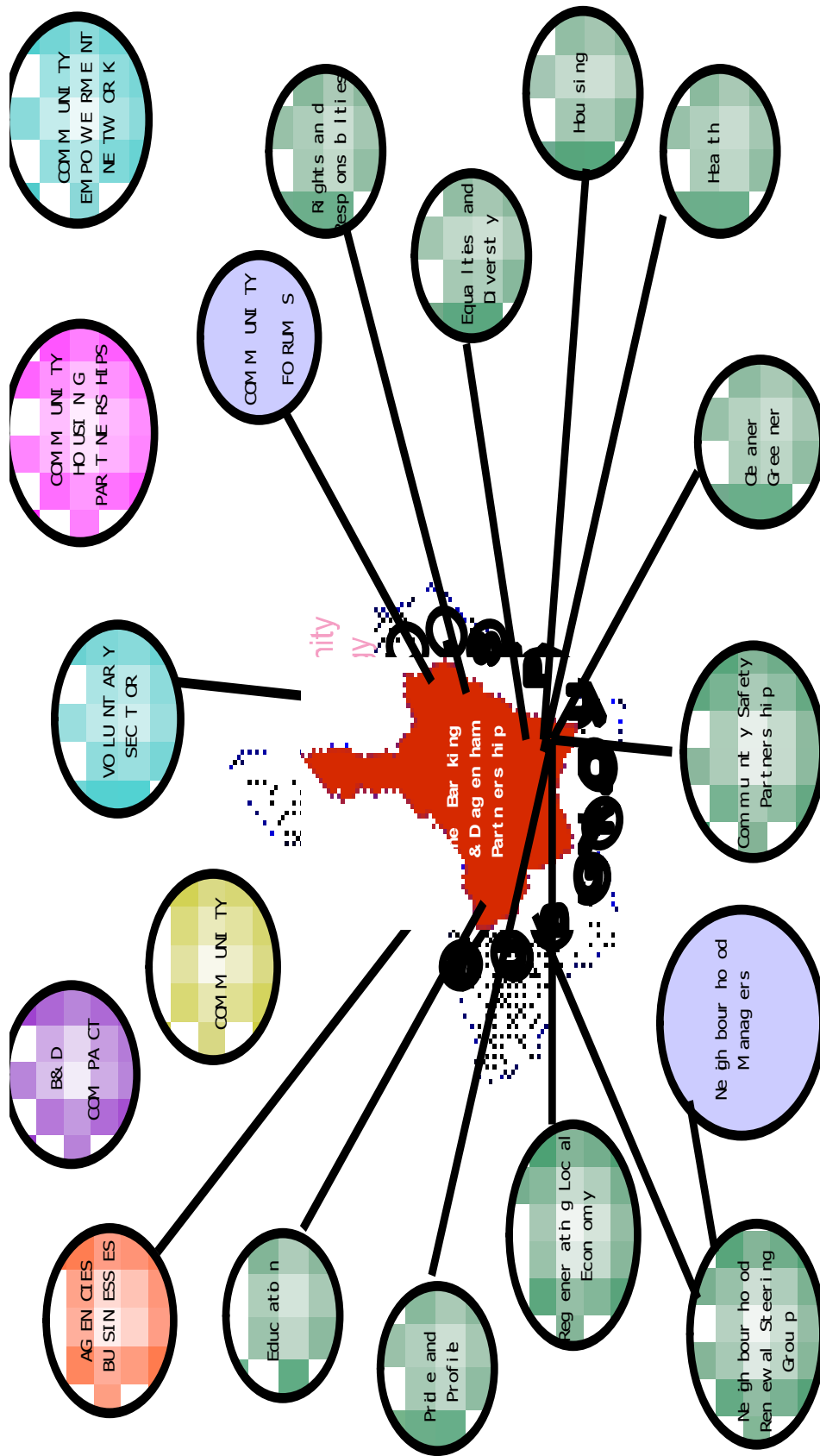
ACTION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION	LEAD OFFICER/MEMBER	TIMESCALE
The Policy Commission will meet in November 2004 to review and monitor progress against the actions set out below		
The Community and its Neighbourhoods		
The Council website is developed to facilitate community empowerment and consultation with all members of the community	Sheyne Lucock	By April 2004
All Citizen's Panel consultation reports are made available on the internet	Joanne Redwin	April 2004 onwards
All other consultation reports are made available on the internet	All Heads of Service	April 2004 onwards
When items are presented at forums it must be specified whether they are for information purposes or open for consultation	John Dawe	April 2004 onwards
If items are open for consultation the Council must be specific what has already been decided and what is open to debate	John Dawe	April 2004 onwards
Any consultation undertaken must specify feedback mechanisms and timescales at the beginning of projects	Joanne Redwin	April 2004 onwards
The results of all consultation should be fed back to participants within the stated timescale	Joanne Redwin	April 2004 onwards
the Community Action Plans (CAP's) are used as the basis for all community planning within the context of the Community Strategy and are disseminated to CHP's	Mick Beackon	April 2004 onwards
Once a year <u>all</u> forums are updated on the key things that they have achieved	John Dawe	April 2004 onwards
Community Forums		
The Community Forum Lead Officer should take responsibility for implementing, monitoring and delivering the Community Action Plans (CAP's)	Community Forum Lead Officers	February 2004 onwards
The results of consultation undertaken at forums are fed back to the forum within 6 weeks (or at the next meeting)	Community Forum Lead Officers	April 2004 onwards
The Community Forums encourage active participation at meetings and consider organising workshops	Community Forum Lead Officers	April 2004 onwards

The Community Forums give active consideration to the allocation of at least £1,000 to small community groups	Community Forum Lead Officers	April 2004 onwards
Black and Minority Ethnic Groups		
The Council endorse the objectives of the Race Equality Scheme and encourage participation and involvement of BME communities	Bill Coomber	April 2004 onwards
The Council will engage with BME groups to ensure services are accessible to the whole community and specific to their cultural	Bruce Morris	March 2004 onwards
Faith Groups		
Community Forum Members and Officers should visit local faith groups to promote themselves as identified as best practice in Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames	John Dawe	April 2004 onwards
The Barking and Dagenham Partnership organises visits to local places of religious worship	Sally Penessa	April 2004 onwards
The Barking and Dagenham Partnership should review its representation from faith communities	Sally Penessa	April 2004 onwards
Older People – See Anti Age Discrimination Policy Commission report for recommendations		
Disabled People		
A helpline is set up by the Council for disabled people to use when applying for jobs	Sam Foggo	From April 2004
All Community Forums organise a presentation on the impact of disabilities upon employment	John Dawe/Param Binning	By March 2005
All voluntary, community and tenants groups should take into consideration the accessibility of venues when booking meetings	All voluntary, community and tenants groups	From April 2004
People with Mental Health Problems		
User involvement and consultation is part of the development of new services	Bruce Morris	March 2004 onwards
Barking and Dagenham move towards integrating activities that are currently centre based with mainstream activities such as providing support and pathways to employment	Bruce Morris	March 2004 onwards

All Community Forums organise presentations on mental health issues	John Dawe/Tim Drew	By December 2004
Children and Young People		
A representative from the Youth Forum attends the Barking and Dagenham Partnership meetings	John Dawe/Sally Penessa/Gayle Levy	By March 2005
Proposals developed by the Youth Forum are reported to the Corporate Monitoring Group (CMG) where the action taken is monitored and feedback to the Forum	John Dawe	March 2004 onwards
The Voluntary Sector		
The Council signs up to the Local Compacts	Mick Beackon	By April 2004
the Council drives the implementation on the Local Compact through the Executive Lead Member	Mick Beackon	April 2004 onwards
Small Community Groups		
Small community groups are continually given the support and encouragement they need to help them apply for funding or grants	Mick Beackon	April 2004 onwards
Tenants and residents associations and other related groups are continually given the support they need through the Tenant Participation Compact, to help them apply for funding/grants and to undergo training	Paul Dawson	April 2004 onwards
Local Businesses		
All Councillors should be encouraged and assisted to meet with local businesses in their ward to engage with them	All Councillors	April 2004 onwards
The Council should work to empower the Chamber of Commerce to influence Council decisions	Jo Sinclair	April 2004 onwards
The Council will establish a local business forum to engage local businesses in Council decision making	Jo Sinclair	April 2004 onwards
Local businesses and the Council work together to engage with young people to promote employment locally and offer sponsorships or job related training	Jo Sinclair	April 2004 onwards
If successful in the Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames area the neighbourhood approach to business receptions should be implemented in other Community Forum areas	Darryl Telles	February 2004 onwards

Appendix 1: THE CURRENT MODEL OF ENGAGEMENT



APPENDIX 2

CONSULTATION WITH COMMUNITY FORUM ATTENDEES SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The Burn's Ladder of Participation can be seen below and is commonly used to measure participation. This has been used in a questionnaire sent to attendees of Community Forum meetings to find out how they feel the Forums are consulting with residents and increasing levels of participation currently and how they would like Community Forums to do this in the future.

- Local policy bottom up strategic decision-making
- Culture change
- Restricted organisation
- Decision-making committees – complete control over specific areas
- Decision-making committees with limited powers
- Partnerships
- Marginalised advisory forums
- Co-option
- Genuine consultation
- Cynical consultation
- Information provided
- Paternalistic
- Cynical misinformation

Response rates

The questionnaire was circulated to 275 recent attendees of community forum meetings with reply paid envelopes and a covering letter. 93 questionnaires have been returned so far giving us a response rate of 34.18%.

Response rates from forum areas are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------|
| ▪ Eastbury, Longbridge and Mayesbrook | 13.97% |
| ▪ Eastbrook, Heath and Alibon | 11.82% |
| ▪ Parsloes, Becontree and Valence | 8.60% |
| ▪ Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames | 12.90% |
| ▪ Wellgate | 11.82% |
| ▪ River, Village and Goresbrook | 9.67% |
| ▪ Don't know/didn't state | 32.25% |

Opinion of forums currently

Respondees were asked to tick up to three boxes describing how they feel the forums are currently run. The results are as follows:

Statement	Percentage agreed (%)
The Council giving cynical misinformation	16.12%
The Council telling you it knows best on how to do things	44.08%
Providing you with information	55.91%

Conducting cynical consultation	18.27%
Conducting genuine consultation	18.27%
Asking for your involvement in making decisions	26.88%
Asking for advice on things that don't really matter	21.50%
Developing a partnership approach	17.20%
Decision making forums with limited powers	31.18%
Decision making forums with complete control over specific areas	7.52%
Being able to organise how some Council services are being run	9.67%
Shifting decision making from Council Officers to local people	5.37%
Allowing local people to decide the way in which the whole Council is run	5.37%

What forums should be like

Respondees were asked to tick up to three boxes describing what they would like forums to be like in the future. The results are as follows:

Statement	Percentage agreed (%)
The Council giving cynical misinformation	0%
The Council telling you it knows best on how to do things	0%
Providing you with information	36.55%
Conducting cynical consultation	4.30%
Conducting genuine consultation	43.01%
Asking for your involvement in making decisions	30.10%
Asking for advice on things that don't really matter	2.15%
Developing a partnership approach	25.80
Decision making forums with limited powers	17.20%
Decision making forums with complete control over specific areas	24.73%
Being able to organise how some Council services are being run	36.55%
Shifting decision making from Council Officers to local people	33.33%
Allowing local people to decide the way in which the whole Council is run	20.43%

Resoondees were given the opportunity to add any other relevant comments regarding Community Forums and engagement, these included:

- There is a need to ensure forums appeal and involve young people and black and minority ethnic groups
- Don't consult after decisions have already been made

- Get a better balance of evening and day meetings
- Give the community more control over how Council money is spent
- The chairperson should be more prepared for the meeting and able to answer residents questions
- All forums should be given full decision making powers
- There is concern about the cost of forums and engagement methods
- Co-operation between the Police and the Council seems to have improved
- Let residents prepare the agenda
- The Forums need more advertisement.

On the positive side:

- There are some good debates and speakers
- Mainly good discussion but there is always going to be an element of cynicism from certain people
- Local residents seem to want the Council to do everything without any help or effort from themselves
- Good initiative and look forward to more involvement in the future.

THE EXECUTIVE**13 JANUARY 2004****REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE STRATEGY**

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		FOR DECISION
<p><i>This report makes recommendations about what immediate actions The Management Team (TMT) are taking to improve the Council's performance on the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) Basket of critical Performance Indicators, which inform our CPA service scores.</i></p> <p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report provides an action plan outlining the action that TMT are taking to improve performance on the Performance Indicators (PI), which constitute our CPA service scores on all areas of council services. For information the action plan also includes those Performance Indicators on Education and Social Services, which impact upon the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) and Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) scores. The Action Plan also contains information on our latest performance on each of these indicators where available.</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>The Executive is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the action that TMT is taking to drive performance on the Critical PI's for CPA; and 2. Agree to support this emphasis on improved performance across the critical basket of CPA Performance Indicators. <p><u>Reason</u></p> <p><i>The attached action plan demonstrates the work being undertaken to improve performance on those areas, which positively impact upon our Comprehensive Performance Assessment score.</i></p>		
<p>Contact Officer Robin Tuddenham</p>	<p>Interim Head of Policy and Performance</p>	<p>Tel: 020 8227 2248 Fax: 020 8227 2806 Minicom: 020 8227 2685 E-mail robin.tuddenham@lbbd.gov.uk</p>

1. Background

- 1.1 In November 2003, the Council received information from the Audit Commission on our service scores across housing, environment, culture and finance. We also received our SSI rating, and our OFSTED score will be available on the

5 December 2003. These elements combine to give our overall CPA service score, which will then inform our re-assessment which has been published on the 18 December 2003. The Council has been able to analyse this data and identify that we will remain in the category of 'Fair' in December 2003. The performance information reveals that whilst some performance indicators have shown an improvement (principally in relation to Housing), others have deteriorated (principally in relation to Environment).

- 1.2 It is critical that the Council maintains improvement in performance, and continues to strive towards being classified as "Good". This will provide further freedoms and flexibilities for the Council, demonstrate evidence of positive outcomes to our community, and have a positive impact upon staff morale which will enable us to more effectively recruit and retain staff.

2. CPA Performance Indicators

- 2.1 While the Council collects performance information on approximately 300 performance indicators, there are only a small number which impact upon the CPA service score. There are thirty which impact upon the service scores not related to Education and Social Services.
- 2.2 TMT have identified actions to be taken during the remaining months of this financial year to make a positive impact upon our performance in the time available. This will impact upon our service scores in December 2004. The outcome of this performance re-assessment in December 2004 will be particularly critical, as it will determine when we will be subject to further comprehensive inspection by the Audit Commission for the next round of CPA. This process will begin in 2005 and will concentrate on around 40 single tier Councils which are showing a lack of improvement in performance.
- 2.3 Appendix 1 contains the action plan for each of the thirty performance indicators, with action taken where possible to influence our performance, and latest performance information from each of these indicators for the information of this for Executive.

Background Papers

- Audit Commission - CPA The Way Forward - June 2003
- Executive/TMT Report - CPA Update - 30 September 2003

BVPI	Description	Action required / or comment	Lead Officer	Timing
Community Housing				
62	Private unfit homes made fit	<input type="checkbox"/> Current performance is 1.65% at Qtr 2, 03/04 – cumulative figure. (2.3% in 02/03) <input type="checkbox"/> Action plan required on how we get into top quartile. (4.2%)	David Woods	asap
183 a and b	Time spent in B&B, hostel accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/> Note required on whether we will achieve the Bed & Breakfast Unit's target by March 2004 – that no homeless family with children should have to live in a B&B except in an emergency, and even then no more than 6 weeks. <input type="checkbox"/> We need to establish whether new hostel accommodation will be ready		asap
Financial Administration				
8	% invoices paid on time	<input type="checkbox"/> Current performance is 90.26%. Government target is 100%. <input type="checkbox"/> Breakdown by department to go to TMT	Julie Parker	asap
9	% council tax collected	<input type="checkbox"/> Current performance is 54% at Qtr 2, 03/04 – cumulative figure (Qtr 2, 02/03 – 52.1% - achieved 91.8% for whole of 02/03 year) <input type="checkbox"/> We need to examine how we can get to 95%		asap
10	% NNDR collected	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION: Department currently reporting that we are on target to hit top 25% national target of 98.6%		n/a
Housing Management				
63	SAP rating	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION: Currently in top quartile. Though we can assume that all authorities have improved and therefore the new top quartiles that will be available in December 2003 are likely to have improved too. Need to ensure we do not slip.	David Woods	n/a
68	Re-let times	<input type="checkbox"/> We need to ensure the PSA pump priming grant will be used to improve performance		asap
72	Urgent repairs on time	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION: Currently in top quartile. Need to ensure we do not slip.		n/a
73	Time for responsive repairs	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION: Currently in top quartile. Need to ensure we do not slip.		n/a
74	User survey: tenants overall satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/> We need to check whether the survey on which this is based can be done annually. Current performance is 65%.		asap
75	User survey: opportunities for participation	<input type="checkbox"/> As above. Current performance is 50%.		asap

BVPI	Description	Action required / or comment	Lead Officer	Timing
164	CRE code of practice	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION: Have always reported YES against this indicator.		n/a
185	Repair appointments made and kept	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION: Currently in top quartile. Need to ensure we do not slip.	David Woods	n/a
184a	Non decent homes	<input type="checkbox"/> Current performance is 55% - improvement of 5% points on 02/03. Need to consider whether any immediate action is required.		
66a	Rent collected	<input type="checkbox"/> Current performance is 97.45% which is in top quartile for London. 98.1% is top quartile nationally. <input type="checkbox"/> We need to produce a report showing the monthly figure for the last 3 years and this year's to identify the peaks and troughs.	Julie Parker	asap
Libraries & Leisure				
118a	User survey: found books	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey currently underway – Need to get something in the press promoting libraries	Roger Luxton	Within the week
118c	User survey: found information	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey currently underway - Need to get something in the press promoting libraries	Roger Luxton	Within the week
119a	User survey: sports & leisure facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey currently underway – Need to get something in the press promoting libraries	Niall Bolger	Within the week
119c	User survey: libraries	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey currently underway – Need to get something in the press promoting libraries	Roger Luxton	Within the week
People				
12	Avg sick days per employee	<input type="checkbox"/> Chief Officers to look at sickness on a week by week basis and report back to John Tatam monthly on action being taken	John Tatam	Weekly / Monthly
14	Early retirements	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION	n/a	n/a
15	Ill health requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION.	n/a	n/a
16a/b	% LA workforce with disabilities / area	<input type="checkbox"/> Need to know the number of people who have answered the question in our neighbouring boroughs. <input type="checkbox"/> Secure funding to expand "Workstep" initiative to place disabled employees in the Council	John Tatam John Tatam	asap Jan 2004 progress report

BVPI	Description	Action required / or comment	Lead Officer	Timing
17a/b	% LA workforce from ethnic minorities / area workforce from ethnic minorities	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION: Need to ensure we do not slip. <input type="checkbox"/> Need information on SCHOOLS	n/a Roger Luxton	n/a asap
156	Accessible buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> Need to confirm the 29.14% figure	Niall Bolger	asap
11a	Women in senior management	<input type="checkbox"/> Current performance is 34.39%. Top quartile figures available Dec 2003. <input type="checkbox"/> We need to establish the total female to male ratio in the workforce	John Tatam	asap
11b/17b	Ethnic minorities in senior mgt	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION: Need to ensure we do not slip.		n/a
Planning				
111	User survey: planning services	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey currently underway. Letter to go out to all applicants who have used the service in the last year.	Niall Bolger	Within the week
109 abc	Planning applications on time a) 60% of major applications in 13 weeks b) 65% of minor applications in 8 weeks c) 80% of other applications in 8 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/> Current performance is a) 36.3%, b) 54.2% and c) 72.2% <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly summary to Graham Farrant on all planning applications (should include reasons for delay if applicable). <input type="checkbox"/> Figures to CE so far for Quarter 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Action plan on what we are going to do in the last 4 months of the year to get to the target.		Weekly
Transport				
96	Condition of principal roads	<input type="checkbox"/> Current performance is 10.7%. <input type="checkbox"/> Report required to TMT on why this has doubled in one year.	Niall Bolger	Next 2 or 3 weeks
99	Road casualties	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION. Generally improving across four of the five elements of this indicator (car users going up). PSA also being used to improve performance		asap
103	User survey: public transport information	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey currently underway		n/a
104	User survey: bus services			n/a
165	Pedestrian crossings with disabled facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION: Currently 100% - Need to ensure we do not slip.		n/a

BVPI	Description	Action required / or comment	Lead Officer	Timing
97a	Condition of non principal roads	<input type="checkbox"/> Need to get an updated figure. Figure for 02/03 is what was recorded for 01/02 – same survey. (Hammersmith & Fulham undertake this)		asap
Waste				
84	Kg waste collected	<input type="checkbox"/> Report to TMT on the 10% reduction in waste that ELWA says is happening!	Niall Bolger	asap
89	User survey: satisfaction with cleanliness	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey currently underway – Need to get something in the press promoting clean streets.		Within the week
91	Recycling facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION: Third orange bag round being introduced in December – should hit the 75% target by end of year.		n/a
82a+b	Recycling + composting	<input type="checkbox"/> Good improvement. Need to know what is being done within the Council offices with regard to recycling.	Niall Bolger	asap
82d	Landfill	<input type="checkbox"/> NO ADDITIONAL ACTION: Only applicable to waste disposal authorities	n/a	n/a
90a	User survey: waste collection	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey currently underway	Niall Bolger	Within the week
90b	User survey: recycling			
90c	User survey: CA sites			
Housing Benefits				
78a	Avg. time new claims	<input type="checkbox"/> Has gone up to 48 days in quarter 2 from 39 days in quarter 1 – still top quartile for London – middle for National which is what we should be concentrating on – 35 days. This indicator was qualified in the 03/04 BVPP audit.	Julie Parker	
79b	Recovery of overpaid benefit	<input type="checkbox"/> On track to exceed year end target of 25% though way off top quartile targets of 51% for London and 62% for National.		

THE EXECUTIVE**REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE STRATEGY****13 JANUARY 2004**

HOME OFFICE CONSULTATION PAPER - POLICING: BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER	FOR DECISION	
<p><i>This report is presented to The Executive to provide Members with an opportunity to comment on Home Office proposals on the operational structures of the Police Service.</i></p> <p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>On 4 November the Government released the Consultation Paper on policing, <i>Building Safer Communities Together</i>. This looks at modernising and reforming the Police Service by developing strong connections between local communities and the Police. This Consultation Paper contains four key themes, which include: increasing community engagement, strengthening accountability arrangements, improving operational effectiveness and modernising the Police Service.</p> <p>The report summarises the proposals and seeks comments from The Executive where appropriate.</p> <p><u>Recommendations/</u></p> <p>The Executive is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss the Home Office proposals and provide an opinion on how the modernised Police Service should operate to meet the need to increase engagement with local people and operational effectiveness; and 2. Agree that this discussion is written up and forwarded to the Association of London Government and the Home Office within the consultation deadline. <p><u>Reason</u></p> <p>This report provides an opportunity for comment on the strategic functioning of a reformed Police Service, and how to maximise its impact upon crime and disorder in Barking and Dagenham.</p>		
Contact Officer: Robin Tuddenham	Interim Head of Policy and Performance	Tel: 020 8227 2248 Fax: 020 8227 2806 Minicom: 020 8227 2685 E-mail robin.tuddenham@lbbd.gov.uk

1. Background

- 1.1 The Government has released a Consultation Paper on policing –*Building Safer Communities Together*. This paper looks at introducing wide ranging reforms to the Police Service. All local authorities are being asked for their comments on this document by 27 January 2004.
- 1.2 The recommendations of the Executive will be forwarded to the Association of London Government to be incorporated into the London Wide response. The Council also intends to provide a separate response to ensure that local priorities are addressed.
- 1.3 This consultation document complements other mechanisms being put in place by the Government. These include the new Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC), which becomes operational in April 2004, and the Police Standards Unit, which exists to harmonise performance across the country.
- 1.4 The Home Office want to stimulate debate on the future shape and role of the Police Service, but the direction of travel is clearly towards an engaged, responsive and truly representative Police Service working within a clear statutory framework, based upon strong partnership arrangements.

2. Current Policing in England and Wales

- 2.1 The Home Office acknowledge that there is considerable misunderstanding about the current Government's arrangements for policing in England and Wales. The current structure is based upon a "tripartite" system. This involves Police Service management through Chief Officers of Police, Police Authorities and ultimately the Home Secretary.
- 2.2 There are presently 43 Police forces in England and Wales. Each one is headed by a Chief Constable. In London, each borough has a Basic Command Unit (BCU) headed by a Borough Commander, who is Chief Superintendent Robin Hopes in Barking & Dagenham.
- 2.3 The Police work in partnership through Crime Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) (called Community Safety Strategic Partnership in Barking and Dagenham). There are 376 CDRPs in England and Wales. There are also 42 Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJB's), which comprise of Chief Officers of the Criminal Justice Agencies in each area.

3. Increasing Community Engagement

- 3.1 The Home Office want to see a stronger role for the local community in Policing, and a more visible and accessible Police Service. The Home Office state that local people should know who their local police are and who is ultimately in charge. It is also important that local people know who else is involved in the Crime and Reduction Partnership in reducing crime.

3.2 The Home Office want to consider some of the following options as ways of communicating the role of the Police Service:

- The Internet
- Libraries and public spaces
- Supermarkets; and
- Community Centres

More effective communication of the work of the Police Service would be welcomed, as evidence suggests that the range of tasks and expectations on police are misunderstood.

3.3 The Home Office intend to increase the visibility and accessibility of the Local Police. There is an expressed intention to reduce the burden of paperwork, with greater use of IT to cut down on form filling.

3.4 The Home Office wish to encourage and widen the potential pool of individuals recruited to the Special Constabulary. This is recognised as a key part of voluntary work with the Police and community engagement with the Police Service. The Home Office are keen to make full use of the expertise of local people, for instance involving those undertaking Neighbourhood Warden Activity or Neighbourhood Watch in a more active Police Service. Barking & Dagenham Neighbourhood Watch is beginning to raise its profile, with a new Chair. Any response to this consultation would need to identify that this work is inevitably reliant on a small number of individuals, and is harder to implement in communities with less stable populations.

4. Accountability of Policing

4.1 The Home Office wish to clarify and strengthen accountability arrangements in the Police Service. There is a recognition that this begins with effective response of local policing through the Basic Command Units. This would mean increased delegation of resources and responsibilities to local police leaders, undertaken within a framework of accountability overseen by the Police Standards Unit. We would welcome this development, as an outer London Borough it can be difficult to exert the same influence of the operations of the Metropolitan police as larger inner London authorities.

4.2 The Home Office have asked whether it should be a statutory requirement on the local Police Force to undertake community consultation. The Home Office want to consider how this might dovetail with other consultation exercises at a local level. Barking & Dagenham Council already has a strong working relationship with the local police, and they attend every community forum. They are also a key part of the Barking & Dagenham Partnership, and we have a thriving Police Community Consultation Group. Community involvement is an established aspect of police work, which does not seem to be fully recognised by this consultation paper. However, the Executive may wish to consider how existing consultation mechanisms could be enhanced.

- 4.3 The Home Office are seeking comments in the introduction of a single non-emergency phone number for the Police. This would be an easily remembered three digit number for non-emergency calls. This would seem to make sense as it would provide the public with an alternative number, which would keep 999 for emergencies, and is established practice in many other countries.
- 4.4 The Home Office are considering introducing a Community Advocacy Service working on behalf of the community and individuals acting as their voice on policing matters. These Advocates could be a source of independent advice and/or take responsibility for people with complaints or concerns in a case working role. This role could be useful if the task is clear, and it does not become too confused with other roles such as the lay visitors to custody, legal advisers and appropriate adults where relevant.
- 4.5 The Home Office are proposing to establish Neighbourhood Panels/Forums to ensure a bottom-up approach to community safety issues. These panels would be seen to focus on anti-social behaviour and crime as a whole rather than purely Police business. The Executive will clearly want to consider whether the existing Community Forums, and Community Housing Partnership structures provides a framework for this process. The Home Office want this process to have a clear link to the Community Safety Strategic Partnership. The Home Office are also keen that there would be some resources available to buy in Street Warden or Community Support Officer work if appropriate.
- 4.6 The Home Office want to strengthen existing partnership arrangements in relation to criminal justice established through Youth Offending Teams, Drug Action Teams and Community Safety Partnerships. The Home Office question whether the current structures provide sufficiently robust constitutional arrangements between key local figures such as the Borough Commander and the local authority Chief Executive. There is also a need to consider the role of other emergency services and the Health Service to achieve the best results. These relationships are well established through the Community Safety Strategic Partnership, which is a statutory entity. The Executive may wish to consider whether these partnerships could be further enhanced.
- 4.7 The Home Office research indicates that the public do not believe they have enough say in decisions about policing or enough communication about how policing operates at a local level. Most people have not even heard of Police Authorities or the structures in place to manage policing. The Home Office is considering wide ranging changes on how policing is governed. The options range from a directly elected Police Board covering a force area, to a Panel of Appointed Members to maintain a single line of accountability on well being issues. This latter model would include members from the local community, Basic Command Units and/or magistrates. The Home Office are keen that any policing board would look at Community Safety in its widest sense.
- 4.8 Expenditure on policing has increased by 19% in real terms since 1997. The Home Office recognise the need for a strong performance assessment framework for policing to enable judgements to be made about cost relative to performance. Barking & Dagenham Community Safety Strategic Partnership is currently undergoing self-assessment as required by the Government Office for London. Any review of performance management of the Police needs to take these self-

assessments into account and ensure that police performance is assessed through existing performance management frameworks, such as the framework for the Barking & Dagenham Partnership (LSP), which will be in place by April 2004. The performance management of the police will also need to be taken into account by the Audit Commission who are reviewing CPA for 2005 onwards.

5. Operational Effectiveness

- 5.1 This consultation paper also looks at how the policing is organised and structured in England and Wales. There is recognition of the need to tackle both anti-social behaviour and disorder at a local level, as well as serious organised crime and terrorism at a national and increasingly international level. The Government is considering the establishment of “strategic forces”. This agenda may be more relevant to those areas with a small police force rather than a large Metropolitan Police service which is already effectively operating at a strategic level.

6. Modernising the Police Service

- 6.1 The Home Office wish to develop the concept of “earned autonomy”, which is gaining greater currency across all public services. It effectively means more freedom for well performing police services, additional grants and lighter touch inspection regimes. Barking & Dagenham would welcome greater freedom and flexibilities for its local command unit, with enhanced scope to deploy resources based upon local crime and disorder priorities, which often conflict with national floor targets. An example of this was the street crime initiative, which took police resources away from local priorities such as reducing residential burglary.
- 6.2 The Home Office recognise that the challenge of rooting out racism in the police service is still a substantial one. There is recognition of the need to create an environment where racist attitudes and behaviour can be freely and openly challenged wherever possible. One proposal to enhance this is more direct involvement of local people in police recruitment. This would appear to be a positive initiative, although there will be capacity issues to effectively support local people through training and development to undertake this work to a high standard.
- 6.3 The Home Office recognise that there needs to be a change of culture and leadership and management of the police service. The old command and control style of leadership will neither be appropriate or effective in the future. There is further work being undertaken on management development and training of chief officers in the police service. This change in management culture and style is welcomed as part of the process of modernisation of all public services, who are delivering a shared agenda through the Barking & Dagenham Partnership.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 This report contains initial views, which will be supplemented by comments from the Executive.
- 7.2 A final response will then be completed, which will be agreed by the Leader and Lead Member for ‘Cleaner, Greener, Safer’, Councillor McKenzie.

Questions to consider

- 1. Are there any other ways beyond existing forums that the local community could become more involved in policing and is this desirable?**
- 2. Is there support for the involvement of the community through community advocates, and what should this role entail?**
- 3. Is there support for the involvement of the local community in police recruitment, and if so how should this operate?**
- 4. Greater decision making at a local level would be welcomed. In what ways could high performance be rewarded so that local people can benefit from more local policing?**
- 5. Is there any need to strengthen the partnership role of the police and if so, how?**
- 6. Is there support for a non-emergency phone number in addition to 999?**

Background Papers

- Home Office Consultation Paper – “Policing: Building Safer Communities Together” - 4 November 2003.
- Community Safety Strategic Partnership Meeting minutes - 17 December 2003.

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