



**Older People's Assembly
23 September 2026
2:00pm to 3:30pm
Council Chambers, Civic Centre
MINUTES**

Officers present:

Jasmin Buckley, Resident Empowerment Officer
Shahina Haider, Resident Empowerment Officer
Marion Finney, Resident Empowerment and Relationship Manager

Guest speakers:

Cllr Steve Tuckwell, Leader of Hillingdon Council
Marsha Alter, Operational Support and Service Development Clinical Pharmacist,
The Middlesex Pharmacist Group of LPSs
Dan Morton, Practice Development Manager – Safeguarding Partnerships & Liz Amil
PC Joanne Fordham & PC Vish Kapoor- Police and Community Safety Update, -
Metropolitan Police

Attendees: 52

No	Item
1	Welcome, housekeeping and introductions The Chair, Jasmin Buckley, welcomed residents, guest speakers and partner organisations to the Older People's Assembly. Residents were thanked for attending and were advised that the meeting would include presentations covering community pharmacy services, safeguarding and community safety. Housekeeping arrangements were outlined, including emergency evacuation procedures, the location of facilities and the use of microphones during the meeting. Residents were asked to place mobile phones on silent and were reminded that individual service enquiries should be raised directly with council officers following the meeting or through the feedback forms. Residents were advised that presentation slides and minutes would be circulated after the assembly.
2	Opening remarks Steve Tuckwell, Leader of Hillingdon Council and Older People's Champion, welcomed residents and reflected on his first few months as Leader of the Council. He

	reiterated his commitment to ensuring resident engagement remained central to decision making and stated that the Older People's Assembly provided an important opportunity for the Council to listen directly to residents' experiences and concerns. The Leader outlined the Council's priorities for the coming years, including: • Being easy to deal with. • Being brilliant at the basics. • Continuing to put residents first. He explained that residents should judge the Council on the quality of its everyday services, including neighbourhood cleanliness, community safety and residents' ability to access services when needed. During his remarks, residents informally responded that it was sometimes difficult to get hold of the Council and obtain clear answers. Steve Tuckwell acknowledged this feedback and stated that improving accessibility and communication remained a key objective. He emphasised that resident feedback, whether positive or negative, was valuable and necessary to support improvement. The Leader also discussed the development of the Age Friendly Hillingdon Plan. He explained that the aspiration was to ensure Hillingdon remained a borough where residents could age well, maintain independence, remain active within their communities and continue contributing to local life. He stressed that older residents' experiences would play a vital role in shaping future priorities and service improvements. Residents were advised that local authorities continued to face significant financial pressures and that difficult decisions would be required in future years. However, the Council remained committed to consulting residents, considering the impact of decisions and ensuring that decisions were explained openly and transparently. The Leader concluded by encouraging residents to continue sharing their views and experiences and thanked attendees for their continued involvement in helping shape Council services.
3	Introduction to Steering Group Members & reminder to join The Chair provided an update regarding the Older People's Assembly Steering Group and thanked residents who had attended recent meetings. It was explained that the group had achieved a strong level of engagement and that feedback from Steering Group members had directly influenced the content of the September Assembly. Residents were informed that the Steering Group helps shape future assembly agendas, identify topics of interest and suggest speakers and organisations that residents would like to hear from.

	Residents interested in becoming involved were encouraged to indicate this on their feedback forms so that the Resident Empowerment Team could contact them with further information.
4	Community Pharmacy - Here to Help - Marsha Alter Marsha Alter, Community Pharmacist and Service Development Pharmacist from the Middlesex Group of Local Pharmaceutical Committees, delivered a presentation on the role community pharmacies play in supporting residents' health and wellbeing. She explained that community pharmacies provide significantly more than prescription services and are often one of the most accessible healthcare resources within local communities. Marsha outlined the qualifications and expertise held by pharmacy teams, explaining that staff include pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, dispensers and healthcare assistants. She noted that many residents are unaware of the level of clinical knowledge available within pharmacies and may not realise the range of support that can be accessed without a GP appointment. The presentation highlighted how community pharmacies develop long-term relationships with residents and their families, allowing staff to identify concerns early and provide advice or signpost residents to appropriate services. Pharmacies were described as a "lighthouse" within the community, often helping identify issues before they become more serious. Examples included: • Changes in mobility, confidence or independence. • Increased confusion or forgetfulness. • Weight loss, poor appetite or fatigue. • Difficulties managing medication. • Social isolation and loneliness. Carer strain and increased reliance on family members. Residents heard how pharmacies support not only patients but also carers and family members by providing advice, reassurance and referrals to additional support services where required. Marsha outlined several NHS services available through community pharmacies, including: • New Medicine Service (NMS). • Discharge Medicines Service (DMS). • Safe disposal of unwanted medicines. • Seasonal vaccinations. • Pharmacy First. • Blood pressure checks.

- Smoking cessation support.
- Contraception services.
- Palliative care medication support.

The New Medicine Service provides follow-up support for residents prescribed eligible new medications, helping to identify side effects, answer questions and improve understanding of treatment. Marsha also highlighted the importance of the Discharge Medicines Service, explaining that pharmacies help ensure medication changes following hospital stays are correctly reflected on future prescriptions and can act as an additional safety net for patients returning home.

Residents were informed that participating pharmacies also provide Pharmacy First consultations for several common conditions, reducing the need for some GP appointments. Marsha emphasised that many pharmacy services can be accessed without an appointment and that residents can use the NHS Service Finder to identify local pharmacies offering particular services.

Q&A

1. Accessing pharmacy services

A resident asked how they could identify pharmacies that offer specific services.

Marsha advised that most pharmacies within Hillingdon provide Pharmacy First services and blood pressure monitoring. Residents were encouraged to speak with their preferred pharmacy or use the NHS Service Finder, and pharmacies could also direct residents to alternative providers where necessary.

2. Pharmacy funding and prescription charges

A resident raised concerns regarding pharmacy funding and people incorrectly claiming free prescriptions.

Marsha acknowledged ongoing funding pressures and explained that discussions continue nationally regarding pharmacy funding. She advised residents to ensure they select the correct prescription exemption category, as incorrect claims may result in financial penalties.

3. Cholesterol testing

A resident asked whether pharmacies offer cholesterol testing.

Marsha explained that cholesterol testing is not currently commissioned locally as a routine pharmacy service, although pilot programmes have been undertaken elsewhere and future service developments are being explored.

4. Medication supply issues

	Residents raised concerns about delays obtaining prescribed medicines and the need to visit multiple pharmacies when medications are unavailable. Marsha acknowledged ongoing national medicine supply challenges and explained that pharmacies regularly work with suppliers, neighbouring pharmacies and GP practices to locate stock or identify suitable alternatives. She added that pharmacies continue to work with GP practices to encourage sufficient repeat prescription ordering periods so that residents have adequate time to obtain their medication should shortages arise.
5	Safeguarding Voices Group and residents safeguarding survey – Dan Morton Dan Morton, Practice Development Manager for Safeguarding Partnerships, delivered a presentation on the work of the Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership and the role of the Safeguarding Voices Group in helping to shape safeguarding services across the borough. Dan explained that the Safeguarding Partnership brings together a range of organisations responsible for protecting children and adults at risk, including the Council, Police, NHS, voluntary sector organisations and community partners. He stressed that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and involves working together to prevent abuse, neglect and exploitation and to respond effectively when concerns arise. The presentation focused on adult safeguarding and highlighted that older people and people with disabilities may be more vulnerable to abuse or neglect due to factors such as: • Frailty, illness or cognitive impairment. • Social isolation and loneliness. • Dependence on others for personal care or daily living. • Increased contact with a range of services and carers. • Communication barriers that can make concerns harder to identify or report. Dan outlined the different forms of abuse that safeguarding services help to address, including: • Physical abuse. • Emotional or psychological abuse. • Financial abuse. • Neglect and self neglect. • Domestic abuse. • Discriminatory abuse. • Modern slavery and exploitation. A significant part of the presentation focused on the Safeguarding Voices Group (SVG), a small group of volunteers with lived experience of safeguarding, care and support services. The group helps ensure that the experiences of residents and

carers influence the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board and wider safeguarding partnership.

Residents heard how members of the group contribute by:

- Reviewing documents, reports and presentations.
- Participating in audits and consultations.
- Sharing personal experiences to identify gaps in services.
- Attending community engagement events.
- Providing feedback on safeguarding services and priorities.
- Helping shape recommendations and action plans.

Liz Amzil, a member of the Safeguarding Voices Group, spoke about her own experience as a volunteer. She explained how her involvement had stemmed from supporting a family member with care needs and described how the group uses lived experience to influence service improvements. Liz encouraged more residents to get involved and explained that members are able to provide direct feedback to those responsible for designing and delivering safeguarding services in Hillingdon.

Dan highlighted recent work undertaken by the group, including supporting a carers' audit, gathering feedback from people with learning disabilities and contributing towards service reviews and quality assurance work. He explained that feedback collected through these activities is used to develop recommendations and action plans that help improve safeguarding practice across the borough.

Residents were also invited to complete a safeguarding survey designed to gather the experiences of people who have accessed safeguarding services. Dan explained that feedback could be provided through the survey, through one off conversations with the safeguarding team or by joining the Safeguarding Voices Group. He emphasised that involvement could be flexible and that residents could contribute as much or as little as they wished.

Q&A

1. Safeguarding responsibilities of local authorities

A resident asked whether safeguarding was a statutory responsibility for local authorities and explained that they were more familiar with safeguarding requirements in settings such as churches and voluntary organisations.

Dan Morton confirmed that safeguarding adults and children forms a key responsibility of local authorities and explained that councils have long held responsibilities for coordinating responses to safeguarding concerns. He advised that safeguarding is delivered through partnership working and involves the Council, Police, NHS and a range of community organisations working together to protect vulnerable residents.

Following the discussion, residents were encouraged to speak with Dan after the meeting if they wished to join the Safeguarding Voices Group, complete the survey or provide safeguarding feedback directly to the Partnership.

Police and Community Safety Update - PC Joanne Fordham & PC Vish Kapoor – Metropolitan Police

PC Joanne Fordham and PC Vish Kapoor from the Metropolitan Police attended the Assembly to provide a community safety update and answer residents' questions. Rather than delivering a formal presentation, residents were invited to raise local concerns and discuss issues affecting their neighbourhoods.

The officers explained that although they primarily work within Uxbridge town centre, concerns raised during the meeting could be shared with the relevant Safer Neighbourhood Teams and partner agencies where appropriate. Residents were encouraged to continue reporting incidents to help build intelligence and support enforcement activity.

Q&A

1. Drug related activity and anti-social behaviour on the Hillingdon Trail

A resident from the Barnhill area raised concerns about ongoing anti-social behaviour and drug related activity along the Hillingdon Trail. The resident explained that members of the local Residents' Association and volunteers regularly carry out litter picking sessions and frequently collect large amounts of drug paraphernalia, including nitrous oxide canisters and other waste. Concerns were also raised regarding graffiti and damage to benches along the route.

The Police advised that reports of drug related activity help build intelligence and can assist in directing patrols to problem locations. Officers explained that information provided by residents could be shared with the local Safer Neighbourhood Team to support further monitoring and enforcement activity.

2. Fly tipping and environmental concerns

Residents raised significant concerns regarding persistent fly tipping across the Barnhill area. Reports included mattresses, toilets, carpets, freezers, construction materials and household waste being dumped on a regular basis. Residents expressed frustration that issues had been reported numerous times but continued to occur. Concerns were also raised about the impact on the local environment, including increased numbers of rats and foxes.

In response, officers explained that fly tipping is primarily a Council enforcement matter, although the Police and Council work closely together. Residents were encouraged to continue reporting incidents and were advised that vehicle registration details or other evidence can support investigations where it is safe to obtain them. Residents were specifically advised not to approach suspected offenders.

A Council representative acknowledged that fly-tipping remains a considerable challenge across the borough but confirmed that enforcement action and prosecutions

had been undertaken where evidence has been available. It was also suggested that fly tipping and anti-social behaviour could be considered as a future Older People's Assembly topic so residents could discuss concerns directly with the relevant Council services.

3. Damage to public bins

Residents also reported ongoing problems with public litter bins being damaged by fire. Concerns were raised that several bins had been destroyed and had not been replaced.

Officers noted the concerns and explained that fires can occur for a variety of reasons, including accidental causes. Residents were encouraged to continue reporting incidents so that patterns could be identified and investigated where appropriate.

4. Illegal e-scooters and e-bikes

Residents expressed concerns regarding the increasing use of privately owned e-scooters and e-bikes on roads and pavements, particularly where individuals were travelling at speed and causing safety concerns for pedestrians.

The Police explained that privately owned e-scooters are not permitted for use on public roads and pavements. Officers advised that when individuals are caught using them illegally, the vehicles can be seized and enforcement action taken. Residents were encouraged to continue reporting locations where problems regularly occur, as this information can be used to plan targeted operations and patrols.

5. Police visibility

A resident commented that they rarely saw police officers or police vehicles within their neighbourhood and questioned whether resources were being directed to local areas.

The officers explained that neighbourhood policing teams regularly patrol communities, although this may not always be visible to residents. It was also noted that some officers operate in plain vehicles and therefore may not be immediately recognisable. Officers reassured residents that patrols continue across the borough and that local intelligence helps determine where resources are deployed.

6. Recovery of stolen property following burglaries

A resident asked how often stolen property is recovered following burglaries and how victims would know if their belongings had been found.

The Police explained that recovery rates for items such as jewellery are unfortunately low. However, residents were encouraged to provide detailed descriptions, photographs and receipts when reporting stolen items. This information assists police

	in identifying recovered property and returning it to its rightful owner where possible. Officers also advised that recovered property may be published through Metropolitan Police channels to allow owners to identify items. 7. Shoplifting and retail crime Residents raised concerns about the apparent increase in shoplifting and questioned why offenders often appear able to leave stores without intervention. Examples were given of individuals openly removing large quantities of goods from shops. The Police explained that many town centre businesses are connected to a local radio network that allows them to report incidents directly to officers. However, officers acknowledged the frustration felt by residents and explained that intervention often depends on police being available at the time, the evidence available, and the wider criminal justice process. Officers also explained that retail staff are generally advised not to physically challenge offenders due to safety concerns. The Police thanked residents for raising their concerns and encouraged them to continue reporting issues to ensure emerging trends and priorities can be monitored and addressed.
7	Closing Remarks The Chair thanked residents and guest speakers for attending and contributing to the meeting. Residents were reminded that: • The next Older People's Assembly would take place on 9 December 2026. • Feedback forms should be completed and returned. • Questions for guest speakers could be submitted through the feedback forms. • Residents interested in joining the Older People's Assembly Steering Group should register their interest with the Resident Empowerment Team.