

Meet the new leader

A background in personnel and human resources management will be a natural advantage for new Haringey leader **Charles**

Adje. His people skills are likely to be in demand as he pursues his aim of engaging the local community in council issues and services.

Nicki Hulford meets the new man at the top.



Charles is no stranger to being in the line of fire in more ways than one. By day, he is an assistant training support manager for the London Fire and Emergency Planning authority. And his council career has been no less fiery. As Executive member for finance he has been the man responsible for balancing the borough's books for the past four years.

Now, as he takes up the mantle of the council leadership he faces the challenge of building on the authority's achievements, particularly over the past year. Not a task to take on if you don't have plans in mind and Charles already has it mapped out.

"One of my immediate priorities is to build on the success of Better Haringey" he says, referring to the council's £5 million environmental campaign. "It is already making a difference and people are getting the message that although the council can do the cleaning up, we need everyone to take responsibility in ensuring that there are not problems in the first place. Graffiti, abandoned vehicles, litter and flytipping are all problems that affect the health and wealth of the borough."

Another issue to be taken forward, on which he had already begun work, is the future of Hornsey Town Hall: "It's an amazing building and an issue of immense interest locally." he says. "We need to be sure that it is put to the best possible use when the council finally vacates the property but we must be sure that it is not a burden on the tax payer."

Councillor Adje moved to Haringey with his wife and son 10 years ago from Islington. He appreciates the area's diverse community: "There is an obvious contrast between the east and west but what is clear is that when people come to Haringey they feel at home. It's an interesting place and when we were looking to move we appreciated the mix of cultures. My aim is now to engage the community and revitalise the borough."

He has a good base to build on as Haringey Council services have made great improvements over the past year: "The financial position is now better and we are working with our partners to build on the improvements that social services have made. The library service has achieved its two star award after an audit commission inspection and the education authority received a very positive ofsted report. But this is the beginning, not the end and I am looking forward to even greater change over the coming year."

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