

MINUTES OF MEETING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY, 14TH JANUARY, 2020, 7.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillors: Lucia das Neves (Chair), Pippa Connor (Vice-Chair), Khaled Moyeed, Mark Chapman, Luci Davin, Yvonne Denny, Lourdes Keever and Patrick Berryman

ALSO ATTENDING:

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

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Dogan and Cllr Jogee.

Cllr Berryman attended as a substitute for Cllr Jogee.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Urgent Business.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

5. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting on 25th November were agreed as a correct record.

7. MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL MEETINGS

The Chair of the Adults and Health Panel advised that the as part of the discussion around the Haringey Safeguarding Adults Board, Dr Cooper had been invited back to a subsequent Panel meeting to give a further update.

The Chair of the Housing and Regeneration Panel gave the Committee an update on Scrutiny Review of High Road West. The Committee noted that work had begun and that Panel members had undertaken site visits to the Peacock industrial estate and to the Love Lane estate.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the following Scrutiny Panels were received and noted and any recommendations contained within were approved:

- Housing and Regeneration – 4th November
- Environment and Community Safety – 5th November
- Children and Young People's - 7th November
- Adults and Health – 14th November

8. FAIRNESS COMMISSION

The Committee received an update report on the progress of the Fairness Commission as set out in pages 49 & 50 of the agenda pack. The report was introduced by Jean Taylor, Head of Policy. Cllr Amin was also present as the relevant Cabinet Member. It was noted that final report of the Fairness Commission was currently in draft form and was expected to be agreed by commissioners at the end of January. The report would then be launched on 20th February to coincide with UN World Day of Social Justice. At its meeting in March, the Council's Cabinet would agree its response to the report and this would include identification of who would take on responsibility for delivering the Commission's recommendations going forwards. The following arose from the discussion of the report:

- a. The Committee sought clarification about what happened to the issues raised as part of this process that did not fit within the five key areas/working groups agreed by the Commission. In response, officers acknowledged that a huge amount of responses were received and that this information was subject to a prioritisation process, which took account of the frequency of a particular issue being raised as well as focusing on issues that were closest to the Commission's key focus such as social justice and fairness. Officers also advised that the feedback received was also checked against existing data to determine key themes and trends. The Committee were assured that feedback and responses received had been shared with commissioners and senior officers across the Council as part of the reporting process.
- b. The Committee sought assurances around receiving sight of which groups and individuals had been engaged with as part of this process. In response, officers advised that a detailed list of those who had been engaged with would be included at the end of the report. Officers also reassured the Committee that there had been a conscious process of scheduling additional engagement activities for those that felt under represented.

- c. The Committee sought assurances around how officers would co-ordinate with existing activities taking place such as the Youth at Risk Strategy and Haringey Community Gold. In response officers acknowledged that there was some level of crossover and that they had worked to avoid duplication. The Youth at Risk Strategy had been revisited as part of the process for setting the recommendations of the Fairness Commission.
- d. In response to a question around whether the recommendations of the Commission would be implemented within the life time of the current administration, officers advised that the medium term goals should be easily achievable in this timeframe and also set out that the outcomes would be measurable.
- e. The Committee enquired about what contingencies were in place to ensure the ongoing delivery of its recommendations, if for instance, a new administration came in with different policy objectives. In response, officers set out that the Commission was made up of 22 people, most of whom were not Councillors and so there would likely be a level of institutional memory. Officers suggested that the breadth of representation on the Fairness Commission would hopefully lend itself to being supported by any future administration.
- f. The Committee sought reassurance about the extent to which children and young people, particularly in the east of the Borough, had been engaged with and how this information had been taken on board. In response, officers advised that significant engagement had been undertaken with schools to talk to children about the prioritisation of issues and fairness. This was done through a variety of forums including drawing exercises etcetera. Officers acknowledged that they spoke to both younger and older children and were conscious of the need to reflect the different experiences of the two.
- g. The Committee challenged the fact that a number of issues around adult social care had been omitted from the remit of the Fairness Commission as they were being dealt with through other forums and suggested that the reasons for this would need to be strongly reflected in the final report so that the community were aware and understood its remit and terms of reference. Officers acknowledged these concerns and advised that the final report would have a strong focus on frontline service delivery.
- h. In response to a question around the communications plan for the Commission's final recommendations, officers advised that this had not been finalised but officers committed to feeding this back to OSC once it was available. **(Action: Jean Taylor).**

RESOLVED

That the Commission's progress was noted.

9. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS - CABINET MEMBER FOR CORPORATE AND CIVIC SERVICES

The Panel undertook a question and answer session with Cllr Amin, the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Civic Services on her portfolio. The Cabinet Member gave a short verbal update:

- The update and refit programme for Haringey's libraries was underway and works had begun at Hornsey Library.

- The Physical Activity and Sports Strategy was in the process of being implemented. This looked at how leisure facilities could be more accessible and included investment in green gyms in parks.
- The Committee was advised that Haringey had been shortlisted for the London Borough of Culture.
- Haringey was going through a redesign and restructure of its HR processes. This included a recruitment focus in supporting local people. Examples of this included the development of a local graduate trainee programme and working with local schools on apprenticeships.

The following arose from the discussion of this item:

- a. The Committee sought assurances around what meetings the Cabinet Member had with The Friends of Libraries groups, following the concerns raised about Marcus Garvey at OSC in July. In response the Cabinet Member advised that she met with the Friends of Marcus Garvey about every 2 months. The Cabinet Member commented that one of the issues raised at OSC was around staffing levels in the children's library. There was now a member of staff focused on the children's library. As part of a review of children's library provision, the service had introduced a libraries promise and were meeting with children and parents to talk about how to improve provision.
- b. The Committee enquired how access to leisure services and undertakings to improve physical activity levels, would be monitored. In response, the Committee was advised that there was significant monitoring and data available on this, particularly around take-up levels for the concessionary rate and engagement with the summer activity programme. Officers agreed to share a breakdown of the take-up for the concessionary rate for leisure facilities. **(Action: Zoe Robertson).**
- c. In response to a question around whether consideration had been given to bringing the Hays contract back in-house, officers advised that they were approaching the final year of this contract and discussions were ongoing around any potential future redesign of that service. However there were concerns around commercial sensitivity that prevented discussing this in a public forum.
- d. The Committee welcomed the previous use of autism-friendly colour-coding of library books in Marcus Garvey and enquired whether this could be brought back. In response, officers agreed to look into this and give further consideration about how to develop a consistent approach across Haringey libraries. **(Action: Charlotte Pomery).**
- e. The Committee raised concerns about the use of Wood Green and Marcus Garvey Libraries as customer service centres and sought clarification as whether Cabinet Member planned to continue with this policy. In response, the Committee was advised that significant capital resources had been invested into these sites to merge libraries and customer services. However, the Cabinet Member acknowledges some of the Committee's concerns and advised that they were looking at ways of how to ensure two distinct service areas and how the library space could be protected at Wood Green. However, it was acknowledged that this was not an easy task.
- f. The Committee also raised concerns about Fusion's management of Tottenham Green leisure centre. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that a report had been commissioned following a recent incident where the pool

- was closed following service users reporting adverse effects from excessive chlorine exposure. In addition, there was also an extensive monitoring programme in place for this contract and officers advised that they were working hard to ensure that a good standard of service was provided. Cllr Amin advised that she was due to meet the UK-wide MD of Fusion soon to discuss some of the issues identified and remained committed to working with Fusion to improve the service.
- g. In response to some other concerns raised, the Committee was advised that the Tottenham Green leisure centre was incredibly popular, with around 40k visits per month, which created its own challenges. Participation at the centre had doubled since Fusion took over the contract. Officers also acknowledged further concerns around queues at peak times and advised that this was something that Fusion were working on and had recently improved their website to provide better signposting and online services.
 - h. The Committee raised further concerns about the use of libraries and suggested that books had been removed from Marcus Garvey in order to make room for the customer service centre and study room. The Committee suggested that restoring libraries to their core function as a library should be included as part of the review of libraries.
 - i. In response to concerns around the customer service centres, the Committee were advised that overall numbers of people using the customer service centres was declining due to improved online services and that further work was being undertaken to support this transition through workshops and digital help sessions. The Committee noted concern with plans to utilise parts of Wood Green library for a business centre and requested that space for students to use the library for studying be preserved, particularly during exam times. The Cabinet Member agreed to look at this as part of the next phase of work. **(Action: Cllr Amin).**
 - j. In response to further concerns around Fusion, officers advised that additional contract monitoring was brought in following the incident in November. The Committee was advised that Fusion were meeting most of their KPIs and that overall contract satisfaction was around 78%.
 - k. The Committee requested that an all Member briefing session be set up around leisure and the Fusion contract. Officers and the Cabinet Member agreed to do this and would give some consideration on when to schedule this. **(Action: Cllr Amin/Zoe Robertson).**

RESOLVED

That the update and responses to the Q&A session were noted.

10. PRIORITY X BUDGET SCRUTINY

The Committee considered the Council's 2020/21 Draft Budget / 5-year MTFS 2020/21 – 2024/25 proposals in relation to Your Council/Priority X. The report was introduced by Frances Palopoli, Head of Corporate Financial Strategy & Monitoring. Richard Grice, Director of Transformation and Resources was also present. The following points were raised during the discussion of this agenda item.

YC01- Reduction in Paper Usage

The Committee raised a general point about separating out income generation proposals from budget savings in future reports. In response, officers advised that the two were treated in terms of budget proposals but acknowledged that they could be separated out in future.

YC02- Income from joining the London Counter Fraud Hub

The Committee sought clarification on whether joining the hub was dependent upon 26 local authorities signing up to it and whether the prospects of this happening were looking good. Officers confirmed that a minimum of 26 local authorities were required to make the hub viable. Officers also advised that although they were not there yet, that discussions had been overwhelmingly positive and it was hoped that there would be 26 other local authorities willing to sign up to it.

The Committee also enquired whether £50k income was a conservative estimate given the potential amounts at stake through Right to Buy fraud etcetera. In response, officers advised that £50k was the best estimate of shared returns, based on pilot schemes in other authorities and evidence to date.

In response to a request for clarification, officers advised that the initial joining fee for the scheme was £75k and that the £705k set out at the bottom of page 68 of the pack was a typographical error.

YC03- Legal income from Clinical Commissioning Group.

The Committee suggested that this proposal seemed slightly theoretical. Officers assured the Committee that they were confident that this saving would take place and suggested that it may already have been implemented.

YC04- Finance Directorate Savings .

The Committee sought clarification about the suggested loss of posts and where these would take place. In response officers advised that of the total £540k saving, £340k was earmarked for the next financial year. Of that £340k, it was anticipated that this would include a loss of 2 FTE posts (£70k). The majority of the FTE posts lost would take place in the second tranche of the saving, which would take place in 2022/23. Committee Members were assured that the impact of the changes would be reviewed and assessed before the second tranche was implemented but that it was too early to accurately quantify the number of FTE reductions at this stage.

YC05- Alexandra Park and Palace Charitable Trust (APPCT).

The Committee sought assurance around whether the proposed £195k reduction in revenue grant from the Council had been communicated to APPCT in the context of the huge savings that had been made from the Council's budget over the last ten year period. In response officers advised that they were confident that this was the case and that those conversations had taken place.

The Committee commented that there was a lack of detail in this proposal and requested further information about how the Palace would mitigate this budget gap in order to make an informed judgment on this saving proposal. The Committee sought assurance that the reduction would not impact some of the Trust's outreach work as well its ability to provide free access to community events and inclusive exhibitions. The Committee were also concerned about any reduction in events and exhibitions that were disability friendly.

Further information was requested in relation to how APPCT would meet the budget gap arising from YC05 for the 23rd January. **(Action: Frances Palopoli).**

YC06- Re-imagining Libraries.

The Committee sought clarification about the individual saving proposals and areas of income generation and raised concerns about any attempt to reduce the general service offer in libraries including opening times. Officers advised that the core service offer would remain the same and that there was no intention, for instance to reduce the number of libraries or the opening times. Instead they would be looking at developing a co-ordinated opening hour timetable across all of the libraries and co-ordinating joint services.

The Committee raised concerns around the proposal for developing work spaces for small businesses and start-ups in Wood Green and Marcus Garvey. In response to these concerns, officers advised that this would not entail any loss of books or book shelves as, Wood Green Library was a big building with a significant amount of vacant space that could be utilised. The intention was to maintain core library facilities but also ensuring that the space in each building is being used to its full potential and developing economy opportunities through job fairs, workspace, pop-up events and volunteering opportunities. In response to further discussion, the Committee felt that aspects of this proposal were nebulous and that they did not fully understand how the savings would be made and the degree to which this would enhance and improve the service offer.

Officers advised that a piece of work was underway to look at what activities could be undertaken and how library spaces could be better utilised. Officers added that part of this was also about seeing how libraries could be improved and the making the space work better. The Committee requested that work space be provided for third sector and community groups.

The Committee enquired whether officers were looking at involving a community interest company. Officers advised that this would continue to be run as a mainstream council service.

In response to a question, officers advised that no evaluation had been done as yet around likely take-up levels from small business to workspace facilities. However, there was a project currently run by the British Council at Wood Green Library on support for small business which had seen significant take-up. Officers set out that they felt there was a real market for these type of services and that the take-up was there.

YC07- Extending FOBO approach to across Council Services.

The Committee raised a general point around hearing different experiences from residents in terms of accessing Council services through Customer Services Centres or long waiting times on the telephone to the Council, than was perhaps given by officers in previous discussions around these issues. The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods acknowledged these concerns and emphasised that the driver of this proposal was around service improvement and widening the lessons learnt from FOBO to across all Council services. In response to a question, the Cabinet Member advised they she was confident of delivering this and that the FOBO programme had demonstrated that it could achieved up to 30% savings in areas of customer service and the back office.

The Chair emphasised the need for provision to be in place to deal with urgent situations and crisis management in response to urgent needs and outside of standard response times. Officers accepted that systems needed to be able to respond to a moment of crisis and that work was being undertaken to ensure that this was in place. Officers advised that they were working to categorize the nature of interactions with residents and where there was an urgent need or request in order to make sure that the Council was responding appropriately.

YC08- Part Capitalisation of CPMO.

In response to a question around the nature of capitalisation costs referred to, officers advised that the capitalisation would involve the cost of equipment but also the cost of staff brought in to specifically help deliver the project. The costs of existing staff would not be capitalised.

YC09- Income from filming and venue management .

The Committee had no comments in relation to this proposal.

YC10- Income from Outdoor Media.

The Committee raised concerns about how the Council would ensure that any advertising undertaken using Council infrastructure was not contrary to the Council's stated aims, such as fast food advertising or adverts for the betting industry. Officers responded that there was a standard of service that any company had to sign up to and uphold if they were to use Council assets for advertising. The Chair commented on some recent examples she had seen and officers advised that any concerns or infringements had should be reported to the relevant officers and would be investigated.

YC11- Review of Corporate Centre.

The Committee had no comments in relation to this proposal.

YC12- Capitalisation of IT infrastructure staff.

In response to a question about the nature of the savings put forward in this proposal, Officers advised that savings would be realised through the use of Capital and Capital Receipts to fund certain parts of staff work where it was shown that the work produced tangible assets or was transformational to the Council.

The Committee requested further information on the figures presented in relation to this proposal. In particular, the Committee sought clarification on the discrepancy between the estimated £416k staff cost savings from capitalisation and the £345k figure outlined in the financial benefits summary section of this saving. **(Action: Frances Palopoli/Richard Grice).**

Capital Programme

In response to a query around the nature of the term self-financing, officers confirmed that broadly speaking, it meant that the income generated would meet the cost of that proposal and that a clear business case was developed and signed off in each instance to demonstrate this.

The Committee sought clarification around the capital investment used in the proposal to re-imagine the Council's library offer and questioned where would the saving come from, if for example, opening times were being maintained at current provision. Officers set out that the savings would be made by reducing net costs through better utilisation of the whole library infrastructure. This was categorised as being about growth rather than savings or a reduction in service. The Committee also sought clarification about what the term co-ordinated opening hours meant and whether libraries would be unstaffed for example. Officers agreed to come back to the Committee with further information on this. **(Action: Charlotte Pomery).**

The Chair advised that she would co-ordinate the final budget recommendations in relation to Your Council with Committee Members via email. **(Action: Chair).**

RESOLVED

- I. That the Committee considered the 2020/21 Draft Budget/MTFS 2020/21-2024/25.

11. FACILITIES MANAGEMENT TRANSITION

The Committee received an update on the transfer of FM services back in house, which was identified as the Council's the first insource programme. The report was introduced by Andrew Meek, Head of Organisational Resilience & Joe McBride, Transition Manager as set out in the agenda pack at page 127. The following arose from the discussion of the report:

- a. In response to a question around who had overall control for FM services once in was brought back in house from 1st April, officers advised that soft FM services would be managed by Haringey Council and hard FM services would be managed by HfH. In response to concerns about governance, the

- Committee was assured that the Corporate Landlord would have overall control and would have a role in co-ordinating overall requests to HfH.
- b. The Committee noted concerns with HfH's current track record on issues of repairs and maintenance and complaints from residents in this regard. The Committee sought assurances that additional responsibilities around management of hard FM for the Council would not make their repairs and maintenance service worse. In response, officers acknowledged these concerns and advised that funding was the crucial issue. The Committee noted that there was a separate funding source for the two; repairs and maintenance was funded through the Housing Revenue Account, whilst Facilities Management was funded through the General Fund.
 - c. The Committee enquired about the future direction of the insourcing agenda and enquired whether consideration had been given to adult social care and school catering services being brought back in-house. In response, officers set out that the transfer of FM services was the first insourcing programme and that a report was going to Cabinet in March which would set out the timeline and the focus of the insourcing programme going forward.
 - d. The Committee requested that a further update on the insourcing programme be brought back to OSC. Officers acknowledged this request and agreed to come back to Members with some further thoughts on how best to accommodate this request and likely timescales. **(Action: Andrew Meek/Joe McBride).**

RESOLVED

That the Facilities Management Update report was noted.

12. SCRUTINY REVIEW ON SEND

This item was deferred to the next meeting as the Chair of the Children's Scrutiny Panel was unavailable.

13. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee received a copy of the work plans for OSC and the four Scrutiny Panels, along with a scoping document for a Scrutiny Review on Schools. The Report was introduced by Rob Mack.

The Committee was advised that work was underway to develop the work plan for 2020/21 so that it was in place and ready to go following Annual Council in May. The Committee noted that the survey for the proposed Scrutiny Café event in March was being developed and should be available on the website in February.

RESOLVED

- I. That the Committee noted the work programmes for the main Committee and Scrutiny Panels at Appendix A of the report and agreed any amendments;

- II. That the Committee approved the scope and terms of reference at Appendix B of the report for the review by the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel on Schools.

14. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None

15. FUTURE MEETINGS

23rd January
12th March

CHAIR: Councillor Lucia das Neves

Signed by Chair

Date