

NOTICE OF MEETING

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday 19th June 2025, 7.00 pm – George Meehan House, 294 High Road, Wood Green N22 8JZ (watch the live meeting [here](#) and watch the recording [here](#))

Members: Councillors Matt White (Chair), Pippa Connor (Vice-Chair), Makbule Gunes, Anna Lawton and Adam Small

Quorum: 3

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

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The chair of the meeting has the discretion to terminate or suspend filming or recording, if in his or her opinion continuation of the filming, recording or reporting would disrupt or prejudice the proceedings, infringe the rights of any individual or may lead to the breach of a legal obligation by the Council.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair will consider the admission of any late items of urgent business. (Late items will be considered under the agenda item where they appear. New items will be dealt with at item below).

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A member with a disclosable pecuniary interest or a prejudicial interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered:

- (i) must disclose the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent, and
- (ii) may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must withdraw from the meeting room.

A member who discloses at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary interest which is not registered in the Register of Members' Interests or the subject of a pending notification must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the disclosure.

Disclosable pecuniary interests, personal interests and prejudicial interests are defined at Paragraphs 5-7 and Appendix A of the Members' Code of Conduct

5. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

To consider any requests received in accordance with Part 4, Section B, paragraph 29 of the Council's constitution.

6. MINUTES (PAGES 1 - 24)

To agree the minutes of the meetings of 27th March 2025 and 8th April 2025.

7. MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL MEETINGS (PAGES 25 - 62)

To receive and note the minutes of the following Scrutiny Panels and to approve any recommendations contained within:

13th February 2025 – Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel

6th March 2025 – Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel

11th March 2025 - Climate, Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel

31st March 2025 – Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel

8. MEMBERSHIP & TERMS OF REFERENCE (PAGES 63 - 92)

To agree the Membership and Terms of Reference for Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the four Scrutiny Panels.

9. APPOINTMENT OF PARENT GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVES (PAGES 93 - 98)

To seek formal approval of the appointment of two Parent Governor representatives as voting co-opted Scrutiny members.

10. APPOINTMENT OF NON - VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Report to follow.

11. OSC WORK PROGRAMME (PAGES 99 - 104)

To agree the overall approach for developing a work programme and to suggest agenda items for upcoming meetings.

12. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

13. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- Tues 22nd Jul 2025 (7pm)
- Thurs 18th Sep 2025 (7pm)
- Mon 20th Oct 2025 (7pm)
- Thurs 27th Nov 2025 (7pm)
- Thurs 11th Dec 2025 (7pm)
- Mon 19th Jan 2026 (7pm)
- Thurs 12th Feb 2026 (7pm)
- Thurs 12th Mar 2026 (7pm)

Dominic O'Brien, Principal Scrutiny Officer
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Fiona Alderman
Assistant Director for Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer)
George Meehan House, 294 High Road, Wood Green, N22 8JZ

Wednesday, 11 June 2025

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING Overview and Scrutiny Committee HELD ON Thursday, 27th March, 2025, 19:00

PRESENT:

Councillors: Matt White (Chair), Alexandra Worrell, Pippa Connor (Vice-Chair), Makbule Gunes and Lester Buxton

ALSO ATTENDING:

22. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to Agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda front sheet, in respect of filming at meetings, and Members noted the information therein.

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

24. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Connor declared a personal interest in relation to agenda items 5 & 8. Cllr Connor advised that she was a signatory to an open letter published by Acorn in relation to asking the Council to end its use of private sector enforcement agents to collect Council Tax debt.

Cllr Connor advised the Committee that she was approaching the deputation and the report listed at agenda item 8 with an open mind.

26. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

The Panel received a deputation from Haringey Acorn in relation to the Council's use of private sector enforcement agents to collect outstanding Council Tax debt. The deputation party were Eleanor Whitlock (lead signatory), Owen Kennedy, Elizabeth Cabeza, Kyra Carty and Reuben Bard-Rosenberg. The key points of their deputation is summarised below:

- The deputation party asked the Committee to scrutinise bailiff use across the borough. Acorn believe that the Council should commit to end use of private bailiffs to collect Council Tax debt and should commit to finding a new approach.

- Acorn started campaigning in 2022 for an end to the use of private sector bailiffs and are now campaigning on the issue nationally. A number of Council's have changed their policies.
- It was suggested that there were three main issues with Haringey's approach:
 1. Using bailiffs was an aggressive and intimidating way to collect Council Tax debt. Citizens Advice Bureau estimated that one-third of people who interacted with bailiffs were subject to behaviour that broke the law. 60% of people reported intimidation or harassment. It was contended that, therefore, use of bailiffs likely increased pressures on other public bodies, such as mental health services.
 2. Using private bailiffs to collect Council Tax debt did not improve people's ability to manage their finances or help Council's maximise their Council Tax income. Bailiffs added charges, compounding residents ability to pay. Policy in Practice found no correlation between bailiff use and Council Tax collection rates across London boroughs.
 3. Private bailiff companies were not incentivised to improve payment rates in the long term. They made money from levying additional charges on residents and always paid themselves first. It was suggested that if bailiffs actually managed to get residents to better manage their debts, they would go out of business. It was claimed that the introduction of the Ethical Debt Policy reduced the use of bailiffs slightly, however it had failed to significantly lower the use of bailiffs in the borough. It was suggested that last year bailiffs received nearly 9000 Council Tax cases in Haringey and that this equated to almost one-in-ten households in the borough.
- It was asserted that the poorest, most deprived and ethnically diverse wards in the borough such as Tottenham Green and Northumberland Park were four times more likely to receive a call from a bailiff than the most affluent wards in the borough.
- Twenty community groups, trade union representatives and local councillors had signed Acorn's open letter to the Council asking it to ban the use of private debt collection agencies.
- Acorn set out that the Council did not seem to have a clear understanding of the problem and the administration did not seem to want to work with Acorn to improve the situation.
- To date, Cabinet Member responses to Acorn's questions included assertions that bailiffs were mainly used to collect debts from landlords and people living outside of the borough. It was commented that tenants, rather than landlords were liable for Council Tax.
- Acorn asserted that Haringey's own data showed that bailiffs were being mostly sent to the poorest wards.
- Acorn was advised that the Council was going to set up a working group on debt collection in 2023, but this didn't seem to have happened.
- Acorn asked the Committee to look into the issue and recommend policy changes to the Cabinet
- The examples of Southwark; who brought debt recovery in-house and; Hammersmith and Fulham, who have ended their use of private sector bailiffs were given. The Committee was encouraged to reach out to other authorities to see what could be done.

The following arose during the discussion of the deputation:

- a. The Committee queried whether Acorn could provide some examples about the impact of bailiff visits. In response, Acorn advised that there were some testimonials provided as part of the submission. Of these, the first was a member who had a bailiff turn up at his door, he did not identify himself, acted in an intimidating manner and refused to leave. The second instance related to a women who was pursued for over a year for £1k of Council Tax debt that she did not owe. This resulted in a flurry of harassment through letters, calls and texts.
- b. The Chair sought clarification about the extent to which the issue was people were unable to pay, rather than an error had been made. In response, Acorn advised that they had a lot of conversations with people on the door step about bailiff use, but not everyone necessarily wanted to put their name to a testimonial. Acorn set out that one of the things they wanted the Committee to do was to go out and talk to residents' about their experiences of being visited by bailiffs. It was suggested that the Council didn't seem to have much information on who the bailiffs working on their behalf were. Acorn commented that as a small voluntary organisation they didn't have the resources that the Council did.
- c. The Panel commented that the report at Agenda Item 8 set out that without use of enforcement agents, the Council would lose £2.5M in lost Council Tax revenue collection. In response, Acorn commented that this assumed that the Council wouldn't be able to collect any of that revenue using a different method. It was commented that Hammersmith & Fulham had some success in sending agents round who were not bailiffs and were able to secure repayment plans.
- d. The Panel queried the assertion that the Council should set-up an in-house debt recovery service, given the cost involved and the precarious financial situation that the Council found itself in. In response, Acorn commented that they were asking the Committee to speak to other Council's to see what was possible based on what happened elsewhere. As a way forward, Acorn suggested some intermediate steps such as; not sending bailiffs to homes that had families with children, introducing flexible payment plans, ensuring that residents were aware of their rights in the letters and correspondence that was sent to them and also have a section of the website with direct links of where residents could make a complaint if bailiffs had acted improperly. Acorn also commented that bailiffs added charges to debts and that money was invariably taken out of the borough.
- e. The Committee sought clarification about when Southwark and Hammersmith & Fulham brought in their revised policies. In response, Acorn advised that they were introduced in around 2017, but some of this had been done in stages.
- f. In response to a question, Acorn advised that an in-house debt recovery service would have more democratic oversight and residents could complain to local ward councillors if they had issues.
- g. The Committee commented that the Ethical Debt policy had been introduced in 2021 and this offered a range of support to residents. The Committee sought Acorn's comments on the extent to which the Ethical Debt policy had made a difference. In response, Acorn advised that they believed that the policy had been most effective in relation to provision of information in one place. It was commented that the policy resulted in fewer people being funnelled towards

- bailiffs at the start of the process. However, once they were in that funnel the amount of people who progressed up each level, to the point of having a bailiff visit, didn't really change.
- h. Acorn also commented that one of the promises made as part of the introduction of the Ethical Debt policy was that there would be special protection for vulnerable residents, effectively a triaging process to stop vulnerable people from getting into debt. When Acorn queried what the Council's definition of a vulnerable resident, they eventually received a copy of the statutory guidance around bailiff use. Acorn suggested that there didn't seem to be much of a working system in place to determine who was vulnerable.
 - i. In response to a request for clarification, Acorn advised that the 9k households figure referred specifically to cases of people being referred to enforcement agents.
 - j. In response to a further request for clarification, Acorn advised that that the assertion that bailiff usage was highest in the most deprived areas of the borough was derived from correlating the number of visits in each ward with the wards that were the most deprived.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services was asked to provide a short verbal response to the deputation. The response is set out below:

- a. The Cabinet Member thanked the deputation party for their deputation and invited them to remain in the meeting for Agenda Item 7, which was a report on Council Tax (CT) collection, support for residents and the use of enforcement agents in collecting CT debt.
- b. The Cabinet Member set out that Haringey was different, in that it had an Ethical Debt Policy. There were a number of steps taken by the Council before cases were referred to enforcement agents, as a last resort.
- c. The Cabinet Member emphasised that it had to be seen in context. Whilst it was appreciated that there were bailiffs that acted improperly, all bailiffs working for Haringey had to wear a body camera. The Cabinet Member advised that all of the complaints that had been received had been investigated and the body camera footage had been viewed. The Cabinet Member advised that on reviewing the footage, none of the cases involved the enforcement agent acting improperly. In reference to one of the specific cases referred to by the deputation party, the Cabinet Member advised that the use of an enforcement agent was appropriate, as the lead tenant had collected the money from the other tenants but had not paid the Council Tax bill and had ignored repeated warning letters.
- d. In terms of the locations of highest incidents of enforcement agents being used, the Cabinet Member advised that everyone knew that the borough was split east to west, with life expectancy varying by 8 years in the most to least affluent wards. The Cabinet Member set out that the same wards that had the highest number of visits by enforcement agents also corresponded to where the Council had given the most Council Tax reduction/exemption. It was stated that the Council was actively working to provide support to its residents in this area.
- e. The Cabinet Member advised that the most important thing was that residents got in touch with the Council if they were struggling to pay their Council Tax, as there were a number of internal Council organisations that could help them.

- f. The Cabinet Member argued that the last thing residents needed was a campaign that suggested the Council was deliberately targeting them and making them afraid to contact the Council and seek help. The Cabinet Member emphasised that the most effective thing that Acorn could do would be to encourage residents to contact the Council if they were having difficulty in paying their Council Tax.
- g. The Cabinet Member reiterated that answers to a number of the questions put forward by the deputation party would be discussed as part of the report at Agenda Item 7.

27. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the following meetings were agreed as an accurate record:

- 6th January 2025 – Call-in
- 14th January 2025 – Call-in
- 20th January 2025 – OSC Meeting (Budget)
- 30th January 2025 – OSC Meeting (Budget)

28. MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the following Scrutiny Panels were noted and agreed as a correct record, and any recommendations contained within were approved:

- Climate, Community Safety & Environment Panel – 17th December
- Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel – 17th December
- Children & Young People's Panel – 13th January

29. COUNCIL TAX COLLECTION, SUPPORT FOR RESIDENTS & THE ROLE OF ENFORCEMENT AGENTS

The Committee received a cover report and an accompanying presentation which provided an update on how the Council dealt with Council Tax debt, including the use of Enforcement Agents, and what support the Council offered to alleviate debt. The report and presentation were set out in the additional report pack at pages 1-28. As Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, Cllr Carlin gave a general introduction to the agenda item. The presentation was introduced by; Kari Manovitch, AD Customer Services; Andrew Mackie, Revenues Manager; and James Straw, Benefits Manager as set out in the additional report pack. Cllr Seema Chandwani, Cabinet Member for Resident Services & Tackling Inequality was also present for this agenda item, as part of her portfolio included the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and the Ethical Debt Policy. As part of the Ethical Debt Policy, the Council had a policy position that no one who was known to the Council as; being vulnerable or having mental health concerns, or known as being in receipt of Council Tax reduction benefit would be referred to an enforcement agent. The policy also put in place a number of changes around how the Council engaged with residents to prevent payment defaults and debt, as well as offer support to those who were struggling financially.

The following arose as part of the discussion of this agenda item:

- a. The Chair sought clarification on slide 9, around the extent to how many of the four pathways led to a person being referred to an enforcement agent. In response, the Committee was advised that those who were in receipt of Council Tax Reduction benefit would never be referred to an enforcement agent. The same applied to those who were known to Adult Social Care as being vulnerable. In the third pathway, for those who were flagged by the Council's Pathway software as being potentially in financial hardship, they would be sent an additional letter offering dedicated help from the Council's Financial support Team and extra time to pay. Officers clarified that if that person did not engage with the Council, then ultimately a decision would have to be made as to whether to refer the case to an enforcement agent or not.
- b. The Chair commented that the deputation had put forward the argument that enforcement agent referrals were concentrated in the most deprived areas. The Chair sought clarification about whether this was reflection of the fact that the Council was failing to reach the people it need to help, or whether it was the case that the Ethical Debt Policy was aimed at helping a minority of the most vulnerable, or whether the Council was saying that Acorn's assertion was incorrect. In response, the Cabinet Member for Resident Services and Tackling Inequality acknowledged that it was a fair challenge and that the Council needed to keep using data to try and understand why referrals may be higher in a particular area. It was suggested that one possible factor may be do with population density and HMO prevalence in particular wards. The Cabinet Member advised that the starting point for the Ethical Debt Policy was to try and do a bit more to see if the organisation could connect with people and offer support before going down the enforcement route. The Cabinet Member advised that around 25k people in Haringey either didn't pay all together or received a significant discount on their Council Tax. The Council had also invested in a Financial Support Team and income maximisation officers to work with people who may be struggling but were not eligible for CTRS. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that there would still be people who were not supported under the scheme and emphasised the importance of local residents getting in touch with the Council in order that the Council could try to support them.
- c. The Committee questioned whether there was a way to exempt eligible people from going through the 65 day process at the beginning of the process, in order to avoid them receiving letters that they ultimately wouldn't have to pay. In response, officers advised that a liability order was required in order for the Council to pursue its right to recover an outstanding debt. So, removing people earlier in the process could result in people being removed who would be eligible to pay and the Council would have no legal recourse to recover it. Officers advised that they wanted to offer as much support as possible and it was acknowledged that the Council was perhaps not contacting all eligible residents at an early stage. Officers acknowledged that they would look at how the CTRS and vulnerable resident cohorts could be exempted at an early stage in the process in order to reduce the worry and anxiety caused to them.
- d. In response to a request for clarification, officers advised that the slide in question related to 1464 referrals in one month, December 2024.

- e. The Committee requested the data for bailiff visits broken down by ward, and any additional information that could be provide such as broken down by the types of case or types of households visited. **(Action: Andrew Mackie).**
- f. The Committee queried what support was on offer to the presumably significant numbers of people who were not eligible for help but were still struggling to pay. The Committee sought clarification about what would happen in this situation on the whole and whether the Council would proceed to prosecution in this circumstance. In response, the Cabinet Member for Residents Services & Tackling Inequality reiterated that because of the checks that had been brought in as part of the Ethical Debt Policy, 25k residents would never receive a visit from an enforcement agent. The Cabinet Member set out that this was an iterative process and that the next step was to look at what our definition of vulnerability should be in this context. The Council was using technology to try and give it some insight into who may need help, but the Cabinet Member acknowledged that the Council needed to be able to improve the amount of data it had on its residents in order to plug the gap, in terms of people that were undoubtedly vulnerable but were not know to us. It was commented that only information on Haringey residents who were known to Haringey Adults Social Services would be held. By way of an example, it was suggested that vulnerable adults placed in Haringey from another authority could conceivably still be referred to an enforcement agent. In relation to those who could not afford to pay, the Committee was advised that the previous government had brought in a piece of legislation that allowed qualified legal advisors to formally request breathing space from debts for the people they were advocating on behalf of. This breathing space was unlimited for those suffering with mental health issues and for six months for those that did not. It was noted that the Council had received a number of these applications and had no choice but to accept them.
- g. The Committee sought assurances around the process for residents to get in touch if an error had been made and the extent to which these channels were properly monitored. In response, officers advised that there was a backlog in Council Tax over January and February, with additional temporary resources brought in to resolve it. Officers advised that cases that had outstanding correspondence wouldn't get issued a summons, because there was something in the software that stopped it. There was also a further check for a liability order, where a case wouldn't go to an enforcement agent if there was outstanding correspondence that the council had not dealt with.
- h. The Committee sought clarification around what the process was when the bailiff was at someone's door and what safeguards were in place for residents. In response, officers advised that the enforcement agent would knock on the door and identify themselves. They were not allowed to force entry at all. Enforcement agents abided by a set of standards set by the Enforcement Conduct Board, as well as the specification laid down by the Council, which included behaviours and when they should return cases to us. They were contracted to go by these standards. Officers set out that the Enforcement Conduct Board would investigate all complaints.
- i. In response, the Committee queried how would a resident know how to complain and whether the organisation advertised this appropriately. In

response officers advised that the process for complaining should be on the paperwork that was handed over to the resident. The Cabinet Member for Resident Services & Tackling Inequality acknowledged the point and commented that she was happy to accede to the deputation request that information about how to complain should be put on the website. Cllr Chandwani also agreed to look at the letters that were sent out in order to make sure the process for making a complaint was really clear. **(Action: Cllr Chandwani).**

- j. The Committee also sought assurances around contacting the financial support team, given wider concerns about it being difficult to contact the Council and the length of call waiting times. In response, the Cabinet Member for Resident Services and Tackling Inequality advised that the financial support team were separate to Council Tax queries and they had separate telephone lines. The Cabinet Member advised that to her knowledge there weren't a lot of complaints about call response times to this line and the calls were generally answered pretty quickly. The Cabinet Member acknowledged concerns about call waiting times for other services in the Council and offered to come back and discuss how to improve these more generally.
- k. The Committee sought an example of a typical case where someone would legitimately receive a visit from an enforcement agent. In response, the Cabinet Member for Finance & Corporate Services referred to one of the examples put forward as part of the deputation. It was explained that in this case there was a shared household with a joint tenancy, the tenants were paying the Council Tax to a nominated lead tenant. That lead tenant failed to pay Council Tax and ignored all of the letters that were sent to them. This resulted in the case being referred to an enforcement agency. The Cabinet Member advised that following an exercise of using Pathway to undertake data checks, 17% of visits by an enforcement agent were found to be households who were in financial difficulty, but that had not been picked up by any of the other previous checks. In contrast, around 40% of households were found to be financially stable.
- l. In reference to a point made by the deputation party, The Cabinet Member for Finance & Corporate Services advised that a landlord was responsible for paying the Council Tax in an HMO where the rooms were let individually.
- m. In response to a question about the case study in the papers, the Committee was advised that the household had a member of the family who was identified as being vulnerable by Adult Social Services and so they were never going to receive an enforcement visit. However, the salient point was around the fact that they had received a number of confusing letters, stating that they had a differing levels of entitlement.
- n. The Committee queried whether support to residents from the Household Support Fund was still available and for how long it would be available. In response, the Cabinet Member for Resident Services and Tackling Inequality advised that all of the support mechanisms set out in the agenda papers were still available to residents, including the Household Support Fund, and would be for 2025-26. It was noted that the government had recently made an announcement about planning to reform the Household Support Fund, but that no further details had been made available at this stage.

- o. The Committee requested a written response to in relation to further information on why the costs of bringing enforcement of Council Tax debt in-house were prohibitively high. **(Action: Kari Manovitch/Cllr Carlin).**
- p. The Committee agreed to give some further consideration around further scrutiny of this issue, once it had received the further information it had requested in relation to a ward-by-ward breakdown and the financial case for saying that an in-house model was too expensive.
- q. Officers advised that in relation to Hammersmith & Fulham, they did cease use of enforcement agents but that this resulted in a backlog of Council Tax arrears. Hammersmith and Fulham were now using private enforcement agents to collect outstanding Council Tax arrears from non-vulnerable residents. In relation to Southwark, officers advised that they had an in-house team that collected Council Tax arrears. These officers operated to the same standard as private companies. Southwark also used external enforcement agents to complement their in-house service, due to cost pressures on the in-house service.

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted the information contained in the cover report and presentation.

30. MARKETS STRATEGY

The Committee received a report on the Haringey Markets Strategy and Action Plan, along with a copy of the Haringey Markets Strategy attached as an appendix to the report. A set of presentation slides was also presented, these are set out in the tabled papers pack. The report and presentation was introduced by Pippa Gueterbock, Head of Placemaking and Keith Trotter, Interim Lead – Local Economy, as set out in the agenda pack at pages 65-168, and in the tabled papers pack. Also present for this item was Cllr Ruth Gordon, Cabinet Member for Placemaking and Local Economy. The following arose during the discussion of this item:

- a. The Committee queried what prompted the Council to develop a market strategy in the first place, and what additional resources would be required to implement the strategy. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that it was driven by a manifesto commitment and the Cabinet Member's enjoyment of walking around a market. The Cabinet Member welcomed the fact that there were different types of markets across Haringey. The Cabinet Member commented that the Latin market at Seven Sisters should be reopening soon. In terms of resources, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that the Council was in a difficult financial position. It was commented that the role of the Council was to act as a curator, and to leverage different business networks together. The Council worked closely with Wood Green BID, and was developing a wider business forum network, which among other things would provide a degree of mentorship.
- b. In relation to concerns around the types of markets and ensuring they appealed to the local area, the Cabinet Member echoed comments made in relation to the success of Holcombe Road market and acknowledged the challenges with

Tottenham Green market. The Cabinet Member suggested it was partially about engagement and understanding what worked in a particular area, as well as the regularity and wider variety of stalls encouraging more traders to the market. Officers added that there was always a balance required between the overall viability of the market and ensuring it offered the right products at the right price point.

- c. The Chair queried whether the option of effectively providing land to external market operators limited the Council's ability to ensure that the right type of markets were happening in the right locations. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that it was difficult to give a definitive answer, but ultimately the Council did not have the resources or expertise to run markets in-house. It was commented that in order to do this, the Council would have to build up a team over a period of time.
- d. The Committee referred to Alexandra Palace farmer's market as an example of a successful market in the borough that was away from a town centre location and sought the comments from officers about why the strategy was focused on town centre locations. In response, officers commented that the market was very well established and people knew when it was on for example. It would be difficult to replicate the market at Alexandra Palace, not least given it's prominent location and history. It was commented that the strategy focused on high footfall areas and town centres, but the team were open to exploring opportunities elsewhere, particularly if there was a good viability case.
- e. The Committee queried what checks were being done around fair pay and working conditions for the markets we interacted with. In response, officers commented that the markets were subject to a licensing process and that the inclusive economy team were part of the Market Strategy, working with business to provide support. Officers commented that fair pay was something they could look at pushing as part of the engagement with businesses. The Cabinet Member commented that a lot of smaller businesses tended to be sole traders and there was also some work to be done around facilitating mentoring by more established businesses.
- f. The Committee welcomed the return of the Latin market at Severn Sisters.
- g. A Committee Member welcomed the fact that Muswell Hill had been nominated as one of the town centres. The Committee asked about opportunities for ward councillor engagement with the Town Centre team going forward, given recent changes within that team. In response, officers advised that the team had recently been through a restructure and those roles were now called Business Engagement Officers, these officers still covered specific geographic areas and lead on market development on the ground. The Committee was advised that the team would be engaging with Ward Councillors and Members were able to contact them as and when they wanted to.
- h. In response to a question about likely contractual arrangements for market operators, officers advised that at Tottenham Green an initial 12 month contract was offered, followed by a three year contract. It was envisaged that something similar would be offered to other markets. Officers provided assurances that operators would have performance targets and that the fact they were taking place on Council land gave the authority a degree of control.
- i. The Chair queried the feasibility of Option D, a new council-operated market, in light of the responses given by officers at the meeting and questioned whether it was possible that there would be a council-operated markets in the future. In

response, officers advised that they did not want to rule it out definitively and the option would be kept under review. The advice from the retail group, who carried out some of the work on the strategy, was that Haringey didn't have access to the larger markets necessary to subsidise the smaller markets. Instead, it was recommended that Haringey should retain its current route of street trading licences, rather than becoming a market borough. It was acknowledged that a council-operated market would be unlikely without significant growth in markets in Haringey. However, this was something that the administration wanted to keep under review.

- j. The Committee agreed to recommend that the decision to operate an in-house market service was kept under review, as the strategy developed and markets expanded, in line with the wider policy position around in-sourcing of services.
- k. The Committee requested that a communication was send round to ward councillors and grouped into town centre areas, that set out what the next steps were for the strategy, along with engagement opportunities for ward councillors and the Business Engagement Officers. In response, the Cabinet Member agreed to write to all Councillors, as well as contacting councillors in groups corresponding to wards with town centre sites, such as Muswell Hill and Crouch End, to provide a point of contact and give summary of the strategy so far, and to attach the slides presented to the Committee. **(Action: Cllr Gordon).**

RESOLVED

- I. That the progress made regarding delivery of the Markets Strategy Action Plan was noted.
- II. That the Cabinet Member for Placemaking and Local Economy provide a further update on the Markets Strategy in future, and that a decision to operate an in-house market service in future was kept under review, as the Markets Strategy developed and markets expanded, in line with the wider policy position around in-sourcing of services.

31. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

RESOLVED

- I. That the current work programme for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee was noted and any amendments were agreed as appropriate.
- II. That the Committee gave consideration to possible agenda items and reports required for its meetings in 2025/26.
- III. That the Committee approved the draft scope and terms of reference for a Scrutiny Review by the Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel on TA Allocations and PRS Discharge Policies.

32. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

33. FUTURE MEETINGS

8th April 2025

CHAIR: Councillor Matt White

Signed by Chair

Date

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 8TH APRIL 2025, 7.00 - 9.20pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Matt White (Chair), Pippa Connor (Vice-Chair), Lester Buxton, Makbule Gunes and Alexandra Worrell

34. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to Agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda front sheet, in respect of filming at meetings, and Members noted the information therein.

35. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for lateness were received from Cllr Alexandra Worrell, who joined the meeting from 7.17pm until the end of the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sarah Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning.

36. URGENT BUSINESS

Cllr Matt White reported that, although there were no new agenda items, a supplementary agenda pack had been circulated which included an updated version of the report on the Community Safety Scrutiny Review. This replaced the version of the report which had been included in the original agenda pack and would be considered by the Committee under Item 8 on the agenda.

Cllr White explained that the revisions to the original report had been required because there was a need to update and clarify of the recommendations and fully reflect the decision-making routes of the Council and the Police to ensure that there were no issues with the response and actions to be taken to take the recommendations forward. This had been agreed with the Chair of the Climate, Community Safety & Environment Scrutiny Panel and was accepted as a late item of business.

37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

38. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

39. 2024/25 FINANCE UPDATE QUARTER 3 (PERIOD 9)

Cllr Dana Carlin, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, introduced the report on the finance update for Quarter 3 noting that there wasn't a substantial difference to the situation for Quarter 2, although there had been a slight deterioration in terms of the demand for and the cost of adult social care services and temporary accommodation. The Council was continuing with the measures previously put in place to reduce non-essential spending. Additional funds had been added to the Adult Social Care budget for 2024/25 but, due to the increase in demand, this money had not been sufficient. In addition, some savings had not been achieved over the course of the year and the detail of this was set out in the agenda papers.

Cllr Carlin, Taryn Eves, Director of Finance, other Council officers and Cabinet Members then responded to questions from the Committee:

- Cllr White commented that there appeared to have been some success in a number of areas but that the efforts to improve the financial situation had been more than offset by further deterioration in the adult social care position. Cllr Carlin responded that almost all local authorities had experienced increased pressures in Adult services, Children's services and temporary accommodation. Taryn Eves explained that the position in the report was from December 2024 and that the impact of some of the spending controls might not be seen until Quarter 4 and would then have the biggest impact in the 2025/26 financial year as they became fully embedded. However, she added that there were still some areas of risk, including a rise in the figures for some demand-led services and for bad debt provision. The position set out in the report was before the use of corporate contingency and it was highly likely that it would be necessary to use Exceptional Financial Support from the government to balance the position for 2024/25.
- Cllr White commented that there could be further pressures caused by the increased global financial instability. Taryn Eves responded that the rates of inflation, interest rates and the cost of services were particularly relevant, particularly in relation to construction costs which could impact on the capital programme.
- Asked by Cllr White how much of the Exceptional Financial Support was likely to be needed, Taryn Eves said that it was not possible to put a precise figure on this until the outturn report had been produced, but acknowledged that it was highly likely that some Exceptional Financial Support would be required for 2024/25.
- Cllr Gunes requested an explanation of why a younger cohort of people required support from adult social care services. Cllr Lucia das Neves, Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care and Wellbeing, explained that a higher incidence of conditions such as autistic spectrum disorders had been seen in the Borough for some time and that some service development, such as the

Autism Hub, had been in response to this trend. Other associated health conditions could add to complexity with recent estimates that there were 20% more people with two or more long-term health conditions in the Borough. She added that poverty and social exclusion could also impact on health and well-being. Sara Sutton, Corporate Director for Adults, Housing & Health, added that there had been an unprecedented increase in one or two areas, including physical disabilities in the lower age cohort, with a spike over the past three quarters. However, it was not currently anticipated that this would be a long-term trend.

- Cllr Gunes expressed concerns about the long-term impact of using Exceptional Financial Support, which would incur £72k of borrowing costs per year for every £1m of funds drawn down according to the report. Taryn Eves explained that Exceptional Financial Support could be funded by capital receipts or borrowing with an allocation in the revenue budget for a “minimum revenue provision”. The additional borrowing costs would therefore add to the budget gap for future years which was why it was important to limit the drawdown for 2024/25 and 2025/26 as much as possible.
- Cllr Connor asked whether figures could be provided on the additional borrowing costs of Exceptional Financial Support drawdown over 20 years. Taryn Eves responded that she could not provide a precise figure but that, with around £72k of borrowing costs per year for every £1m of funds, this would increase the budget gap in subsequent years. The working assumption for 2025/26 was that £27m would be funded through borrowing and £10m from capital receipts and this was factored into the five-year forecast in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- Asked by Cllr Connor for clarification on the reserve balance, Taryn Eves explained that this would be set out in the outturn report and that it involved reserves held for risks and uncertainties. These included the Services Reserve and the Unspent Grants Reserve which totalled £22m and would be reviewed to establish whether older balances were no longer required and could be released to reduce the 2024/25 overspend.
- Referring to paragraph 1.4 of the report, Cllr Connor noted the increased demand for services from clients aged 50 to 64 presenting with physical disability and mental health needs. She queried the reasons for this and how their needs were being met prior to that. Cllr das Neves commented that there was growth in demand and complexity in various age groups, so it was possible that the Council may not have been supporting some of these people prior to that. There were also challenges around healthy life expectancy which could mean that people were presenting in earlier age brackets than expected.
- Cllr Connor requested further details on the reasons for the increased acquisition costs for the capital schemes relating to Wards Corner and High Road West. Taryn Eves responded that there had been a pragmatic consideration of which capital schemes could continue and the changes from 2025/26 onwards reflected what was felt to be the most realistic timescale for delivery. This would be reviewed again for 2026/27 and there was a new capital board in place to review this work.

- Cllr Buxton queried the changes made to the budget, such as through in-year savings, without the approval of Full Council or Scrutiny. Taryn Eves responded that savings proposals were agreed each year when setting the Budget, but that spending could be reduced in-year in relation to non-essential spends that did not impact on service delivery. This could include, for example, printing costs or agency spend, and were referred to in the papers as management actions.
- Cllr Worrell queried the implications of using Exceptional Financial Support in 2024/25 for the Budget in 2025/26 and what options would remain in circumstances where even Exceptional Financial Support was not sufficient to balance the Budget. Cllr Carlin commented that there was some discussion nationally about what Exceptional Financial Support was originally intended to be used for and that a large number of local authorities now required this support due to the current financial pressures. It was recognised that Haringey was in this situation due to demand-led pressures and not because it had been profligate with spending. She added that the Leader of the Council had been in correspondence with the Minister of State for Local Government who had responded to reassure the Council that funding from central Government would be based on factors including deprivation and ability to raise income through Council Tax. Taryn Eves explained that the 'in-principle' agreement with the Government on Exceptional Financial Support was for £28m in 2024/25 and £37m in 2025/26 but that the amount of this that would be needed for drawdown would not be finalised until the final outturn position had been established. In circumstances where this was not sufficient to balance the Budget, there would need to be a further conversation with the Government. The Council aimed to improve forecasting which would assist with the ongoing conversations with the Government.
- Cllr Worrell requested clarification on how the savings delivery for 2024/25 impacted on savings targets for 2025/26. Taryn Eves clarified that the 2025/26 Budget did include some write-off of undelivered savings from 2024/25 which had been clearly documented in the Budget report. An assumption had been made in relation to the Amber savings of £3.2m set out in Table 2 of the report that these would be delivered in full in 2025/26 so it would be necessary to keep on close eye on this. It was recognised that a significant level of risk was being carried and so the corporate contingency for 2025/26 had been increased to manage this.
- Cllr White queried whether any further improvements to the position for Children's Services and Housing was anticipated in Quarter 4. Cllr Zena Brabazon, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools & Families, said that figures for Quarter 4 were not yet available. However, she added that the number of children in care was down at 316, but the market costs from private providers were rising and the complexity of cases was also increasing. She added that rising costs in this area was a national issue. Ann Graham, Corporate Director of Children's Services, commented that she was not anticipating the financial position to worsen in Quarter 4, although there would be an overall overspend as set out in the report. On Housing Demand, Sara Sutton reported that the

position had been relatively stable in Quarter 3 and it was anticipated that it would remain stable in Quarter 4. However, the market remained volatile in terms of costs temporary accommodation. Jahedur Rahman, Director of Housing, added that the housing demand acquisition programme was expected to deliver a saving but, while properties had been acquired, there was a slight lag between doing so and people moving in. Therefore, a significant proportion of the savings would be delivered in 2025/26 rather than 2024/25.

- Asked by Cllr White about bad debt provision and Housing Benefit overpayments, Taryn Eves said that the forecast had been fairly consistent throughout the year and there remained an overspend for 2024/25. There had been some detailed work on this, including the recovery of overpayments.
- Cllr Connor referred to the savings for Adults, Health & Communities set out from page 48 of the agenda pack and noted that resource constraints within the commissioning teams appeared to be causing delays to these savings. Sara Sutton explained that, on transitions, additional budget had been approved for the commissioning team for 2025/26 and recruitment would follow which would provide a significant increase in resources to deliver savings profiled over the next few years. She also clarified that the savings for Adults, Health & Communities also now included housing demand due to the recent reorganisation of Directorates in the Council. On transitions, Cllr Brabazon added that the red rating could be slightly misleading because this was a new service and the staff team had needed to be assembled in the first year so there had been an enormous amount of work to get this underway. Ann Graham added that, with hindsight, the business case could have been structured differently with more lead-in time before the savings could be achieved. She noted that the project and the recruitment did not begin until April 2024 but that around half the projected savings had still been achieved. The reprofiled targets would take into account the unachieved savings.
- Cllr Connor requested clarification on the source of funding for the new capital scheme "Tottenham Parks", referred to in paragraph 3.8 of the report. Cllr Carlin explained that, through a reorganisation of costs, it had been possible to find around £1.8m from the Down Lane Park budget to put into other Tottenham parks that hadn't received investment for some considerable time. She emphasised that there would still be substantial investment in Down Lane Park.
- Cllr Connor referred to Strategic Procurement, which involved £600m spent on contracts according to paragraph 11.5 of the report, and requested further details of how efficiency was being achieved in this area. Taryn Eves explained that the majority of Council spending was on contracts and staffing so it was necessary to tighten contract spend. The £600m figure was approximately £450m on revenue and £150 on capital and the aim from 2025/26 onwards was to save £3m per year. A new Procurement Board was in place to support this process by examining all contracts at an early stage. Cllr Connor suggested that it would be useful for key papers, for example from Audit Committee on significant items on procurement, to be flagged to the Committee in future.

(ACTION)

- Cllr Connor proposed that the Adults section of the finance information in the report should be added as an agenda item to the next meeting of the Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel in order to scrutinise this in greater detail. **(ACTION)**

40. 2024-26 CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN: Q3 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Margaret Gallagher, Head of Performance & Business Intelligence, introduced the report for this item, which covered the Quarter 3 period from October to December 2024, and had previously been submitted to the Cabinet meeting on 18th March 2025. She highlighted Appendix 3 to the report which provided full details of progress against the 188 activity lines in the Corporate Delivery Plan with 70% of the milestones being achieved and delivered on time. A summary KPI dashboard was also included in the papers to track the trends and the direction of travel from quarter to quarter with 92% of activities currently rated as Green or Amber. This was an improved position since Quarter 2 and there had been some notable achievements including delivering on new Council homes and bringing leisure services in-house. The 8% of Red ratings totalled 15 individual lines across the 8 themes.

Given the large number of individual lines, Cllr White proposed that the Committee should focus mainly on the Red rated lines.

Margaret Gallagher, other officers and Cabinet Members responded to questions from the Committee:

- Referring to paragraph 1.6 of the report, Cllr Connor noted that the first Young People Extraordinary Council had taken place in October 2024 and asked about the impact achieved so far. Jess Crowe, Corporate Director of Culture, Strategy & Communities, said that an example of impact had been a follow-up engagement event with the whole Cabinet which had taken place with the young people from the Council meeting and others from local schools. This had focused on developing the programme for the London Borough of Culture and exploring the kind of things that they would be interested in seeing. There was some specific funding to support the children & young people strand of the Borough of Culture programme, so the Council meeting had been timely in helping to shape the programme. She added that there would also be other examples of impact on issues such as climate change and SEND.
- Referring to paragraph 1.15 of the report, Cllr Connor requested further details on the review of internal governance processes including on timescales and oversight. Taryn Eves reported that she chaired the new Procurement Board which had met twice so far and was officer-led with representation from Legal, Procurement and each of the Directorates. It also had strong links to the Capital Board. Lead officers would be brought in as required for the different contracts being considered. The Board would test the value for money of the contracts, check compliance of the procurement processes and have an understanding of the pipeline of procurements expected in the coming years.

- Referring to paragraph 4.2 of the report, Cllr Connor noted that the point on the preparation for the CQC Assurance inspection, with the aim of achieving an outcome of 'Good', had been rated as Green although the outcome of the inspection had actually been 'Requires Improvement'. Cllr das Neves emphasised that the Green rating reflected the preparation for the inspection which had included holding a mock inspection and to anticipate the issues likely to be raised. While she acknowledged that the rating was not what the Council wanted to receive, the CQC had expressed confidence that the Council understood the positive areas and the challenging areas that it was working to improve.
- Cllr Worrell queried the reasons for the Red ratings under Theme Two (Climate Emergency), particularly on the Borough Idling Plan which was being paused. Cllr Mike Hakata, Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment & Transport, clarified that the Red items, such as the action plan to electrify the Council's fleet, were not being taken off the agenda in any way but that it was not possible to continue with them at present because of funding issues. He added the Cabinet had decided to remove these lines from the Corporate Development Plan for the time being until there was a prospect of funding for them as it was not possible to move forward until that happened. However, he emphasised that the Cabinet remained committed to progressing these projects when it was able to do so. Jess Crowe clarified that this decision had been made through the recent Cabinet which had considered the same Quarter 3 report. Asked by Cllr Worrell how public accountability for the delivery of these projects could be maintained if they had been removed from the Corporate Development Plan, Cllr Hakata said that they remained as manifesto commitments and that Cabinet Members were also held to account by Scrutiny on progress.
- Asked by Cllr White specifically which lines had been removed from the Corporate Development Plan, Margaret Gallagher clarified that these were the lines on the Decentralised Energy Network, the Borough Idling plan and the Healthy Schools Network. It was also clarified that the details of this were set out in paragraph 2.7 of the report.
- Cllr White referred to item 8 of Theme One (page 157 of agenda pack) on the digital skills and inclusion strategy, noting that the delay was due to the new Digital Inclusion Manager not beginning the role until March 2025. Margaret Gallagher confirmed that the digital restructure was in place and clarified that the report related to Quarter 3 ending in December 2024 so described the position at that time.
- Cllr White referred to item 13 of Theme One (page 158 of agenda pack) on the Community Assemblies model and noted that there was currently no resource to progress this. Jess Crowe explained that the Policy and Strategy team had been stretched and had therefore focused on more time critical activities. Vacancies had also been held in the team to contribute to improving the

financial position. However, it was not proposed that the item be removed from the plan and there could be an opportunity to explore it through one of the calls to action in the Borough Vision which would be formally launched soon. There would also be a minor restructure within the Policy and Strategy team to focus more resources on resident participation and engagement.

- Cllr White referred to item 27 of Theme One (page 160 of agenda pack) on reducing demand to Customer Services in core service areas, which was Red rated due to capacity challenges. Cllr Seema Chandwani, Cabinet Member for Resident Services and Tackling Inequality, said that this should be a number one priority because it was the 'front door' for contacting the Council but that it required a holistic whole Council approach. It also required updating the digital offer with resources through the digital transformation programme. She added that it was unaffordable to continue with expensive phone-based and face-to-face customer services and that, in her view, there needed to be a major strategic overview and investment programme. This would help to deal more quickly with the demand in areas such as parking, housing repairs and council tax. Asked by Cllr White whether additional capacity was being provided to help progress this, Cllr Chandwani said that she would follow up with further details.

(ACTION)

- Cllr White referred to item 92 of Theme Four (page 168 of agenda pack) on greater alignment with Young Carers activity which was Red rated. Cllr das Neves explained that there was a wider piece of work on the Council's approach to carers that encompassed a range of needs that carers had, including digital approaches to help them access services. This included a survey and engagement sessions but, as noted in the text, there was a need for some specific work with young people. Sara Sutton concurred with this, noting that it was part of the next evolution of the carers work and that there was currently an aim to bring the new Carers Strategy to Cabinet in the summer.
- Cllr Connor referred to item 90 of Theme Four (page 168 of agenda pack) on the review and update to the Carers Strategy, querying why this item was marked as unchanged given that this was a significant issue in the recent CQC inspection. Margaret Gallagher clarified that the 'unchanged' note was intended to measure the direction of travel between quarters and was a way of assessing trends.
- Cllr Connor proposed that the Adults items in the report could also be included in the discussion (along with the Finance report) at the next meeting of the Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel in order to scrutinise these in greater detail.

(ACTION)

- On temporary accommodation (TA), Cllr Worrell queried why it hadn't been possible to get more alternative forms of accommodation in place. Sara Sutton replied that there had been a reduction in the number of families in bed and breakfast accommodation over the quarter and that the number of families in TA remained relatively stable. This was mainly due to the management of

outflow and through the acquisitions process which had enabled the delivery of properties through the Haringey Community Benefit Society (HCBS) to provide more social housing. However, this remained a challenging area and increased demand was anticipated. She added that there was an ambition to deliver modular accommodation units for TA, including a project in Wood Green that had been slightly delayed from its original timescale but was on track to be delivered in 2025/26.

- Cllr Worrell highlighted the quality of TA and inspections which was rated as Amber and asked if this could be delivered this year. Sara Sutton explained that the Council was part of a programme called Setting the Standards and there had been an increase in the number of visits and tenancy checks. There would continue to be increased activity in this area.

41. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CLIMATE, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL- ONE OFF SCRUTINY REVIEW OF COMMUNITY SAFETY.

Cllr White noted that, as explained at the beginning of the meeting, a supplementary agenda pack had been circulated which included an updated version of the report on the Community Safety Scrutiny Review. Cllr Buxton, Chair of the Climate, Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel, reported that the Panel had held a one-off Scrutiny Review meeting on 11th March 2025. Two members of the Youth Panel had been invited to attend the meeting which had also been attended by the Borough Commander, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Council officers. Discussions topics had included ward panel meetings, antisocial behaviour, stop and search and youth issues in the Borough. Recommendations from the report included:

- Closer working and better and more frequent communication between the Youth Panel representatives and Community Safety Panels.
- To review and strengthen the Ward Panel Meeting Structure as a main tool of communication between residents, local organisations and the Police.
- For the Community Safety Team to assist in communications and support residents finding venues.
- For Ward performance figures to be reported on a quarterly basis to the Ward Panel meetings.
- For antisocial behaviour reporting to be more prominent and user friendly.

Cllr Gunes requested further details on the recommendation for quarterly reporting to the Ward Panel meetings. Cllr Buxton explained that the Panel considered that it was not explained to Ward Panels how frequently Police officers were taken out of wards for various reasons.

Asked by Cllr Worrell for clarification about paragraph 3.9 in the supplementary report about the short-term nature of projects, Cllr Buxton explained that this was in

response to issue about funding for Council projects being set for three years or less and the need for projects to have longer-term visions than this.

Asked by Cllr Connor about the links between the Police and schools, Cllr Buxton referred to the links with the Community Safety Partnership, co-chaired by the Borough Commander, as set out in paragraph 3.1 of the revised report. He added that this was on an infrequent basis, but that more frequent meetings could be pushed for. Cllr White informed the Committee that some of the recommendations concerned specific actions for the Police and the Borough Commander who had been sent the report to consider. Although the recommendations were agreed at a meeting of the Climate, Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel on 11th March 2025, it was possible that minor technical amendments would be required following feedback from the Borough Commander. Cllr White therefore proposed that the report on the Scrutiny Review to be agreed subject to these minor amendments and that authority to approve the minor amendments be delegated to the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager in consultation with the Chair of the Climate, Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel.

RESOLVED – That the report of the Scrutiny Review on Community Safety be approved subject to minor technical amendments following feedback from the Borough Commander.

RESOLVED – That the authority to agree these minor technical amendments be delegated to the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager in consultation with the Chair of the Climate, Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel.

42. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

Cllr Buxton introduced a draft scoping document for a Scrutiny Review on the prioritisation of cyclists within the Walking and Cycling Action Plan. He noted that this had emerged following a discussion on cycling at the Scrutiny Café consultation event and other feedback from residents to Councillors regarding cycling infrastructure, particularly with regards to the increased use of e-bikes. There were plans for three scrutiny sessions, with residents, outside experts and focus groups as detailed in the draft scoping document. The Review would look at ways of improving cycling within the Borough and improve safety for cyclists and vulnerable road users.

Asked by Cllr Connor how the perspective of pedestrians would be captured in the Review, Cllr Buxton said that the Panel would reach out to local groups and that, while there was not a dedicated pedestrian groups, there were disabled groups and other organisations that represented vulnerable road users.

Cllr White observed that there were significant differences in terms of vulnerability and potential conflict between different types of bicycles such as e-bikes compared to

pedal bikes. Cllr Buxton confirmed that these differences would be considered as part of the Review.

RESOLVED – That the draft scoping document for a Scrutiny Review on the prioritisation of cyclists within the Walking and Cycling Action Plan be approved.

CHAIR: Councillor Matt White

Signed by Chair

Date

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING Children and Young People's
Scrutiny Panel HELD ON Thursday, 13th February, 2025, 7.00 -
8.45 pm**

PRESENT:

**Councillors: Makbule Gunes (Chair), Anna Abela, Marsha Isilar-Gosling,
Mark Grosskopf, Anna Lawton and George Dunstall**

ALSO ATTENDING:

102. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein'.

103. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Panel received apologies for lateness from Cllr Lawton and Cllr Dunstall.

104. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None

105. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

106. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None

107. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting on 13th January were agreed as a correct record.

108. ANNUAL SOCIAL CARE PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Panel received a report which provided an overview of safeguarding and social care activity and performance for 2023/24. The report was introduced by Richard Hutton, Senior Performance Officer and Dionne Thomas, AD Safeguarding and

Children's Social Care as set out in the agenda pack at pages 1-24. The Director of Children's services was also present for this item. The following arose during the discussion:

- a. The Panel queried the seeming assertion in the report that higher levels of adoption should be seen as a positive trend, and queried why. In response, officers advised that there were more cases of children who were currently in placements coming through the system that would result in higher adoption figures. The numbers could fluctuate significantly, but ultimately the best outcome was for children to remain with their families where possible. Where adoption was considered the best outcome, this had to be done in a timely way. Officers advised that the service undertook benchmarking around adoptions and this was monitored closely.
- b. The Panel welcomed the report and highlighted that there were a number of positive outcomes contained within it.
- c. The Panel queried the types of residential accommodation and the costs involved. In response, officers advised that costs for residential units were always the highest and that there were a range of costs within residential settings. The lowest costs was in-house foster care or children being placed with their family. This was true across the country. Officers set out that the Council had to procure placements that met the needs of the child, and were bespoke. The Council sought to pay the lowest price for residential payments that it could. It was commented that if a child had particularly high needs, a bespoke package would be commissioned and it was expected that the provider would work with the child to reduce need over time. The DCS advised that the service worked with health colleagues to share costs where appropriate and that the service benchmarked costs across London and Haringey was not paying the highest. It was acknowledged that the costs of residential payments were inflated due to the providers inflating those costs and that there was significant research to back this up.
- d. The Panel questioned the reasons for a drop in UASC and whether this was just a result of less children presenting for asylum. In response, officers advised that they didn't know why the numbers had dropped, but that the authority was ready to make referrals and offer placements in the way it should. There was a drop in the number of children being referred to Haringey from the National Transfer Scheme and there had been a drop in children presenting from particular countries. In response to a follow up, officers advised that there was a general drop across some areas of London and it was speculated that this might be partially accounted for an increase in people arriving by small boats, at the expense of other routes.
- e. In response to a question about the underlying factors that were involved in the dip in completing assessments, officers advised that they knew the quality of assessments was good and that the service had been regularly audited to that effect. The DCS advised that they had a very strong Early Help service that helped with assessment work. The service worked with Early Help officers in frontline assessment teams at an early stage and it was suggested that this might mitigate the need for assessments further down the line.
- f. The Panel sought assurances around how parents of children with learning difficulties were being supported. In response, officers advised that there was a dedicated parenting support team within Children's Services and that there were seven parenting programmes in place to support parents, including

- Cygnnet which worked with parents of SEND children. Other programmes included, sleeping behaviour and managing routine.
- g. The Chair queried the prevalence of domestic violence as a factor in assessment, in response officers advised that domestic violence was one of the most prevalent categories and that this was true across different local authorities. Officers advised that they had a range of interventions, programmes and different methods of assessment, which enabled the service to think about the most appropriate mechanism to support a particular family, who may be affected by domestic violence.
 - h. The Panel highlighted the percentage of care leavers in higher education (11%) and queried whether more could be done to increase this figure. In response, officers advised that they would always be looking to do more, but that 11% was good in relation to benchmarking with other boroughs. The London average was 8% and the national average was 6%. There was a strong aspiration that everybody should thrive and the service continually looked at how it could support care leavers. It was suggested that this did not always mean higher education and that there were also a range of apprenticeship and training options available.

RESOLVED

That the service improvement and challenges contained within the report were noted, along with the actions taken during 2023/24 in response to local demand and the financial pressures experienced by the service in relation to placements

109. UPDATE ON CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES AND DEVELOPMENTS UNDERWAY FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Panel received a report which provided an update on work to support the mental health and mental wellbeing of children and young people in Haringey, in the context of the post-pandemic period which was characterised by increasing complexity and demand for mental health services. The report was introduced by Caroline Brian, AD Commissioning & Programmes & Dionne Thomas, AD Safeguarding and Social Care as set out in the agenda pack at pages 25-43. The following people were also present for, and took part in, this agenda item: Colin McKenzie, Commissioning Project Manager (LBH); Tim Miller, AD Place, integration, Transformation & Delivery for NCL Integrated Care Board (NHS); Michelle Guimarin - NHS North Central London ICB; Penny Mitchell, Director of Population Health Commissioning for NCL Integrated Care Board (ICB); and Clive Blackwood – Head of CYPMHS at North London Foundation NHS Trust. The following arose as part of the discussion of this item:

- a. The Panel sought clarification over the term neurodiversity, in response NHS colleagues advised that this related to a variety of challenges faced by young people from conditions such as ADHD or autism. It was explained that this could impact the child's ability to socialise and could also impact the wider family.
- b. In response to a question, officers advised that emotional wellbeing was a journey for young people and that various events in a young person's life, such as bereavement or separation, could have a cumulative impact on their emotional wellbeing and could impact their ability to regulate the world around them. NHS colleagues set out that there were a number of support services

- available to young people to help them work through the challenges they may face.
- c. In relation to the Parent Psychology Service, the Panel queried whether mental health services were offered to new mothers. In response, the AD for Early Help, Prevention & SEND advised that this would be provided through family hubs and they would commission perinatal services that would support the mother through pregnancy and early motherhood. NHS colleagues advised that they were working closely with the Early Help service to target perinatal services and that there was a broad level of support available in this field across Haringey.
 - d. The chair of SEND Power queried the extent to which services were operating holistically, and raised concerns about a lack of CAMHS appointments and those appointments being cancelled at little or no notice. It was emphasised a shortage of services in this area had a big impact on families. In response it was noted that there was more than one provider referred to in the report, but that North London NHS Trust was the primary provider of CAMHS in Haringey. NHS colleagues advised that they were working through the ICB to improve services and bring them up to the national standard. The service levels were outlined as no child should wait longer than four weeks for their first contact. Performance on this metric was at 64%. It was acknowledged that this needed to improve, particularly as treatment for children was due to be started within eight weeks. It was set out that the longest waiting times were for ADHD services and that the waiting time for this was up to 14 months.
 - e. The Head of CYPMHS at North London Foundation NHS Trust advised that the Trust was working with the ICB to bring in additional resources to Haringey CAMHS at the St Ann's site and that this had seen additional staffing resources put in and weekend clinics for CAMHS offered. In relation to accessing services when in crisis, the Panel was advised that a range of interim support measures were in place whilst people waited for treatment, including wellbeing calls and hosting online groups. Officers advised that the service was conducting a review of existing contracts and pathways in order to redirect and refocus the services it commissioned, in order to focus on early intervention and prevention.
 - f. SEND Power impressed on the Panel how distressing some of the stories they had heard from their peer group about their own children being in crisis and unable to access mental health service. Attendees acknowledged the impact on children and young people and emphasised that the historical lack of service provision in this area was being tackled and that the right governance arrangements were in place for partners to move forward collectively.
 - g. In relation to under-funding in this area, NHS colleagues advised that they would like to see more funding in the system as the demand had increased above any additional funding that had been secured. It was noted that through the ICB's Inequality Fund, targeted work had been done in pockets of the east of the borough with high levels of historic deprivation. This has been done in partnership with Open Door. NHS colleagues set out that there had been a 67% increase in CAMHS cases in the last year. The ICB recognised that there needed to be an equitable offer for all children and adults in Haringey around access to mental health services and that there was a recognition that there had been historical underfunding in these services in some parts of the region.

Assurances were provided to the Panel that work was being done to address this historical underfunding.

- h. The Panel requested a further update on Children's mental health outcomes come to the Panel in a years' time. **(Action: Philip).**

RESOLVED

Noted

110. YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE INSPECTION UPDATE

The AD for Early Help, Prevention and SEND gave a verbal update to the Panel on the recent inspection undertaken of the Youth Justice service. It was noted that the final report was not due to be published until 3rd March, so the findings from the inspection could not be given in full. However, a summary of some of the key findings was given to Members. Matthew Knights, Head of Youth Justice was also present for this agenda item. The following was noted in relation to this update:

- The inspection involved five weeks of preparation from when the visit was announced to the actual inspection on 9th -13th December.
- The inspectors said that they enjoyed their visit and that they particularly welcomed hearing from the children and their parents/carers.
- There was a team of nine inspectors, who spoke to 50 staff and partnership representatives about the wider youth justice system. This included: CAMHS, probation, police, social care, volunteers, SEND, children and parents.
- Across the inspection, there were 30 meetings and they looked at 40 children and held individual interviews with their case managers.
- The inspectors advised that leadership and governance was strong. It was also recognised as; child-centred, purposeful, clear on its priorities.
- Partners held each other to account.
- Data was used well and was used to drive improvements
- The leadership team were committed, passionate and working collaboratively with each other.
- Management had a good understanding of the quality of work being undertaken by staff.
- There was a key focus on empowering others to work and being truly creative and innovative.
- Staff planning was identified as being strong.
- It was identified that there was some variability in decision making in relation to assessment of practice to keep others safe.
- Work with victims needed to increase.
- Children and parents were overwhelmingly positive about the service.
- The inspectors commented that there was a real authenticity to Haringey.

The recommendations from the report will be included in the Youth Justice Plan, which will be agreed by the Youth Justice Partnership Board.

The Panel requested that the full inspection report be brought back to the next meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel. **(Action: Philip).**

RESOLVED

Noted

111. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

RESOLVED

That the Panel noted the work programme.

112. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

113. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

This was the last meeting of the municipal year. Dates for 2025-26 will be agreed at Annual Full Council in May.

CHAIR: Councillor Makbule Gunes

Signed by Chair

Date

MINUTES OF THE MEETING Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel HELD ON Thursday, 6th March, 2025, 6.30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Alexandra Worrell (Chair), Dawn Barnes, John Bevan and Diakides

222. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein'.

223. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Moyeed and Cllr Harrison Mullane.

224. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Urgent Business.

225. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

226. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

227. MINUTES

Cllr Bevan advised that he had not been able to arrange a meeting with Clarion for an estate walkabout and requested help from officers to arrange this. **(Action: Hannah).**

In relation to the partnering contract, officers advised that a number of bids had been submitted as part of the tendering process and it was hoped that a contract would be awarded towards the end of 2025.

Officers were requested to provide a written update on the frequency that the £20 food voucher was paid. **(Action: Jahedur Rahman).**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting on 16th December 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

228. VERBAL UPDATE ON THE LOCAL PLAN

The Panel received a verbal update along with a tabled presentation that provided an update on the timelines and development of the updated Local Plan. The presentation was given by Bryce Tudball, Head of Spatial Planning as set out in the tabled papers agenda pack. Cllr Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing & Planning was present for this agenda item. The following arose as part of the discussion:

- a. The Chair acknowledged the amount of work that had gone into the Local Plan to get it to this stage and welcomed a number of the positive changes that had been made. The Chair requested that officers provide some further comments about the reasons for the delays to date. In response, officers advised that the delays had been part of the feedback arising from the planning service peer challenge review and that the principal reason for this was around resources within the team. The Panel was advised that this had been acknowledged by senior management and the service now had a full complement of staff. Officers advised that the delays had allowed the service to respond to raft of changes put forward by the new government, and that the timescales for the Local Plan were now running in tandem with the London Plan.
- b. The Chair sought assurances around the extent to which the emerging Local Plan could be used as a consideration when determining planning applications. Officers advised that once it had been published as a draft Local Plan in the summer, a limited amount of weight could be given to the new Local Plan when considering planning applications.
- c. The Panel commented that the updated Local Plan had a lead-in time of seven years, and assurances were sought that it wouldn't be out of date by the time it was in place. In response, officers acknowledged the lead-in time but gave assurances that by the time it was finalised in 2027 it would be very up to date, a lot of work had gone into future proofing the Local Plan. A lot of emphasis was being given to placemaking within the plan, rather than it being reactive.
- d. The Panel sought assurances about whether there would be a greater emphasis on increasing the number of social housing units within the plan. Officers advised that they anticipated that the new plan would have stronger policies around having more properties for social rent, including more social rent properties in Tottenham and the east of the borough.
- e. The Panel raised concerns with the number of very tall buildings that had been permitted in Tottenham Hale under the current Local Plan, and sought assurances that something similar wouldn't happen in Wood Green under the new Local Plan. In response officers advised that the aim of consulting on a new Local Plan was to build up an evidence base from the consultation with which to base the borough's planning priorities on. It was identified that the new Local Plan would, unlike the previous iteration, have a dedicated section that identified areas that were appropriate for tall buildings, and that some of these may be in Wood Green. Officers gave assurances that they did not believe that Wood Green would look like Tottenham Hale in respect of the concentration of tall buildings.

- f. The Panel sought assurances around whether the new plan would enable environment goals, and specifically retro fitting. An example was given of a resident who was very keen to retrofit his home to improve its energy efficiency, but was unable to do so because he lived in a conservation area. In response, officers advised that one of the areas that would be substantially reinforced in the plan was the climate emergency and buildings sections. The vision was to have a leading retrofit policy within London. Officers acknowledged that there were some policy conflicts between retrofitting and conservation areas. It was suggested that solar PVs may be permitted in some circumstances. It was necessary to consider the specific character of a conservation area and how retrofitting would impact that area. For example, solar panels would not be suitable in a conservation area where one of its primary characteristics was the roofs of the buildings.
- g. The Panel sought clarification about protected views in the borough and whether this applied to Alexandra Palace. In response, officers advised that there was a range of protected views in the borough, some of these were protected at the local level and some at the London level through the London Plan. The GLA were looking at strategic views, of which Alexandra Palace was one, but these were unlikely to change.
- h. The Chair sought assurances around whether the new plan would include an enhanced focus on future proofing against extreme weather and flooding. In response, officers advised that there would be a specific chapter around climate resilience including flood risk and heat mitigation. It was commented that the current Local Plan did say much on these topics.

RESOLVED

Noted

229. MOCK HOUSING INSPECTION - UPDATE

The Panel received a report which provided an update on the mock housing inspection of housing services conducted against the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards, carried out by specialist housing consultants, Housing Quality Network (HQN) between September and October 2024. The report was introduced by Jahedur Rahman, Operational Director of Housing Services & Building Safety as set out in the agenda pack at pages 13 – 20. Cllr Sarah Williams, the Cabinet Member for Housing & Planning was also present for this item. The following arose as part of the discussion of this item:

- a. The Director of Housing advised that overall the outcome of the mock inspection was a C2 grade, which was the second highest of four possible grades (C1, C2, C3 & C4). Prior to the referral to the regulator, Haringey would have likely been a C4 authority. The Chair welcomed the overall positive outcome of the mock inspection and commented that a number of areas of improvement had been made. It was questioned how many inspections of the new consumer standards had been carried out to date and what sort of scores were being achieved. In response, officers advised that there had been 50 inspections and that most authorities were coming out at C3. Some achieved a C2 grade, and only one in authority in London had achieved a C1 grade – Westminster. Officers advised that HQN issued 48 recommendations that

- should bring the Council up to a C1 grade. Of those 48, there were a number of recommendations that had been identified internally as areas for improvement. Six of the 48 had been implemented. One of these was around reporting beyond the big six compliance areas, which was already happening internally. HQN commented on Haringey's extensive resident engagement structures. Resident engagement impact assessments would be carried out every year by the Council to drive forward the improvement agenda.
- b. The Panel expressed a degree of surprise around the overall score, given the gaps in stock condition surveys and the performance levels on voids. The Panel sought assurances that the C2 score was realistic. In response, officers advised that rating was given by an external company, rather than the regulator, so it was not a certainty. However, HQN used the criteria set out by the regulator and also reviewed all of the previous judgments made by the regulator when assigning a rating. The report set out that Haringey was able to meet the criteria for a C2 rating, but did not say that it definitely would achieve this score. In relation to stock condition surveys, officers advised that the authority had achieved a 75-80% compliance rate on stock condition surveys. The Director of Housing advised that he did not want to be complacent, but advised that the mock inspection gave the authority a critical view of whether it was on the right track and also set out what steps needed to be taken to achieve a C1 grade.
 - c. In response to a question, officers clarified that the 48 actions were what was considered necessary in order to achieve a C1 rating, rather than what was required for a C2 rating.
 - d. The Panel raised concerns about tenant walkabouts and that these needed to be reconfigured. It was commented that residents no longer attended these in Northumberland Park ward. Concerns were also raised around walkabouts on sheltered housing blocks and the need to ensure that a sheltered housing manager, or one of their staff, needed to be present when conducting these. It was suggested that this was something that the Cabinet Member may want to take forward. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that she would take these comments on board. The Director of Housing acknowledged the need to reconfigure tenant walkabouts of estates. It was commented that the resident advisory panels would be part of this process going forward. The Director of Housing acknowledged that the walkabouts needed to be meaningful, signed off by residents, and that the residents understood the grading and how it was applied.
 - e. A Member of the Panel raised concerns about a case where a resident had a water leak and had been charged for several thousand baths worth of water. Concerns were raised that, in many instances, the Council did not know where Thames Water had installed water meters. In response, officers acknowledged this individual case and advised that the Member had been working with the relevant Assistant Director to resolve it.
 - f. In relation to stock condition surveys, officers advised that 75% of internal surveys had been carried out and 80% of surveys in communal areas.
 - g. The Panel sought assurances around the comments in the report around housing fraud. In response, officers advised that tenancy audits took place which used a number of algorithms to identify possible cases of tenancy fraud. The Housing team worked with Corporate Fraud team to review these and take

- the necessary action. The report made a recommendation that a new policy document should be developed to formalise this working arrangement.
- h. The Panel queried the impact of asbestos on the Council being able to carry out works. In response, officers acknowledged that if work was required in an area with known asbestos, then the health and safety risk could make the works complicated. It was commented that in general, the policy was to try and not disturb the asbestos and work round it where possible. The Director of Housing agreed to provide written feedback on any specific cases, if a member of the Panel were to email him with the details.
 - i. The Panel raised concerns about the extent to which the Council would be reliant on its contractors in order to achieve a satisfactory rating in the event of a future inspection by the regulators. It was commented that as an organisation the Council was weak on contract management. In response, the Cabinet Members advised that the Council was ultimately responsible for checking the work undertaken by its contractors and it was acknowledged that there was a need to ensure effective contract management was carried out, particularly in the key areas of building safety and compliance standards.
 - j. In response to a question, the Panel was advised that the report and action plan was not for external consumption, and therefore not attached to the report, at the request of HQN.
 - k. The Panel sought clarification about the role of Scrutiny in the formal reporting structures around the consumer standards and a future inspection given that it was a public facing body. In response, officers acknowledged the role of Scrutiny, but set out that the Council also had a cross-party Housing Improvement Board, chaired by the Chief Executive and that there was a degree of overlap. Officers advised that HQN were aware of the role of Scrutiny and that 2 years' worth of papers to this panel were submitted as part of the evidence for the inspection.
 - l. In response to a question, officers clarified that a C2 rating reflected that that overall the organisation was delivering on the consumer standards, but that some areas of improvement were required.

RESOLVED

That the update was noted.

230. ALLOCATIONS POLICY

The Panel received a report which set out the background to the development of a new housing allocations policy, set out the requirements for, and process for, consultation and covered the main principles of Haringey's new draft housing allocations policy. It also included the draft housing allocations policy and the EQIA as appendices. The report was introduced by Hannah Adler, Head of Housing Policy and Strategy and Darren Fairclough, Head of Lettings & Rehousing - Housing Demand, as set out in the second agenda pack at pages 1-82. Cllr Sarah Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing & Planning was also present for this agenda item. The following arose as part of the discussion of this report:

- a. The Panel sought assurances around how the focus group was representative of the makeup of Haringey's housing register. In response, officers advised that

- the focus group proportionally represented the reasons that people were on the housing register, such as severe overcrowding, medical need, living in TA etcetera. It was also commented that the group was in itself also a diverse group that represented Haringey's residents.
- b. The Panel queried the process for how people were selected to sit on the focus group. In response, officers advised that the Council took a data driven approach and developed a shortlist that was representative of the categories of reasons why people required housing as listed on the housing register. From that shortlist, the Council then wrote to those people in order to make sure they would be willing to take part.
 - c. The Chair questioned the new approach that was being taken to prioritise families with dependent children over those with a mixture of dependant and non-dependent children (i.e. those over the age of 22). In response, officers advised that a number of different options were considered and that the reason that those with solely dependent children were proposed as having priority was that, whilst the wider housing challenges across London were recognised, it was considered that a child of 23 and above did not need to live at home and could live independently. The Council was seeking to prioritise those with the most need, and so it was felt that dependent children should be prioritised. Officers acknowledged that every model would result in some groups being prioritised at the expense of others. The Cabinet Member added that the aim was to give children the best chances to not have their life blighted by their housing situation. Officers advised that the age at which a child was considered non-dependant i.e. 22 was part of the consultation process.
 - d. The Chair asked for figures on what the impact would be on the housing register if we gave equal priority to those families with dependent and non-dependent children. Officers agreed to provide a response in writing. **(Action: Hannah Adler).**
 - e. The Panel sought further clarification about how the cut-off point for dependent children being 22 and under was reached. It was commented that in some cultures there was an expectation that adult children would live with the family until they were married. Concerns were also raised with the general feasibility of a 23 year old being able to afford to live in the private rented sector. The Panel asked whether a 23 year old child would then go on the housing register in their own right and potentially add to the length of the waiting list. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that there were no perfect answers to the issue, given the scale of the housing crisis. However, it was commented that what the policy was trying to do was prioritise those most in need. It was also stated that the policy specifically referred to when a person of family was allocated a new home. The Council was not seeking to move people out of their existing homes. The Cabinet Member also commented that the service was also looking at the rightsizing policy in conjunction with allocations. Officers reiterated that the cut-off point of 22 was being consulted upon and was not final. Officers also acknowledged that a 23 year old child could join the housing register as they were no longer classed as a dependant, and that their status and banding would depend on their individual circumstances.
 - f. The Panel questioned how many homes were classed as being overcrowded and how many people were allowed to share a room. In response, officers

advised that severe overcrowding was classed as being overcrowded by two bedrooms and this was something like 400 homes. Severe overcrowding would place that family on Band B of the housing register. Overcrowding was classed as being overcrowded by one room and this would put the family at Band C of the register. Officers set out that the draft housing allocations policy did not prioritise two adult children sharing a room. The Panel was advised that under the proposed model, demand for significantly larger homes of 5 bedrooms and above would be halved. This would ensure those with the most need were able to get the larger homes.

- g. The Chair acknowledged that setting a cut-off age for dependent children was difficult but commented that she thought it may need to be higher than 22.
- h. The Panel commented that the key activity needed to alleviate housing crisis was to build more houses, and that the allocations policy had a role in this. The Panel queried whether the policy was, in effect, giving priority to those in TA over those with severe overcrowding. An example was given of a property that had 8 people sharing a two bed flat and that the average waiting time for the family would be something like 12 years. In response, officers acknowledged that there was a significant amount of severe overcrowding in Haringey's social housing stock, and the negative outcomes that this had on families. In relation to severe overcrowding and those in TA, both of these families were in Band B in the current policy and there were no plans to change this in the revised policy.
- i. In relation to increasing supply, officers acknowledged that this was one of the key things required to tackle the housing crisis. It was commented that under the Housing Delivery Programme, Haringey was building more than 3k new homes, of which around 700 had been delivered to date. Officers set out that there was a number of other activities that could be undertaken in order to increase the availability of larger family homes, such as having more people sharing bedrooms in certain circumstances and also through looking at our under-occupation offer. It was commented that one of the small levers within the housing allocation policy was to potentially increasing the priority for under-occupiers within their band, so that they had more choice.
- j. The Panel was advised that the Council had managed to secure 4 times as many under occupation moves in the current year, compared to 2023/24. They key support area that was needed in relation to rightsizing was to be able to offer the right level of flexible support to individuals. Officers provided assurances that there were other routes out of TA that were not just being put into social housing, it was commented that the Council needed to promote these routes.
- k. The Cabinet Member commented that there was a pilot programme underway to build extensions on existing homes and that there were four of these currently underway. The Cabinet Member also set out that Haringey had one of the highest allocations for its allocations programme, the properties from which would go into the HCBS and could be used for TA.
- l. In response to a question, officers advised that under the current policy there was scope to allow a family to move from an overcrowded property to a less overcrowded one, such as moving into a four bed when they needed a five bedroom home.

- m. The Panel queried whether there was any way the Council could restrict Right to Buy. In response, officers advised that Right to Buy applied to all council tenants and that unless the new government revised the existing policy position, such as giving local authorities more flexibility, then there was not much that could be done. It was commented that the building costs of the new homes would make tenants' ability to purchase them prohibitive, in many cases.
- n. The Panel commented that they would be interested in seeing whether anything could be done through the allocations policy to support split families or even families that have separated.
- o. The Panel sought clarification about the change in numbers for each priority band that would arise from the proposed changes. In response, officers advised that the main change was de-prioritising those with non-dependent children into a lower Band B. It was suggested that there wasn't much change to the other bands. The Panel was advised that there were around 500 households who would be impacted by this change.
- p. Officers advised that if the Panel wanted to comment on the draft allocations policy, they would invite them to respond as part of the wider consultation process.
- q. The Chair queried whether moving under-occupiers to the highest band and retaining the start date of their tenancy was enough of an incentive to get people to move. In response, officers advised that the policy used the main lever that was available to it, which was to prioritise under-occupiers and move them to Band A. It was suggested that there was not much more that could be done through an allocations policy. Officers acknowledged that Council needed to be able to offer a broad suite of incentives to those who were under-occupying, including cash incentives and tailoring support. It was suggested that the Neighbourhood Moves scheme was also available to them. Officers advised that the Council was able to make direct offers to individuals where there was an overriding interest in regaining a particular property and that the existing policy did not prohibit this.
- r. The Panel noted that there were a few instances where the Council would allow someone to under-occupy, usually if it meant they were under-occupying by less than their current home, and questioned whether they should just be given greater cash incentives instead. In response, officers advised that the incentives worked in such a way that you got a payment for downsizing and then an additional payment for each room you downsized to, so technically they were also getting additional cash incentives. It was noted that the level of incentives and the need for wrap-around care were something that needed to be developed as part of the incentives work.
- s. The Chair expressed concern about the proposed use of auto-bidding, suggesting that there may be a number of legitimate reasons why someone might be entitled to a second choice, before they were deemed to be intentionally homeless. In response, officers emphasised that it was an offer of a suitable home and that there was also an option to appeal. Officers commented that this was in-line with what was offered by other local authorities and that the properties went through an assessment process to determine their suitability. The Panel was advised that the auto-bidding was in addition to the

ability to express a choice on a particular property. It was commented that, in reality the auto-bidding would only affect those who were not bidding themselves. The Panel was advised that in some respects, those who received an offer of social housing were in a fortunate position, as many more of those on the housing register would never receive an offer. The Chair commented that she was mindful of the above but questioned what real impact it would have to give people two choices, given that property would be allocated to someone else.

- t. The Chair questioned what steps would be taken to make sure that people were aware that auto-bidding was in place and the rules around only getting one offer of a suitable placement. In response, the Cabinet Member set out that the changes to the policy were aimed at making people engage with the process and to make that process easier and more transparent. The Cabinet Member also emphasised that housing people in Temporary Accommodation was a comparatively very costly, and there was a financial need to people into alternative sources of housing.
- u. The Panel commented that the Neighbourhood Moves scheme seemed to have had a knock-on effect on the performance around voids and the that perhaps the scheme should be limited to just under-occupiers and those with housing need. In response, officers advised that as part of the consultation they were proposing to limit the scheme to those living in overcrowded accommodation and under occupiers, and would no longer be offered to those without housing need.
- v. The Chair raised concerns about the possible impact of the new supported housing regulations leading to some providers failing to get a licence and having to leave the sector. The Chair queried what support would be in place for supported housing residents who lost their accommodation because the provider left the sector. In response, officers acknowledged that this was a concern and set out that there had been some bad actors in the sector, who had disguised profits and used housing benefit to pay for care and support. It was acknowledged that it had created challenges to the market but that it was hoped it would result in improving standards across the sector. Officers advised that they were aware of the issue and that there was a project board in place that was coordinating a response to the consultation. Officers emphasised the need for regional and sub-regional provision across London to prevent bad actors from simply moving from one borough to another.
- w. Officers advised that the exact date of the consultation was not finalised, but that that it was likely to begin a couple of months.

RESOLVED

That the Panel noted the report and the draft Housing Allocations Policy.

231. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

RESOLVED

- I. That the Panel considered its work programme, attached at Appendix A of the report.
- II. That the Panel agreed the scoping document for a proposed Review on TA Placements Policy and the PRS Discharge Policy, set out in Appendix B of the report.

232. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

233. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that there were no further meetings of the Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel in 2024/25 municipal year.

CHAIR: Councillor Alexandra Worrell

Signed by Chair

Date

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CLIMATE, COMMUNITY SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON TUESDAY 11TH MARCH 2025, 7.15pm – 9.30pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Lester Buxton (Chair), Liam Carroll, Luke Cawley-Harrison and George Dunstall

Co-optees: Ian Sygrave

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein’.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Adamou, Cllr Ali and Cllr Culverwell extended apologies for absence.

3. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

The finalised draft scope of a proposed Scrutiny Review on the position of cyclists in the road user hierarchy was circulated to the Panel for more in-depth discussion at Item 11.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

6. MINUTES

It was raised that there was an amendment to a statement within the minutes ‘the Council’s Vision Zero’. The Vision Zero campaign was in fact a Transport for London initiative. **ACTION (Scrutiny Officer).**

7. PRESENTATION BY THE BOROUGH COMMANDER AND CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS

The Borough Commander introduced the report.

The Panel learned that:

- There had been successes in reduction in crime in the Borough– especially in the violent crimes and knife crime category. However there had been significant increases in the category of 'crimes against the person'.
- The Met Police had formally exited 'special measures' brought about last year.
- There had been a focus on strengthening public protection in policing. This included child abuse, exploitation, violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and more.
- There had been growth in terms of posts and investment in neighbourhood crime fighting.
- The Police had engaged with the public to help prioritise issues of impact on a ward-by-ward basis and in line with their harm profile.
- The strengthening of public trust was continuing however the Borough Commander emphasised that the speed of the roll out of projects was dependent on funding. The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and Home Office funding had been reduced.
- 'Clear Hold Build' was seen by many as a success story in the Finsbury Park and Northumberland Park areas. They had delivered a reduction in crime.
- Following the Baroness Casey report on the Met Police, there had been significant work done on the internal culture of the police force – especially with regards to delivering on higher standards and ensuring that only the right officers were in place in the Force.

A Youth Panel Member Representative asked further about the focus on highly gentrified areas such as Finsbury Park and Tottenham Hale. She enquired as to why gentrified areas also had high levels of violence. The Borough Commander highlighted that the crime rates had reduced due to enforcement action, however specific reasons for violence may include criminal access to transport hubs, and geography. It was emphasised that work was being done in partnership with the British Transport Police and TfL to target certain individuals. The Detective Superintendent stated that the nature of crimes in these areas were predominantly thefts from the person. He clarified that there were many reasons why certain areas were more susceptible to crime - such as pavement access for ebikes, schools in the area and travellers into and out of the area. The Detective Superintendent highlighted that commuter campaigns would raise awareness of the possibility of thefts. The Borough Commander added that they were reviewing crime hotspots in the area and considering street lighting, street furniture and more to deter crime. The Chair enquired further as to the solid measures that were taking place to ensure that

commuters and residents were safe. The Borough Commander responded that work was targeting knife crime using partnerships with the British Transport Police. Further work was also carried out using passive drugs dogs. There had been recent successes at Wood Green and Seven Sisters Tube Stations. The Police also used behavioural detection officers – who watch the movements of potential criminals. Intelligence was also shared with the Transport Hub. The Police were bidding for resources for more plain clothes officers, road policing units and passive drugs dogs work across London. The Detective Superintendent also offered to circulate some further reports to the Panel at a later date. **ACTION (DSI Ian Martin)**

It was pointed out that it would be useful for the Panel to know whether crime hotspots could be presented in the ward-by-ward figures in future. This was to get a clarification as to whether crime statistics were evenly spread throughout the borough or concentrated in certain areas. This would help the Panel understand how resourcing was being affected by highly concentrated areas. The Borough Commander suggested to bring these reports to the Ward Panel meetings, as these could help inform priorities in neighbourhood wards in addition to highest harm and volume according to resourcing. She acknowledged that there was some room for improvement with regards to the frequency of Ward Panel meetings. **ACTION. (B.C. Caroline Haines).**

Cllr Dunstall commented that in light of the sometimes-geographic nature of crime, numbers rather than percentages would be useful in the ward-by-ward presentation of figures. **ACTION. (DSI Ian Martin).** He then requested more clarification of the actual times allocated to the Safer Neighbourhood Teams on a ward basis – and how many police officers were available to ward residents at any one time. The Non- Voting Co-optee added that daily abstractions (or the removal of officers from their role in their neighbourhood to address other concerns in other localities) were at 2.94% as a whole - or 21 officers a day. He expressed concern that these figures underestimated the impact on the resourcing of Safer Neighbourhood Teams. He pointed out that large sections of officers were on response and protected from abstractions, however the roles that were left could still be abstracted to other parts of the team or outside of the neighbourhood and this left little police resources available to ward residents. He pointed out that exact figures on this would be useful. He stated that anecdotal evidence had raised that sometimes abstractions occurred for what he thought was relatively trivial concerns such as crowd control at a wrestling match at Wembley.

The Borough Commander pointed out abstractions mainly affected uniformed officers; however, she assured the Panel that more robust processes for requesting abstractions were now in place and the number of abstractions needed had fallen as a result. Resourcing for London wide events (such as demonstrations) where possible were resourced from non front-line staff. She pointed out there was a broader issue of the availability of 'fully fit' officers in place. There had been significant work with Professional Standards to ensure that the public were not dealing with officers who were not 'fit for duty' due to health or violations of professional standards. This meant

that the post was still there but not being occupied by a fully fit officer. She also emphasised that currently, Borough Commands across London were operating without a fully fit police force. Once this wider issue was dealt with then the impact of abstractions would be minor. The Detective Superintendent was unable to give statistics for the types of abstractions that were needed over the past year, during the meeting but offered to circulate these to the Panel once they had been collated. **(DSI Ian Martin).**

Another Youth Panel Member Representative enquired about the alternatives to enforcement when deterring youth crime. Views had been gathered by other members of the Youth Council and the representative had personal experience of this. He emphasised that he thought that 'Clear, Hold, Build' was positive however more emphasis on the prevention of youth crime in neighbourhoods such as West Green, Noel Park and more would ensure that the Police would not be seen as a dominant negative force but as a community resource. The Representative mentioned longer term youth-led programmes in conjunction with the Police. He suggested more working together with Haringey's Youth Council would be welcome to improve relations between young people and the Police. The Borough Commander thanked the Representative. She emphasised that 'Clear, Hold, Build' did have a phase for building relations with the community, but for now she emphasised that there was a role for enforcement. The Cabinet Member for Communities also emphasised that the 'Hold' phase would work with partners to develop relations. In areas where 'Clear, Hold, Build' was in force – such as Northumberland Park, partners have worked with youth projects to increase the availability of education, training and employment opportunities for young people. And consideration was to be given on how this could be replicated across the borough.

The Youth Representative replied that he was concerned that youth resources were not being utilised. He emphasised that the view of the Police amongst young people was very negative. He highlighted that enforcement had to be seen in conjunction with prevention projects in order to prevent criminality in young people in other areas. The Cabinet Member for Communities talked about the projects that the Youth Justice Team were rolling out to young people in schools. She stated that she would be more than happy to discuss further ways to engage young people outside of the meeting.

ACTION. (Cllr Adja Ovat)

The Assistant Director for Children's Services stated that her portfolio covered these areas. Her team was working on a Young People's Strategy which was looking at just these sorts of issues. She suggested that her team work with representatives of the Youth Council to consider the impact that this would have on the young population and whether resources were getting to areas that needed it the most. **ACTION. (A.D. Jackie DiFolco).**

In addition, the Borough Commander stated that although significant work was being done with young people, more discussions should be held with the Youth Council or representatives to determine whether the levels of prevention were appropriate or if

more intensive work was needed in certain locations. **ACTION (B.C. Caroline Haines).**

Cllr Carroll highlighted that in the report, there was mentioned 'tough choices in terms of funding and service delivery'. He requested more detail as to what this meant. The Borough Commander emphasised that it was still being discussed at the highest level. She mentioned there had been a paper published by the Commissioner setting these out and areas that would be compromised if levels of funding weren't sufficient. She assured the Panel that front line services were not mentioned.

Cllr Carroll also commented that amongst those statistics that had seen an increase in the borough, the increase in sexual offences was notable. He also expressed concerns as sexual offences are known to be under reported. The Borough Commander emphasised that sexual offences were primarily crimes against women and girls. She stated that there may be a few factors working together that led to a rise in figures. Differences in how crime was recorded may be a factor, and also the effects of work the Police have done to encourage reporting of sexual offences. However, she also stated there was work being done to make public spaces safer and to target the right areas and people with resource. Cllr Carroll asked whether risks of sexual offences were concentrated in certain areas. The Borough Commander responded that the areas of risk were high footfall areas and town centres. She emphasised that there was some positive tactics to prevent and deter and make effective use of resources to tackle pattern of crimes in these areas.

Cllr Dunstall referred to the Monthly Tracker by Offence Type chart on Page 18 of the report. He enquired whether it was possible for the Police to produce results for 2023, as the Panel could then compare trends especially where offences have increased.

ACTION (D.S.I Ian Martin)

Cllr Dunstall then enquired about the Stop and Search data. He pointed out that this had a 34% criminality detection rate. However, he pointed out that this meant that 66% of people had been searched who had not carried out any criminal activities. This led to a negative view of the Police. He enquired how this figure compared with the rest of London and nationally. He also enquired as to the steps the Police were taking to reduce the number of Stop and Search through prevention work and improved relations with communities. However also ensuring that Stop and Search was being carried out in situations where officers were more than one third sure that criminality was taking place. The Borough Commander highlighted that the tactic was an incredibly useful tool for removing weapons from circulation. However, she admitted that fine tuning needed to occur whereby officers who were conducting searches were being led by intelligence and were surer as to whether criminality was occurring. She emphasised that the Met's Stop and Search Charter had been published recently. There had been extensive consultation on aspects of Stop and Search and ensuring that the process was fair and equal, as well as greater scrutiny and precision through Community Monitoring Groups. The Borough Commander and Haringey's Director of Children's Services Ann Graham had worked around training for a trauma informed

approach to Stop and Search. There was more awareness around over searching and now greater scrutiny and transparency through the Community Monitoring Groups.

The Detective Superintendent then offered figures as to the trends in data and clarified that the 2024 had seen an increase in detection rate – going from 30% in 2023 to 34% in 2024. This was in line with the rest of London who had a positive detection rate of 33.9%. The Detective Superintendent also emphasised that the volumes of Stop and Search had decreased by 28% in 2024 compared to 2023. This he stated was evidence that a more data driven approach was successful. In contrast London had seen a 13% reduction in Stop and Search from 2023 to 2024.

The Youth Representative, then asked whether in-depth demographic data was available to the public of those being stopped and searched. The Borough Commander responded that the Stop and Search Charter was new and the mechanisms for communicating information to the public about data was not worked out yet. However, the Community Monitoring Group was scrutinising all the issues of Stop and Search in the meantime.

Cllr Cawley Harrison commented that although the data showed there had been a decrease in crime and Anti-Social Behaviour - his experience as a ward representative was very different. He stated that residents were perceiving that there was a big increase in 'low level' or 'volume' crime and his concern was it was being underreported, as it was not being prioritised by the Police. This, he stated was skewing data and altering residents' experience. Under reporting could contribute to an escalation of low-level crime into Anti-Social Behaviour which needed the intervention of more services. He emphasised that many residents felt that there was no point in reporting some crimes as they would not be investigated. He enquired whether the Police had seen a difference in crime reporting and enquired further as to how many cases were being investigated. Where community measures had worked, he enquired whether crime rates were actually increasing in other areas nearby.

The Borough Commander responded that work had been done with businesses in the area to ensure that crime was being reported, and they had seen an increase in reporting in certain areas. However, there was still an issue with under reporting. She stated that crimes were reviewed by solvability and 40-45% of crimes were not able to be investigated. However, improvements could be made in communicating with the victims of crime early on in the reporting process. She stated that demand outstripped supply, and her team focused efforts on areas of the highest harm as well as preventative work. More improvements could be made on identifying persons behind crime patterns; however, she stated that the Police were fully aware of the impacts of measures across wards. Local teams were now focusing on 'volume' crimes and at the categories at most risk for particular wards.

As time was short, the Chair requested that the Borough Commander provide some figures on Ward specific details on patterns in crime across boundaries. **ACTION**
(B.C. Caroline Haines.)

8. **COMMUNITY SAFETY FOCUS: OVERVIEW FROM THE SERVICES AND CLEAR, HOLD, BUILD.**

The Intelligence Analyst introduced the report which included a summary of figures on youth crime, knife crime, robbery and theft, Anti-Social Behaviour and the Young People at Risk strategy.

The Non-Voting Co-optee commented that although 'Clear, Hold, Build' as a police tactic for removing crime from key areas - had seen some positive results in Finsbury Park; after a year, there had been a significant increase in youth violence and knife crime in the area too. He enquired as to the factors that contributed to this. He also further enquired as to the ability of the council's Anti-Social Behaviour department to respond to issues, as there had been a lack of resources following a restructure. He wanted assurance that resourcing was correct for Anti-Social Behaviour issues. The Cabinet Member for Communities admitted that there had been staffing changes however the quality of work would not be affected. The Assistant Director for Resident Services then stated that staff had been added to the team and senior officers would now have specialisms of noise and Anti-Social Behaviour as well as an overall Head of Service. With regards to the figures of youth and knife crime, the Detective Superintendent, stated that this may be due to an increase in detection rates rather than an increase in crime rates.

Cllr Dunstall then enquired whether 'Clear Hold Build' was pushing crime into other areas. The Borough Commander responded that in the case of Northumberland Park, the 'Clear, Hold, Build' area had been extended to areas of high harm crime in Enfield to deal with a pattern of displacement. Since then, there had been no other trends to suggest otherwise. She suggested that in some categories such as sex work - a displacement maybe seen in that other locations may be used, however without reporting it was impossible to tell whether this was happening or not. However, she stated that in the case of organised criminality, Clear Hold Build was seeing significant reductions in violent crime in the borough and in Enfield. As specific 'crime generators' were being dealt with longer term, there was reduced incidents of violent crime in all areas. The Cabinet Member for Communities added Clear Hold Build looked at crime holistically and was not pinpointed to certain areas.

Cllr Dunstall, enquired further as to the work the Police did with street-based sex work as other factors were also involved such as exploitation, trafficking, and substance misuse. He stated that evidence from third sector sources had shown that there was a shift in how sex workers viewed the Police— and this had pushed sex work indoors and has been detrimental to some of the relationships the third sector had built. The Borough Commander stated that there was a sliding scale with help that could be offered women to exit sex work and the Police enforcement of what was essentially illegal activity. In previous operations, residents were not noticing any change in levels of street prostitution in the areas in which they lived and now through enforcement - they were.

Cllr Cawley Harrison then raised that in his experience, residents do not have clarity as to who was ultimately responsible for Anti-Social Behaviour. He stated that with 9,000 incidents reported in the Borough, eight members of staff did not seem proportional. Clarity was needed on where responsibility lay; and more information needed on how responsive and proactive work was prioritised and differentiated. He stated that further information on work between the Anti-Social Behaviour team and the Housing team would also be useful.

The Cabinet Member for Communities responded that the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy was currently under review by the Housing team. She stated that this would be addressed in the Policy. The Assistant Director stressed also that there is lack of clarity as regards to the definitions of Anti-Social Behaviour and this would also be addressed within the policy. He stated that with regards to dealing with proactive issues, there was a Partner Problem Solving Group that met to deal with repeated issues. However, he stated that from a resident point of view complaining about Anti Social Behaviour should be seamless. The Detective Superintendent also pointed out that some victims of ASB were extremely vulnerable and although the nature of the Anti Social Behaviour may seem low level - the persistence of repeated ASB incidents had a devastating effect – he cited the Fiona Pilkington case as an example. He stated that a dedicated Haringey ASB Police team had been set up to work more closely with the council, to support and understand the data and profile of the borough.

The Chair requested that the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy be returned to the Panel at a later date. **ACTION. (Scrutiny Officer)**

Cllr Cawley Harrison stated that from the council website it was not easy to find out the procedures of Anti-Social Behaviour and also how to report it online. He asked if the home page and channels through to reporting could be re-considered. **ACTION (AD - Eubert Malcolm).**

Cllr Carroll asked about the material change to drug supply lines in the borough and if shut down of supply had incorporated new synthetic opioids. The Borough Commander replied that strategic intelligence on quality and type of drugs was given to the Police but on a confidential basis. The Borough Commander responded that there had been 12 drugs lines closed in Northumberland Park. She also stated that with drugs came an increase in violent crime. She stated that there were techniques to gather information and there had been some successes. In all cases the subjects have had significant custodial sentences. Cllr Carroll pointed out that although there were positives with the first-time youth reoffending figures, he expressed concern on the rise in escalating criminal activities in the Youth Justice figures. The Head of Youth Justice emphasised that his team was monitoring this on a regular basis and looking for opportunities to work collaboratively on prevention and diversion strategies. He stated that once there was Youth Justice involvement, those who had been committing more serious crimes felt more supported in terms of not reoffending. He emphasised that there was a very small cohort who continually reoffend or commit serious

violence. The team this year was working with the Police and Probation Services in Haringey's new Youth Integrated Offender Management Groups to put in place more targeted work with habitual knife carriers, and young people at risk to provide more support for them.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PANEL TO THE CABINET

After extensive discussion around some of the points raised at the meeting, the following recommendations were agreed to be finalised.

Recommendation 1: The Panel recommended closer working, and more frequent communication between the Youth Panel representatives and Community Safety Partnership. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Borough Commander should work together to build these into future workplans and policies. A first step would be to organise a visit between the Cabinet Member for Communities and the Youth Council.

Recommendation 2: The Panel asks the Cabinet Member for Communities to help standardise and formalise Ward Panel meetings as a main tool of communication between Police, Council and residents.

Recommendation 3: The Panel asked whether funds could be allocated to provide training and to help facilitate community leaders to structure meetings, find venues and help promote these newly standardised Ward Panel meetings.

Recommendation 4: The Panel asked that the Borough Commander be asked to organise Quarterly Ward performance figures on Safer Neighbourhood Teams' (SNT) visibility and front-line police resourcing to be cascaded to the newly standardised Ward Panel Meetings. This is so that residents understand how many 'fit for duty' police officers were available.

Recommendation 5: The Panel asked that the Borough Commander be asked to provide quarterly ward-by-ward Anti Social Behaviour reporting to feed into the newly standardised Ward Panel meetings.

Recommendation 6: The Scrutiny Panel recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, feeds into the upcoming review of the Anti Social Behaviour Policy along with all other relevant council departments. In addition, and as a matter of urgency, a guidance note for councillors and residents outlining the definition of Anti Social Behaviour and a flow chart of structure for reporting ASB be made available (which includes all council departments that deal with ASB).

Recommendation 7: Another recommendation is to make the online ASB link on the council website more prominent and user friendly – perhaps basing design on user feedback.

Recommendation 8: The Panel asked that the Borough Commander be asked about the proportion of successful outcomes in Haringey for Stop and Search and further information on procedures and policy.

Recommendation 9: In light of the short-term nature of youth justice projects the Panel recommends that expertise within the voluntary sector be sought by Cabinet Members to ensure that officers have the research, evidence and organisational support to successfully apply for longer term funding opportunities if they exist.

The Chair also mentioned when next year Community Safety was considered, voluntary organisations should be invited. **ACTION (Scrutiny Officer)**

It was decided that the Stop and Search Community Monitoring Groups and MOPAC's Disproportionality Group be invited to talk about Stop and Search in further depth at a later session. **ACTION (Scrutiny Officer)**

10. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

The draft scope for an in-depth scrutiny review on cycling in the borough and its position in the road user hierarchy in Haringey was circulated and discussed. The Chair requested any amends or comment from the Panel.

The Panel mentioned that:

- Cllr Dunstall was left off the list of the scrutiny panel. **ACTION (Scrutiny Officer)**
- There was a suggestion for the Panel to ride around the Borough to assess new cycling infrastructures and to do a comparison with other boroughs. Fridays were cited as the best time to arrange this during the day. **ACTION (Scrutiny Officer)**

11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

CHAIR: Councillor Lester Buxton

Signed by Chair

Date

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ADULTS & HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON MONDAY 31st MARCH 2025, 6.40 - 10.00pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Pippa Connor (Chair), Cathy Brennan, Thayahlan Iyngkaran, Mary Mason, Sean O'Donovan and Sheila Peacock

Co-optees: Helena Kania and Evelyn Trimmingham

48. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein'.

49. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

Cllr Iyngkaran gave apologies for lateness and joined the meeting during item 9.

50. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Pippa Connor declared an interest by virtue of her membership of the Royal College of Nursing.

Cllr Pippa Connor declared an interest by virtue of her sister working as a GP in Tottenham.

Cllr Thayahlan Iyngkaran declared an interest as a consultant radiologist and a deputy medical director.

Helena Kania declared an interest as a co-Chair of the Joint Partnership Board.

52. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/ PRESENTATIONS/ QUESTIONS

None.

53. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th December 2024 be approved as an accurate record.

54. ACTION TRACKER

It was noted that, since the publication of the agenda papers, two further responses to action points had been received and circulated to the Panel Members. These responses related to Action Point 29 (Disabled Access to shops/restaurants in Haringey) and Action Point 43 (Self-neglect and Hoarding policy).

Asked by Cllr Mason about Action Point 37 (cost savings for transitions), Dominic O'Brien, Scrutiny Officer, clarified that this point would be addressed as part of a joint meeting on transitions between the Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel and the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Panel which was expected to take place over the next couple of months.

Asked by Cllr Peacock about the progress on Action Points 30, 31 & 32 (Quality Assurance), Dominic O'Brien said that officers were preparing a response on Action Point 32 and that the CQC had been contacted about Action Points 30 & 31 but no response had been received.

55. UPDATE ON NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Eve Trimingham was introduced to the Panel and her appointment as a non-voting co-opted Member of the Panel was approved.

Cllr Connor noted that, as approved by the Standards Committee, the way that co-opted members were appointed to Scrutiny Panels was changing and that approval from the main Overview & Scrutiny Committee would be required for all new appointments in future.

Cllr Sheila Peacock commented that it was important to advertise the co-optee vacancies to attract a wider range of applicants. Dominic O'Brien agreed to provide further details to the Panel in writing about the proposed recruitment process for 2025/26. **(ACTION)**

RESOLVED – That Evelyn Trimingham be appointed as a non-voting co-opted Member of the Panel.

RESOLVED – That the non-voting co-opted Members of the Panel for the remainder of the 2024/25 Municipal Year be confirmed as Helena Kania and Evelyn Trimingham.

RESOLVED – That the revisions to the Protocol for Non-voting Co-opted Members as agreed by the Standards Committee in March 2025 be noted.

56. AIDS & ADAPTATIONS / DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT - UPDATE

Cllr Connor introduced this item, noting that this was the fourth report to the Panel on this issue. The Panel had been tracking this closely following a series of recommendations made in 2022 after concerns were expressed by residents about delays and communication issues.

Alexandra Dominigue, Commissioning Project Manager, explained that a project board had been established to support implementation of the Panel's recommendations and that her role had included support and development for the Board. Developments since the most recent update to the Panel in February 2024 included:

- Undertaking benchmarking work with neighbouring local authorities on the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and have incorporated that learning into the team's work.
- Expanding the Occupational Therapist (OT) adaptations function by appointing an OT Duty Team to triage cases and reduce the number of inappropriate referrals to the main OT Team.
- Improving communications with residents through a 4-6 week contact pathway to update them about the status of their case.
- Reducing waiting lists by commissioning an external team to provide additional support on assessments and support planning processes.
- Use of resident feedback, complaints and Members' inquiries to improve monitoring of service satisfaction.
- Changing how equipment and adaptations are procured by using the Dynamic Purchasing System.
- Streamlining the commissioning process with a smaller group of suppliers.

Alexandra Dominigue then responded to questions from the Panel:

- Asked by Cllr Connor about the current data on cases with delays, Alexandra Dominigue explained that the case management system displayed how long individuals had been waiting and that reports were produced and reviewed regularly using this data with cases reallocated according to priority where appropriate. The overall waiting list had been reduced from over 1,000 in September 2024 to a current figure of 388. Over the same time period, the average number of days on the waiting list had been reduced from close to 200 days down to 122 days. The number of assessments completed in a month had increased from 50 to 210. In addition, the number of under-18s on the waiting list had been reduced from 33 to one.
- Cllr Mason reported that, in her experience as a ward Councillor, the number of people contacting her about OT cases and assessments had greatly reduced recently. She noted that the calls still coming through tended to be more

complex cases, particularly relating to mental health, and requested further detail on how these cases were dealt with, including liaison with Housing services. Alexandra Dominigue highlighted the work on the Older People's Housing Strategy which had enabled conversations on supporting Council, Housing Association and private tenants by ensuring seamlessness in services. This work was ongoing, but she felt that there were improvements so far in terms of the communications and working together between different teams. Jo Baty, Service Director for Adult Social Services, acknowledged that there was a long way to go in relation to cases where there were multiple layers of complexity. In some cases, there could be several different professionals working with someone and so the Council had made a commitment that there would be a lead professional on aids and adaptation cases so that there would be someone taking ownership for coordination. This would help to improve the tracking of cases and avoid unnecessary delays.

- Cllr Connor requested clarification on the progress towards the improved information sharing highlighted in paragraph 4.6.2 of the report. Alexandra Dominigue explained that this was an ongoing piece of work including improvements to internal communications, the sharing of information with residents and working with communications colleagues on the format of communications, including easy read format. Cllr Connor suggested that there should be a future update to the Panel on how the improvements to communications were working in practice. **(ACTION)**
- Asked by Helena Kania about the timetable for the development of the new case management system referred to in paragraph 4.8.1 of the report, Alexandra Dominigue said that a written response would be provided on this. **(ACTION)** She added that, regardless of the system, it was essential that there was the right management and proactive culture on dealing with complexity and casework.
- Asked by Helena Kania about contact with residents from the named person responsible for their case, Alexandra Dominigue explained that management meetings included looking at information such as the number of people on the waiting list and how regularly they had been contacted. This could vary according to resources available which could fluctuate due to the national OT shortage.
- Cllr Peacock asked about equipment used through the Connected Care service as an emergency alert after a fall. Jo Baty agreed to look into the specific case referred to outside of the meeting. Sara Sutton, Corporate Director for Adults, Housing & Health, noted that a review on the Connected Care service was expected to be carried out in 6-12 months' time.
- Cllr O'Donovan requested further details about the next steps for the implementation of the recommendations set out in section 4 of the report. Alexandra Dominigue noted that, on the pilot project for more regular contact with residents, she was directly involved in this programme, meeting fortnightly with the team and could provide a written update with further details. **(ACTION)** Improvements on advocacy were being considered through the Commissioning Co-production group and the team had worked closely with Disability Action

Haringey to ensure that they had sufficient capacity. Cllr Connor suggested that it would be useful for the Panel to receive further details about the work of the project board and the Commissioning Co-production group. **(ACTION)**

- Cllr Iyngkaran queried the inaccuracies in notes from meetings between officers and residents and suggested the use of AI tools to assist with the accuracy of transcriptions. Jo Baty noted that part of the efficiencies work included the use of tools such as AI to reduce the administrative burden on staff and free them up to use their core skills, so she agreed with the potential benefits of being creative in the area. It may therefore be possible to bring a further update on this area of work to the Panel in future. **(ACTION)** Sara Sutton noted that they had recently launched a translation and interpreting service with embedded assistance which was another example of utilising new technology.
- Asked by Cllr Iyngkaran about the triaging of cases, Alexandra Dominigue explained that triaging was based on priority so there was an urgent waiting list and a longer-term waiting list.

Nazarella Scianguetta, a member of the Haringey Wheelchair User Group, then spoke about the difficulties experienced by residents on housing and OT issues. She felt that OTs did not always listen to the residents about their requirements which risked resources being wasted on unsuitable adaptations. She also commented that it could be difficult for residents to make contact with the right person when they needed to and that the notes of the meetings involving residents were sometimes inaccurate.

Alexandra Dominigue responded that this was not the standard that the department held itself to and committed to looking at the individual circumstances of the cases described. She added that details of assessments or support plans should be shared and agreed upon with the resident and their advocate/carer and that the implementation of practices such as this should be overseen by a team manager. Once agreement had been reached then this would be transferred to a surveyor who would agree with a construction organisation on how the works would be undertaken. At the end of the process, the OT then checked that the works had been carried out to the agreed specification.

Sara Sutton, as the new Corporate Director for Adults, Housing & Health from 1st April 2025, commented that she was aware of Nazarella Scianguetta's case and that it was important to have an understanding of cases such as this as an opportunity for learning and reflection, noting that access to suitable accommodation was a critical issue for the Council.

With regards to communications, Jo Baty spoke about improvements to the culture of the service, including the tone and engagement with residents being consistently good and anything written about a resident's case being signed off by them.

Cllr Connor summarised key points highlighted by the Panel:

- Further details about the work of the project board and the Commissioning Co-production group and progress against the Panel's previous recommendations.
- Progress on innovative approaches using new technologies including AI.

- Accurately capturing the voice of residents in the discussions on their case.
- Improvements on contracts and commissioning, including through the Dynamic Purchasing System.
- Monitoring and tracking of case progress, the use of the support plan as progress is made and how the resident is included in that process.

Cllr Lucia das Neves, Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care and Wellbeing suggested that, given the relevance of the discussion on aids and adaptations to the bespoke housing programme, the Panel could consider some joint scrutiny work with the Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel. **(ACTION)**

57. PREPAREDNESS IN THE EVENT OF A FUTURE PANDEMIC

Introducing the report on this item, Will Maimaris, Director for Public Health, informed the Panel that the definition of a pandemic was an epidemic of an infectious disease beyond a single country and that this was an area that required input from emergency planning colleagues as well as public health.

Ahead of the discussion, Cllr Connor noted that the full plans on pandemic preparedness would not be produced until later in the year. Will Maimaris explained that there were two plans in development, one of which was a multi-agency pandemic response plan led by public health and the other was a separate Council pandemic plan focused on the broader response across Council services. He added that the plans would provide a framework for a response but would not set out the specific details of different possible scenarios.

Will Maimaris and colleagues from public health and emergency planning then responded to questions from the Panel:

- Cllr Connor requested further details about the coordination with hospitals, including on staffing, resilience and PPE equipment. Angharad Shambler, Senior Public Health Strategist, explained that the Hospital Trusts (North Middlesex and Whittington) had their own organisational plans with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) providing overall governance. She also noted that a national pandemic preparedness exercise would be taking place in the autumn, led by the Department of Health and Social Care, and would include actions and learning from the Covid pandemic.
- Asked by Cllr Connor how the potential closure of schools would be managed, Damani Goldstein, Consultant in Public Health, said that the partnership working with the Hospital Trusts and the ICB involved exercises to test responses and that this included schools, with headteachers part of the local planning. There was also some learning from the Covid pandemic on children's mental health, wellbeing and safety from the recent UK Health Security Agency (UK HSA) national conference. Schools would also be better prepared for online learning and support, though issues such as the needs of children who didn't have the necessary technology at home would need to be considered as the national and local planning progressed.

- Cllr lyngkaran raised concerns about the impact of school closures on children and how schools could be supported to stay open. Will Maimaris emphasised the need to minimise any impact on schools, including learning from the Covid pandemic and probably setting the threshold differently for closing schools. A better overall pandemic response could also prevent school closures. However, he also noted that some concerning trends such as school absenteeism, mental health and the impact of social media, all predated the Covid pandemic. Cllr das Neves noted that she had been lobbied during the pandemic to use HEPA air filters in schools but that this kind of measure required national leadership to be implemented.
- Expanding on the issue of planning exercises, Luke Lambert, Emergency Planning & Resilience Manager said that a large national planning exercise was scheduled for August 2025 and that feedback to the UK HSA on the preparation for this was being coordinated through the multi-agency Haringey Resilience Forum. He added that there had been extensive debriefing internally following the Covid pandemic which had not just fed into pandemic planning but also general emergency planning. This learning was captured internally across multiple services and fed through to the Resilience Emergency Planning Board which tracked the necessary actions. He agreed to establish whether the report that resulted from this could be shared more widely. **(ACTION)**
- Cllr lyngkaran queried how residents could be provided with accurate information about vaccines to make informed choices given the current levels of misinformation. Damani Goldstein replied that a lot of focused work on vaccinations had been maintained since the Covid pandemic with a programme of health champions. This included work in partnership with voluntary organisations related to communities with low vaccination uptake. Training was also being developed for people working closely with schools to help have more effective conversations about vaccines. Angharad Shambler added that there was a multi-agency vaccination group and close working with the ICB, including clinical leads from primary care. Luke Lambert noted that an important part of communications during large incidences was uniformity and ensuring that messages from national government and the NHS were reinforced locally through various methods and communication channels and disseminated through community outreach groups. There was an internal communications plan that could be used during major incidents.
- Cllr O'Donovan referred to the importance of support for vulnerable groups including older people, people who are isolated and rough sleepers. Damani Goldstein said that, on rough sleeping, there was general agreement on providing housing for everyone but that there were limitations outside of a pandemic situation with insufficient funding locally and that funding had not been provided for this from national level.
- Cllr Peacock expressed concerns about upper age limits for vaccines such as for RSV which meant that people aged 80+ were not eligible to receive them. Will Maimaris commented that RSV vaccine eligibility was based on national policy after trials which had showed poor evidence for effectiveness over the

- age of 80. This was therefore not something that the Council could influence locally and any change in policy would be from the UK Health Security Agency.
- Helena Kania emphasised the contribution of the local neighbourhood groups that had been set up during the Covid pandemic and also highlighted the approach of some European countries on encouraging all households to keep emergency supplies that could last for 72-hours. Angharad Shambler reiterated that a lot of work was done with health champions to promote preparedness for incidences such as heat waves or cold snaps so this would be relevant to the information and guidance that was currently being worked through. Luke Lambert added that a new community resilience toolkit was being launched by the London Resilience Unit which had a number of recommendations for local authorities around key messaging that could be shared with local communities. There would also be a new Strategic Community Commissioner starting in April who could help in the coordination of community volunteering and resilience during major incidents. Cllr das Neves added that there was existing advice at national level on items that households could store in case of emergencies.
 - Cllr Mason asked about readiness to respond on issues that had arisen during the pandemic including violence against women and girls (VAWG) (noting recent recommendations from research by Kings College London) and mental health. Will Maimaris suggested that Cllr Mason send the relevant research to the public health team and added that learning about pandemic responsiveness in these areas would be included in both the VAWG Strategy and the pandemic plans.
 - Cllr Mason highlighted the role of mutual aid groups in supporting people in various ways during the pandemic.
 - Cllr Mason spoke about the disproportionate impact of Covid on care workers and others in low-income jobs.
 - Asked by Cllr Brennan whether a system was still in place to send emergency text messages to residents, Luke Lambert agreed to look into this and provide a written response to the Panel. **(ACTION)** Angharad Shambler added that testing of texting on severe weather alerts had been carried out for residents who had participated in the Connected Communities service. However, she noted that there were issues about data sharing that needed to be carefully considered in partnership with the information governance teams. There was also work with primary care providers to text residents with particular health conditions who may be vulnerable to severe weather conditions.
 - Cllr Brennan highlighted the lack of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) during the pandemic. Will Maimaris responded that the Council did not keep a stock of PPE and that this was dealt with through the national and London resilience systems, so this was an area where the Council would want some further assurances.
 - Cllr Connor queried the safeguards against fraud that occurred during the pandemic from the public funds to support businesses. Will Maimaris responded that this was an issue for the national inquiry and that he was confident that the Council had used its funds appropriately when procuring necessary items during the pandemic.

- Asked by Cllr Connor about discharge of people with Covid from hospitals to care homes, Will Maimaris said that national policy and learning would contribute to the public health advice and that individual hospitals had business continuity plans to use in the event of a major incident.

58. COUNCIL RESPONSE TO CQC INSPECTION

Jo Baty, Service Director for Adult Social Services, reported to the Panel that the outcome of the recent CQC inspection had been published in January 2025 and highlighted some key areas requiring improvement that the Council was responding to. These included carers, waiting times, communications from the service and with residents, signposting and information/advice and co-production. Measures that were being taken by the Council to make improvements included:

- Proactive involvement of carers in co-production groups, which had begun over a year previously.
- Four more sessions with residents were expected in late April/early May, with one in each of the three physical localities in the Borough and one online. These sessions would be aimed at helping to refine priorities and timelines.
- Priorities for residents included improving availability of information and advice in a timely manner, access to respite services and reducing waiting times. In particular, a minimum standard of communication across the service was required, including improved letters, a more accessible website and striking the right balance between compassion and financial efficiency.
- A process was being put in place for some detailed performance management reports which would help with monitoring progress and benchmarking against other Boroughs.
- There was ongoing work on co-producing service specifications for home care.
- There were plans for the involvement of residents as quality assurers of service provision.
- There had been mixed feedback from members of the Joint Partnership Board (JPB) on engagement with Adult Social Care and there had been a review of how the JPB had been operating and how Adult Social Care could better engage. The report from Community Catalysts had been circulated in draft and a special meeting with the JPB on progressing the actions was planned. There would also be a recruitment process for a new independent JPB chair.
- Community Catalysts had also produced a draft report following a review of the Learning Disabilities Carer Forum and there would be a meeting with the Forum on this shortly.
- Both of the above reports and the action plans that would follow could be brought to the Scrutiny Panel at a later date. **(ACTION)**
- The necessary savings and efficiencies through measures such as assistive technology and the day services review would require engagement with residents and a co-production element.

Jo Baty and Cllr Lucia das Neves then responded to questions from the Panel:

- Asked by Cllr Peacock which residents groups had been engaged with, Jo Baty said that there were long-established relationships with various voluntary and community organisations, tenants' associations and residents' associations. Recent conversations had been held with the Somali Community Association, the Kurdish Community group and there was a forthcoming meeting expected with Jewish residents. Cllr Peacock suggested that some of the written materials produced by the Council needed to use terminology that a wide range of people from all communities could easily understand.
- Cllr Mason commented that communications from statutory services in general was poor. She welcomed short briefings that were made available to Councillors and suggested that these could be made more widely available online. She also suggested that some engagement approaches could be based on geographic areas and not just to specific community groups. Cllr das Neves noted that the forthcoming resident engagement sessions previously referred to by Jo Baty would be based on the three locality areas. Cllr Mason observed that these were quite large areas and Cllr das Neves agreed, noting that the national agenda around neighbourhoods may help with moving engagement to a more local level.
- Cllr Brennan observed that co-production seemed to be well understood at a senior level of the Council but that, at the front line, some elements of the approach appeared to be lost. She suggested that more training in this area could lead to improvements. Cllr das Neves acknowledged the importance of training, and also support on both sides of co-production, which Community Catalysts was assisting with as an external neutral organisation.
- Asked by Cllr Connor about the induction of new staff to the ethos of improved communications that the Council was aiming for, Jo Baty highlighted the importance of in-house bespoke training for all managers and engaging residents in expert-by-experience training to develop cultural change. Cllr Brennan emphasised the need to ensure that this ethos was also applied to the interactions of frontline staff with residents. Jo Baty agreed with this point and reiterated the importance of the work with managers as they were the gatekeepers to support and supervision for frontline staff. Cllr Connor proposed that this area of training for managers should be monitored by the Panel.

(ACTION)

- Eve Trimmingham spoke about issues with communications from the Council and the experience of residents and the local community that they didn't always receive the right information and the engagement that they expected. Cllr das Neves highlighted the role of ward Councillors as a good route to having concerns heard when people feel that something hasn't worked in the way that it should have.
- Cllr Iyngkaran suggested that consideration could be given to using independent co-production facilitators.
- Cllr O'Donovan highlighted the significant proportion of locum staff in the social care workforce and questioned how the communications ethos that had previously been discussed could be embedded with such a high turnover of staff. Jo Baty acknowledged that turnover in the sector was a national issue but

emphasised the importance of promoting what was unique about Haringey and its direction of travel in areas such as co-production, which she felt would help to attract good staff. She also commented that retention was also an issue which could be supported through initiatives such as mentoring or experiences in the health and voluntary sectors. Sara Sutton added that the Council would be playing a role in the national initiatives to bring people with health conditions back to work by working with health and social care providers to enable routes and opportunities to progress and develop skills from entry level roles. There were also dedicated schemes on employment support for local people linked to the Haringey Works programme. Further details could be brought to the Panel at a later date if required.

- Asked by Cllr O'Donovan about the development and engagement process for the new Carers' Strategy, Jo Baty responded the planning for this was underway including through the four events that were described earlier in the meeting and through the co-production work with carers over the previous 18 months. She added that carers had told the Council for a long time that they wanted information and advice in accessible formats, to know where to go to avoid escalation/crisis and for staff to be respectful, professional and to respond in a timely way. The sessions were therefore intended to hone in on priorities, to agree timelines and to establish a process by which residents could understand the changes that had been made and could then feedback whether they were experiencing social care differently.
- Cllr das Neves highlighted the role of the Adult Improvement Board in tracking progress on service improvement and the opportunity for the Panel to contribute as Cllr Connor and Cllr Iyngkaran were now on that Board. Asked by Cllr Mason if papers from the Board meetings could be circulated to the Panel Members, Sara Sutton said that a summary of key points discussed could be provided but that sharing of the full reports would not be appropriate. **(ACTION)**
- Cllr Connor reiterated that it would be useful for the Panel to track progress on a number of issues that had been discussed **(ACTION)** including:
 - the reports from Community Catalysts on the Joint Partnership Board and the Learning Disabilities Carer Forum (when available).
 - progress with the co-production work.
 - progress towards the website improvements.
 - progress on reducing Care Act assessment delays.
 - details on how residents could have easier access to the information about their case, such as through a phone app for example.
- Cllr Connor reminded the Panel that they would need to consider the financial constraints of the Council in the discussions on all of these issues.

59. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

Cllr Connor informed the Panel that it had not been possible to conduct another Scrutiny Review due to staff constraints. There would be a further meeting with officers to update the draft report on Hospital Discharge and the updated version was expected to be circulated to Panel Members soon after that.

Cllr Connor informed the Panel that she had discussed with officers the possibility of placing a standing item on finance to the Panel's agendas for 2025/26 given the current importance of the pressures on the Adult Social Care budget.

Cllr Mason suggested that consideration could be given as part of the work programme to issues of poverty, particularly in relation to people with disabilities, given the pressures on welfare spending and on adult social care services.

Cllr O'Donovan suggested that issues on the work programme that could be prioritised included the Autism Strategy, support for carers, the impact of housing conditions and modern slavery.

Cllr Connor proposed that Panel Members could provide input by selecting their top three issues from the list on the draft work programme and provide their reasons for this. **(ACTION)**

60. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Dates for 2025/26 TBC.

CHAIR: Councillor Pippa Connor

Signed by Chair

Date

Report for: Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 19th June 2025

Title: Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Panels - Membership and Terms of Reference

Report authorised by: Ayshe Simsek, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager

Lead Officer: Dominic O'Brien, Principal Scrutiny Officer
Tel: 020 8489 5896, E-mail: dominic.obrien@haringey.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** N/A

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to establish the Scrutiny Panels and agree their memberships.
- 1.2 The Committee is also asked to consider the appointment of two Haringey representatives to the North Central London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
 - (a) Note the terms of reference (**Appendix A**) and Protocol (**Appendix B**) for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Panels;
 - (b) Establish the following Scrutiny Panels for 2025/26:
 - Adults and Health;
 - Children and Young People;
 - Culture, Community Safety and Environment; and
 - Housing, Planning and Development;
 - (c) Approve the remits and membership for each Scrutiny Panel for 2025/26 (**Appendix C**); and
 - (d) Approve Cllr Matt White and Cllr Pippa Connor to be appointed as the two Haringey representatives to the North Central London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2025/26.

3. Reasons for decision

- 3.1 The terms of reference and membership of the scrutiny panels above need to be confirmed at the first meeting of each municipal year.
- 3.2 The power to appoint Haringey's representatives to the North Central London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) was delegated to the OSC by Council at its meeting on 22 March 2010.

4. Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 4.1 As agreed by Annual Council on 19 May, the membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2025/26 will be:
- Cllr Matt White (Chair);
 - Cllr Pippa Connor (Vice-Chair);
 - Cllr Makbule Gunes;
 - Cllr Anna Lawton;
 - Cllr Adam Small.
- 4.2 The Committee will also include statutory education representatives, who shall attend and have voting rights solely on education matters when being considered by the main committee.
- 4.3 The terms of reference and role of the OSC is set out in the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules in Part Four (Section G) of the Council's Constitution. This specifies key responsibilities for the Committee. This information is provided in full at **Appendix A**.
- 4.4 There is also a Protocol, outside the Constitution and provided at **Appendix B**, that sets out how the OSC is to operate.

5. Scrutiny Panels

- 5.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules state that the OSC may establish a number of Scrutiny Review Panels to examine designated Council services.
- 5.2 The proposed 2025/26 membership for the four Scrutiny Panels is listed below.

Scrutiny Panel	Membership
Adults and Health	Cllr Pippa Connor (Chair), Cllr Cathy Brennan, Cllr Thayahlan Iyngkaran, Cllr Mary Mason, Cllr Sean O'Donovan, Cllr Felicia Opoku, Cllr Sheila Peacock.
Children and Young People	Cllr Anna Lawton (Chair), Cllr Anna Abela, Cllr Kaushika Amin, Cllr George Dunstall, Cllr Mark

	Grosskopf, Cllr Marsha Isilar-Gosling, Cllr Ruairidh Paton.
Culture, Community Safety & Environment	Cllr Makbule Gunes (Chair), Cllr Liam Carroll, Cllr Luke Cawley Harrison, Cllr Eldridge Culverwell, Cllr George Dunstall, Cllr Mark Grosskopf, Cllr Sue Jameson.
Housing, Planning & Development	Cllr Adam Small (Chair); Cllr Dawn Barnes, Cllr John Bevan, Cllr Isidoros Diakides, Cllr Holly Harrison-Mullane, Cllr Lester Buxton, Cllr Khaled Moyeed.
All Councillors (except Members of the Cabinet) may be members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Review Panels. However, no Member may be involved in scrutinising a decision in which he/she has been directly involved.	

5.3 The policy areas to be covered by the four existing Scrutiny Panels are attached at **Appendix C**, together with the relevant portfolio holders for each scrutiny body.

5.4 Given the Council's difficult financial situation, the terms of reference for Overview and Scrutiny has been updated to allow more prominent focus on budget monitoring and performance. The Committee will still keep its strategic focus as well as oversight of customer focus and worklessness which is in response to community views expressed at the Scrutiny Café in September 2024. However, culture and leisure has moved to the remit of the Culture, Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel.

6. North Central London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6.1 Haringey is a member of the North Central London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC), along with Barnet, Camden, Enfield and Islington.

6.2 The revised terms of reference, agreed by the JHOSC at its meeting on 29 January 2016, and by Haringey Council on 16 May 2016, are as follows:

- To engage with relevant NHS bodies on strategic area wide issues in respect of the co-ordination, commissioning and provision of NHS health services across the whole of the area of Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington;
- To respond, where appropriate, to any proposals for change to specialised NHS services that are commissioned on a cross borough basis and where there are comparatively small numbers of patients in each of the participating boroughs;
- To respond to any formal consultations on proposals for substantial developments or variations in health services across affecting the area of Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington;
- The joint committee will work independently of both the Cabinet and health overview and scrutiny committees (HOSCs) of its parent authorities, although

evidence collected by individual HOSCs may be submitted as evidence to the joint committee and considered at its discretion;

- The joint committee will seek to promote joint working where it may provide more effective use of health scrutiny and NHS resources and will endeavour to avoid duplicating the work of individual HOSCs. As part of this, the joint committee may establish sub and working groups as appropriate to consider issues of mutual concern provided that this does not duplicate work by individual HOSCs; and
- The joint committee will aim work together in a spirit of co-operation, striving to work to a consensual view to the benefit of local people.

6.3 A revised terms of reference for the JHOSC is scheduled to be tabled at the next meeting of the JHOSC on 11th July 2025.

6.4 Haringey's OSC is entitled to appoint two representatives to the JHOSC. The power to make this appointment was delegated to OSC by Council at its meeting on 22 March 2010.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

7.1 The contribution scrutiny can make to strategic outcomes will be considered as part of its routine work.

8. Statutory Officers Comments

Finance and Procurement

8.1 The Chief Finance Officer has confirmed the Haringey representatives on the JHOSC are not entitled to any remuneration. As a result, there are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

8.2 Should any of the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny generate recommendations with financial implications then these will be highlighted at that time.

Legal

8.3 The Assistant Director for Corporate Governance has been consulted on the contents of this report.

8.4 Under Section 21 (6) of the Local Government Act 2000, an Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to appoint one or more sub-committee to discharge any of its functions. The establishment of Scrutiny Panels by the Committee falls within this power and is in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Constitution.

8.5 Scrutiny Panels are non-decision-making bodies and the work programme and any subsequent reports and recommendations that each scrutiny panel produces must

be approved by the OSC. Such reports can then be referred to Cabinet or Council under agreed protocols.

- 8.6 The OSC can appoint two representatives to the North Central London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This is in accordance with the decision made by full Council on 22 March 2010 that the making of nominations to the Joint Health Committee be delegated to the Committee.

Equality

- 8.7 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:

- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

- 8.8 The proposals outlined in this report relate to the membership and terms of reference for the OSC and carry no direct implications for the Council's general equality duty. However, the Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them within its work programme and those of its panels, as well as individual pieces of work. This should include considering and clearly stating;

- How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share the nine protected characteristics;
- Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate;
- Whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Haringey;
- Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people, are being realised.

- 8.9 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments are based on evidence. Wherever possible this should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix A - Part Four (Section G) of the Constitution of the London Borough of Haringey.

Appendix B - Scrutiny Protocol

Appendix C - Overview & Scrutiny Remits and Membership 2025/26

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Part Four, Section G

Overview and Scrutiny

Procedure Rules

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES

1. The arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny

- 1.1 The Council will have one Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which will have responsibility for all overview and scrutiny functions on behalf of the Council.
- 1.2 The terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be:
- (i) The performance of all overview and scrutiny functions on behalf of the Council.
 - (ii) The appointment of Scrutiny Review Panels, with membership that reflects the political balance of the Council.
 - (iii) To determine the terms of reference of all Scrutiny Review Panels.
 - (iv) To receive reports from local National Health Service bodies on the state of health services and public health in the borough area.
 - (v) To enter into or appoint such joint overview and scrutiny committees that include the London Borough of Haringey and other boroughs for the purpose of responding to consultation by NHS bodies on proposals for substantial variation or development in the provision of health services as required by The Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.
 - (vi) To monitor the effectiveness of the Council's Forward Plan.
 - (vii) To receive all appropriate performance management and budget monitoring information.
 - (viii) To approve a programme of future overview and scrutiny work so as to ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's and Scrutiny Review Panels' time is effectively and efficiently utilised;

PART FOUR – RULES OF PROCEDURE

Section G – Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules

- (ix) To consider all requests for call-in and decide whether to call-in a key decision, how it should be considered and whether to refer the decision to the Cabinet or to Council.
- (x) To monitor the effectiveness of the Call-in procedure.
- (xi) To review and scrutinise action taken by partner authorities in discharge of crime and disorder functions and to make reports and recommendations to Cabinet and Council on these.
- (xii) To make arrangements which enable any Councillor who is not a Committee Member to refer any local government matter, or any crime and disorder matter, to the Committee under the Councillor Call for Action Procedure.
- (xiii) To ensure that referrals from Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Cabinet either by way of report or call-in are managed efficiently, and
- (xiv) To ensure community and voluntary sector organisations, users of services and others are appropriately involved in giving evidence to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or relevant Scrutiny Review Panel.

1.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may establish a number of Scrutiny Review Panels:

- (i) Scrutiny Reviews Panels are appointed to examine designated Council services. Scrutiny Review Panels will refer their findings/ recommendations in the form of a written report, with the approval of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to the Cabinet and/or the Council as appropriate.
- (ii) Scrutiny Review Panels will analyse submissions, request and analyse any additional information, and question the Cabinet Member(s), relevant Council officers, local stakeholders, and where relevant officers and/or board members of local NHS bodies or NHS funded bodies.
- (iii) Subject to the approval of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Scrutiny Review Panels will be able to appoint external advisors and/or to commission specific pieces of research if this is deemed necessary.
- (iv) Scrutiny Review Panels should make every effort to work by consensus; however, in exceptional circumstances Members may submit minority reports.

PART FOUR – RULES OF PROCEDURE

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- (v) Prior to publication, draft reports will be sent to the relevant chief officers or where relevant officers of the National Health Service for checking for inaccuracies and the presence of exempt and/or confidential information; Scrutiny Review Panel members will revisit any conclusions drawn from disputed information;
 - (vi) Following approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, final reports and recommendations will be presented to the next available Cabinet meeting together with an officer report where appropriate. The Cabinet will consider the reports and formally agree their decisions.
 - (vii) Following approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, reports on NHS, non-executive or regulatory matters will be copied to the Cabinet for information.
 - (viii) At the Cabinet meeting to receive the final report and recommendations, the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Chair of the Scrutiny Review Panel may attend and speak.
 - (ix) After an appropriate period, post implementation, Overview and Scrutiny Committee will carry out a follow up review to determine if the recommendations had the intended outcomes and to measure any improvements.
- 1.4 When Scrutiny Review Panels report on non-executive or regulatory functions the above rules apply, except the references to The Cabinet shall be taken as reference to the relevant non-executive body.
- 1.5 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall undertake scrutiny of the Council's budget through a Budget Scrutiny process. The procedure by which this operates is detailed in the Protocol covering the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.6 All Overview and Scrutiny meetings shall take place in public (except where exempt or confidential matters are considered).
- 1.7 The Overview and Scrutiny function should not be seen as an alternative to established disciplinary, audit or complaints mechanisms and should not interfere with or pre-empt their work.
- 2. Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Review Panels**
- 2.1 All Councillors (except Members of the Cabinet) may be members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Review Panels. However, no Member may be involved in scrutinising a decision in which he/she has been directly involved.

PART FOUR – RULES OF PROCEDURE

Section G – Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules

- 2.2 The membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Review Panels shall, as far as is practicable, be in proportion to the representation of different political groups on the Council.

3. Co-optees

- 3.1 Each Scrutiny Review Panel shall be entitled to have up to three people as non-voting co-optees, who will be approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.
- 3.2 Statutory voting non-Councillor members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be paid an allowance in accordance with the Members' Allowances Scheme in Part 6 of this Constitution.

4. Education representatives

- 4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Review Panel whose terms of reference relate to education functions that are the responsibility of the Cabinet, shall include in its membership the following representatives:

- (i) At least one Church of England diocesan representative (voting).
- (ii) At least one Roman Catholic diocesan representative (voting).
- (iii) 2 parent governor representatives (voting).

These voting representatives will be entitled to vote where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Scrutiny Review Panel is considering matters that relate to relevant education functions. If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Review Panel is dealing with other matters, these representatives shall not vote on those matters though they may stay in the meeting and speak at the discretion of the Chair. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Review Panel will attempt to organise its meetings so that relevant education matters are grouped together.

5. Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Review Panels

- 5.1 In addition to ordinary meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, extraordinary meetings may be called from time to time as and when appropriate. An Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting may be called by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee after consultation with the Chief Executive, by any two Members of the Committee or by the proper officer if he/she considers it necessary or appropriate.

PART FOUR – RULES OF PROCEDURE

Section G – Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules

- 5.2 In addition to ordinary meetings of the Scrutiny Review Panels, extraordinary meetings may be called from time to time as and when appropriate. A Scrutiny Review Panel meeting may be called by the Chair of the Panel after consultation with the Chief Executive, by any two Members of the Committee or by the proper officer if he/she considers it necessary or appropriate.

6. Quorum

The quorum for the Overview Scrutiny Committee and for each Scrutiny Review Panel shall be at least one quarter of its membership and not less than 3 voting members.

7. Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Review Panels

- 7.1 The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be appointed by the Council.
- 7.2 The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall resign with immediate effect if a vote of no confidence is passed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 7.3 Chairs of Scrutiny Review Panels will be drawn from among the Councillors sitting on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Subject to this requirement, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may appoint any person as it considers appropriate as Chair having regard to the objective of cross-party chairing in proportion to the political balance of the Council. The Scrutiny Review Panels shall not be able to change the appointed Chair unless there is a vote of no confidence as outlined in Article 6.5 in this Constitution.
- 7.4 The Chair of the Budget Scrutiny Review process will be drawn from among the opposition party Councillors sitting on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall not be able to change the appointed Chair unless there is a vote of no confidence as outlined in Article 6.5 in this Constitution.

8. Work programme

Overview and Scrutiny Committee will determine the future scrutiny work programme and will establish Scrutiny Review Panels to assist it to perform its functions. The Committee will appoint a Chair for each Scrutiny Review Panel.

9. Agenda items for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 9.1 Any member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall be entitled to give notice to the proper officer that he/she wishes an item relevant to

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the functions of the Committee to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting of the Committee. On receipt of such a request the proper officer will ensure that it is included on the next available agenda.

- 9.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall also respond, as soon as its work programme permits, to requests from the Council and, if it considers it appropriate, from the Cabinet to review particular areas of Council activity. Where they do so, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall report their findings and any recommendations back to the Cabinet within an agreed timescale.

10. Policy review and development

- 10.1 The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the development of the Council's budget and policy framework is set out in the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this constitution.

- 10.2 In relation to the development of the Council's approach to other matters not forming part of its policy and budget framework, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Scrutiny Review Panels may make proposals to the Cabinet for developments insofar as they relate to matters within their terms of reference. The Scrutiny Review Panels must do so via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

11. Reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Following endorsement by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, final reports and recommendations will be presented to the next available Cabinet meeting. The procedure to be followed is set out in paragraphs 1.3 or 1.4 above.

12. Making sure that overview and scrutiny reports are considered by the Cabinet

- 12.1 The agenda for Cabinet meetings shall include an item entitled 'Issues arising from Scrutiny'. Reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee referred to the Cabinet shall be included at this point in the agenda unless either they have been considered in the context of the Cabinet's deliberations on a substantive item on the agenda or the Cabinet gives reasons why they cannot be included and states when they will be considered.
- 12.2 Where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prepares a report for consideration by the Cabinet in relation to a matter where decision making power has been delegated to an individual Cabinet Member, a Committee of the Cabinet or an Officer, or under Joint Arrangements, then the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will also submit a copy of their report to that body or individual for consideration, and a copy to the

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proper officer. If the Member, committee, or officer with delegated decision making power does not accept the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, then the body/he/she must then refer the matter to the next appropriate meeting of the Cabinet for debate before making a decision.

13. Rights and powers of Overview and Scrutiny Committee members

13.1 Rights to documents

- (i) In addition to their rights as Councillors, members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Review Panels have the additional right to documents, and to notice of meetings as set out in the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution.
- (ii) Nothing in this paragraph prevents more detailed liaison between the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Review Panels as appropriate depending on the particular matter under consideration.

13.2 Powers to conduct enquiries

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Review Panels may hold enquiries into past performance and investigate the available options for future direction in policy development and may appoint advisers and assessors to assist them in these processes. They may go on site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, commission research and do all other things that they reasonably consider necessary to inform their deliberations, within available resources. They may ask witnesses to attend to address them on any matter under consideration and may pay any advisers, assessors and witnesses a reasonable fee and expenses for doing so. Scrutiny Review Panels require the support of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to do so.

13.3 Power to require Members and officers to give account

- (i) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Review Panels may scrutinise and review decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any Council functions (Scrutiny Review Panels will keep to issues that fall within their terms of reference). As well as reviewing documentation, in fulfilling the scrutiny role, it may require any Member of the Cabinet, the Head of Paid Service and/or any senior officer (at second or third tier), and chief officers of the local National Health Service to attend before it to explain in relation to matters within their remit:
 - (a) any particular decision or series of decisions;

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- (b) the extent to which the actions taken implement Council policy (or NHS policy, where appropriate); and
- (c) their performance.

It is the duty of those persons to attend if so required. At the discretion of their Director, council officers below third tier may attend, usually accompanied by a senior manager. At the discretion of the relevant Chief Executive, other NHS officers may also attend overview and scrutiny meetings.

- (ii) Where any Member or officer is required to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Review Panel under this provision, the Chair of that body will inform the Member or proper officer. The proper officer shall inform the Member or officer in writing giving at least 10 working days notice of the meeting at which he/she is required to attend. The notice will state the nature of the item on which he/she is required to attend to give account and whether any papers are required to be produced for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Review Panel. Where the account to be given to Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Review Panel will require the production of a report, then the Member or officer concerned will be given sufficient notice to allow for preparation of that documentation.
- (iii) Where, in exceptional circumstances, the Member or officer is unable to attend on the required date, then the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Review Panel shall in consultation with the Member or officer arrange an alternative date for attendance, to take place within a maximum of 10 days from the date of the original request.

14. Attendance by others

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Review Panel may invite people other than those people referred to in paragraph 13 above to address it, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions. It may for example wish to hear from residents, stakeholders and Members and officers in other parts of the public sector and may invite such people to attend. Attendance is optional.

15. Call-in

The call-in procedure is dealt with separately at Part 4 Section H of the Constitution, immediately following these Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

16. Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)

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The Council has adopted a Protocol for handling requests by non-Committee Members that the Committee should consider any local government matter which is a matter of significant community concern. This procedure should only be a last resort once the other usual methods for resolving local concerns have failed. Certain matters such as individual complaints and planning or licensing decisions are excluded.

Requests for a CCfA referral should be made to the Democratic Services Manager who will check with the Monitoring Officer that the request falls within the Protocol. The Councillor making the referral will be able to attend the relevant meeting of the Committee to explain the matter. Among other actions, the Committee may: (i) make recommendations to the Cabinet, Directors or partner agencies, (ii) ask officers for a further report, (iii) ask for further evidence from the Councillor making the referral, or (iv) decide to take no further action on the referral.

The Protocol is not included within this Constitution but will be subject to regular review by the Committee.

17. Procedure at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and meetings of the Scrutiny Review Panels.

- (a) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall consider the following business as appropriate:
 - (i) apologies for absence;
 - (ii) urgent business;
 - (iii) declarations of interest;
 - (iv) minutes of the last meeting;
 - (v) deputations and petitions;
 - (vi) consideration of any matter referred to the Committee for a decision in relation to call-in of a key decision;
 - (vii) responses of the Cabinet to reports of the Committee;
 - (viii) the business otherwise set out on the agenda for the meeting.
- (b) A Scrutiny Review Panel shall consider the following business as appropriate:
 - (i) minutes of the last meeting;

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- (ii) declarations of interest;
 - (iii) the business otherwise set out on the agenda for the meeting.
- (c) Where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Review Panel has asked people to attend to give evidence at meetings, these are to be conducted in accordance with the following principles:
 - (i) that the investigation be conducted fairly and all members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Review Panels be given the opportunity to ask questions of attendees, to contribute and to speak;
 - (ii) that those assisting the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Review Panel by giving evidence be treated with respect and courtesy;
 - (iii) that the investigation be conducted so as to maximise the efficiency of the investigation or analysis; and
 - (iv) that reasonable effort be made to provide appropriate assistance with translation or alternative methods of communication to assist those giving evidence.
- (d) Following any investigation or review, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Review Panel shall prepare a report, for submission to the Cabinet and shall make its report and findings public.

17A. Declarations Of Interest Of Members

- (a) If a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Review Panel has a disclosable pecuniary interest or a prejudicial interest as referred to in Members' Code of Conduct in any matter under consideration, then the member shall declare his or her interest at the start of the meeting or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. The member may not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter or participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting and must withdraw from the meeting until discussion of the relevant matter is concluded unless that member has obtained a dispensation from the Council's Standards Committee.
- (b) If a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Review Panel has a personal interest which is not a disclosable pecuniary interest nor a prejudicial interest, the member is under

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no obligation to make a disclosure at the meeting but may do so if he/she wishes.

18. The Party Whip

Scrutiny is intended to operate outside the party whip system. However, when considering any matter in respect of which a Member of scrutiny is subject to a party whip the Member must declare the existence of the whip and the nature of it before the commencement of the Committee/Panel's deliberations on the matter. The Declaration, and the detail of the whipping arrangements, shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

The expression "party whip" can be taken to mean: "Any instruction given by or on behalf of a political group to any Councillor who is a Member of that group as to how that Councillor shall speak or vote on any matter before the Council or any committee or sub-committee, or the application or threat to apply any sanction by the group in respect of that Councillor should he/she speak or vote in any particular manner."

19. Matters within the remit of more than one Scrutiny Review Panel

Should there be any overlap between the business of any Scrutiny Review Panels, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is empowered to resolve the issue.

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (OSC) PROTOCOL 2025**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Overview and Scrutiny plays a fundamental role in the Council's governance arrangements through holding decision makers to account, policy review and development, acting as a community voice and ensuring the efficient delivery of public services. Effective scrutiny requires the commitment of the whole Council and partners, as well as creating the right culture, behaviours and attitude that sees scrutiny as a valuable contributor to the business of the Council.
- 1.2 This new protocol is a welcome opportunity for the whole Council to re-affirm its commitment to effective scrutiny, foster an effective and constructive working relationship with all stakeholders in the scrutiny process and refresh relevant policies and procedures so that they reflect best practice. It also takes into account learning from recent Haringey scrutiny work as well as the new Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities that was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in May 2019.
- 1.3 The Protocol is intended to give effect to the provisions in the Constitution relating to Overview and Scrutiny. In the event of any apparent conflict that may arise between the provisions in the Protocol and the Constitution, the Constitution shall take precedence.

2 ROLE OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 2.1 The Council is committed to creating an environment conducive to effective scrutiny. It is a statutory function and a requirement for all authorities operating executive arrangements. It is also an integral part of the Council's decision-making structure and provides essential checks and balances to the Council's Cabinet to ensure that its powers are used wisely. Whilst its legitimacy is beyond question, scrutiny should nonetheless be able to demonstrate clearly to the Council and its Cabinet, senior management team, partners and the public the value that it adds in its work and seek to make recommendations that improve the lives of local residents.
- 2.2 Effective Overview and Scrutiny should:
 - Provide constructive challenge;
 - Amplify the voices and concerns of the public;
 - Be led by independent minded Members who take responsibility for their role; and
 - Drive improvement in public services.

Challenge

- 2.3 For challenge to be effective, it needs to be sufficiently robust. It should nevertheless be constructive and focused on matters of timely relevance to the Council and the wider community. The role of scrutiny as a 'Critical Friend' should be undertaken in a courteous and professional manner, reflecting the Member's Code of Conduct. The aim of scrutiny should be to improve decision making and outcomes for residents, not scoring political points or providing a political opposition to those who make decisions.

Public and Community Involvement

- 2.4 Overview and Scrutiny has an important role in articulating the concerns of residents and community organisations. It will therefore strive to facilitate their involvement in its work and, in particular, the development of its work plan, providing evidence and asking questions.
- 2.5 Overview and scrutiny will seek to ensure that the feedback that it receives is representative of the local community. It will be proactive in seeking input and seek to involve individuals and groups within it that are best placed to inform specific pieces of work. It will use a range of methods and, where possible, locations in order to best to engage with diverse stakeholders and listen to their views and experience.

Independence

- 2.6 Overview and scrutiny shall be independent in both outlook and operation. The Cabinet should not seek to direct the areas that it focusses upon, although suggestions can be made for the work programme. Overview and scrutiny shall not be subject to undue party political influence, such as whipping. Members on scrutiny bodies shall also undertake their work with an open mind and make recommendations that are based on the evidence that they receive rather than pre-conceived ideas or pressure from within the political group. It should seek to be strategic and focused on the Council and its communities of interest.

Driving Improvement

- 2.7 It is important that scrutiny not only provides challenge but delivers outcomes. These should aim to make a difference to the lives of residents through improving public services. This should be achieved by the making of evidence-based recommendations to the Council's Cabinet and other organisations responsible for the commissioning and delivery of public services.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 Overview and scrutiny can scrutinise any matter which affects the authority's area or its residents' wellbeing. The powers of Overview and Scrutiny were contained in the Local Government Act 2000 and consolidated by the Localism Act 2011. It can:
- Review decisions taken by the Cabinet or the Council;
 - Investigate matters affecting the borough of Haringey and its residents;
 - Contribute to policy development for the Council;
 - Make reports and recommendations to the Cabinet or the Council;
 - Review decisions made by the Cabinet but not yet implemented ("call-in");
 - Appoint sub-committees and arrange for them to discharge any of its functions;
 - Review matters relating to the health service and crime and disorder and make reports and recommendations;
 - Require members of the Cabinet and officers to attend to provide information and answer questions;
 - Invite other persons to attend meetings as part of its evidence gathering;
 - Give notice in writing to a relevant partner authority requiring that it has regard to a report or recommendations relating to its functions; and
 - Request information from a relevant partner authority that is required for Overview and Scrutiny to discharge its functions.

4 STRUCTURE

- 4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall comprise five members and be politically proportionate as far as possible. The membership shall be appointed each year at the Annual Council Meeting. The chair of the Committee shall be a member of the majority group. The Vice-Chair shall be a member of the largest minority group. The Committee shall also comprise statutory education co-optees, who have voting rights on education matters.
- 4.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall establish four standing Scrutiny Panels to examine designated public services. The Committee shall determine the terms of reference of each Panel. If there is any overlap between the business of the Panels, it is the responsibility of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to resolve the issue. Areas which are not covered by the four standing Panels shall be the responsibility of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.3 The chair of each standing Scrutiny Panel shall be a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and shall be determined by the Committee at its first meeting of the year. It is intended that each Panel shall be comprised of between 3 and 7 members and be politically proportionate as far as possible. The membership of each Scrutiny Panel shall be appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It is intended that, other than the Chair, the other members will be non-executive members who do not sit on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.4 Should one of the Panels be responsible for education issues, the membership shall include the statutory education co-optees. It is intended that the education co-optees will also attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee when reports from a relevant Scrutiny Panel are considered.
- 4.5 Each Scrutiny Panel shall be entitled to have up to three non-voting co-optees, who will be approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis. Non-voting co-optees are expected to add value to scrutiny by performing the following roles:
- To bring a diverse spectrum of experience and adding a different perspective to any items;
 - To act as a non-party political voice for those who live and/or work in Haringey; and
 - To bring specialist knowledge and/or skills to the Overview and Scrutiny process and an element of external challenge by representing the public.
- 4.6 Nominations for non-voting co-optees will be sought primarily from established community groups that have a working relationship with the Council but consideration can be given to specific individuals where particular expertise/experience is required that would not be otherwise available¹.
- 4.7 Overview and Scrutiny bodies shall seek to work by consensus. Votes should only take place when as a last resort and when all efforts to achieve a consensus have been unsuccessful.

5 MEETING FREQUENCY AND FORMAT

- 5.1 The Committee shall hold six scheduled meetings each year. One meeting shall include agreement of the annual work programme for Overview and Scrutiny. One meeting, in January, shall consider the budget scrutiny recommendations from each Scrutiny Panel. In addition, the Committee may also hold evidence gathering meetings as part of in-depth scrutiny reviews on a specific issue as and when required. An extraordinary meeting of the OSC may be called in accordance with the Council's Constitution (Part 4 Section G).

¹ There is a separate and detailed Protocol regarding the process for appointment of non-voting co-optees.

- 5.2 Members of the Council may Call In a decision of the Cabinet, or any Key Decision made under delegated powers, within five working days of the decision being made. The full procedure is given in the Council's Constitution (Part 4 Section H).
- 5.3 Pre-decision scrutiny on forthcoming Cabinet decisions shall only be undertaken at scheduled Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings, in adherence with the Council's Forward Plan.
- 5.4 It is intended that each Scrutiny Panel shall hold four scheduled meetings each year. An extraordinary meeting of a Panel may be called in accordance with the Council's Constitution (Part 4 Section G). In addition, Scrutiny Panels may also hold evidence gathering meetings as part of in-depth scrutiny reviews on a specific issue as and when required.
- 5.5 The choice of venue for meetings may have regard to the business to be transacted and the circumstances of the time. This may include meeting online for remote working or to improve access to those providing evidence to the Committee or a Panel.

6 ENGAGING WITH THE CABINET

- 6.1 Legislation relating to local authority governance provides for the separation of the Executive and Non-executive Members of a Council in order to provide a check and balance on decision-making. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee therefore shall engage regularly with Cabinet, particularly regarding its future work programme and the Forward Plan. The first of such meetings should be arranged with Cabinet prior to the first meeting of the Committee. The Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Panels shall seek to liaise on a regular basis with the relevant Cabinet Members covering relevant portfolios regarding the progress of the work programme, agenda setting and requests for reports, attendance and updates.
- 6.2 The Leader of the Council and Chief Executive shall be invited to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as required, based upon the agenda of a meeting, but at least once a year at the meeting when the Overview and Scrutiny work programme is considered. This shall be an opportunity to discuss jointly, amongst other matters, the Council's priorities for the next year. Meetings between the Cabinet and scrutiny should focus on outcomes and be respectful and constructive, respecting the different but complementary nature of the roles and the value of scrutiny to the Council and its residents.
- 6.3 All Cabinet Members will be expected to attend either the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and/or Scrutiny Panels as required and with reasonable notice, based upon the agenda of a meeting, but at least twice a year. Cabinet Members will be expected to provide information specific to an agenda item, to provide updates on key areas within their portfolios and to answer questions.
- 6.4 The Leader and Cabinet Members attending an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Panel meeting may be accompanied and assisted by any service officers they consider necessary. The Member may invite an officer attending to answer a question and provide information on their behalf.
- 6.5 Cabinet Members and senior officers attending formal meetings of scrutiny bodies shall strive to provide full answers to questions that are put to them. Where this is not possible due to the necessary information not being accessible at the meeting, a written answer will be provided within 7 working days of the date of the meeting. To better meet requests for information, members of the Committee

and its Panels will seek to provide advance notice of questions so that Cabinet Members and senior officers may prepare for their participation in the meeting.

7 RESPONDING TO SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Overview and Scrutiny may make recommendations to the Cabinet or any other public service providers. Recommendations to Cabinet shall be introduced by either the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the relevant Scrutiny Panel. They shall be responded to by the appropriate body within two months of their receipt. Responses shall be circulated to Members of the relevant scrutiny body before the Cabinet meeting to approve the response. Where recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny are not accepted by Cabinet, an explanation will be given of the reasons why. Where a response is requested from NHS funded bodies, the response shall be made within 28 days.

8 THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

- 8.1 Overview and Scrutiny will agree its own annual work programme and keep it under review over the course of a municipal year. It will have regard to corporate and strategic priorities and consult widely to inform the focus for scrutiny activity.
- 8.2 The Council's Democratic Services Team shall coordinate the development of the work programme for Overview and Scrutiny, covering the work of the Committee and of the Scrutiny Panels. The development process for this should include engagement with Members, Cabinet, senior officers, partners, voluntary and community organisations and residents, with specific opportunities provided for each of them to submit suggestions. Whilst safeguarding the independence of the scrutiny process, the Committee shall have regard to all such suggestions when they decide their work programme.
- 8.3 Decision makers should seek to involve scrutiny in the development of new policy at an early stage when proposals are being developed so that account can be taken of it when developing its work plan.
- 8.4 As part of the development of the work programme, the Committee will determine how external partners and public service providers shall be scrutinised and engage with key personnel to build the necessary relationships and awareness for this purpose.
- 8.5 The scrutiny work programme should reflect a balance of activities, including:
- Holding the Executive to account;
 - Policy review and development;
 - Performance management;
 - External scrutiny; and
 - Public and community engagement.
- 8.6 The work programme should;
- Reflect local needs and priorities. Issues should be of community concern as well as Borough Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy priorities;
 - Prioritise issues that have most impact or benefit to residents;
 - Involve local stakeholders; and
 - Be flexible enough to respond to new or urgent issues.
- 8.7 Scrutiny work will be carried out in a variety of ways and use whatever format that is best suited to the issue being considered. This can include a variety of "one-off" reports as well as in-depth scrutiny

review projects that provide opportunities to thoroughly investigate a topic and recommend improvements.

- 8.8 In deciding its work programme, the Committee shall be mindful of the need to achieve meaningful outcomes by ensuring that plans are deliverable within the timescale set and with the resources available.
- 8.9 A template shall be maintained and shared by the Democratic Services Team to provide criteria to assist with the preparation and updating of the work programme. The Team also will assist the Committee and its Panels in tracking their decisions and requesting updates on progress from time to time, following which the Chair and officer will consider whether such matters need to form an agenda item.
- 8.10 A template shall be maintained for the use of the Chairs and Officers of the OSC and Panels to assist the Cabinet and senior officers in understanding the purpose of scrutiny activity relating to specific topics and to justify requests for information or reports. Agenda planning meetings shall be arranged between Chairs and senior officers ahead of scheduled meetings to ensure clarity on any reports that are requested. A detailed scope, terms of reference and project plan shall also be prepared for each in-depth scrutiny review project prior to it starting. This shall include consideration of resources, timescale for completion and aspired outcomes.

9 BUDGET SCRUTINY

- 9.1 The Council's budget shall be scrutinised by both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and each of the Scrutiny Panels. The role of the Committee shall be to scrutinise the overall budgetary position and direction of the Council and strategic issues relating to this, whilst each Scrutiny Panel will scrutinise areas that come within their terms of reference. Any individual areas of the budget that are not covered by the Panels shall be considered by the Committee.
- 9.2 A lead Committee member from the largest opposition group shall be responsible for the co-ordination of the Budget Scrutiny process and recommendations made by respective Scrutiny Panels and the Committee relating to the budget.
- 9.3 To allow effective scrutiny of the budget in advance of it formally being set, the following timescale is suggested:
- **Scrutiny Panel Meetings: May to November**
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will receive regular budget monitoring reports budget whilst each Scrutiny Panel shall monitor budgets within their respective areas. Between May and November, this shall involve scrutinising progress with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) approved at the budget setting full Council meeting in February.
 - **Scrutiny Panel Meetings: December/January**
Each Scrutiny Panel shall hold a meeting following the release of the December Cabinet report on the new MTFS. The Committee will also meet to consider proposals relating to any areas within the MTFS that are not covered by individual scrutiny panels. Each Panel and the Committee shall consider the proposals in this report for their respective areas, in addition to their budget scrutiny already carried out. Relevant Cabinet Members will be expected to attend these meetings to answer questions relating to proposals affecting their portfolios as well as senior service officers.

Scrutiny Panels and the Committee may also request that the Cabinet Member for Finance and/or senior officers attend these meetings to answer questions.

- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting: January**

The Committee will consider and make recommendations on the overall budgetary position and direction of the Council and the MTFS. Each Scrutiny Panel and the Committee shall also submit their final budget scrutiny report to the meeting for ratification, containing their recommendations/proposals in respect of the budget for the areas within their terms of reference.

- **Cabinet Meeting: February**

The recommendations from the Budget Scrutiny process that have been approved by the Committee shall be referred to the Cabinet. As part of the budget setting process, the Cabinet will clearly set out its response to the recommendations/proposals.

10 ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- 10.1 Legislation and the Council's own Standing Orders provide for all Members to have access to information based upon their membership of Committees and on a need to know basis.
- 10.2 For Overview and Scrutiny to be effective, it needs access to relevant information and in a timely manner. In particular, it is imperative that it has the information necessary to provide effective challenge about the provision, quality and resourcing of services. It has a legal right to information and this includes enhanced power to access exempt or confidential information. This is in addition to existing rights that Councillors have to access information.
- 10.3 Overview and Scrutiny Members need access to key information about the management of the Council, particularly on performance, management, funding and risk. Members should also be given the support necessary to ensure that they understand such information. In seeking this information, they should be mindful of the capacity of the Council to resource activity and the value and outcomes likely to be gained through it.
- 10.4 Overview and Scrutiny should not rely purely on those who are directly responsible for services for information and should seek to supplement the evidence at its disposal from within the Council from other sources, including service users, other residents and partners.
- 10.5 A template shall be maintained for the use of the Chairs and Officers of the OSC and Panels to explain the basis for the request for information and to detail the information that is required and the purpose to which it will be put. Requests will be responded to positively and in a timely manner. To ensure that the information provided is relevant, officers should ensure that they have a clear understanding of the reasons why information is needed by seeking clarification if necessary.
- 10.6 It is recognised that there may be rare occasions when it may be legitimate for information to be withheld and a written statement setting out the reasons for this will be provided to the OSC and its lead officer should this occur. Cabinet Members and senior officers will nevertheless seek to avoid refusing requests or limiting the information they provide. Before a decision exceptionally is made not to share information, serious consideration will be given to whether the information can instead be shared in closed session and the reason for this stated.
- 10.7 Where a Cabinet Member or senior officer determine that information requested by the OSC should be withheld, the OSC may refer the matter to the Monitoring Officer for adjudication if it wishes to

challenge the decision. In considering the matter, the Monitoring Officer should have regard to the legitimacy of Overview and Scrutiny, the reason(s) given for withholding the information and the value to the Council and residents of scrutiny activity on this matter.

11 TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS

- 11.1 One of the key roles of Overview and Scrutiny is to promote transparency and openness. The presumption therefore will be that its meetings will take place in public and the need to hold closed sessions will be avoided. Meetings that take place as part of the evidence gathering process for in-depth scrutiny reviews will also take place in public.
- 11.2 However, it is accepted that there will be limited occasions when it will be appropriate to meet in closed session because of the nature of the business or the position of the witness giving evidence. Evidence gathering activities may therefore take place outside of formal meetings if necessary or appropriate.
- 11.3 The status of meetings in terms of public or closed sessions, recording and documentation should be made clear in advance to all individuals attending to provide evidence.

12 OFFICER ADVICE

- 12.1 The Code of Conduct for Officers is clear that all Members are entitled to receive impartial advice and have access to information by virtue of their membership of committees and on a need-to-know basis.
- 12.2 There is therefore an expectation that all Senior Officers will provide impartial advice to scrutiny bodies as and when required. The Statutory Scrutiny Officer and the Monitoring Officer have particular roles in ensuring that timely, relevant and high quality advice is provided.
- 12.3 There is a specific statutory requirement for the Council to designate a Statutory Scrutiny Officer. The role of this officer is:
- To promote the role of the authority's overview and scrutiny committee(s);
 - To provide support to the authority's overview and scrutiny function and to local Councillors;
 - To provide guidance to members and officers of the council in relation to overview and scrutiny's functions.
- 12.4 The Statutory Scrutiny Officer cannot be the Council's Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer or the Chief Finance Officer.
- 12.5 The Monitoring Officer has three principal responsibilities:
- To report on matters they believe are, or may be, illegal or amount of maladministration;
 - To be responsible for the conduct of councillors and officers; and
 - To be responsible for the operation, review and updating of the constitution.
- 12.6 Where there are disagreements about Overview and Scrutiny's powers, role and remit, the role of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer will be to advocate on behalf of it and protect its independence. The role of the Monitoring Officer will be to adjudicate on such matters and, if need be, report to Full Council on any issues that may need addressing.

APPENDIX C: Draft Overview & Scrutiny Remits and Membership 2025/26

Scrutiny Body	Areas of Responsibility	Cabinet Links
Overview & Scrutiny Committee Cllr Matt White (Chair), Cllr Pippa Connor (Vice Chair), Cllr Makbule Gunes, Cllr Anna Lawton, Cllr Adam Small The Committee shall also include statutory education representatives, at meetings on education matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haringey Deal: coproduction, codesign, participation and local democracy • Communications • Corporate governance, performance, policy and strategy • External partnerships 	Cllr Peray Ahmet Leader of the Council
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council finances, budget and MTFS • Participatory budgeting • Community wealth-building: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement policies, frameworks and systems • Insourcing policy and delivery • Capital strategy • Council Tax policy • HR, staff wellbeing and corporate recruitment • Legal • IT and digital transformation • Data policy and reform • Information management • Elections • Emergency planning 	Cllr Dana Carlin Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs and skills • Local business • Town centres and high streets • Local economic growth 	Cllr Ruth Gordon Cabinet Member for Placemaking and Local Economy

Scrutiny Body	Areas of Responsibility	Cabinet Links
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local welfare Resident Experience 	Cllr Seema Chandwani Cabinet Member for Resident Services and Tackling Inequality
	Cross cutting, significant or high profile issues; Matters outside the remit of individual panels	To be determined according to issue
Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel Cllrs Connor (Chair), Cllr Felicia Opoku; Cllr Sheila Peacock; Cllr Thay Iyngkaran; Cllr Cathy Brennan; Cllr Mary Mason; Cllr Sean O'Donovan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult social care Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Mental health and wellbeing Refugee and migrant wellbeing Public Health Safeguarding adults Transitions (Joint with Cabinet Member for Children, Schools & Families). 	Cllr Lucia das Neves Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care and Well-Being
Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel Cllr Anna Lawton (Chair), Cllr Marsha Isilar-Gosling; Cllr Mark Grosskopf; Cllr George Dunstall; Cllr Kaushika Amin; Cllr Anna Abela; Cllr Ruairidh Paton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption and fostering Early help Early years and childcare Looked after children and care leavers Unaccompanied minors Safeguarding children Schools and education Services for children with disabilities and additional needs 16-19 education Youth services Transitions Youth justice (Joint with Cabinet Member for Communities) breakfast clubs Free School Meals 	Cllr Zena Brabazon Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Families

Scrutiny Body	Areas of Responsibility	Cabinet Links
Culture, Community Safety & Environment Scrutiny Panel. Cllr Makbule Gunes (Chair); Cllr Luke Cawley Harrison, Cllr Liam Carroll; Cllr Eldridge Culverwell; Cllr George Dunstall; Cllr Sue Jameson; Cllr Mark Grosskopf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Action Unit • Strategic Transport • Air pollution • Liveable Neighbourhoods & School and Play Streets • Urban Greening and biodiversity • Local renewable energy • Sustainability and decarbonisation • Circular Economy • Vision Zero (Joint with Cabinet Member for Resident Services & Tackling Inequality) 	Cllr Mike Hakata Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment & Transport
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste management and Recycling • Fly-tipping and Waste Enforcement • Highways • Flooding • Parking 	Cllr Seema Chandwani Cabinet Member for Resident Services and Tackling Inequality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime prevention and reduction • Anti-Social Behaviour • Community cohesion and inclusion • Licensing and regulatory services • Active citizenship and Voluntary & Community Sector • Local food strategy 	Cllr Ajda Ovat Cabinet Member for Communities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts & Culture • Delivery of Borough of Culture • Libraries • Parks and Green Spaces • Sports and Leisure 	Cllr Emily Arkell Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure

Scrutiny Body	Areas of Responsibility	Cabinet Links
Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel Cllr Adam Small (Chair); Cllr Dawn Barnes; Cllr John Bevan; Cllr Isidoros Diakides; Cllr Holly Harrison-Mullane; Cllr Lester Buxton; Cllr Khaled Moyeed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy and Development • Council housebuilding • Council housing services • Housing Major Works • Housing associations • Private sector housing • Housing needs • Homelessness and rough sleeping • Planning policy and enforcement (inc Local Plan) • Housing Improvement Board 	Cllr Sarah Williams Cabinet Member for Housing & Planning (Deputy Leader)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placemaking • Council assets • Estate Renewal 	Cllr Ruth Gordon Cabinet Member for Placemaking & Local Economy
If there is any overlap between the business of the Panels, it is the responsibility of the OSC to resolve the issue. Areas which are not covered by the 4 standing Scrutiny Panels shall be the responsibility of the main OSC.		

Report for: Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 19th June 2025

Title: Appointment of Parent Governor representatives

Report authorised by: Ayshe Simsek, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager

Lead Officer: Philip Slawther, Principal Scrutiny Officer, 020 8489 2957
philip.slawther2@haringey.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

Report for Key/ Non Key Decision: N/A

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 The report seeks formal approval of the appointment of two Parent Governor representatives as voting co-opted members to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee when educational matters are being considered and appointment to the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Panel which has responsibility for considering educational matters,.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Camilla Borthwick-Fox and Christine Cordon be appointed as voting co-opted members to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, participating at meetings when educational matters are being considered.
- 3.2 That Camilla Borthwick-Fox and Christine Cordon be appointed to the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Panel as Panel Members which has responsibility for considering educational matters

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 There are a number of different models used by Councils for how Overview and Scrutiny works. Committees often shadow Cabinet portfolios or corporate priorities of Councils. Many Councils have an overarching co-ordinating committee, with scrutiny panels reporting to it. This is the model currently used in Haringey.
- 4.2 Parent Governor representative are required to be appointed as members to all scrutiny committees responsible for education matters. This means that in Haringey they are members of both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel. The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel specifically includes education within its terms of reference, but its recommendations need to be approved by the Overview and

Scrutiny Committee. As this gives the Committee ultimate responsibility for scrutiny of education issues, Parent Governor Representatives also need to be listed as members of it. In light of the focus on Budget Monitoring by the Overview and Scrutiny, the Parent Governors would only be required to attend meetings where there are educational matters for decision – making such as reviews from the Children and Young People's Panel and Call in of decisions relating to educational matters or strategic and cross cutting issues, which may include consideration of education matters

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001 require parent governor representatives to be elected to serve on education overview and scrutiny committees. Therefore, no alternatives were considered.

6. Background information

- 6.1 Parent Governor representatives (PGRs) were introduced in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 so that parents of children at schools had an apolitical voice on local education matters. Although elected by parent governors, the role of Parent Governor representatives is to represent parents and not governors.
- 6.2 The Act provided for;“local authority education committees or sub-committees to include one or more elected representatives of parent governors at maintained schools in relation to which the committee or sub committee acts.”
- 6.3 This was changed under the Local Government Act 2000 to reflect the new political arrangements that were introduced for local authorities in England. Those operating the new 'executive arrangements' were required to appoint at least two but not more than five parent governor representatives to each of their education overview and scrutiny committees. Haringey has decided that there should be two Parent Governor representatives appointed to its scrutiny committees and this is reflected under Paragraph 4.1 of Part 4, Section G of the Council's constitution: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Review Panel whose terms of reference relate to education functions that are the responsibility of the Cabinet, shall include in its membership the following representatives:
- (i) At least one Church of England diocesan representative (voting).
 - (ii) At least one Roman Catholic diocesan representative (voting).
 - (iii) 2 parent governor representatives (voting).
- 6.4 These voting representatives will be entitled to attend a meeting and vote where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Scrutiny Review Panel is considering matters that relate to relevant education functions. If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Review Panel is dealing with other matters, these representatives shall not vote on those matters though they may stay in the meeting and speak at the discretion of the Chair.

- 6.5.1 The statutory education co-optees will also be invited to attend the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings, when it is considering an agenda item relating to education matters as set out at paragraph 4.2 and will be provided with support and briefings to participate in these meetings when required by Democratic Services and Scrutiny Team. They will attend the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel which has responsibility for educational matters.
- 6.5.2 Within the current structure of scrutiny in Haringey, there is one overarching Overview and Scrutiny Committee and four advisory panels, these being:
- Adults and Health
 - Children and Young People
 - Culture, Community Safety & Environment
 - Housing, Planning & Development
- 6.6 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee consists of 5 non executive members.
- 6.7 Scrutiny panels are chaired by a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The membership of each panel consists of between 3 and 7 non executive members and is politically proportional as far as possible. The membership of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel also includes the statutory education representatives and also has a non-voting co-opted Members who is a representative from a Haringey SEND parent/carers forum.
- 6.8 The terms of reference/arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny are set out in Part 2 (Article 6), Part 3 (Section B) and Part 4 (Section G) of the Council's Constitution. Further information can be found via the link below:
- <https://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=873&MId=7972&info=1&MD=Constitution>
- 6.9 By bringing a educational expertise and adding a different perspective to the business of the panel, non voting co-optees are expected to add value to scrutiny by performing the following roles:
- To bring specialist knowledge and/or skills to the Overview and Scrutiny process and to bring an element of external challenge by representing maintained schools.
 - To act in a non party political manner
 - To establish good relations with members, officers and co-optees.
 - To abide by the relevant sections of the Council's Constitution in terms of the rules and procedures for Overview and Scrutiny.

6.10 It is expected that statutory education co-optees will:

- Attend formal meetings of the Panel, which are usually held in the evening.
- Attend additional meetings and evidence gathering sessions such as site visits.
- Prepare for meetings by reading the agenda papers and additional information to familiarise themselves with the issues being scrutinised.
- Prior to meetings consider questions they may wish to put to Cabinet Members, officers and external witnesses.
- Help the Panel to make practical suggestions for improvements to services.
- Assist in the preparation of reports and the formulation of recommendations.
- Contribute to the development of the annual work programme.
- Keep abreast of key issues for the authority and bear these in mind when scrutinising services and making recommendations for improvement.

6.11 In March and April 2025, nominations were sought from all eligible parent governors. Two nominations were received, so no formal election is required. The people nominated were: Camilla Borthwick-Fox, Parent Governor at Ferry Lane Primary School; and Christine Cordon, Parent Governor at North Harringay Primary.

7 Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

Finance

7.1 Statutory Education Representatives are entitled to an allowance of £154 per meeting, upto a maximum of £616.

Legal

7.2 The Assistant Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report. Part 4 Section G (4.1) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules

7.3 The Parent Governor representatives is entitled to vote on recommendations considered at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on educational matters and will participate at the Panel where there specifically related to education matters. Therefore, the Parent Governor representatives is bound by the Council's Code of Conduct (in Part 5 Section A of the Constitution) that includes the registration and declaration of interest. However, the co-optee is also required to comply with

relevant parts of the General Obligations of the Code (in Paragraph 3) when attending the meetings and conducting the business of the Panel.

Equality

- 7.4 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:
- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
 - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.
- 7.5 The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.
- 7.6 Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

8 Use of Appendices

None.

9 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Local Government Act 2000 (LGA 2000)

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Report for: Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 19th June 2025

Title: Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Report

authorised by: Ayshe Simsek, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager

Lead Officer: Dominic O'Brien, Principal Scrutiny Officer
Tel: 020 8489 5896, E-mail: dominic.obrien@haringey.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non-Key Decision:** N/A

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the work plan for 2025-26 for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the current work programme for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and agree any amendments, as appropriate.
- 2.2 That the Committee give consideration to the agenda items and reports required for its meetings in 2025/26. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on 22nd July 2025.

3. Reasons for decision

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) is responsible for developing an overall work plan, including work for its standing Scrutiny Panels. In putting this together, the Committee will need to have regard to their capacity to deliver the programme and officers' capacity to support them in that task.

4. Background

- 4.1 The current draft iteration of the Committee's work plan for 2025-26 is provided as **APPENDIX A**.
- 4.2 The current Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme specifies that the meeting scheduled to be held on 22nd July 2025 will include:
- Cabinet Member Questions – Leader of the Council
 - 2024/25 Provisional Financial Outturn report and MTFS update

- 4.3 The Committee should give consideration to the items for the next meeting and any amendments that it wishes to make to the Work Programme for the meetings scheduled in 2025/26.
- 4.4 Given the Council's difficult financial situation, the terms of reference for Overview and Scrutiny has been updated to allow more prominent focus on budget monitoring and performance. This includes in-year finance and performance monitoring items on a quarterly basis which are scheduled to take place on:
- 22nd July 2025 – Provisional Financial Outturn report (Q4)
 - 18th September 2025 – Q1
 - 11th December 2025 – Q2
 - 12th March 2026 – Q3
- 4.5 The Committee retains a focus on an overall strategic focus and a number of policy areas including oversight of customer focus and worklessness which is in response to community views expressed at the Scrutiny Café in September 2024. There are two meetings in the schedule specifically set aside to consider policy issues not directly related to finance. These are scheduled to take place on:
- 20th October 2025
 - 12th February 2026

5. Effective Scrutiny Work Programmes

- 5.1 An effective scrutiny work programme should reflect a balance of activities:
- Holding the Executive to account;
 - Policy review and development – reviews to assess the effectiveness of existing policies or to inform the development of new strategies;
 - Performance management – identifying under-performing services, investigating and making recommendations for improvement;
 - External scrutiny – scrutinising and holding to account partners and other local agencies providing key services to the public;
 - Public and community engagement – engaging and involving local communities in scrutiny activities and scrutinising those issues which are of concern to the local community.
- 5.2 Key features of an effective work programme:
- A member led process, short listing and prioritising topics – with support from officers – that;
 - reflects local needs and priorities – issues of community concern as well as Borough Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy priorities
 - prioritises topics for scrutiny that have most impact or benefit
 - involves local stakeholders
 - is flexible enough to respond to new or urgent issues

- 5.3 Depending on the selected topic and planned outcomes, scrutiny work will be carried out in a variety of ways, using various formats. This will include a variety of one-off reports. In accordance with the scrutiny protocol, the OSC and Scrutiny Panels will draw from the following to inform their work:
- Performance Reports;
 - One off reports on matters of national or local interest or concern;
 - Issues arising out of internal and external assessment (e.g. Ofsted, Care Quality Commission);
 - Reports on strategies and policies under development or other issues on which the Cabinet or officers would like scrutiny views or support;
 - Progress reports on implementing previous scrutiny recommendations accepted by the Cabinet or appropriate Executive body.
- 5.4 In addition, in-depth scrutiny work, including task and finish projects, are an important aspect of Overview and Scrutiny and provide opportunities to thoroughly investigate topics and to make improvements. Through the gathering and consideration of evidence from a wider range of sources, this type of work enables more robust and effective challenge as well as an increased likelihood of delivering positive outcomes. In depth reviews should also help engage the public and provide greater transparency and accountability.
- 5.5 It is nevertheless important that there is a balance between depth and breadth of work undertaken so that resources can be used to their greatest effect.

6. Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 6.1 The contribution of scrutiny to the corporate priorities will be considered routinely as part of the OSC's work.

7. Statutory Officers comments

Finance and Procurement

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report. Should any of the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny generate recommendations with financial implications these will be highlighted at that time.

Legal

- 7.2 There are no immediate legal implications arising from the report.
- 7.3 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the approval of the future scrutiny work programme falls within the remit of the OSC.
- 7.4 Under Section 21 (6) of the Local Government Act 2000, an OSC has the power to appoint one or more sub-committees to discharge any of its functions. In accordance with the Constitution, the appointment of Scrutiny Panels (to assist the scrutiny function) falls within the remit of the OSC.

- 7.5 Scrutiny Panels are non-decision making bodies and the work programme and any subsequent reports and recommendations that each scrutiny panel produces must be approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Such reports can then be referred to Cabinet or Council under agreed protocols.

Equality

- 7.6 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:
- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
 - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.
- 7.7 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them within its work plan and those of its panels, as well as individual pieces of work. This should include considering and clearly stating;
- How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share the nine protected characteristics;
 - Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate;
 - Whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Haringey;
 - Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people, are being realised.
- 7.8 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments are based on evidence. Wherever possible this should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

8. Use of Appendices

APPENDIX A – OSC Workplan 2025-26

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Draft Work Plan 2025-26

Date	Potential Items	Lead Officer/Witnesses
19 June 2025	Terms of Reference & Panel Portfolios	Principal Scrutiny Officer
	Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan	Principal Scrutiny Officer
22 July 2025	2024/25 Provisional Financial Outturn report and MTFS update	Cabinet Member for Finance & Corporate Services, Director of Finance
	Cabinet Member Questions - Leader of the Council	Leader and Chief Executive
18 Sep 2025	Finance and Performance update – Q1	Cabinet Member for Finance & Corporate Services, Director of Finance
20 Oct 2025	Non-finance items (TBD)	
27 Nov 2025	Budget Scrutiny – Culture, Strategy & Engagement	Cabinet Member and Officers

		Deputy Chair (in the Chair)
11 Dec 2025	Finance and Performance update – Q2	Cabinet Member for Finance & Corporate Services, Director of Finance
19 January 2026 (Budget)	Budget Scrutiny - Panel feedback and recommendations. To consider panel's draft recommendations and agree input into Cabinet's final budget proposal discussions	Cabinet Member and Officers Deputy Chair (in the Chair)
	Treasury Management Strategy Statement	Assistant Director - Finance
12 February 2026	Non-finance items (TBD)	
12 March 2026	Finance and Performance update – Q3	Cabinet Member for Finance & Corporate Services, Director of Finance