

# London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

## Notice of Meeting

### ASSEMBLY

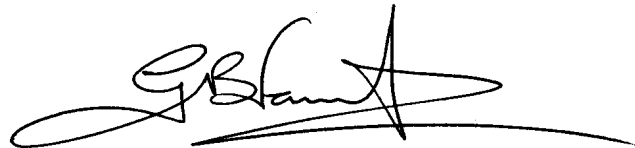
**Wednesday, 4 February 2004 - Civic Centre, Dagenham, 7:00 pm**

To: Members of the Council of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

**Chair:** Councillor J Davis  
**Deputy-Chair:** Councillor D F Best

#### Declaration of Members Interest

In accordance with Article 1, paragraph 12 of the Council's 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



Graham Farrant  
Chief Executive

27.1.04

Contact Officer Valerie Dowdell  
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#### AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. To confirm as correct the minutes for the Assembly meeting held on 7 January 2004 (Pages 1 - 2)

3. **Petitions (for decision): (Pages 3 - 29)**
  - (i) Vandalism and anti-social behaviour in and around Goresbrook Park
  - (ii) Sheppey Road traffic issues
  - (iii) Edgefield Avenue and environs
4. **Local Issue:**

Presentation on Detached Youth Work by Brian Lindsay, Head of Youth Support and Development Service, DEAL
5. **Report of the Executive (for decision) (Pages 31 - 33)**

Including a recommendation on the 2004/2005 Council Tax Base
6. **Leader's Question Time (for response)**
7. **General Question Time (for response)**
8. **Report of the Scrutiny Management Board (for information) (Pages 35 - 39)**
9. **Report of the Development Control Board (for information) (Page 41)**
10. **Report of the Personnel Board (for information) (Pages 43)**
11. **Report of the BAD Youth Forum (for information) (Pages 45 - 48)**
12. **Report of the Community Empowerment and Engagement Policy Commission (for decision) (Pages 49 - 94)**
13. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**
14. **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 Assembly, 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). ***There are no such items at the time of preparing this agenda.***

15. **Any other confidential or exempt items which the Chairman decides are urgent**

## **ASSEMBLY**

Wednesday, 7 January 2004  
(7:00 - 8:10 pm)

### **PRESENT**

Councillor J Davis (Chair)

|                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Councillor J L Alexander    | Councillor Ms M G Baker   |
| Councillor W F L Barns      | Councillor Mrs J Blake    |
| Councillor G J Bramley      | Councillor Mrs J E Bruce  |
| Councillor Mrs D Challis    | Councillor H J Collins    |
| Councillor Mrs J Conyard    | Councillor B Cook         |
| Councillor A H G Cooper     | Councillor Mrs J E Cooper |
| Councillor Mrs V W Cridland | Councillor R J Curtis     |
| Councillor W C Dale         | Councillor J R Denyer     |
| Councillor C J Fairbrass    | Councillor M A R Fani     |
| Councillor Mrs K J Flint    | Councillor C Geddes       |
| Councillor A Gibbs          | Councillor Mrs D Hunt     |
| Councillor I S Jamu         | Councillor F C Jones      |
| Councillor T J Justice      | Councillor S Kallar       |
| Councillor M A McCarthy     | Councillor M E McKenzie   |
| Councillor D O'Brien        | Councillor B M Osborn     |
| Councillor Mrs C T Osborn   | Councillor R B Parkin     |
| Councillor J W Porter       | Councillor Mrs V M Rush   |
| Councillor A G Thomas       | Councillor Mrs P A Twomey |
| Councillor T G W Wade       | Councillor J P Wainwright |
| Councillor L R Waker        | Councillor Mrs M M West   |

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

|                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Councillor D F Best          | Mrs E E Bradley        |
| Councillor A C Clark         | Councillor L A Collins |
| Councillor M W Huggins       | Councillor R J E Jeyes |
| Councillor R C Little        | Councillor D S Miles   |
| Councillor Mrs J E Rawlinson | Councillor L A Smith   |

**76. To confirm as correct the minutes for the Assembly meeting held on 10 December 2003**

Agreed.

**77. Petition relating to traffic issues in Lambourne Road**

Ms L Rich, lead petitioner, introduced the petition.

Agreed the recommendations set out in the report.

**78. Local Issues:**

(i) Annual Audit Letter 2002/03

Received the Annual Audit Letter for 2002/03, introduced by Peter Flamank of PricewaterhouseCoopers.

(ii) Safeguarding Children: A Multi Agency Review of Child Protection Services

Graham Farrant introduced a report setting out the main findings and recommendations arising from a wide-ranging multi agency review of services to safeguard children undertaken by the Area Child Protection Committee.

**79. Report of the Executive**

Noted.

**80. Leader's Question Time**

Councillor Justice asked if consideration had been given to granting a civic award to Jason Leonard for his services to Rugby Union, as he had been a local resident and was educated at Warren School. Councillor Fairbrass responded that the matter had to be discussed with the person concerned first.

**81. Report of the Scrutiny Management Board**

Noted.

**82. Report of the Development Control Board**

Noted.

**83. Report of the Personnel Board**

Noted.

**84. Report of the Community Forums**

Noted.

**85. Report of the Anti Age Discrimination Policy Commission**

Councillor Denyer commended the report to Members and thanked all those involved in producing it for their hard work.

Agreed the recommendations set out in the report.

**86. Report of the Director of Finance: Proposed Change to the Constitution - Council Tax Base**

Agreed that the authority to set the Council Tax Base for 2004/05 be delegated to the Director of Finance.

## THE ASSEMBLY

4 FEBRUARY 2004

## REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

| PETITION: VANDALISM AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN AND AROUND GORESBROOK PARK   | FOR DECISION |
|---|--------------|
| <p><i>The Constitution (Article 2, paragraph 15) requires petitions containing more than 50 signatories from separate households to be reported to the Assembly, together with details of action taken or proposed.</i></p>   |              |
| <p><b>Summary</b></p>   |              |
| <p>To report the receipt of a petition containing 177 individual signatures from 139 separate addresses in the Borough, plus four addresses outside the Borough, raising concerns about anti-social behaviour in and in the neighbourhood of Goresbrook Park. The covering letter makes reference to 12 principal points of concern (see <b>Appendix A</b>).</p>  |              |
| <p>A meeting took place on 10 November 2003 involving Councillor Thomas, relevant Council Officers, Inspector Stephen Manger (Metropolitan Police), the Lead Petitioner (Mrs S J Johnson), and four other signatories. As a result of this a number of actions were proposed, some of which have already been undertaken, the details of which are in the report.</p>   |              |
| <p>There was a great deal of active community consultation in the proposals and planning of the improvements for this Park. Since the Phase 1 improvement work at Goresbrook Park commenced, in January 2002, it has been the focus of repeated vandalism and anti-social behaviour; however this behaviour is not entirely confined to this Park. A more detailed account of the history of this project is attached as <b>Appendix B</b>.</p>   |              |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b></p>  |              |
| <p>The Assembly is asked:</p>   |              |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) to note that a meeting has been held with the petitioners and as a result of this a number of actions were proposed, some of which have already been undertaken;</li> <li>(ii) that the Council in isolation cannot solve these problems but can only assist in reducing such problems in association with other agencies and with the active support of the majority of the community, and especially parents and grandparents;</li> <li>(ii) to agree that the Council should not proceed with Phase 2 of the Goresbrook Park Master Plan and that a revised Master Plan should be developed for this Park.</li> </ul> |              |
| <p><b>Reason</b></p>  |              |
| <p>To assist the Council in achieving its Community Priority of Making Barking and Dagenham Cleaner, Greener and Safer.</p>   |              |

|   |                                       |  |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Wards Affected</b> – The section of the Park referred to is within Goresbrook Ward, although a small part of the Park is also in River Ward. |                                       |  |
| <b>Contact</b><br>Allan Aubrey  | Head of Leisure and Community Service | Tel: 020 – 82273576<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:allan.aubrey@lbbd.gov.uk">allan.aubrey@lbbd.gov.uk</a>  |
| Peter Parkin  | Parks & Countryside Manager           | Tel: 020 – 8227 6785<br>Fax: 020 – 8270 6787<br>Minicom: 020 – 8227 3034<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:peter.parkin@lbbd.gov.uk">peter.parkin@lbbd.gov.uk</a> |

## 1. Background

- 1.1 The petition is accompanied by a letter from the Lead Petitioner, which refers to a number of matters, and is attached as **Appendix A**. The main issues of the letter can be summarised as follows:

| <b>Issue</b>       | <b>Summary of Request / Comment in Petition</b>  |
|--------------------|--|
| Skate Park         | <i>'remove it as it attracts a disruptive element'</i>   |
| Table tennis table | <i>'remove it as being used for inappropriate purposes'</i>  |
| Children           | <i>'out late at night without parental control, vulnerable to exploitation, rise in "gang culture"</i> |
| Decking            | <i>'vandalised, needs removing'</i>  |
| Cage               | <i>'cleaned up regularly (Refers to the basketball and 5-a-side court)'</i>                            |
| Arson              | <i>'in park, close to fences'</i>  |
| Vehicles           | <i>'speeding and racing of cars on local roads'</i>  |
| Motorcycles        | <i>'using the park'</i>  |
| Parks Police       | <i>'should be patrolling the park, not driving up and down Dagenham Avenue'</i>                        |
| Police Patrols     | <i>'do not visit parks to talk to children'</i>  |
| Pavements          | <i>'need regular cleaning of broken glass and fast food litter'</i>                                    |
| Abandoned vehicles | <i>'high incidence, including burned out cars'</i>   |

- 1.2 Whilst many of those points refer specifically to Goresbrook Park, or to features within it, it is also clear that the problems raised by the petitioners apply equally to factors or locations outside the Park. The problems are therefore better seen as issues for the Goresbrook area as a whole, rather than specifically for the Park.

- 1.3 The North-Western section of the Park has seen some significant changes and physical improvements in the last two years or so, details of which are set out in **Appendix B** to this report.

## **2 Meeting with Petitioners**

- 2.1 In accordance with the Council's procedure for dealing with petitions of more than 50 signatures, a meeting took place on 10 November 2003 involving Councillor Thomas, relevant Council Officers, Inspector Stephen Manger (Metropolitan Police), the Lead Petitioner (Mrs S J Johnson), and four other signatories. The Councillors in the River Ward were also invited to attend but decided not to as it was felt that this was not necessary as the focus of the problem was in the Goresbrook Ward and that no major problems had been reported to them about the section of the Park in River Ward.
- 2.2 Initially, the Petitioners' meeting was focused on the symptoms of anti-social behaviour, which were very apparent to all concerned, rather than the underlying causes. Nevertheless, a number of points came out of the discussions, which are included in the following sections of this report.
- 2.3 The plans showing the position of the Park and the features within it are attached as **Appendix D**.

## **3 Responses to Specific Points in the Petition and To Other Points Arising Out Of the Petitioners' Meeting.**

### **3.1 Multi-agency response**

- 3.1.1 As already noted, the petition covers a wide range of matters which have occurred in the Goresbrook area, and therefore requires responses from a range of departments and agencies. This is the type of issue which the Council's Officers are dealing with through the Local Strategic Partnership, which is focusing a multi agency approach to these types of issues.
- 3.1.2 A list of Police and Council contacts was circulated to all those present at the petitioners meeting, to improve communication with the residents.

### **3.2 Park Management**

- 3.2.1 Goresbrook Park has been area which that has received higher than normal instances of vandalism and anti-social behaviour throughout the Spring and Summer of 2003.
- 3.2.2 Owing to the repeated spates of vandalism the table-tennis table and the decking on which it stood were removed and the area has now been reseeded.
- 3.2.3 The oak decking "Riverdeck" is in need of repair which at the time of the petitioners meeting was estimated to cost approximately £2,000. However, this has subsequently been damaged further and may be beyond repair if so it will be removed and stored in a safe place until a decision is made on if and where it can be relocated.

- 3.2.4 The skateboard area needs to be better contained by fencing to prevent skaters / cyclists riding directly out onto the pavement or into the road and if funding permits this will be carried out next financial year (2004/05).
- 3.2.5 Cycling is permitted in parks, but petrol powered motorcycles, motor scooters and “gopeds” are not. The Parks Police have recently been successful in bring to prosecution a number of illegal motor cyclists riding in parks and this initiative will continue.
- 3.2.6 Fencing and locking of this Park would not put an end to anti-social behaviour, as shown in other parks.

### 3.3 **Parks Police and Council Security**

#### **Parks Police**

- 3.3.1 Parks Police vehicles were often seen driving along Dagenham Avenue because it is their primary route from their operating base / kennels in Goresbrook Road to Heathway and most of the Dagenham area. The log of the incidents for Goresbrook Park to which the Parks Police responded to during July, August and September 2003 is attached as **Appendix C**.
- 3.3.2 The Parks Police do not have sufficient resources to patrol parks full time. The unit also patrols school premises, all parks and public buildings as well as responding to alarm calls and other reports passed to them by Barking Communications Centre. The unit also is required to assist during major emergency incidents. Investigations into the availability of external funding are being carried out by Officers in the Leisure and Community Development, in association with the Community Safety Manager and other agencies.
- 3.3.3 The view expressed by all those present at the petitioner’s was that there should be more Parks Police available to provide a more extensive presence in the Borough’s parks.

#### **Council Security - CCTV**

- 3.3.4 CCTV is not generally appropriate for park locations, because of the large distances and low light levels. Nor was it the solution that some people believed it to be. It is expensive to install and operate and therefore it is concentrated on locations where the number or crime reports indicate it is most needed. The same considerations applied to mobile CCTV cameras, which are installed for limited periods to help in locations where high levels of crime had been reported.

### 3.4 **DEAL / A13 Artscape**

- 3.4.1 Having accepted funding from the Arts Council and the Strategic Regeneration Budget for features in the Park there is expectation that the Council will maintain and retain the features provided. However, the Head of Arts has advised that as specific features were not mentioned in either the original grant application or the expanded scheme there is little likelihood of return of funding being required. The Council is maintaining the horticultural aspects of the scheme and is therefore complying with the funding bodies’ criteria.



3.4.2 The application to Groundwork specified that the project would provide;

Phase 1:

A boundary defined by trees and climbers

Pollarded willows marking the route of the brook

Mown grass lawns for picnicking

Bands of summer wildflowers

Small new play area (skateboard) and upgrading of existing sports area (basketball / five aside court)

Phase 2:

Installation of drumlins and boulders

3.4.3 The Council has now spent the entire Groundwork grant on implementing Phase 1 and on design for Phase 2. A decision now needs to be made on whether the implementation of Phase 2 as it stands should continue. In addition, Groundwork might require their funding returned if the Council decide to remove the skateboard and basketball / five-a-side areas as they were specifically mentioned in the grant application. Negotiations would need to take place should the Council choose this route.

3.4.4 In term of the decking from around the table tennis table most of this has been salvaged and is in storage and could be reused elsewhere in the Borough's parks. However, as a matter of courtesy Officers will advise the designers and funding bodies what has happened and our proposed actions.

3.4.5 The grant funding was only for the provision of physical features and would not have been available to provide or pay for out-reach youth workers.

### 3.5 **Housing & Health Department**

#### **Street Warden Service**

3.5.1 Street Wardens patrols are predominantly carried out in the part of the Borough which covers the residential and shopping areas of River, Goresbrook and Village Wards.

3.5.2 The Street Warden service currently works daylight hours up to 8.00pm during the summer and 5.00pm during the winter months. However, the bulk of criminal or nuisance behaviour generally occurs outside this time.

3.5.3 The Street Wardens are aware of the problems in the area and therefore respond to complaints as well as walk through the Park on occasion to keep an eye on what is happening.

3.5.4 St Albans's Vicarage, and also the Church Hall, which are Church owned, have both stood vacant for some time, attracting anti-social activities. However, proposals were understood to be in place for the redevelopment of the site by a Housing Association. The Street Wardens have approached groups of youths gathered in and around St Albans's Church and Vicarage. Contact has been made with the leaders of Becontree Parish about concerns for the vicarage and church which seem to be being targeted due to their neglected appearance.

Information was also passed to Councillor Huggins who has supported these efforts by contacting the Bishop regarding these properties.

3.5.5 Blank copies of the Street Wardens Service Anti-Social Behaviour Log Sheets will be provided to residents who wish to provide information to build up a diary of events which can then be used in evidence.

3.5.6 The Street Warden service is currently being reviewed, including a review of its operating hours. Although no permanent changes can be made until staff have been fully consulted, arrangements have previously been made to provide patrols at hot spot areas outside normal operating times, where additional funding had been identified for these extra activities.

### **Housing Management**

3.5.7 The Housing Department have advised that the only nuisance reported to Estate Officers within the time scale referred to centred on an area of amenity green in Hedgemans Road. That matter was investigated by Housing and Health Department Officers, at which time four addresses were contacted and the matter was resolved.

3.5.8 The problems now appear to be focused on areas that are not directly managed by the Housing Department. However where a Council tenant is implicated in these activities, or a youth / member of the family is involved, action can and will be taken against that tenant, in accordance with the Conditions of Tenancy.

## **3.6 Metropolitan Police**

3.6.1 The Police "Disorder Bus" has operated in the area. However, it is a responsive service and its route is determined by the number of reports received each week; so unless residents are reporting incidents formally to the Police, the location will not be recognised as a focus for anti-social behaviour. In view of concerns raised in the petition the Disorder Bus will be tasked to include the Goresbrook area in the near future.

3.6.2 The Police informed the petitioners meeting that there had been no specific incidents in the Park reported to them in October.

3.6.3 In addition the Home Beat Officers will be instructed to contact residents reporting issues. Inspector Manger also provided a direct line number to the petitioners to be used to report intelligence.

3.6.4 The Police and Education, Arts and Libraries Department co-operate on truancy patrols (*Operation Caretaker*) which have tended to focus on town centre areas, where truanting children generally gather. On future operations, they will also visit the Borough's Parks.

3.6.5 The Police have been consulted on this report and invited to provide any additional information which they think is relevant, however, at the time of the report was finalised no further details have been received.

### 3.7 **Community Safety**

- 3.7.1 The biggest, single difficulty about dealing with alleged offenders is the gathering of information, intelligence and witness statements sufficient to bring a prosecution in Court, or take other courses of action open. Without that, neither the Police, the Council, nor any other agency could take action. All were willing to help residents in a number of ways, but the judicial system in this Country is based on evidence and witness statements. It is, therefore, essential that residents come forward with whatever information they feel able to give, in order that a case can be assembled. However, witnesses **may** be required to give evidence in Court and some are not willing to do so.
- 3.7.2 Incidents of children and young people thought to be at risk because they were sleeping out, or staying out until the early hours of the morning needed to be reported to Social Services Department, but information of names (even if only first names) and addresses would be required before any action could start.
- 3.7.3 The Corporate Community Safety Team will be recruiting for a new post of Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator in the near future. This post has been funded for 2 years by the Government. An Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy has been published and the members of the Community Safety Strategic Partnership have signed up to it.

### 3.8 **Environmental Management**

#### **Traffic**

- 3.8.1 Traffic Calming features (road humps) were introduced in Dagenham Avenue some years ago and have been effective in reducing vehicular speed and road crashes. Traffic Calming schemes are prioritised and introduced by the need to reduce known road casualties in accordance with Government targets

#### **Abandoned Vehicles**

- 3.8.2 The Councils Abandoned Vehicles will remove rubbish and fly tipping which is contained within a vehicle and also sweep the immediate area after the vehicle is lifted. The Contractor is also conscientious in advising Officers of secondary fly-tipping issues around the vehicle, in order that the Council can arrange for the area to be cleaned.
- 3.8.3 The Metropolitan Police and Council Officers are aware that there are individuals removing vehicles with the Council's 'notice' on them who are not operating on behalf of the Council or other agencies. This is thought to be as a result of the increase in scrap metal prices to. When officers investigate complaints about glass etc being left behind it is often not a vehicle removed by our contractor but by one of these 'rogue' operators.
- 3.8.4 The Abandoned Vehicle Section are constantly visiting the area and arranging for vehicles to be removed from around the Goresbrook Park area. Over the last 2 years the section has improved dramatically the time it takes to check a vehicle which has been reported as abandoned and also the time by which a vehicle is removed once it has been confirmed as being abandoned. The Performance Indicators for the section confirm this improvement. In an endeavour to further improve the situation targets and funding were accepted to improve our Public

Service Agreement (PSA) goals, this has been running since the summer and to date we are above the targets set.

### **Litter / Street Cleansing**

- 3.8.5 The Goresbrook area is covered by an Area Street Cleansing Team and it is also covered by beat sweeper rounds. Both of these cleansing operations are coordinated by an Area Supervisor, who will check each street has been inspected and/or cleaned on a weekly basis. Footpaths around the Leisure Centre and fast foot outlets are being targeted by our Enforcement Division to improve the environment around the vicinity. The fast food outlets are being visited by the Enforcement Section, in a co-ordinated approach to remind them of their responsibilities under the 1990 Environmental Protection Act. They will be prosecuted if they fail to comply.

## **4. Overall analysis and conclusions**

- 4.1 In an effort to deal with the repeated requests to provide some activities for young people of the Borough, the opportunity was taken to improve the landscape and provide facilities in this Park. After extensive local consultation, discussion and involvement, the Council accepted Capital funding from the Arts Council and SRB for improvements to one part of Goresbrook Park. In line with the requirements of those funding agencies to try to bring about real improvements, the scheme was designed by professional artists and landscape architects. High quality materials and trees were used.
- 4.2 There is clearly an expectation on the part of those funding bodies that the facilities provide will benefit the local community over a long period, and will be cared for and maintained to a standard appropriate to their high quality.
- 4.3 It is apparent that, due to the high and concentrated levels of vandalism to which the area has been subjected right from the start of the project, but particularly in 2003, it has proved impossible to keep pace with the rate and extent of repairs, replacement and reinstatement that have been required.
- 4.4 If the Council is willing to accept capital grant aid from grant awarding organisations in order to bring about improvements to facilities and areas in the Borough that imposes an obligation to provide for ongoing maintenance into the future. The recently adopted Capital Programme Monitoring Scheme now ensures that the Revenue consequences are identified and highlighted as part of the process of appraising potential schemes for inclusion in the Capital Programme, regardless of whether the capital expenditure is funded from internal or external sources. This was not necessarily the case in the earlier phases of schemes such as A13 Artscape.
- 4.5 It also seems that Goresbrook Park, as one element in the local neighbourhood scene which has changed quite dramatically in the last 2 years, it has been a meeting place for large groups of young adults which has been accompanied by high levels of anti-social behaviour. The Park itself, including the features, facilities and equipment within it, is as much a victim of anti-social behaviour as surrounding residential areas. It is not the **cause** of anti-social behaviour, although in this case it was one of the sites of it.

- 4.6 As a result of the extensive vandalism to Phase 1 a decision has been taken not to progress with the original Master Plan recommendations for Phase 2. It is proposed that a revised Master Plan be identified for the Park and this is currently being progressed by Officers in the Leisure and Environmental Services Department.
- 4.7 Gatherings of young people, in parks and elsewhere in the Borough, feature high in the concerns of many people, and are a frequent subject of discussion at Community Forums and other public meetings. If young people are going to gather, (and such gatherings are not, in themselves, illegal), then there is an argument that the parks are a more appropriate place than on street corners, around telephone boxes, in the lobby of flats or other buildings or similar more prominent locations. This is a view generally supported by the Police. Parks are provided for all ages to use for genuine recreational purposes.
- 4.8 Neither the Council nor the Police, working in isolation, can provide the answers which the petitioners in this case are demanding in response to high intensity and determined examples of anti-social behaviour in the Goresbrook area.
- 4.9 However, by the Council working through all its wide range of services, in partnership with other agencies such as the Police, and with the co-operation of members of the local community, both as individuals and as groups and associations, a difference **can** be made in demonstrating to those responsible for vandalism and anti-social behaviour, that it is not welcome, will not be tolerated and that action **will** be taken against those who carry it out.
- 4.10 The need for co-operation from members of the community cannot be over-emphasised. It will take the form of providing information and intelligence to the Police and Council about the perpetrators. The reporting of incidents which occur so that a true picture can be built up and resources targeted to where they are most needed. The maintaining of Incident Logs by the community and in certain cases being prepared to make formal witness statements which can be used as evidence in Court if cases are to be brought to the Courts for crimes like Criminal Damage or breach of the Byelaws which cover parks.

## **5 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The Head of Finance has indicated that there is little likelihood of claw back from grant funders as long as the facilities which were specified in the grant application are currently retained and maintained.
- 5.2 The cost to the Council over the past three financial years in providing Fence Repairs, Grounds Maintenance and Security to this park is:
- |         |                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------|
| 2001/02 | £17,636                         |
| 2002/03 | £24,006                         |
| 2003/04 | £16,433 (as at 3 December 2003) |
- 5.3 It should be noted that the high quality of the materials used in this Park as part of these improvements would in normal circumstances have represented good value for money over their expected long life, however, the fact that they have been repeatedly subjected to high levels of vandalism and abuse has meant that the

potential cost of repair, replacement and maintenance is higher than normal. In effect any expenditure required to repair such high quality installations subsequently reduces the amount of money available for repairs and maintenance in other parks. Thought needs to be given to whether continual repairs can be regarded as being cost effective, bearing in mind the needs of other parks.

## **6 Consultation**

6.1 The following have been consulted in the course of considering this petition and preparing this report:

### **Councillors**

Councillors Thomas, Huggins and Porter as Ward Councillor and also Councillor Porter as Portfolio Holder for Raising Pride in the Borough

### **Corporate Strategy**

Jeff Elsom, Community Safety Manager

### **Housing and Health**

Tony Chapman, Team Leader - Street Warden Service  
Jan Hughes, Housing Contracts Manager

### **DEAL**

Tracey McNulty, Head of Arts  
Peter Watson, Senior Engineer  
Paul Pearson, Head of Finance, DEAL

### **LESD**

Simon Swift, Parks & Leisure Development Manager  
Damien Parker, Cemeteries Manager  
Mike Mitchell, Head of Environmental Services  
Mike Livesey, Head of Civil Engineering  
Gary Ellison, Principal Engineer- Traffic  
Bob Cooper, Interim Head of Finance, LESD  
George McCreight, Abandoned Vehicles Officer

### **External**

Inspector Stephen Manger, Metropolitan Police

## **Background Papers**

Petition

**Text of Petition covering letter.**

*"We the undersigned residents of the area surrounding Goresbrook Park Phase 1 including Dagenham Avenue, Vincent Road, Chaplin Road, Urswick Road are very concerned in the subsequent rise of anti-social behaviour in the area and would like to draw your attention to the disruption this has on the quality of the resident's lives within the locality. In particular the impact of the poor behaviour of children / youths congregating in the park and surrounding area through noise, vandalism, intimidation and damage to the environment.*

*We would like some positive action from the Council on the following points:-*

- 1 Skate Park – To be removed, we feel that this is an attraction to the disruptive element to the park*
- 2 Table Tennis Table – This to be removed as gangs of youths congregate around this most evenings to engage in drinking, drug taking, sexual behaviour and generally making a nuisance of themselves through noise, bad language etc. It has been built exceptionally near to resident's homes, invading privacy and rendering their properties vulnerable to damage i.e. missiles being regularly thrown and gardens being broken into. It is also excluding people who wish to use this part of the park either through intimidation by the above or who are unable to due to the amount of rubbish strewn in the area.*
- 3 Children – The children are vulnerable and seem to be out all night without parental control, roaming about unchecked and unchallenged. This is not confined to the park but to the whole of the Goresbrook area. This could attract undesirables keen to exploit children and young people. Parents are also justifiably concerned in relation to their safety of their children through bullying, intimidation and the apparent rise in 'gang culture' in the locality.*
- 4 Decking – This has been completely vandalised and needs to be removed.*
- 5 Cage – To be cleaned up now and on a regular basis.*
- 6 Arson – Fires being set on a regular basis often very near to residents homes*
- 7 Vehicles – The amount of cars which race up and down local roads often a very great speeds*
- 8 Motor Cycles – Must be stopped from using the park – it is a hazard and a disruption at all hours of the day and night*
- 9 Parks Police – should be patrolling the park, not driving down Dagenham Avenue at 30 – 40 mph. Comments like 'I don't get paid enough' do not help or inspire resident's confidence*

- 10 *Police Patrols – It was boasted that the Police would visit different parks and talk to the children, where are they?*

*Furthermore:*

- 1 *The surrounding pavements should be cleaned up now and on a regular basis, there is always a lot of broken glass on the pavement and lots of litter from the fast food outlets at the Leisure Centre.*
- 2 *We are also concerned about the high incidence of the dumping and burning of vehicles in Dagenham Avenue and Vincent Road areas.*

*We understand that the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham has signed up to a Public Service Agreement for Local Authorities which we believe includes action taken in the areas pertaining to youth offending, anti-social behaviour and environmental issues. Can you confirm that this is running on course and whether the concerns that we have raised will be resolved through the targets set to achieve PSA goals?*

*This is a residential neighbourhood with young families, the elderly and people who work. Local people are dismayed and disgusted at the decline in the neighbourhood which is fast becoming an unpleasant place to live. We demand that strategic intervention on behalf of the Authority now takes place.*

*We believe that the Councils Corporate Commitment to liaising with the Community should be for the benefit of its residents and improving their way of life. “*



**Summary Of Recent Works And Vandalism At Goresbrook Park.**

**1 Background**

- 1.1 Using funding from the A13 Artscape and the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) Round 5, it was proposed to bring about improvements to Goresbrook Park over a period of years, consulting and involving the wider community and building on the activities of an enthusiastic Residents Association which had earlier been successful in getting funding to replace a footbridge over The Gores brook. As the Park is effectively divided into three sections, it was proposed to tackle the improvements in phases. Phase 1 dealt with the north-western area (bounded by Dagenham Avenue, Vincent Road, Urswick Road, Lullington Road and Chaplin Road) which is the focus (but not the full extent) of the concerns expressed in the petition.
- 1.2 There was extensive public consultation and involvement in developing and implementing the proposals for the park, starting in January 2001 with a public consultation event on the Master Plan for the whole Park, through a more detailed planning and option event on site in October 2001, to practical activities like tree planting and wildflower planting in the spring of 2002.
- 1.3 The outcome of this consultation was a scheme known as “Flowering Fields”. The intention was to transform what was formerly a flat, bleak landscape of short-mown grass into something with more character, interest and diversity. The main features of “Flowering Fields” were:
- Tree planting around the boundary.
  - Creation of a mound following the course of a culverted stream, planted with semi-mature willow trees.
  - Bands of wildflowers across the Park.
  - Skateboard area.
  - Basketball and soccer courts.
  - Hedge planting.
  - A picnic deck of shaped, oak planking.
  - Picnic lawns.
  - A turf seat.
  - Stone / concrete table tennis table on timber deck.
  - Three mature Scots Pines.
  - New litter and dog-waste bins.

**2 Recent site history**

- 2.1 The appointed landscape contractor moved onto site in January 2002 and immediately had problems with vandalism. Damage was done to equipment and machinery in the contractor’s compound and work in progress constantly being vandalised overnight and having to be put right the next morning. The Council offered to arrange static security, but at a cost to the contractor, which he declined. Eventually, the Council paid for static security for a spell, at a cost of £2,600.

- 2.2 Nevertheless, landscape work progressed and by the summer of 2002 trees had been planted, grass mostly re-established and drifts of wildflowers were in bloom, creating a very good effect. Work was still progressing on the “hard” elements of the scheme.
- 2.3 During the October 2002 half-term, Arts related workshop projects for young people were organised, involving the mixing of music and cutting a CD, and designing a football kit. The workshops were based at Goresbrook Leisure Centre.
- 2.4 By Winter 2002, concerns were being raised by neighbours and local Councillors about both the damage to and misuse of the table tennis table and decking. Suggestions to remove or re-site the table and decking were deferred to see if things improved once the skate area was finished and available for use.
- 2.1 Spring of 2003 brought real signs that Dagenham Avenue, alongside the Park, was becoming the focus for anti-social behaviour, and a particular “hotspot”. Reports were received from residents of cars being raced up and down the road, stones, earth, eggs and other debris being thrown at passing vehicles, stolen cars and motorcycles forcing access to the Park and being set alight, including one being crashed into the basketball court fencing.
- 2.2 By the summer of 2003, anti-social behaviour in the area had increased further and the Parks Section were receiving almost daily telephone calls from neighbouring residents, in which the Park was being blamed as the cause of the anti-social behaviour, as the skateboard area (fronting Dagenham Avenue) had become a focus and a gathering point. Around 15 of the semi-mature willow trees had been stripped of their bark, and one of the Scots Pines was dying due to petrol having been poured down the irrigation tube provided to water it.
- 2.3 The exceptionally hot and dry weather meant that, by the height of summer, all the grass had turned yellow and brown, and was sparse in patches. Horticultural maintenance was still the responsibility of the landscape contractor, under the aftercare arrangement, but regular grass-cutting was not required due to weather conditions. As a consequence litter-picking was also infrequent, as this is done as part of the mowing regime. However, the emptying of both the litter and dog-waste bins continued on a regular basis.
- 2.4 A press release was issued in July 2003 highlighting the levels of vandalism being experienced, and calling on the local community to assist in providing information which might lead to offenders being identified. Photographs appeared in local papers, and interviews took place with local radio stations. Whilst young people were getting much of the blame, instances of dumping and fly-tipping on site suggested that adults were also behaving irresponsibly.
- 2.5 Towards the end of summer, grass fires were being regularly started. At the end of August the Council took over routine horticultural maintenance from the contractor. A 3 m wide border was cut around the perimeter to create a firebreak in the long grass sections. Litter, debris and fly-tipped material were also cleared. The landscape contractor retained aftercare responsibility for the trees.

2.6 In September, the vandals' attention returned to the table-tennis table and its decking. Planks were being removed by the vandals, replaced by the Council, only to be removed again. This persistent damage would have been no easy feat due to the high quality of the installation, and indicates that the damage was premeditated rather than being spur of the moment. The table tennis table was attacked with hammers, and was eventually damaged beyond repair. In the interests of safety, both the table tennis table and its decking were removed. The bulk of the decking has been retained for possible future use.

**Appendix C**  
**Parks Police reported incidents in Goresbrook Park (July – September 2003)**

| Date       | Call Time | Arrival Time | Response Time | Time Left Site | Duration of call | Premises Type | Location                                  | Type of Incident          | Action   |
|------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|---|---------------------------|--|
| 02/07/2003 | 0         | 15.13        | 0             | 15.20          | 7                | Park          | Goresbrook Park (Vincent road on highway) | Routine patrol            | Fire Brigade called to attend MP officers attending  |
| 02/07/2003 | 0         | 15.13        | 0             | 15.20          | 7                | Park          | Goresbrook Park (Vincent road on highway) | Routine patrol            | Fire brigade called to attend MP officers attending  |
| 05/07/2003 | 14.15     | 14.20        | 5             | 14.35          | 15               | Park          | Goresbrook (Skate Park)                   | Youths lighting fires     | Checked area found evidence of fire lighting materials informed control  |
| 07/07/2003 | 16.00     | 16.04        | 4             | 16.25          | 21               | Park          | Goresbrook                                | Motorcycle riding in Park | Motorcycle had left park before arrival on site  |
| 07/07/2003 | n/a       | 17.15        | n/a           | 17.27          | 12               | Park          | Goresbrook - Skate Park                   | Grass Fire                | On routine patrol noticed small fire, stamped out embers and informed Sgt  |
| 08/07/2003 | n/a       | 16.45        | n/a           | 16.48          | 3                | Park          | Goresbrook                                | Fire in Bushes            | Managed to put fire out - spoke to children in area and a boy aged 9 allegedly started the fire. No further evidence or information. |

| Date       | Call Time | Arrival Time | Response Time | Time Left Site | Duration of call | Premises Type | Location              | Type of Incident           | Action  |
|------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---|
| 09/07/2003 | 21.35     | 21.45        | 10            | 21.59          | 14               | Park          | Goresbrook            | Motorcycle riding in Park  | On arrival found no trace of motorcycles  |
| 11/07/2003 | 22.30     | n/a          | n/a           | n/a            | n/a              | Park          | Goresbrook            | Youths causing disturbance | called before arrival to attend a higher priority incident  |
| 15/07/2003 | 0.00      | 0.15         | 15            | 2.00           | 105              | Park          | Goresbrook / Parsloes | Missing 8 year old boy     | called to assist police in searching Parsloes Park - no trace found   |
| 18/07/2003 | 11.51     | 12.01        | 10            | 12.23          | 22               | Park          | Goresbrook            | Motorcycle riding in Park  | Member of public had video evidence of youths riding in park given by a member of the public. Took details from offenders and gave a verbal warning |
| 21/07/2003 | 19.32     | 19.35        | 3             | 19.50          | 15               | Park          | Goresbrook            | Youths causing disturbance | on arrival unable to positively identify youths accused - youths moved on - control informed  |

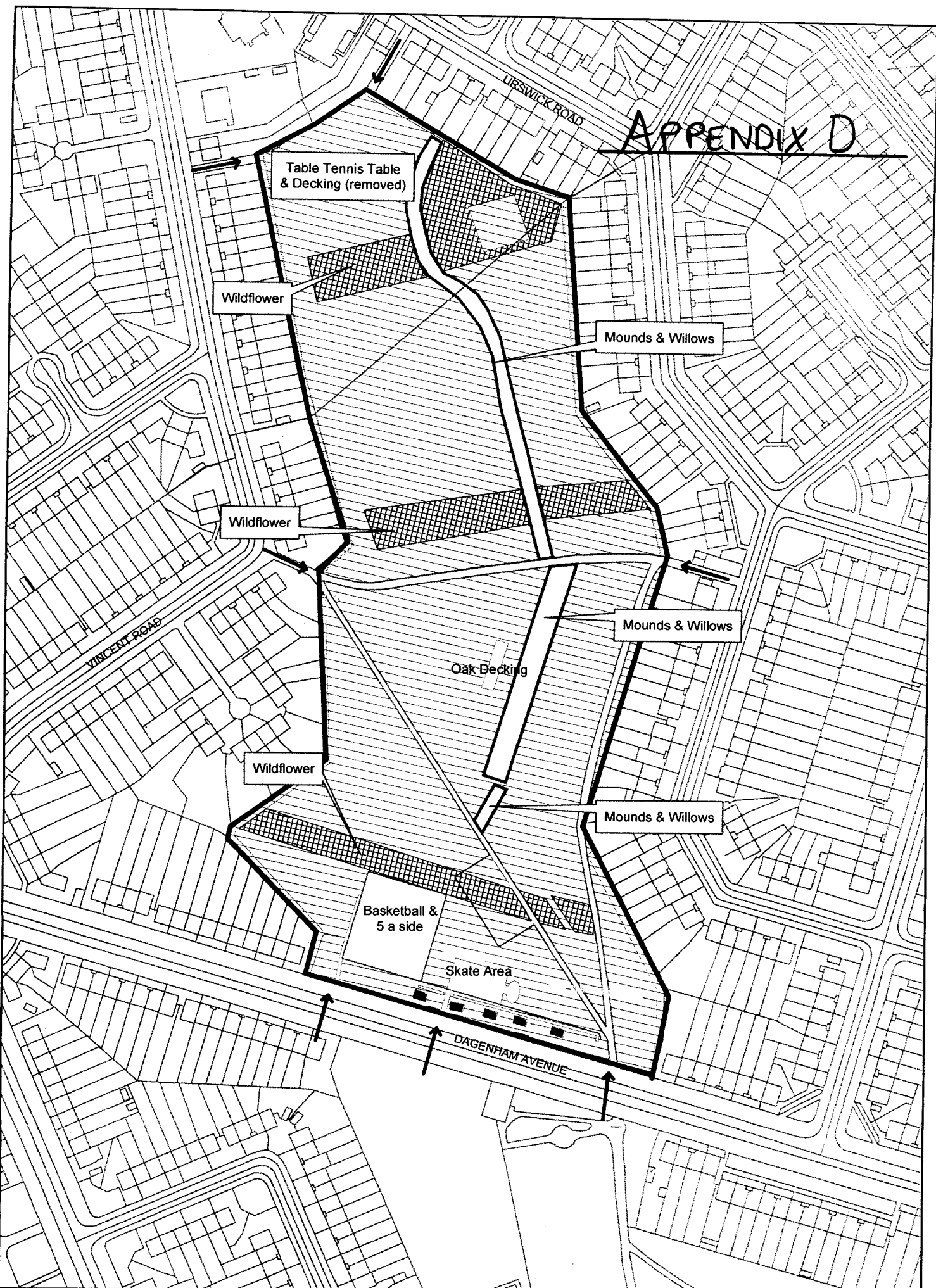
| Date       | Call Time | Arrival Time | Response Time | Time Left Site | Duration of call | Premises Type | Location                 | Type of Incident             | Action  |
|------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| 27/07/2003 | 20.15     | 20.29        | 14            | 20.37          | 8                | Park          | Goresbrook               | Motorcycle riding in Park    | Details taken and riders made to leave park after being cautioned |
| 04/08/2003 | 2040      | n/a          | n/a           | 2130           | 50               | Park          | Goresbrook, Urswick Road | Youths causing disturbance   | Removed youths from location                                      |
| 07/08/2003 | 1750      | 1755.00      | 5             | 1835           | 40               | Park          | Goresbrook               | Youths setting fire to grass | Checked area, no sign of youths. Control informed                 |
| 12/08/2003 | n/a       | 21.10        | n/a           | 21.3           | 20               | Park          | Goresbrook               | Fire in park                 | Grass fire put out by residents.                                  |
| 13/08/2003 | 11.15     | 11.25        | 10            | 11.4           | 15               | Park          | Goresbrook               | Motorbike in park            | No trace of bike  |
| 15/08/2003 | 17.4      | 17.45        | 5             | 18.05          | 20               | Park          | Goresbrook               | Motorcycles in park          | Youths left park on arrival                                       |
| 20/08/2003 | n/a       | 19.50        | n/a           | 20.05          | 15               | Park          | Goresbrook               | Burnt out motor vehicle      | on routine patrol found car - no index number - control informed  |
| 22/08/2003 | 15.10     | 15.18        | 8             | 15.40          | 22               | Park          | Goresbrook               | Youths Lighting Fires        | Fire Brigade on site no trace of youths                           |

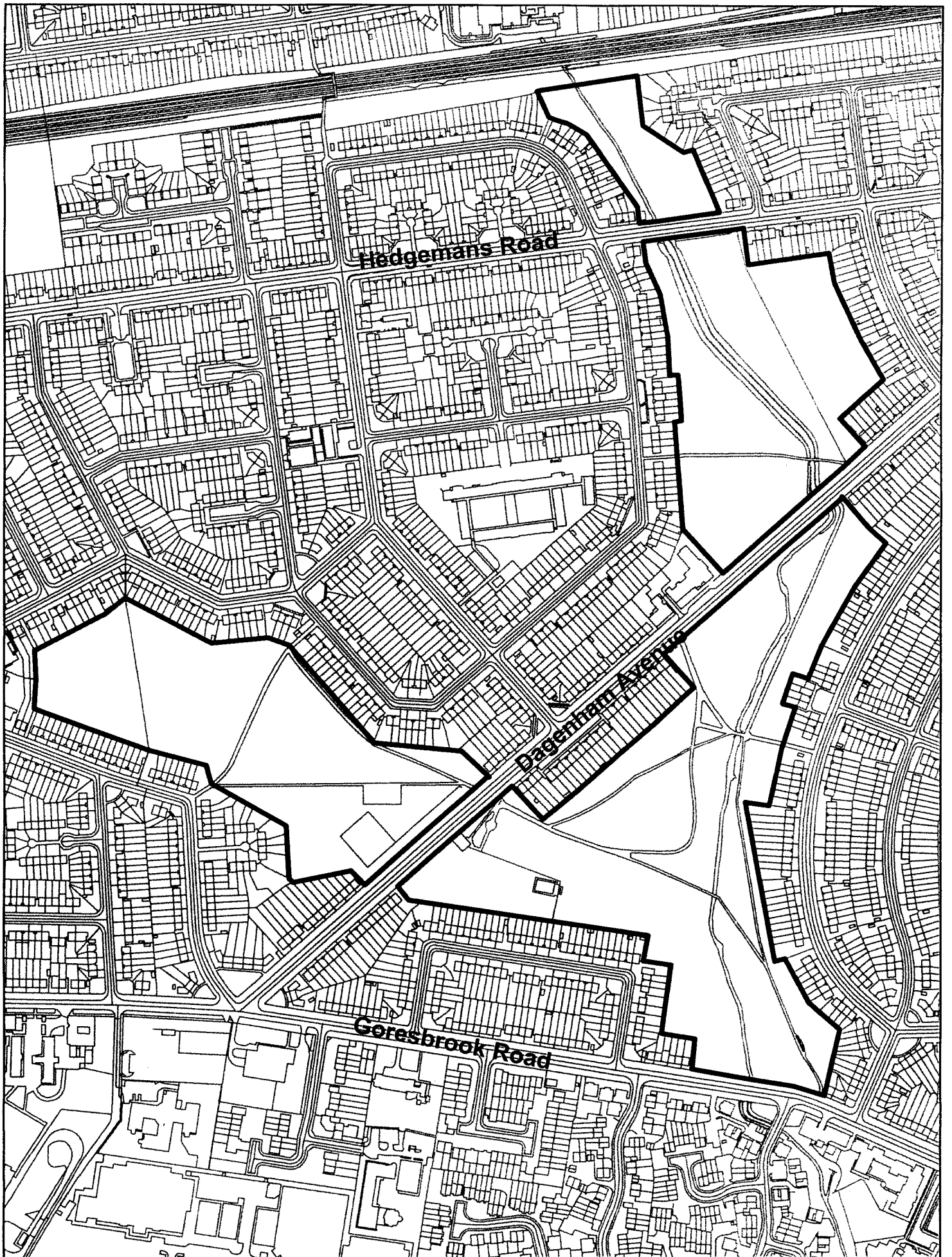
| Date       | Call Time | Arrival Time | Response Time | Time Left Site | Duration of call | Premises Type | Location        | Type of Incident           | Action  |
|------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------------|---|
| 22/08/2003 | 15.40     | 15.41        | 1             | 16.00          | 19               | Park          | Goresbrook      | Youths causing damage      | found 10 youths on site - no cause for concern - group warned re: anti social behaviour   |
| 22/08/2003 | 19.20     | 19.30        | 10            | 19.55          | 25               | Park          | Goresbrook      | Youths causing fires       | spoke to group of 16 youths - they denied setting fires but said a local resident had had strong words with them for being close to her property - no evidence of fires - left site |
| 23/08/2003 | 12.00     | 12.05        | 5             | 12.35          | 30               | Park          | Goresbrook      | Grass fire                 | Fire trampled out by myself and 2 members of the public   |
| 03/09/2003 | 09:55     | 10:02        | 7             | 10:20          | 18               | Park          | Goresbrook Park | Youths causing disturbance | Youths fled site on my arrival. Control informed.   |
| 06/09/2003 | 19:05     | 19:09        | 4             | 19:30          | 21               | Park          | Goresbrook Park | Setting fires              | Provided access for fire unit. No trace of suspect. Control informed  |

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Call Time</b> | <b>Arrival Time</b> | <b>Response Time</b> | <b>Time site left</b> | <b>Duration of call</b> | <b>Premises Type</b> | <b>Location</b> | <b>Type of Incident</b>       | <b>Action</b>  |
|-------------|------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|--|
| 07/09/2003  | 12:45            | 12:55               | 10                   | 13:15                 | 20                      | Park                 | Goresbrook Park | Motorbikes in park            | Checked area, no trace of motorbikes. Control informed   |
| 09/09/2003  | 20:15            | 20:25               | 10                   | 20:45                 | 20                      | Park                 | Goresbrook Park | Fire in park                  | Extinguished grass fire. Fire brigade dampened area down   |
| 10/09/2003  | 18:20            | 18:34               | 14                   | 18:50                 | 16                      | Park                 | Goresbrook Park | Problem with youths           | Words of advice to group of youths. Control informed   |
| 12/09/2003  | 11:10            | 11:15               | 5                    | 11:27                 | 12                      | Park                 | Goresbrook Park | Youth causing criminal damage | Checked area, no sign of youth. Damage to decking.   |
| 13/09/2003  | 20:05            | 20:08               | 3                    | 20:45                 | 37                      | Park                 | Goresbrook park | Youths being a problem        | On arrival, found decking had been pulled up. MDO Contacted to make good the damage. Left MDO in charge of site. |



# APPENDIX D





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LA 086282(2000) London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

The London Borough of  
**Barking & Dagenham**

Map Title: GORESBROOK PARK  
Contract Name: PARKS  
Contract Number: 5  
Date Plotted: 9.12.03  
User Name: CMO Page 24

1:4,000



**THE ASSEMBLY**

**4 FEBRUARY 2004**

**REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

| <b>PETITION : SHEPPEY ROAD</b>   | <b>FOR DECISION</b> |
|--|---------------------|
| <p><i>The Constitution (Article 2, paragraph 15) requires petitions containing more than 50 signatories from separate households to be reported to the Assembly, together with details of action taken or proposed</i></p>   |                     |
| <p><b>Summary</b></p>  |                     |
| <p>In September 2003 the residents of Sheppey Road submitted a petition containing 65 signatures from 55 different addresses to the Council, the majority of which are from the Eastbury Ward. The petitioners requested some form of speed restriction be put in place, due to the increasing amount of cars and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) speeding along the road, in order to avoid the traffic calming measures in Woodward Road.</p> |                     |
| <p>The heading on the petition stated: -</p>   |                     |
| <p><i>“Sheppey Road petition regarding the nuisance drivers of cars, HGV lorries etc, driving down our road at speed to avoid the speed humps in Woodward Road and Hedgemans Road. Someone is going to get seriously hurt if something is not done about this!!!! Our children are not safe and our elderly frail neighbours are also vulnerable please help!!!!!!!! .”</i></p>  |                     |
| <p>In accordance with Council procedures in connection with petitions, a meeting was arranged between the Lead Member, Councillor McKenzie, Ward Members, Councillors Mrs Cooper, Mrs Blake, Mrs Conyard, Mrs Challis and the lead petitioners and Officers. The meeting took place on 8 January 2004 at the Civic Centre.</p>   |                     |
| <p>The lead petitioner outlined the ongoing problem of cars and HGV using Sheppey Road to avoid speed humps in Woodward Road.</p>  |                     |
| <p>A traffic and speed survey was carried out on Wednesday 5 November 2003. The survey indicated that whilst it is possible that some drivers may be exceeding the speed limit of 30mph, 85% of traffic travelled at less than 30mph in both directions.</p>   |                     |
| <p>There have been no reported crashes that occurred in the area within the last three years, up to August 2003, that involved any casualties with injuries.</p>   |                     |
| <p>Alternatives to traffic calming features were discussed and these included the possibility of introducing a partial section of ‘one way’.</p>   |                     |
| <p>The petitioners agreed to the actions being recommended to the Assembly.</p>  |                     |

## Recommendation

The Assembly is asked to agree:

- That Sheppey Road will not be included in the programme for consideration of road safety measures because of the two following reasons.
  - Firstly, there are no recorded crashes involving personal injury within the past three years in Sheppey Road.
  - Secondly, Council policy is to prioritise Road Safety funding towards known accident sites.
- As the road is currently being used as an alternative route for traffic attempting to avoid the traffic calming in Woodward Road, to consult residents on the possibility of introducing a length of 'one way' traffic restriction.
  - 1) In the direction of Gale Street. This would operate between Woodward Road and Canonsleigh.
  - 2) In the direction of Lodge Avenue between Woodward Road and Flamstead Road.
- This would be subject to residents' support of a scheme and will be designed and implemented as part of the Council's Capital Programme 2004 for Traffic Management

## Wards Affected

Eastbury Ward  
Mayesbrook Ward

## Reason

To improve road safety in the Borough, to reduce casualty numbers and severity in accordance with Government targets and assist the Council in achieving its Community Priorities of *"Making Barking and Dagenham Cleaner, Greener and Safer"*.

|                                |                           |  |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Contact</b><br>Mike Livesey | Head of Civil Engineering | <b>Tel:</b> 020 8227 3110<br><b>Fax:</b> 020 8227 3166<br><b>Minicom:</b> 020 8227 3034<br><b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:mike.livesey@lbbd.gov.uk">mike.livesey@lbbd.gov.uk</a> |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--|

## Background Papers

Petition  
Traffic / Speed Survey; 5 November 2003  
Accident Data; August 2000-2003  
Notes of Petitioners' Meeting; 8 January 2004

**THE ASSEMBLY**

**4 FEBRUARY 2004**

**REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

| <b>PETITION: RELOCATION OF REFUSE COMPOUNDS OUTSIDE HOUSING ASSOCIATION FLATS IN EDGEFIELD AVENUE BARKING</b>   | <b>FOR DECISION</b> |
|---|---------------------|
| <p><i>The Constitution (Article 2 paragraph 15) requires petitions containing more than 50 signatories from separate households to be reported to the Assembly, together with details of action taken or proposed.</i></p> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>To report the receipt of a petition containing 142 individual signatories from 121 separate addresses, asking for the relocation of the refuse compounds at the Housing Association flats adjacent to the back of the public highway in Edgefield Avenue.</p> <p>The heading on the petition stated:</p> <p><i>"We are petitioning for action to move the paladins outside housing association flats in Edgefield Avenue. They currently face onto the main road. Not only are they an eyesore they are often left open even when not full, but most of the time they are overflowing and therefore also present a health hazard and attract vermin. Large items are left next to the bins for weeks on end and children can be observed playing amongst the rubbish. In the interests of our whole environment, we want the bins moved to the back of the site against the wall, placed in some kind of enclosure as currently".</i></p> <p>The covering letter, addressed to the Street Cleansing Manager, also outlined concerns regarding the amount of refuse and litter found on the local streets.</p> |                     |
| <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>The Assembly are asked to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• London and Quadrant Housing Association have given assurances that they will relocate the refuse compounds to the rear of the site.</li><li>• The Commercial Waste Manager is in agreement with the new location and that they can be serviced within the terms of the Council's conditions.</li><li>• The residents and Head Petitioners will be advised of the new arrangements.</li><li>• Environmental and Street Cleansing issues have been discussed with the Head Petitioners.</li></ul>   |                     |

|  |                                  |   |
|--|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Reason</b>  |                                  |   |
| To assist the Council in achieving its Community Priority of Making Barking and Dagenham Cleaner, Greener and Safer. |                                  |   |
| <b>Ward Affected</b>   |                                  |   |
| Longbridge Ward  |                                  |   |
| <b>Contact</b>   | Head of Environmental Management | Tel: 020 8227 2677<br>Fax: 020 8227 2221<br>Minicom: 020 -8227 3034<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:mike.mitchell@lbbd.gov.uk">mike.mitchell@lbbd.gov.uk</a> |
| Mike Mitchell  |                                  |   |

## 1. Background

- 1.1 The two refuse compounds at the Housing Association flats, known as Manor Court, are located within the boundary of the site immediately adjacent to the entrances from the public highway.
- 1.2 The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham currently holds a Trade Refuse Agreement with London & Quadrant Housing Association for the removal of refuse from the site. The location and maintenance of the compounds is the responsibility of the Housing Association.
- 1.3 It is understood that the original copy of the petition was sent to London & Quadrant Housing Association on the 11 November 2003 and at the same time a copy was also sent to the Street Cleansing Manager and the Leader of the Council.
- 1.4 Following receipt of the petition London & Quadrant sent an acknowledgement to the Head Petitioner (Philomena Hayward) and then held a meeting with John Mitchell, the Council's Commercial Waster Manager, on the 8 December 2003, to discuss the possibility of relocating the compounds.
- 1.5 It was agreed that the compounds could be relocated at the back of the site and all residents were then advised of the changes which were to be made.
- 1.6 London & Quadrant advised the Council that the relocation works were programmed to commence at the end of January 2004 and that sufficient room was to be provided to accommodate four Eurobins (currently two are provided).
- 1.7 Prior to the completion of the works, all residents will be advised of the new arrangements. The Head Petitioner will also be advised.
- 1.8 In accordance with the Council procedures in respect of petitions, a meeting was arranged with the Head Petitioners. The meeting was held on 6 January 2004 at the Civic Centre and Councillor McKenzie (Portfolio Holder for Street Care) and Ward Members (Councillors Baker, Clark, and Cook), the Head of Environmental Management and General Manager - Street Care, also attended.

- 1.9 It was pointed out that the wording on the heading of the petition purely dealt with the problems associated with the location of the refuse compounds and would be the subject of the presentation of the petition to the Assembly.
- 1.10 The programme of works and actions taken by London & Quadrant Housing Association were outlined and assurances were given that Officers of this Council would monitor progress and take appropriate action to see that the matter was concluded as agreed.

## **2. Street Cleansing Issues**

- 2.1 A full discussion was then held in respect of the Street Cleansing issues within the Edgefield Avenue/Upney Lane area.
- 2.2 Details of Street Cleansing rounds and litter bin provision were outlined and assurances were given that three new litter bins were to be installed at the end of January 2004.
- 2.3 Petitioners were also appraised of the Council's commitment to achieving a Greener, Cleaner and Safer Environment and of its intention to educate and introduce more enforcement with respect to litter problems.
- 2.4 The Petitioners generally agreed to the actions being reported to the Assembly.

## **3. Consultation**

Councillor McKenzie and the Ward Councillors have been consulted during the drafting

|   |
|---|
| <b>Background Papers</b>                                    |
| Copy of Petition and covering letter dated 11 November 2003 |
| Minutes of Meeting 6 January 2004                           |

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## THE ASSEMBLY

4 FEBRUARY 2004

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE

| THE EXECUTIVE - RECENT BUSINESS   | FOR DECISION                       |   |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| <p><i>This regular report on the work of the Executive is submitted under Article 2, Paragraph 9.2 of the Constitution.</i></p> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>This report summarises the work of the Executive on 13 January 2004. It includes a recommendation from the Executive on the 2004 / 2005 Council Tax Base.</p> <p>It also summarises the decisions taken and the other matters considered by the Executive. Key issues have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Performance Assessment Performance Indicators (A1).</li> <li>• Mayor, Members and Fleet Transport (A3).</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendation / Reason</b></p> <p>1. <b>2004 / 2005 Council Tax Base</b></p> <p>The Executive received a report setting out the calculation of the Council Tax Base for 2004 / 2005. The report also set out information on new powers available to the Council to reduce discounts for second homes and long-term empty property, and to award locally determined discounts.</p> <p>The Assembly is recommended to agree that locally determined discounts should not be awarded for 2004/2005.</p> |                                    |   |
| <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>Barry Ray</p>  | <p>Democratic Services Officer</p> | <p>Tel: 020 8227 2134<br/>           Fax: 020 8227 2171<br/>           Minicom: 020 8227 2685<br/>           E-mail: <a href="mailto:barry.ray@lbbd.gov.uk">barry.ray@lbbd.gov.uk</a></p> |

**A DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE****13 January 2004****1. Corporate Performance Assessment Performance Indicators**

Received a report setting out an action plan for The Management Team to improve the critical Performance Indicators (PI) that constitute the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) service scores on all areas of council services. The Action Plan also contained information on the latest performance on each of these indicators where available.

**Agreed** to support the emphasis set out in the Action Plan across the critical basket of CPA Performance Indicators in order to improve performance on those areas that positively impact upon the CPA score.

## 2. Home Office Consultation Paper - Policing: Building Safer Communities Together

Received a report summarising the proposals contained within the Government's consultation paper on policing - *Building Safer Communities Together*, which looks at modernising and reforming the Police Service through developing strong connections between local communities and the Police.

**Agreed** that a final response be drafted and agreed by the Leader and Lead Member for 'Making Barking and Dagenham Cleaner, Greener and Safer', Councillor McKenzie, in order to convey this Council's views on the strategic functioning of a reformed Police Service, and how its impact upon crime and disorder in Barking and Dagenham can be maximised.

We have also placed on record our thanks to the Community Safety team for their work in helping to reduce crime and the fear of crime in the Borough.

## 3. Mayor, Members and Fleet Transport

Received a report outlining the actions required to the Mayor, Members' and Fleet Transport service in order to achieve, as far as possible, the budgetary savings agreed at that time of £10,000 in the current financial year and up to £70,000 from 2004 / 2005 onwards.

Noted that the current year's savings can be met through better budgetary controls, but, in order to save an estimated total of £53,500 in the coming year from the budget in question.

**Agreed**, that with effect from the new financial year:

1. The in-house Members' transport service cease (except for civic functions) but that special arrangements are made through a local mini cab firm for those Members who are eligible for a Disabled Blue Badge, as set out in Option 2 of the report; and
2. The Members' home delivery service be reduced to Fridays only.

## 4. Award of Residential Respite Care Beds Contract

Received a report highlighting the temporary reduction of residential care beds to provide planned respite care following the re-provision programme for transforming Kingsbridge Residential Care Home to a Nursing Home. The report also outlined the tender process undertaken in accordance with the Constitution (Contract Rules) in order to meet the demands of the service.

**Agreed** to award the Respite Care Beds contract to Angel Lodge for the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2006 at an overall value of £171,029 per annum, in order to establish a consistently managed provision of planned residential respite care beds enabling carers to take planned breaks.

## **B INFORMATION AND OTHER ITEMS**

*13 January 2004*

### **1. Community Empowerment and Engagement Policy Commission**

Noted the contents of the final report of the Community Empowerment and Engagement Policy Commission, prior to its submission to the Assembly on 4 February 2004, and placed on record our thanks to those Members and officers who participated.

#### **Background papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Minutes, agenda and public reports for the Executive meeting held on 13 January 2004.

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**THE ASSEMBLY**

**4 FEBRUARY 2004**

**REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

| <b>REPORT OF MEETINGS – 17 DECEMBER 2003</b>  | <b>FOR INFORMATION</b>                         |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p><i>This regular report on the work of the Scrutiny Management Board is submitted under Article 2, Paragraph 9.2 of the Constitution.</i></p> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>This report summarises the work of the Scrutiny Management Board at its meetings on 17 December 2003 (further details are set out in the report):</p> <p><b>Call-In - Members' Telephones</b> – A Call-In following the Executive's decision clarifying issues associated with Members' telephones.</p> <p><b>Performance Indicators (PIs)</b> – The Board is monitoring Best Value (BV) PIs. It received details of BV126(a) – Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households and BV127(e)(i) – Robberies per 1,000 population (cumulative).</p> <p><b>Best Value Reviews (BVRs)</b> – Update on Member involvement in Years 1, 2 and 3 BVRs.</p> <p><b>Transition Arrangements for Disabled School Leavers</b> – Update on the Council's arrangements for effective transition of disabled school leavers moving from Children and Family to Adult Services.</p> <p><b>Routine Items</b> - The Forward Plan, current, ongoing and future Scrutiny Panels and future/outstanding reports.</p> |  |  |
| <b>Contacts:</b>  |  |  |
| Councillor Mrs Twomey   | Chair of Scrutiny Management Board             | Tel: 020 8593 3315<br>Email: <a href="mailto:patricia.twomey@lbbd.gov.uk">patricia.twomey@lbbd.gov.uk</a>  |
| Councillor H Collins  | Deputy Chair of Scrutiny Management Board      | Tel: 020 8593 8976<br>Email: <a href="mailto:herbert.collins@lbbd.gov.uk">herbert.collins@lbbd.gov.uk</a>  |
| Kal Benning   | Team Manager Democratic and Electoral Services | Tel: 020 8227 2348<br>Fax: 020 8227 2171<br>Text: Link: 020 8227 2594<br>Email: <a href="mailto:kalbinder.benning@lbbd.gov.uk">kalbinder.benning@lbbd.gov.uk</a> |

**(i) Call-In –Members’ Telephones**

The Board considered a Call-In following the Executive’s decision of 25 November 2003 clarifying issues associated with Members’ telephones and out of hours information technology support.

The Call-In Members commented on how all Members should be treated in terms of mobile telephone allocations and connections to the Centrex System and they sought clarification as to what percentage of the Members’ allowance can be offset against tax for the telephone element.

After weighing up all the evidence the Board concluded that

- (i) all Members should be treated equally in relation to the provision and related costs of telephones for Council business use, and as such **all** costs should be borne by Members from their Members’ allowances
- (ii) there should be no exception to this rule, either now or in the future, and accordingly (a) those with mobile telephones provided by the Council should be required to discontinue their use and hand them back, and (b) the one remaining Centrex line connection should be disconnected
- (iii) should any Member position require a mobile telephone or other similar means of contact or communication, the Member holding that position should personally purchase the necessary equipment and pay for all costs, again making use of their basic or, where appropriate, special responsibility allowance.

The Board, therefore, asked the Executive to revise their original decision concerning telephones for Members accordingly, that is by reconfirming the original decision number 1 in relation to the telephone handsets provided with the computer equipment, but deleting 2 and 3 and replacing them with (i), (ii) and (iii) above. [The original decision number 4 was unaffected as this relates to IT support for Members, not telephones.] A copy of the original minute is appended.

The Board also asked the Director of Finance to issue general tax guidance to all Members.

**(ii) Performance Indicators – Corporate Strategy Department**

Directors or their representatives, whose departments have any PIs in the lowest quartile are attending Board meetings to discuss the reasons for this and possible solutions.

The Director of Corporate Strategy reported on the following PIs which are not in the national bottom quartile but have slipped from the middle 50% in the last quarter:

- BV126a - Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households
- BV127e (i) - Robberies per 1,000 population (cumulative)

The Board noted the initiatives implemented to reduce domestic burglaries and street robberies.

**(iii) Best Value Reviews**

The Board has a role to ensure Members are effectively involved in BVRs. It received an update on Years 1, 2 and 3 BVRs.

**(iv) Transition Arrangements for Disabled School Leavers**

The Board received an update on the Council's arrangements for effective transition of disabled school leavers moving from Children and Family to Adult Services. It covered progress and developments within the Education, Arts and Libraries and Social Services Departments to ensure a collaborative approach to meeting the needs of young people.

The Board expressed best wishes to Bob Kedward, Head of Children and Family Services on his forthcoming retirement and thanked him for his assistance with various scrutiny work

**(v) Routine Items**

**(a) Forward Plan –** The Board noted/commented as follows:

- Disposal Programme - sought clarification of whether this is land or properties (housing) for sale.
- Variation in Local Terms and Conditions of Employment in Relation to Industrial Injury and Sickness Pay - the Chair requested to be kept informed of this.

**(b) Current/Ongoing and Future Scrutiny Panels**

- Health and Social Care Partnership Arrangements Scrutiny Panel – The Board (i) agreed Councillor Barns join this Scrutiny Panel in place of Councillor H Collins, (ii) noted that there will be a delay in the Panel's reporting timetable.

- School Inspection Reports – The Board (i) welcomed the Panel's report on the OFSTED reports of Henry Green, John Perry, Becontree and St. Margaret's Church of England Primary School, (ii) expressed concern about the lack of representation of Henry Green Primary School at the Scrutiny Panel meeting and requested that this be followed up.

**(c) Future and Outstanding Reports – The Board requested as follows:**

- Number of Staff on the Establishment - this report be sent to Councillor Jeyes as soon as it is available.
- Allotments Issues – this be followed up with the Director of Leisure and Environmental Services so that Councillor L Collins can feedback at the next Board meeting.

**Background papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Minutes of the Scrutiny Management Board – 17 December 2003



**EXTRACT FROM  
THE EXECUTIVE**

Tuesday, 25 November 2003  
(7:00 - 7:30 pm)

**Present:** 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 and Councillor T G W Wade.

**Also Present:** Councillor M A McCarthy, Councillor Mrs V M Rush, Councillor Mrs P A Twomey and Councillor Mrs M M West.

**206. Members Telephones and Out of Hours IT Support**

Further to Minute 121 (23 September 2003), received a report on Members' telephones and the possible introduction of an 'Out of Hours' IT support facility.

The report addressed a number of concerns previously expressed by Members in relation to telephones and set out the possible advantages / disadvantages and cost implications of several options.

It also outlined a proposal for the provision of 'Out of Hours' IT support for Members, including a help desk facility together with a 'mobile technician'.

Agreed, in order to clarify the issues associated with Members' telephones, that:

1. If they wish, when the new ADSL computer connections are made, Members be allowed to keep and use the telephone handset, already provided, for incoming calls only at no extra charge to the Council (Option Two);
2. Members are generally expected to continue to use their own private telephones for Council business calls and to meet all related costs from their Basic Allowance;
3. Notwithstanding 1 and 2 above, no change be made to the current allocations of mobile telephones and connections to the Centrex system, as set out in the report; and

An 'Out of Hours' IT support for Members not be provided at this time.

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**THE ASSEMBLY**

**4 FEBRUARY 2004**

**REPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL BOARD**

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p><b>REPORT OF MEETINGS OF 17<br/>DECEMBER 2003 AND 6 JANUARY<br/>2004</b></p>   | <p><b>FOR INFORMATION</b></p>  |  |
| <p><i>This regular report on the work of the Development Control Board is submitted under Article 2, Paragraph 9.2 of the Constitution.</i></p> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>This summarizes the business transacted by the Development Control Board since their last report to the Assembly.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Development Control Board has met two times (17 December 2003 and 6 January 2004) since they last reported to the Assembly, a total of 8 planning applications have been presented. From these applications, 8 were decided in accordance with the officers' recommendation.</li> <li>2. The Board noted that 2 Town Planning Appeals had been lodged and 1 had been determined as dismissed.</li> <li>3. Details of applications determined by the Director of Leisure and Environmental Services under delegated authority were presented covering the period 21 November 2003 to 10 December 2003.</li> </ol> |  |  |
| <p>Contact Officer:<br/>Councillor Mrs. Bruce</p> <p>John Dawe</p>  | <p>Chair, Development<br/>Control Board</p> <p>Democratic Services</p> | <p>Tel: 0208 227 2116<br/>e-mail: <a href="mailto:jean.bruce@lbbd.gov.uk">jean.bruce@lbbd.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Tel: 020-8227 2135<br/>Fax: 020-8227 2171<br/><a href="mailto:john.dawe@lbbd.gov.uk">john.dawe@lbbd.gov.uk</a></p> |

**Background papers**

Minutes of the Development Control Board 17 December 2003 and 6 January 2004.

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**THE ASSEMBLY**

**4 FEBRUARY 2004**

**REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL BOARD**

| <b>REPORT OF RECENT MEETING</b>  |   | <b>FOR INFORMATION</b>   |
|--|---|--|
| <p><i>This regular report of the work of the Personnel Board is submitted under Article 2, Paragraph 9.2 of the Constitution.</i></p> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>This report summarises the work of the Personnel Board from 17 December 2003 to 9 January 2004</p> <p>The Board met on 23 December 2003 and agreed the redundancy of an employee in the Finance Department.</p> |   |  |
| <p>Contact:<br/>Barry Ray</p>  | <p>Team Manager<br/>Democratic and<br/>Electoral<br/>Services</p> | <p>Tel: 020 8227 2134<br/>Fax: 020 8227 2171<br/>Text Line: 020 8227 2685<br/>E-mail: <a href="mailto:barry.ray@lbbd.gov.uk">barry.ray@lbbd.gov.uk</a></p> |

**Background papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Minutes of the Personnel Board – 23 December 2003

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**THE ASSEMBLY**

**4 FEBRUARY 2004**

**REPORT OF THE B.A.D. YOUTH FORUM**

| UPDATE REPORT  | FOR INFORMATION  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <p><i>This is the regular report on the work of the B.A.D. Youth Forum submitted under Article 2, paragraph 9.2 of the Constitution.</i></p> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>The report summarises the activities of the meeting of the Youth Forum held in December 2003. The main points arising are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terms of reference</li> <li>• Work of the sub-groups</li> <li>• LGC Local Government Awards</li> <li>• Events programme</li> <li>• Connexions UK</li> <li>• Future meeting</li> </ul> |  |   |
| <p>Contact:<br/>John Dawe</p>  | <p>Democratic and<br/>Electoral Services<br/>Manager</p> | <p>Tel: 020 8227 2135<br/>Fax: 020 8227 2171<br/>Minicom:<br/>Email: <a href="mailto:john.dawe@lbbd.gov.uk">john.dawe@lbbd.gov.uk</a></p> |

**1 Introduction**

Following the inaugural meeting of 2003/04 B.A.D. Youth Forum, the group came together on 11 December 2003.

Notwithstanding the time of the year attendance was quite poor, an issue that will be taken up by the Youth and Development Service with absent Forum members. As a result the proposed hustings for Chair of the Forum have been held over until the next meeting.

**2 Terms of Reference**

At the inaugural meeting of the Forum the young people accepted the need for ground rules so that everybody would feel comfortable participating,

particularly as the Forum is a new learning experience for many young people. The ground rules as reported have now been incorporated as part of the terms of reference governing the way the Forum operates.

### **3 Sub-groups**

The outcomes of the various meetings of the sub-groups set up under the Forum are reported as a regular item. It was noted that as a result of the resignation of a youth worker coupled with the fact that a temporary member of staff left at the end of the year, this has had an effect in terms of the level of support the sub-groups can reasonably expect at the present time. The vacant post of youth worker supporting the Forum has since been advertised.

#### ➤ Crime and safety

The meeting discussed how both parks and buses could be made more safe for young people as well as issues around stop and search rights.

#### ➤ Education

Issues discussed included PSE improvements, teacher/pupil respect, careers advice, a need for water fountains in schools, better bike security, more football/rugby pitches and also that canteen food could be improved.

Meetings of the other sub-groups including Youth facilities, social services and health were planned to be held in January and will be the subject of further reports.

A number of the young people want to see more Sub-Group meetings. However in view of the mentioned staff shortages proposals are being given to organizing a once a week drop in at the Beacon Centre to enable Forum members to do follow up work rather than having to rely solely on the support of youth workers.

### **4 LGC Local Government Awards**

As part of the LGC Local Government Awards the Council made a submission on behalf of the B.A.D. Youth Forum under the heading of Local Democracy Initiative of the Year. Unfortunately the submission has not been shortlisted.



## **5 Events Programme**

The Events Manager from the Leisure and Environmental Services Department outlined the work of the Events Section including information about the main events organized.

A business plan of events is being drawn up for the next three years which has been subject to wide-ranging consultations with different groups including the Youth Forum.

The aim is that the plan currently in production will reflect the views of young people. The proviso was made however that any new events will be subject to available funding.

Having opened up the issue to the floor a number of ideas were suggested from young people including:

- Something around the River Roding to highlight Barking's history as a fishing fleet such as a fun day and a boat race
- More young orientated music shows like that organized at last year's Town Show
- School talent shows
- Dramatic arts
- Karaoke
- Bring back the Carnival in Barking or alternatively extend the Dagenham Carnival across the Borough
- Mini-marathon
- Charity netball matches

The Events Manager agreed to take up the various ideas including speaking to such groups as the carnival organizers and those involved with the Road Race Committee.

It was agreed by the Forum that it would be useful to stay in touch with the Events Team and to that end the Manager will be invited to attend future

## **6 Connexions UK**

The role of Connexions UK was outlined for the Forum's benefit in relation particularly to issues of inclusion through getting more young people involved in shaping services. A subsequent meeting has been arranged with the Youth and Development Service with a view to arranging for representation on the UK Connexions Board. A number of young people have put their names forward.

## **7 Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Forum is due to be held on 19 February 2004, provisionally at the House of Commons to be hosted by Jon Cruddas, MP.

## THE ASSEMBLY

4 FEBRUARY 2004

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND ENGAGEMENT  
POLICY COMMISSION

| COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND ENGAGEMENT<br>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><b><u>Summary</u></b></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"> <li>● review existing practices for empowering and engaging the local community</li> <li>● undertake a number of visits in order to identify and improve our knowledge of good practice</li> <li>● develop recommendations to be presented to the Council</li> <li>● ensure that this Policy Commission considers the impact on issues highlighted by the Social Inclusion and Anti Age Discrimination Policy Commissions, and</li> <li>● improve communication</li> </ul> |              |
| <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"> <li>● the community and its neighbourhoods</li> <li>● community forums</li> <li>● black and minority ethnic groups (BME)</li> <li>● faith groups</li> <li>● older people</li> <li>● disabled people</li> <li>● people with mental health problems</li> <li>● young people</li> <li>● voluntary sector</li> <li>● small community groups, and</li> <li>● local businesses</li> </ul>  |              |

## **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 4<sup>th</sup> March and ending on 8<sup>th</sup> 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.

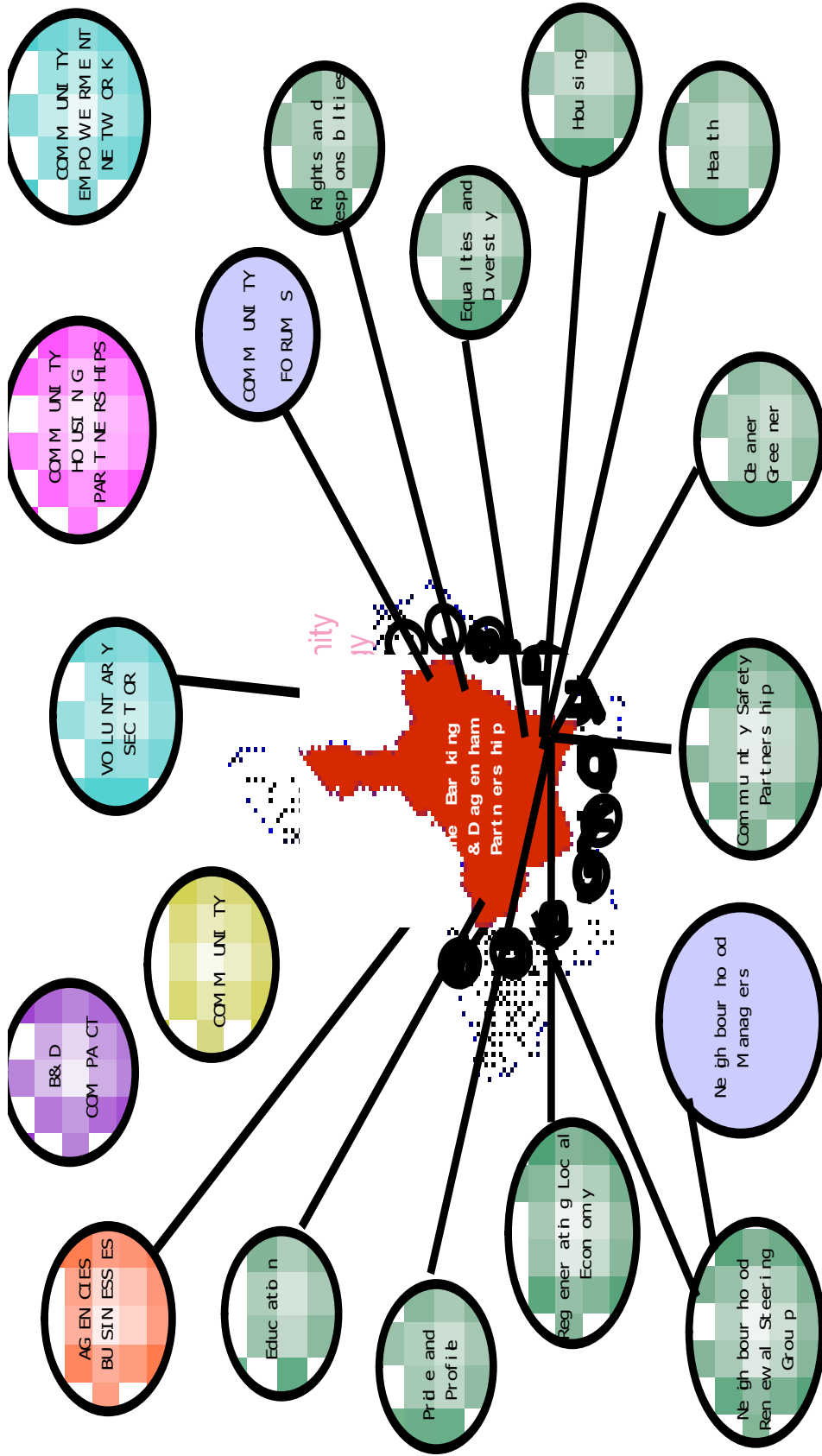
## ACTION PLAN

| RECOMMENDATION   | LEAD OFFICER/MEMBER           | TIMESCALE             |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| The Policy Commission will meet in November 2004 to review and monitor progress against the actions set out below  |                               |                       |
| <b>The Community and its Neighbourhoods</b>  |                               |                       |
| 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    |
| <b>Community Forums</b>  |                               |                       |
| 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 |
| <b>Black and Minority Ethnic Groups</b>  |   |                    |
| 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 |
| <b>Faith Groups</b>  |   |                    |
| 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 |
| <b>Older People – See Anti Age Discrimination Policy Commission report for recommendations</b>   |   |                    |
| <b>Disabled People</b>   |   |                    |
| 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    |
| <b>People with Mental Health Problems</b>  |   |                    |
| 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      |
| <b>Children and Young People</b>  |                                    |                       |
| 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    |
| <b>The Voluntary Sector</b>   |                                    |                       |
| 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    |
| <b>Small Community Groups</b>   |                                    |                       |
| 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    |
| <b>Local Businesses</b>   |                                    |                       |
| 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.