

Minutes of Hillingdon's Older People's Assembly

6 December 2021

Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uxbridge.

<p>1.</p>	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Marion Finney introduced herself as the Manager of the Customer Engagement Team and chair of the Assembly. She welcomed everyone and stated it was good to see residents back at the Old People's Assembly after what has been a very challenging time for everyone during the COVID lockdown period.</p> <p>She recognised and welcomed residents who were attending the assembly for the first time. She went through the housekeeping and agenda and explained the purpose of the Older People's Assembly which is to hear about services and activities that the Council and its partners provide and also an opportunity for residents to provide feedback that would help to improve and shape services for the future. She reminded attendees if they wished to report issues and make service requests, they should do so by calling the main switchboard number 01895 250 111 or do it online 24/7 as we cannot discuss individual issues at the assembly.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Remarks from Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE– Former Leader of the Council</p> <p>Cllr Ray Puddifoot welcomed all attendees to the Assembly and stated it was wonderful to meet again in person after such a long time.</p> <p>He stated it was just over 16 years ago on the 3 June 2005 when he announced his appointment of the Older People's Champion and his role to champion the strategy and the Older People's Plan. Since that time, the Older People's Plan has gone from strength to strength and is regularly reviewed by the Council Cabinet and the Assembly.</p> <p>He stated due to COVID the assembly was put on hold, in line with the government's advice and guidance on social distancing, but the older people's plan continues to be reviewed and updated at Cabinet meetings.</p> <p>Cllr Puddifoot gave a brief overview of the work done under his championship. He mentioned a few items on the cabinet report, which described some of the successful outcomes over the past 16 years, which has been business as usual, though some have been halted for a limited time due to the pandemic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety and security. Under the burglar alarm scheme, eleven thousand, one hundred and three burglar alarms were installed for older residents who were over 65. This service was suspended due

	<p>to COVID and has now resumed. Cllr Puddifoot was please to say there are many in stock.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventative care/ Telecare line Service. This service supports residents to be independent in their own home. On 31st May 2021 England had 6835 residents who received Telecare services, over 5,766 of those are over 75 years and over. • Keeping independent and healthy. This is very much what is being done in the Older People’s Plan and although many programmes and activities have been suspended due to the pandemic. Since the end of June 2021, the council has collaborated with staff members from nine libraries to make regular phones calls to residents. • Pre- Swimming and Pre-Allotment? These programmes were also affected but have resumed. • Brown Badge older people parking scheme. There are now, thirteen thousand, four hundred and sixty-one active brown badge users in the borough. • Supporting older people in the community. Grant is available for outings, summer, winter and or Christmas activities or events. Private funding is available for transport. Grants applications have reopened. • Age UK Providing home visits and give advice on welfare benefit and other financial entitlements to older residents. <p>Cllr Puddifoot stated that he stood down from being the Older People’s Champion in January 2021 and will no longer be attending the assembly in an official capacity as a champion.</p> <p>Cllr Puddifoot thanked the Hillingdon staff and the residents of the Older People’s Assembly for all their contributions over the past 16 years towards keeping the assembly active and thriving. Cllr Puddifoot handed over to the new Leader and Champion Cllr Ian Edwards.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Remarks from Cllr Ian Edwards – Leader of the Council</p> <p>Cllr Ian Edwards reflected upon Cllr Puddifoot’s remarks and gave his assurance that the journey will continue. There will be no change under his leadership, he will continue in the same way as Cllr Ray Puddifoot.</p> <p>Furthermore Cllr Edwards, went on to reflect to 2005, when Cllr Puddifoot put his flag in the ground and said “I am the Older People’s Champion, I am the one who will shape the council’s services and responses of older people to make sure they are treated well and supported to the absolute best of the</p>

Council's ability, so older people can live a very fulfilling, happy and enjoyable retirement”.

Cllr Edwards stated that without Cllr Puddifoots leadership from that point on, the council would be no different to any other borough. So, the council's current position lies tremendously on Cllr Puddifoot's shoulders.

Cllr Edwards stated It is a big task to follow such a leadership, but he has been observing what Cllr Puddifoot has been doing and seeing what works and he will be carrying on in that approach.

Cllr Edwards stated one of his greatest ambitions, for older people is that everybody in Hillingdon borough, can live a fulfilling, happy and enjoyable retirement. He will ensure programmes such as swimming lessons, the dining clubs, walking groups, volunteering opportunities and many other activities continue.

Cllr Edwards recognises a lot of young people who can give back to the community, many who would welcome older people's advice, guidance, stewardship, and help.

He stated as we get older, we become less able and require more help and he is absolutely committed to ensuring that older people stay in control of their own destinies and can live independently in their own homes for as long as possible.

He talked about the support provided by Telecare line, and he will be taking that further.

He will be working with Brunel University to look at what Telecare next generation would look like? He will look at proposals and things they can do to help older people live independently, safe, and securely in their own home and even longer than is presently possible.

He said if residents wish to downsize, the council can support them through its current scheme. Please click on this link for more information [Downsizing options - Hillingdon Council](#)

Cllr Edwards mentioned, when older residents come to the end of their journey and need extra care, he wants to make sure the council provides the absolute best care at the very highest standard. He mentioned visiting Grassy Meadows Extra Care Facility in Hillingdon and he was enormously impressed to see the joy on the residents faces and hear their endorsement about feeling happy about living in the facility. This was very encouraging and is evident that Hillingdon is on the right path, and will be looking to further enhance other facilities.

He will continue to fight hard for older people and one of the things needed is to tackle the current COVID situation. He suggested we need to work hard to make sure everyone takes the booster as this will enable us all to

	<p>remain safer. He encouraged everyone to take the message back to their own family members, particularly those who are hesitant.</p> <p>He is looking forward to pre-COVID activities coming back in full force as well as the Middlesex Suite re-opening for public use. He hopes and believes this will happen very speedily and things will get back to normality.</p> <p>He reiterated that everything that is set up, arranged, and done in the past, will continue for as long as possible.</p> <p>Finally, he stated that he has enjoyed meeting everyone at his first assembly and look forward to seeing everyone at the next assembly. He said, the real value of these assemblies is for residents to express their views which will help Hillingdon Council to know what they can do to make residents lives much better.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>First presentation focused on keeping safe and warm this winter and was delivered by Susan Walden - Information and Advice Service Manager, Age UK Hillingdon, Harrow and Brent</p> <p>Susan introduced herself and shared information about Age UK's greatest aims and the services provided for older people in the community. She also gave information about things older people can do to keep safe and stay warm in the winter months as well as information about financial assistance.</p> <p>Below are the keys points of the presentation:</p> <p>Age UK would we like to achieve, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce hospital admissions • Reduce attendance at Accident and Emergency • Reduce GP Appointments • Reduce winter deaths • Reduce number of people having problems meeting fuel bills • Provide information, support, and practical assistance to stay warm and well. <p>She shared information nuggets about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping well • Being prepared for the season • Saving energy and getting the best of energy deals • Ideal temperatures in living room <p>Older people can keep well by doing all the flowing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular exercise • Eat well • Keep warm (check temperatures) • Wear warm clothes in and out of the house, wear a hat, gloves and wrap a scarf around your face when going out in cold weather

- Keep bedroom warm
- Use a hot water bottle or an electric blanket
- Keep hands and feet warm
- Several thin layers are warmer than one thick layer

Few ways to prepare for the winter months.

- To prevent any problems, get your heating serviced once a year to ensure it's running safely and efficiently. Make sure the person who services it is qualified and, on the Gas, Safe Register.
- Test your carbonmonoxide alarms – even low exposure can cause long-term health problems, while high exposure can be fatal (for more details see Age UK Guide 27)
- Ensure you know where your stopcock is – in case of burst pipes
- Stock cupboards and freezer with food
- Register for shopping deliveries – there is a digital inclusion service that can help residents.
- Keep grit or a salt/sand mix to put on steps and paths in icy weather
- Have your annual flu jab as well as keeping up to date with COVID boosters
- Stock up on prescription medicines
- Contact your local fire service – they may be able to offer a free safety check and fit smoke detectors
- Is access to your property safe? - consider grab rails for front or rear doors

Susan talked about how older people can save money and shared some examples useful information below.

- Residents should make sure they claim all the financial support available to them as this can help towards heating costs.
- Winter Fuel Payment and the Cold Weather Payment – which is an additional £25 a week (dependent on certain weather conditions between November/March)
- Warm Home Discount Scheme £140 – if you receive pension credit or on a low income you may be entitled to a reduction on your heating bill through this scheme from your energy supplier.

More details on the schemes and services can be found in the Age UK's guide called – “More money in your pocket”

To contact for support to apply for benefits please call the Information and Advice Team on 020 8756 3040 (option 1)

Susan Walden at Age UK

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	<p>Website www.ageukhbb.org.uk Telephone number 020 8756 3040</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Second presentation focused on: Health and Wellbeing over the winter season and was delivered by Mr. Viral (Sunny) Doshi FRPharmS, Public Health Pharmacist, Hillingdon Public Health</p> <p>Viral introduced himself and spoke about his background and history working in Public Health as a Pharmacist.</p> <p>He shared information about what to do if residents feel unwell. One of the options are getting advice from a pharmacy, as pharmacists can give treatment and advice on a range of minor illnesses and can tell you if you need to see a doctor. Another is seeing your GP online or over the phone, or go in for an appointment if they think you need to including calling the non-emergency NHS 111 line.</p> <p>Below are key points from the presentation.</p> <p>Steps residents can take to stay healthy and promote well-being.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily exercise will help you stay strong and healthy. If it is too cold outside, walk around the house. Keep your toes and hands moving. • Keep yourself hydrated by drinking plenty of liquids, especially water. • Have a balanced healthy diet. Include fruits with plenty of vitamin C such as oranges and food with vitamin D such as eggs and oily fish. • Keep warm: central heating, hot water bottles with a British Safety Standard marking, blankets and warm clothing. • Open a small window every now and then throughout the day to provide circulation and clean fresh air into the property. <p><u>Flu vaccination for winter 2021-2022</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are most at risk from the complications of flu are recommended to get a flu vaccine every year. • This winter it is especially important with flu and coronavirus (COVID-19) both in circulation. Research shows that if you get flu and COVID-19 at the same time you may be more seriously ill. • You do not need to wait to be invited to have your vaccine, if you are eligible, you can make an appointment at your GP surgery or ask any pharmacy that provides the NHS service.

The importance of knowing the difference between a mere cold and the flu.

- Flu occurs every year, usually in the winter, which is why it's sometimes called seasonal flu. It's a highly infectious disease with symptoms that come on very quickly.
- Symptoms of flu are: fever, chills, headache, aches and pains in the joints and muscles. Flu can lead to hospitalisation, permanent disability or even death.

Causes of flu

Flu is caused by influenza viruses that infect the windpipe and lungs. Because it is caused by viruses and not bacteria, antibiotics won't treat it.

Flu is infectious

He talked about how people catch flu. This is when an infected person coughs or sneezes, they spread the flu virus in tiny droplets of saliva over a wide area. These droplets can then be breathed in by other people or they can be picked up by touching surfaces where the droplets have landed. But the best way to avoid catching and spreading flu is by having the vaccination before the flu season starts.

Flu Vaccine

Residents can get a free flu vaccine if they are aged 50 years old and over, have certain health conditions, such as, diabetes, kidney disease, and liver disease. Flu vaccine is delivered to GP practices, pharmacies, and other services in batches in the run up to and over the flu season. You can visit the website at WWW.NHS.UK to check all those who are eligible.

COVID vaccine booster

- Most people who are eligible for both the flu jab and COVID-19 booster, will have to attend 2 appointments.
- It is important that you do not delay your flu jab in the expectation that you can have it alongside the COVID-19 booster.
- You need to have your flu jab before flu starts to circulate. If you are offered both vaccines at the same appointment it will save you having to attend a second time. It is safe to have them both together.

COVID -19 Vaccines

- Anyone who gets COVID-19 can become seriously ill or have long-term effects (long COVID). The COVID-19 vaccines are the best way to protect yourself and others.
- The coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines are safe and effective.
- They give you the best protection against COVID-19 and reduce the risk of getting seriously ill which may lead to hospitalisation or even death.

How to get the COVID -19 vaccine

- Book your COVID-19 vaccination appointments online for an appointment at a vaccination centre or pharmacy.

- Find a walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site to get vaccinated without needing an appointment.
- Wait to be contacted by your GP surgery and book your appointments with them.

Types of Vaccines

The COVID-19 vaccines currently approved for use in the UK are:

- Moderna vaccine
- Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine
- Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine
- Janssen vaccine (available later this year)

How well do COVID -19 vaccines work

- Reduce your risk of getting seriously ill or dying from COVID-19.
- Reduce your risk of catching or spreading COVID-19.
- Helps protect against COVID-19 variants.
- The first dose should give you some protection from 3 or 4 weeks after you've had it. But you need 2 doses for stronger and longer-lasting protection.
- There is a chance you might still get or spread COVID-19 even if you have a vaccine, so it's important to follow advice about how to avoid catching and spreading COVID-19.

Side effects and safety

The COVID-19 vaccines approved for use in the UK have met strict standards of safety, quality, and effectiveness.

They may cause some mild side effects, and should not last longer than a week, such as:

- A sore arm from the injection
- Feeling tired
- Headache
- Feeling achy
- Feeling or being sick
- More serious side effects, such as allergic reactions or blood clotting, are exceedingly rare.

COVID-19 Vaccine Ingredients

- The COVID-19 vaccines do not contain egg or animal products.
- The Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine contains a tiny amount of alcohol, but this is less than in some everyday foods like bread.

Hillingdon's key successes

- 90% plus vaccination achieved for all over 70s both first and second doses with 89% for 65 69 age cohort.
- 80% plus of over 70s (with the second dose) have received booster

	<p><u>Corona Virus Booster Vaccine.</u> A coronavirus (COVID-19) booster vaccine dose helps improve the protection you have from your first 2 doses of the vaccine. It helps give you longer-term protection against getting seriously ill from COVID-19.</p> <p><u>How and when to get COVID Vaccine Booster Vaccine</u> Booster vaccine doses will be available on the NHS for people most at risk from COVID-19 who have had a 2nd dose of a vaccine at least 6 months ago. Most people can. Book a vaccination appointment online for an appointment at a vaccination centre or pharmacy. Go to a walk-in vaccination site to get vaccinated without needing an appointment. Wait to be contacted by a local NHS service such as a GP surgery and book an appointment with them.</p> <p><u>Walking COVID-19 vaccination sites</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winston Churchill Theatre • Stockley Park (Howletts Pharmacy) • Lawton Pharmacy <p>The NHS is continuously trying to take people’s feedback onboard and improve the service so there might be more walk-in services available.</p> <p><u>Beware of vaccine scams</u> There are reports of fraudsters using text messages to offer the COVID-19 vaccine. Please note the NHS will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never ask you to press a button on your keypad asking you to confirm whether you want the vaccine. • Never ask for payment for the vaccine or for your bank details. <p>If you receive a text message from an unfamiliar number:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not respond to it or click on any links. • Do not enter any personal or log on details. • Do not make any payment. <p>Further Information can be found at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.hillingdon.gov.uk • www.nhs.uk • www.gov.uk
6.	<p>The following questions were asked, and answers given</p> <p>Q1, I understand that there are pharmacists in the GP surgeries now, what is the reason for this?</p>

	<p>Answer: Because it has been realised that pharmacists have a little bit more expertise than counting medicines and putting them in a box, pharmacists have much more clinical skills. They have been given this responsibility to allow GPs to focus more on treating more serious long-term chronic conditions. The pharmacists will have the opportunity to focus on the more minor health conditions such as a sore throat, cold flu's because they are experts in the clinical and medicine field. This will reduce the work of GPs and enable them to look at patients records to find out if everything is working for them and whether they need any other treatment or change in medication dozes.</p> <p>Q2, You mentioned we need to take in a certain amount of water every day. Do you mean H2O or other forms of fluid like teas and coffees?</p> <p>Answer Any type of fluid that will hydrate the body is good. So, this can be teas, coffees, and water. Although too much of coffees can dehydrate you because of the caffeine. Keep up the hydration but not excessive.</p> <p>Q3, You mentioned about getting advice from a GP, the question is how do you get past the receptionist? And they normally ask very personal questions that only a GP should be asking. How do you get around this?</p> <p>Answer: Receptionist vary amongst each surgery; the answer is you just need to persevere.</p> <p>Viral thanked the residents for attending and is available to attend future assemblies.</p>
7.	<p>Date of the next Assembly: To be confirmed depending on the government's advice and guidance on social distancing.</p>