

 <p><b>Brent</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Equalities Committee</b> 6 December 2016</p> <p align="center"><b>Report from the Director of Performance, Policy &amp; Partnerships</b></p>
<p align="right">Wards affected: ALL</p>	
<p><b>Update on Outcome Based Reviews and the Harlesden Community Hub</b></p>	

## 1.0 Summary

- 1.1. Three Outcome Based Reviews (OBRs) were established in January 2016 which set out to understand:
- 1) How do we tackle the issues and challenges that people experience around participation in work and / or retaining a tenancy during periods of vulnerability?
  - 2) What might support and enable people to participate more fully in work and / or to find accommodation to meet their needs?
  - 3) How do we ensure a more holistic approach to regeneration in Harlesden, where priorities for physical regeneration are clearly linked to the investment in environmental and social regeneration?
- 1.2. The OBRs were a new approach for the Council bringing in design-led methods to discover new perspectives on challenges, engage a diverse stakeholder group in turning insights into ideas and generate principles and a broader vision for success in each of the three areas. The approach involved data collection, service mapping, interviews with professionals, and community research including ethnographic research and focus groups. Insights from the research were shared with partners at a stakeholder visioning event held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016 to jointly generate ideas of how we could tackle the key challenges and issues people experience in relation to employment, housing and where they live.

- 1.3. A number of ideas were put forward at the visioning day on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and it was agreed to bring together resources across the three OBRs to take forward the development of a community hub as a prototype for design and testing.
- 1.4. This report outlines the OBR approach and shares the work carried out to develop and trial a community hub model in Harlesden from 31<sup>st</sup> October – 12<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

## **2.0 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to note the progress and next steps for the work on the OBRs and Harlesden Hub prototype.

## **3.0 Detail**

### *The OBR approach*

- 3.1. Brent Council has been running three OBRs, using design-led processes, focusing on employment support and welfare reform, housing for vulnerable people and regeneration. The OBRs set out to:
  - gather rich insights and understand challenges through new perspectives;
  - create something different (new solutions, different relationships and ways of working);
  - build new capabilities in service design processes and innovation capacity; and
  - deliver improved outcomes for Brent residents.Delivering a customer-centred approach was a key component of this work, engaging residents and partners in research, visioning, design and testing.
- 3.2. Using a design-led approach in the areas of employment, housing and regeneration, the team conducted community research including ethnographic research (in-depth study of people in their own environment) and focus groups. During the research, the team spoke with over 250 residents. The 250 people included 51 people at risk of eviction, 142 Harlesden residents, 24 people with mental health problems and 24 carers. The ethnographies put the voices of residents at the centre of our learning, enabling us to listen to their stories, journeys and experiences to better understand challenges from an individual perspective. The OBRs also involved data collection, service mapping and interviews with professionals.
- 3.3. One key area which came out of the research was the difficulty some individuals and professionals face in navigating the system, knowing which organisations to connect with or refer to. Through a stakeholder visioning event and co-design workshops, principles and ideas for new models of resident support were developed. A summary of the ideas generated on the visioning day is included below. In addition to the hub, work is progressing on a number of these in partnership with related services and stakeholder groups.

Table 1: Ideas from Visioning Day 30/06/16

<b>Housing Vulnerable People</b>	<b>Employment Support &amp; Welfare</b>	<b>Regeneration</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the assessment process – joining up across different services, but equally importantly, ensuring our assessments respond to people’s ability and motivation to engage, rather than just their statutory (housing, adult social care children’s social care) need</li> <li>• Adapt these assessment processes to better reflect the needs of people coming from institutional settings, particularly prison and hospitals</li> <li>• Build on/accelerate the work Private Housing Services already do to develop our role with private sector landlords, to improve availability and standards in the private rented sector</li> <li>• Commission more short-term accommodation to help flow in the system, but do this with a stronger evidence base of need, and with the right front line resource to so that people can move on to long-term accommodation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a common outcomes framework (incorporating a needs assessment and technical solution)</li> <li>• Develop a community hub approach for employment and welfare support</li> <li>• Employer engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise job opportunities for local young people from Old Oak development by engaging with employers and schools to ensure there is a match between skills and job opportunities</li> <li>• Work with community groups, faith groups, businesses etc. to develop activities such as a Big Harlesden weekend festival to improve community cohesion/cross-cultural and intergenerational dialogue</li> <li>• Create a local environmental services manager role for hot spots in the borough to integrate local service delivery, improve response times and build relationships</li> <li>• Create a role of Town Centre Manager</li> <li>• Develop initiatives which seek to integrate children from different primary schools to break down barriers and enhance community cohesion from an early age.</li> </ul>

*Developing a community hub model*

3.4. The OBRs provided an opportunity to rapidly develop and test an idea through prototyping. The idea of a community hub was a key theme across the OBRs. The development of a hub prototype was identified as a way to test how we could create well-connected communities, bring together local organisations to work under one roof and to jointly address needs. The community hub prototype in Harlesden was designed to create something different which offered a more localised, personalised and holistic approach.

- 3.5. From the outset it was recognised that the development of a community hub prototype required cross-sector buy in, bringing together residents, partners and other stakeholders and involving them in the design process. This process included a stakeholder design event on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016 to agree what could be involved and the resources people were able to commit; and a design week in early October 2016 to form the team, design and build the prototype.
- 3.6. A temporary hub was developed through this co-design process with partners and ran for a two-week period from 31<sup>st</sup> October to 12<sup>th</sup> November 2016 in Harlesden. The community hub prototype provided a physical space, based in Tavistock Hall on Harlesden High Street, enabling a range of local organisations to work together with a focus on:
  - Developing better connections and new relationships;
  - Offering access to housing, benefits and employment advice;
  - Supporting connections with learning & development and skills & knowledge exchange through a range of activities;
  - Delivering local community regeneration activities; and
  - Promoting healthier lives.
- 3.7. As part of the hub, a London bus was hired and located on the High Street to provide additional space for activities and raise awareness of the hub. The direct presence on the High Street enabled the team to engage residents who may otherwise have not entered the hub.
- 3.8. A core team was established to run the hub with representation from services across the Council, the local community and Brent Community Advice Network (BCAN). Community representatives and a range of services and local organisations participated in the project. This included Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, Children and Families advice, Crisis Brent, BCAN, Advice 4 Renters, Brent Works, Brent Start, Jobcentre Plus, the Harlesden Neighbourhood Forum, B3, Brent Carers, Brent Mind, CVS Brent, College of North West London, Groundworks, Harlesden Town Team, Harlesden Money Advice, Brent Youth Debates, OPDC, QPR, Brent Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Global Skills Centre, Terrance Higgins Trust, PLIAS, Harlesden Woman's Juice Project, Love London Project and Change, Grow, Live. Local organisations and community groups gave their resources for free.
- 3.9. The key aim of the hub was to put individuals at the centre. Prevention/early intervention work, targeted approaches for people with complex and multiple needs, and support for people in crisis were key elements of the hub. The hub offered a space where residents could interact with each other and form new relationships, as well as accessing the support and advice they need. The flexible space meant that people coming into the hub were able to speak with an adviser, participate in an activity, engage with the exhibition or sit and have a chat and a cup of coffee. Activities included an information session on the Benefits Cap, a coffee morning for people with mental health problems, arts and crafts sessions and a social networking event.

- 3.10. The team working in the hub were able to support residents with a range of needs. The breadth of support provided included advice and support for housing benefit assessment, benefits cap, council tax, emergency shelter, employment, repairs, renting and form filling. Some residents returned to the hub on more than one occasion to receive continuing support with their situation.
- 3.11. The hub also operated beyond the physical space through events, including a community clean-up day, bike maintenance and cycling training for adults.

*What did we set out to learn?*

- 3.12. The design and testing of a community hub was not about re-inventing what already exists, the focus was on creating something different and bringing together resources, skills and expertise to address local needs. The prototyping of a hub model was a way to develop and test the feasibility of the idea quickly and in a safe and controlled environment. It enabled us to engage a wide range of stakeholders in the process, with a number of local organisations coming forward to participate in the project, and an opportunity to learn, experiment and try something new.
- 3.13. It was acknowledged that it would be difficult to assess the longer-term impact of support provided to residents in a two-week period but there were key areas of learning to focus on:

*Learning from the prototype:*

- Is there an appetite for a community hub in Harlesden?
- What are we learning about the hub model? Is there anything specific that is working really well? Is there anything specific that could be improved?
- What are we noticing about the space? How are people using it?
- How are organisations working in the space – is this different to how they normally operate?

*Developing a longer-term model:*

- How do we develop a model that is community led and develops well connected communities?
- How could a hub model help deliver joint assessment of need?
- How could a hub model help build resilience?

*Evaluating the hub*

- 3.14. A daily tally of footfall was recorded. There was an increase in the number of people using the hub, with a significant increase in footfall in week two. Some days were quieter than others and the weather had an impact, with fewer visitors on wet days. Activities were able to draw people into the hub, with the highest attendance at an information session for residents on the Overall Benefit Cap organised by Crisis Brent. In total during the two-week prototype there were 647 visits to the hub. In week one there were 73 visitors to the hub

and 294 in week two. 115 people were engaged on the bus in week one and 165 in week two.

Figure 1: Hub visits

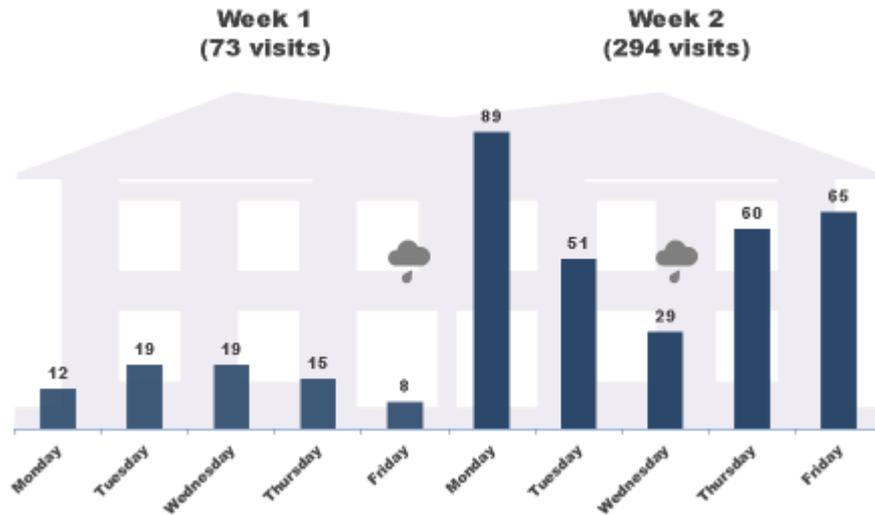
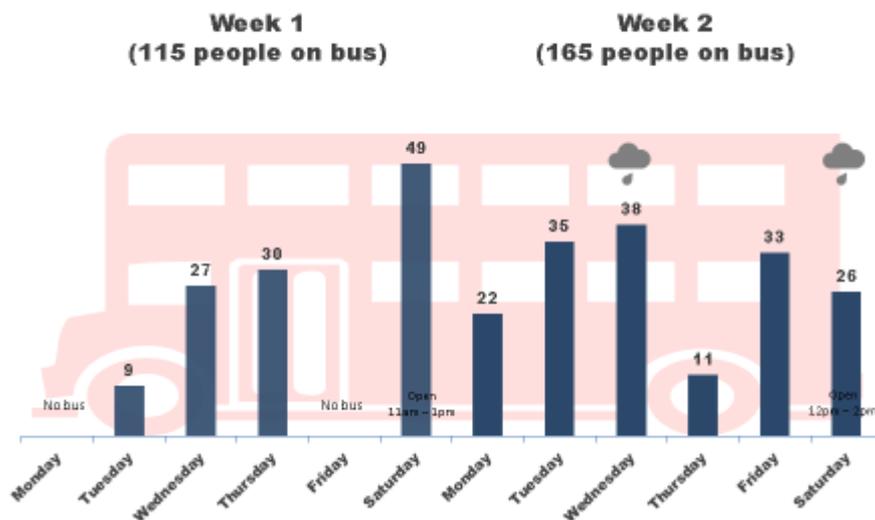


Figure 2: People engaged on the bus



3.15. A full evaluation of the Harlesden hub prototype is currently being carried out. Early lessons from the prototype include:

- Branding and location are key in creating the environment but the complexity of promoting such a broad range of advice and activities within a limited timeframe made publicising the hub challenging. It can also be difficult to convert promotion to visits but the increase in numbers in week two suggests that word of mouth and a visible, physical presence are key factors.
- The benefits of a flexible space to accommodate a range of activities and advice / support should be considered in future design;

- A localised offer and ability to respond to needs, requires a multi-purpose / multi-skilled team who are able to take ownership and problem-solve across a range of needs;
- Both the environment and the approach of the team created a relaxed atmosphere which made people feel comfortable and welcome in the space; and
- The ability for organisations to network and make links was also a key benefit of co-location.

3.16. There were opportunities for residents and partners to share their feedback through a graffiti wall, feedback forms for partners and observations carried out by resident volunteers. Some examples of feedback include:

*“Felt empowered by conversations with advisers” (Resident)*

*“I had a problem with housing...I was happy to leave with the answer” (Resident)*

*“The space created a sense of community and there seemed a genuine invitation for people to explore concerns, seek advice, make new connections and learn more about the local area” (Resident volunteer observer)*

*“As the days went by I saw us go from being people with a role in a Hub to a positive, passionate and empowered team wanting to do our best for the residents, the community and learn something on the way.” (Team Hub member)*

#### *Next steps*

3.17. The evaluation will inform next steps in developing a longer-term sustainable model. This includes a review of feedback from organisations who participated in the hub and residents who visited and a workshop on 22<sup>nd</sup> November which will gather feedback from partners and provide an opportunity to work together on next steps.

3.18 It is envisaged that we will develop a temporary hub model for Harlesden to allow us to build on the momentum of the prototype and continue to offer a similar service while we develop a longer term solution. We also intend to look at how the model could be adapted and rolled out in other parts of the borough where there is a need for this kind of approach.

#### *Wider outcomes*

3.19. There are additional outcomes from the wider OBR process, including:

- An appetite to test new approaches to service design centred around the individual;
- Greater understanding of the issues and challenges facing residents and the things that would support and enable them;

- Development of new working relationships with colleagues, partners and residents involved in the work;
- Service design informed by a set of principles developed with residents, local organisations and partners; and
- New capabilities, skills and expertise in using design methods, tools and techniques.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1. There are no direct requests for funds in this report.
- 4.2. However, section 3.18 refers to a temporary hub model in Harlesden. It is currently anticipated that it would be funded from a combination of existing budgets plus support from partners. The prototype was funded in such a manner. Nonetheless, there is the possibility that external funding from partners would not be available and that this would produce a small budget pressure. Until detailed plans and any additional costs can be confirmed, this risk is difficult to assess.
- 4.3. A business case will be developed for any future community hub model proposals. This is a future item that will need a fuller assessment at the appropriate time.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1. None at this stage although in developing the proposed hub model, Officers are required to have regard to the public sector equality duty detailed in the Equality Act 2010 with a view to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the said Act; advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

#### **6.0 Equality Implications**

- 6.1. The OBR work sought to engage a wide range of residents in order to gain input from all communities. In developing the hub prototype consideration was given to issues such as accessibility and providing information in key community languages. Equality implications will continue to be considered as part of the development of future models.
- 6.2. It was not possible to track the diversity of visitors to the hub although approximate data on gender and age was collected. It appeared from observation that the hub attracted visitors which represented the key local communities in Harlesden.

## **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)**

7.1. None at this stage but this will be considered as part of the development of future hub models.

### **Background Papers**

None

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