

Minutes of Hillingdon's Older People's Assembly
26 September 2017
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uxbridge

1	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Marion Finney from the Customer Engagement Team welcomed everyone to the meeting and went through the agenda. She explained the purpose of the Older People's Assembly to new members, which is for the council, its partners and residents to work together to improve services for older residents in Hillingdon.</p>
2	<p>Update from the Older People's Champion - Cllr Ray Puddifoot</p> <p>The borough is enhanced by nice floral displays and Hillingdon has 47 green flags for its parks and green spaces - more than any other local authority.</p> <p><i>London in Bloom:</i></p> <p>The borough won numerous awards in the London in Bloom competition, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Park of the year for Eastcote House Gardens• Gold awards for the following sites: Breakspear Crematorium, RAGC, Poors Field, Ruislip Lido, Stockley Business Park, the Walled Garden at Eastcote House and 'Our Community Award' for Friends of Eastcote House• Small Cemetery of the Year for West Drayton Cemetery <p>Hillingdon was awarded Gold for best borough in London and now represents London in the large city category of Britain in Bloom. Cllr Ray Puddifoot thanked all the green spaces staff and people in the community who have helped achieve these awards.</p> <p><i>Older People's Action Plan:</i></p> <p>Cllr Puddifoot outlined some of the work being undertaken as part of the Older People's Action plan, which is updated quarterly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hillingdon continues to offer a free burglar alarm scheme, with a free service for over 65s. 1000 alarms were fitted in phase 9 of the plan, with 170 already fitted in phase 10, the current phase.• The council is addressing reports of rogue traders. In the first quarter of 2017/18, 4 cases of doorstep crime were investigated, with £18,600 recovered for victims as a result of the council's intervention.• The council continues to deliver the Telecare Line Service, which is offered free for residents over 80 years old. As at the end of June 2017, there were 4,847 service users. The service continues to grow, with 199 new users (130 of whom are over 80 years old) joining between April and June 2017.

- Older people are offered lots of opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity. The Mature Exercise Programme has 12 venues running weekly classes, including Zumba Gold and chair exercises. The council continues to offer free swimming sessions for those aged 65 years and over, with free swimming lessons offered at the borough's three main pools. The council also holds regular tea dances.
- The council continues to develop its brown badge scheme. There are 10,500 brown badge holders and 562 new badges were issued in the 3 months to July 2017.
- 320 free allotments are allocated to over 65s and the council has a programme of regular maintenance. 72 plots have been allocated to over 60s at half price. Half plots are available for those that can't manage a whole plot.
- Financial advice is offered for older people, in conjunction with Age UK. 76 older people have been referred for a financial health check in the 3 months to June 2017 and support was given for claims totalling £145,000 in entitlements.
- The council has a stock of heaters that can be loaned free of charge to over 65s. A small grant is available to cover the cost of these heaters.
- Funding is available through the Leader's Initiative Fund for community groups to organise social events, such as outings and Christmas parties that will bring older people together.

All the above initiatives are contained in the draft budget for next year, so the benefits mentioned will be maintained in the next financial year.

Trading Standards

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Hillingdon's Trading Standards department provides advice and guidance for consumers, but also for traders, covering around 100 different legislations.

The website www.hillingdon.gov.uk/tradingstandards allows access to consumer advice and guidance sheets on a variety of legislations that the council covers. Guidance sheets are also available for traders.

The team can also be contacted by phone on **01895 250164** (option #1) The advice and information empowers people to help themselves. The department also works with the banks and give talks to community groups.

People are advised to contact the Citizens' Advice Consumer Service for help. They can be contacted by phone on **03454 040506**, or via their website www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Citizens' Advice Consumer Service notifies Trading Standards of any enquiries relating to any form of trading fraud. Residents can visit the Citizens' Advice Bureau for face to face enquiries. It has branches in Hayes,

Ruislip and Uxbridge. The contact number is **0344 848 7903**. They operate independently of Trading Standards.

The Trading Standards team also provides advice and guidance to traders to maintain and improve the quality of goods and standard of services. It investigates non-compliance from businesses. The response can range from advice and guidance to warnings or prosecution.

The Metropolitan Police have produced a useful publication called the Little Book of BIG scams. This is available online at www.met.police.uk/docs/little_book_scam.pdf or from Barclays Bank, or the Trading Standards Team.

On 13 October, the Trading Standards team will be having a stall at an event at Barclays Bank.

Scams

- Be sceptical about offers.
- Never pay the full amount for any work up front. Make sure you get a contract that agrees the price.
- You do not have to agree to offers or deals immediately. Insist on time to obtain independent / legal advice before making a decision.
- NEVER give banking or personal details to anyone you do not know or trust.
- Your information is valuable so make sure you protect it.
- Always log on to a website directly, rather than clicking on links provided in an email

Scams should be reported, there is no need to feel embarrassed. This will help other people avoid being scammed in the future.

Action Fraud is the organisation with a remit to deal with online scams. They can pass on details of these to the Trading Standards eCrime team.

www.actionfraud.police.uk 0300 123 2040

The Trading Standards team presented three scenarios as role-play.

Scenario 1 Doorstep trader

You are entitled to a 14 day cancellation period after agreeing to any work.

The trader should give you detailed paperwork, including prices and the name of the trader or company that the contract is with. You should proactively get three quotes so you know a reasonable price for the work.

If a trader says they will take you to the bank to withdraw money, you can ask to speak to the bank manager on arrival, quoting the banking protocol. If you think you are being scammed, you can request police assistance, if necessary.

Scenario 2 - telephone scam

You will never be asked for your PIN by the bank. **Never** disclose it. If someone asks for financial information you can end the call and verify the caller is genuine. You can contact the bank using the phone number on the back of your card. Do not use the number given to you by the caller, as this could be part of the scam. Scammers can also stay on the line, so try calling the bank on a different line, or wait a little while for the line to clear, before calling.

Scenario 3 - postal scam

Trading Standards has a national scam team. They act on intelligence from Action Fraud and the Citizens' Advice Consumer Service. They carry out raids on offices and seize paperwork that helps identify victims. There are quite a lot of victims in the Hillingdon area. Trading Standards are in the process of contacting victims and offering advice. Sometimes they can recover cheques from the scammers. Lottery/prize draw scams are quite common at the moment. Put them in the bin!

Trading standards liaise with other council departments such as adult social care and client financial affairs to deal with related issues.

Flyers and printouts of advice were available to pick up at the end of the assembly.

Safeguarding

The safeguarding team works with vulnerable individuals and consults them on their wishes. Individuals are helped to stay in their home environment for as long as possible. Assessments are covered by the Care Act. They can identify any limitations to someone taking care of themselves and how best to meet their needs. 24 hour a day care is the last option. There are packages of care in the community available, for example, personal care, meals etc

Day care, short stays and sheltered accommodation are other options. Direct payments are offered to give choice and control. You can employ the services that best meet your individual needs, with the funding provided by Hillingdon Council.

The reablement programme is a service that can be used temporarily to help residents regain their skills and confidence. Equipment is also offered, for example handrails, commodes, Telecareline and sensory equipment from the specialist sensory teams.

The council also considers the needs of carers. The carers' assessment identifies what can be offered to support carers and help them continue to provide care.

Respite is available, including a sit-in service for someone to come and sit

with your loved one for a few hours so you can have a break or do other things. Fun and stress relieving activities can be offered to support the carer's wellbeing.

Client Financial Affairs Team

The team was set up 15 years ago. It's a small team of 4 that deals with the finances of around 350 people. It undertakes three main roles for clients who either live or have died in the London Borough of Hillingdon.

1. Deputyship
2. Appointeeship
3. Public Health Funerals

Deputy /Appointeeship

To access this support:

- You need to be referred by the social care team
- To be assessed as lacking the mental capacity to look after your finances
- Have no one else to support you.

Whether it comes under deputy or appointee depends on income and finances.

First, the team would carry out an assessment to find out whether the person has capacity and can make decisions.

'Mental capacity' means a person's ability to make their own choices and decisions using relevant information to make and support their reasoning for that choice. Under UK law, someone's capacity is judged according to the specific decision to be made. For example someone may be able to go shopping and choose suitable food for their needs but they may not be able to work out the change they are due to be given at the till.

Deputyship

You can apply to become someone's deputy if they 'lack mental capacity'.

They may still be able to make decisions for themselves at certain times.

People may lack mental capacity because, for example:

- they have/have had a serious brain injury or illness
- they have dementia
- they have severe learning disabilities

When someone cannot make an informed choice then their deputy can make this choice for them using a "best interest" decision. As a deputy, you are authorised by the Court of Protection to make decisions on the client's behalf.

Appointeeship

This is a provision where the Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions can appoint someone to collect and manage the state benefits of someone who cannot do this for themselves. The DWP say this is because they are either mentally unable to manage money or are severely disabled.

Clients can be in care homes, extra care or resident in the community.

The deputy/appointee process is as follows:

- Receive a referral and an assessment from a qualified person to confirm that the client lacks capacity to manage their finances
- Conduct a search at their property, remove items of value and collect financial and other relevant documents
- Try to trace family or friends who may be willing to act instead or to find out if any arrangements are in place for someone to act.
- Put together financial documents and write to all parties to advise of the council's involvement
- Complete a Court Application and send off with fee
- Apply for appointeeship to support client whilst the deputy order is considered
- Pay bills and expenses including rent, care fees, spending money etc

What happens next?

- Once the DWP or Court of Protection has agreed that the council is to act for the client then the council starts the process of managing the person's finances. The council collects their benefits and pensions etc in a bank account opened for this purpose.
- Payments come in and go out of this account depending on the client's circumstances and individual needs.
- Each client has their own account statement.
- Clients who live at home have very different needs to someone placed in a care home.
- A budget is agreed so we know who to pay funds to and when.
- Payments for care fees and personal allowance are set up.
- Direct debits and standing orders are used to pay utility bills such as gas/electric/water.
- Additional funds can be made available for personal purchases if needed i.e. a new coat.

Public health funerals

- This is a funeral provided for clients who have died in Hillingdon's boundaries and who have no one else to arrange a funeral for them.
- In the past these were referred to as Pauper's Funerals.

- Today in the vast majority of cases there is money available to cover the cost of the funeral: there is just no one who wants to make the funeral arrangements.
- The council provides this service under S46 Public Health (control of diseases) Act 1984.

Finance abuse

All the three teams presenting at the assembly today come together in this type of case.

If you suspect someone you know is suffering financial abuse you should report it in one of the following ways:

- Call 999 if you are reporting a crime that is in progress or if someone is in immediate danger.
- Contact the local police if you think a crime has been committed or contact the local council if you think someone is at risk or is being abused.
- Care homes and home carers: Contact the council on 01895 556633 to report matters if you're concerned about someone not being treated properly in a care home or someone being mistreated by a carer
- NHS hospital or clinic care: Contact the manager of the hospital or clinic if you're worried about someone.
- If you want to discuss your concerns and get some advice, contact Action on Elder Abuse, helpline: 0808 808 8141

Questions and answers

The following questions were asked and answers given:

Q1. Hundreds of flats are being built in the area of Hayes Station and the old Nestles site. What is being done to provide medical facilities, schools and other infrastructure to support all the extra residents?

A1. The Council is looking at a range of community and transport infrastructure interventions and measures in the Hayes Housing Zone; this includes the provision of 'health hub' healthcare facilities, increased provision for children services facilities and managed community space, the current investment in expanding existing schools and building new ones, and the on-going partnership work between the Council and Transport for London to develop and maintain the transportation network including the provision for new and diverted bus routes to Hayes. Every year the Local Authority updates the forecast need for all parts of the borough using the latest population data and approved residential planning applications.

Q2. Please could you make presentations as black print on a white background and not use coloured text, so it is clearer to see.

<p>A2. We will bear this in mind for future Assemblies.</p> <p>Q3. Could you put all the details of advice on preventing scams in Hillingdon People?</p> <p>A3. We will work with the Corporate Communications team on ways of publicising the advice.</p> <p>Q4. What should you do with internet scams? How do you report them?</p> <p>A4. You should contact Action Fraud www.actionfraud.police.uk . It is best to delete the email. Do not click on any links.</p> <p>Q5. There is a very bad smell in Victoria Road, South Ruislip opposite the Stonefield Estate. It has been going on for some time. Who should I report it to?</p> <p>A5. The environmental protection and anti social behaviour teams can deal with this. It is best to report it via the contact centre on 01895 250111. Useful council telephone numbers are in the back of Hillingdon People.</p> <p>Comment: When you call Hillingdon Council you can't get through to the people you want and no one calls you back with a response to your enquiry. There are problems with kerbs and pavements being smashed by heavy vehicles when utility companies are digging up the road.</p> <p>Response: The Customer Engagement Team can contact the Highways team to look into this.</p> <p>Q6. When did it become legal for charities to come to your front door asking for donations?</p> <p>A6. Trading Standards advised that you can just say no, turn them away or not answer the door.</p> <p>Q7. Is it illegal for someone to fly a drone over your garden?</p> <p>A7. If a drone is flown over your property, technically that is trespass and you can sue for damages in the County Court. However, there is not a very realistic possibility of people being prosecuted for this.</p>
<p>Close</p> <p>Marion thanked everyone for attending and the officers for their presentations.</p>
<p>Date of the next Assembly: 5 December 2017 From 2pm to 3.30pm (registration from 1.30pm) The assembly will be held in the Council Chamber</p>