

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, 26TH MARCH, 2018, 19:00

PRESENT:

Councillors: Pippa Connor, Tim Gallagher, Emine Ibrahim and Charles Wright (Chair)

Cooptees: Luci Davin & Yvonne Denny.

67. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred those present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting and asked that those present reviewed and noted the information contained therein.

68. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Hearn.

69. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

71. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

There were no deputations, petitions, presentations or questions.

72. MINUTES

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting on 29th January and the minutes of the special meeting on 1st March were agreed as a correct record.

73. MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel on 31st January 2018 and the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel on 8th February were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

74. PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Clerks Note – The Chair agreed to take items 10, 13 & 14 earlier than listed on the agenda as the AD Commissioning and Cllr Blake needed to leave the meeting early because of child care issues. The minutes reflect the order of business as it was taken during the meeting, not the order listed on the published agenda.

The Committee received a Priority Board performance update which reflected performance as at December 2017 from Charlotte Pomery, AD Commissioning. The following points were noted in response to the discussion of the report.

- a. In response to a query around transfers of care, the Committee was advised that performance in this area was a priority and that there were weekly call-over meetings with CCG partners. Officers advised that this was a volatile area and that a small number of delays could have an adverse effect on performance. In response to a follow up question, the Committee was advised that performance was formally reported on a quarterly basis through the Finance and Performance Partnership Board.
- b. In response to a question around whether there were any financial implications for not meeting the Better Care Fund stretch targets, officers advised that there were financial implications to the wider health and social care system but that these would not be met by the local authority. The Committee noted that there was also some contingency built into the Better Care Fund budget against under-performance.
- c. In response to a question, the AD Commissioning agreed to come back to the Committee with further information around homelessness prevention and further analysis of why all of the performance measures under Priority 4, Objective 5 had a red RAG status. **(Action: Charlotte Pomery).**
- d. The Committee sought clarification on responsibility for policing and community safety indicators. In response, officers advised that the Council worked closely with partners in monitoring performance but individual performance measures were ultimately set by MOPAC. The last joint CSP and Health and Wellbeing Board considered the performance indicators for 2018/19.
- e. The Chair thanked officers for their participation in Overview and Scrutiny meetings over the duration of the administration and suggested that their input had made a significant contribution to the Committee's work.

RESOLVED

The Committee noted the progress made against the delivery of the priorities and targets of the Corporate Plan, Building a Stronger Haringey Together at Quarter 3 of 2017/18.

75. Q3 BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee received a budget monitoring update at Quarter 3 as set out in the agenda pack at pages 25-48 of the agenda pack. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Health introduced the report.

The Cabinet Member advised that there was an overall improving position from Quarter 2 to Quarter 3. Adult Social Services, Children's Services and Temporary Accommodation remained the three areas of concern; with Adults reporting an improved position and Children's reporting a significantly worsening position in Quarter 3. The increased overspend in Children's Services was attributed to increased LAC numbers as well as the increasing costs of residential placements. The Cabinet Member highlighted that there had been some double counting involved in the Adult Social Services savings in the MTFs, this was previously reported to the Committee at the meeting of 29th January.

The following points were noted in response to the discussion of the report:

- a. In response to a question about confidence that the next round of savings would be met, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that no additional savings had been requested in Priority 1 in the latest MTFs in recognition that only 21% of pre-agreed savings being met. Instead, those savings had been rolled forward with a contingency built into the budget. The Cabinet Member advised that a different model of savings had been adopted in the MTFs for Priority 2, with a focus on demand reduction approaches. The Cabinet Member commented that the budget position for the 2018/19 financial year was in a much improved from 2017/18.
- b. The Committee sought reassurances on how long reserves could be used to alleviate the structural overspend within the overall budget. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that the latest MTFs contained a £15m General Fund reserve. In order to maintain that reserve, the Council would have to find around £7-8m in 2019/20 as well as implementing all of the savings identified for that financial year. The Committee noted that a budget resilience reserve had been created to protect the General Fund reserve. The Cabinet Member advised that ultimately, the Council's financial sustainability was dependent upon increasing Council Tax and Business Rates receipts.
- c. The Committee sought assurances around the significant underspend in the capital budget and queried what assurances could be given that slippages would not take place in further years. The Cabinet Member advised that the majority of significant slippages related to regeneration and development projects, which the Council had less control over than some of its other functions. The Cabinet Member commented that he was unable to give any assurances about slippages in further years and advised that this would be impacted by changes in the wider economic climate as well as the priorities of the incoming administration.
- d. The Cabinet Member agreed to come back to the Committee with details of the procurement issues in appointing contractors to the disabled facilities grant framework. **(Action: Cllr Arthur).**
- e. The Cabinet Member and Deputy Section 151 Officer agreed to email the Chair of the Housing and Regeneration Panel with further information in relation to Scheme 429 Strategic Acquisitions. **(Action: Cllr Arthur & Jon Warlow).**
- f. In relation to a query about the allocation of one-off versus permanent revenue and capital virements, the Deputy Section 151 Officer agreed to speak to the

Chair of the Adults and Health Panel outside of the meeting. **(Action: Jon Warlow)**.

- g. The Deputy Section 151 Officer suggested that the Committee could email him directly if they wished with any questions on future budget monitoring reports, in order to ensure he had the required information at future meetings.

76. SCRUTINY REVIEW ON SUPPORT TO CHILDREN FROM REFUGEE FAMILIES

The Committee received the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel review on support to children from refugee families. Cllr Mark Blake introduced the report as set out on pages 149-184 of the agenda pack. Cllr Blake highlighted the need for better interaction with voluntary sector partners around support for refugee children and suggested that a substantive review on this is something that the Panel should consider in the future administration. **(Action: Chair of C&YP Panel to note)**.

The following points were noted in discussion of the report:

- a. In response to questions around free school meal provision, officers advised that children from families with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) were not entitled to them. It was noted that the schools themselves had tried to provide free school meals from their own budgets and had in some cases been quite creative in providing this. However, the Council was not able to provide funding due to the nature of NRPF.
- b. The Committee suggested that a topic for a future scrutiny review should be investigating what other recourses for funding were available for refugee children, given the challenges faced with providing free school meals and difficulties with securing funding from central government due to NRPF.

RESOLVED

That the report and its recommendations were approved and that the report be submitted to Cabinet for response.

77. SCRUTINY REVIEW ON RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

The Committee received the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel review on support to children from refugee families. Cllr Mark Blake introduced the report as set out on pages 3-9 of the second dispatch agenda pack.

RESOLVED

- I. That the recommendations were agreed, as set out in the report of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel as per Page 4 of the second dispatch agenda pack.
- II. That the report be submitted to Cabinet for response.

78. FINSBURY PARK EVENTS UPDATE

The Committee received the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel review on Finsbury Park events. The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Andrea Keeble, the Commissioning Manager for Active Communities; as set out on pages 49-66 of the agenda pack. The Commissioning Manager for Active Communities advised that good progress had been made against all of the recommendations agreed previously with the exception of developing longer term contracts for events, which had been delayed by the ongoing court challenge.

The following points were noted following discussion of the report.

- a. The Committee sought clarification around the recovery process for the park following major events. In response, officers advised that what the environmental impact fee was spent on was agreed with the Finsbury Stakeholder group. The fee was around £35k last year. The Committee was advised that officers were receiving advice from the Sports Turf Research Institute on grass restoration. The Commissioning Manager for Active Communities agreed to come back to Committee Members with further information on the recovery plan and the circulation process.
- b. In response to a request for clarification, the Cabinet Member for Environment advised that following the judgement received from the Court of Appeal, the Council accepted that the money received from events was ring fenced to Finsbury Park as per the Open Spaces Act 1906.
- c. The Cabinet Member advised that the revenue accrued from events would be spent on the management and maintenance costs of Finsbury Park and that any surplus would be used to improve the Park's infrastructure. In response to a request for further clarification, officers confirmed that there was sufficient scope for investment in Finsbury Park to justify the level of revenue sought. The Committee was advised that the surplus revenue generated was needed both for operational running costs of the park as well as long standing works required, such as a £300k upgrade to the play park and an upgrade of the park lighting. Officers advised that a budget setting exercise was being undertaken and that this would be completed in due course.
- d. The Committee requested that a report be brought back to a future OSC meeting in the new administration around the Finsbury Park budget and what the additional revenue raised through events would be spent on, given the ring fencing. The Chair suggested that this should be reflected in the recommendations of the Parks Scrutiny Review report.
- e. In response to a question around the cost and usage of a tractor used in Finsbury Park, the Cabinet Member agreed to feed this information back to the Committee. **(Action: Cllr Mitchell).**

RESOLVED

- I. The Committee noted the progress made to date to achieve the recommendations as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

79. SCRUTINY REVIEW ON PARKS

The Committee received the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel review on Finsbury Park. The report was introduced by the Chair of the Environment

and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel, Cllr Gallagher; as set out on pages 115-148 of the agenda pack.

The Committee agreed that an additional recommendation be added to the Panel's report which requested a clear response around the revenue from Finsbury Park events, which set out how much revenue was received and what exactly the money was spent on. **(Action: Rob Mack)**.

In response to the discussion of the report, the following points were raised:

- I. The Committee queried whether there was any available funding from the CCG and Public Health to contribute to park related health and wellbeing outcomes.
- II. The Committee raised concerns that more parks may be required to hold events in order to utilise and disperse the revenue generated.
- III. The Chair of the Environment and Community Safety Panel agreed to speak to the Chair and agree whether a further recommendation needed to be added to the report around undertaking a review of the Outdoor Events Policy. **(Action: Cllr Gallagher)**.

RESOLVED

That the report and its recommendations were approved, subject to the above amendment, and that the report be submitted to Cabinet for response.

80. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF SOCIAL HOUSING

The Committee received the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel review on Social Housing. The report was introduced by the Chair of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel, Cllr Ibrahim; as set out on pages 79-115 of the agenda pack.

The following points were raised in response to the discussion of the report.

- a. In response to a potential contradiction between recommendations 3c and 20, the Chair of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel acknowledged the potential ambiguity and clarified that the recommendation for the Council to set affordable homes at social rent levels should be a long term commitment.
- b. The Committee agreed to amend recommendation 20 to: The long term commitment of the Council should be for all affordable homes to be set at social rent levels. **(Action: Clerk)**.
- c. The Committee questioned what could be done to prevent any new homes built, either as part of a wholly-owned development vehicle or directly built by the Council, from being subject to Right-to-Buy. In response the Chair of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel acknowledged these concerns and commented that the government kept moving the goal posts around right-to-buy regulations.

RESOLVED

- I. That the Committee considered the findings of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel and agreed the recommendations as set out in Table of the report, subject to the amendment outlined above.

- II. The Committee recommended that the report be submitted to Cabinet for a response.

81. SCRUTINY REVIEW ON CARE HOMES

The Committee received the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel review interim report on Care Home Commissioning. The report was introduced by the Chair of the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel, Cllr Connor as set out in the Third Dispatch Agenda Pack.

The following points were raised in response to the discussion of the report.

- a. The Chair of the Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel advised that this was an interim report and that a further final report would be presented to future Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the new administration.
- b. The Committee noted that the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee was also undertaking scrutiny work around care homes and workforce, the recommendations from this work would feed into the Panel's final report.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the interim findings of the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel and agreed the recommendations set out in Table 1 of the report.
- (b) The Committee noted that a final report would be submitted to a future Committee meeting in the next municipal year.

82. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee considered the Work Programme update report as set out at pages 186-212 of the agenda pack.

The following items were put forward for consideration by the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee as suggested areas for further work.

- a. Concluding the Fire Safety work, particularly in light of the ongoing investigation around Grenfell. The Chair suggested that aspects around building control were particularly relevant.
- b. The impact of green waste collection charges.
- c. Support for refugee children and the need for better interaction with voluntary sector partners.
- d. Final report on Care Home Commissioning, feeding in work of the JHOSC.

RESOLVED

- I. The Committee noted the work programmes for the main Committee and the Scrutiny Panels.

83. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

84. FUTURE MEETINGS

This was the last meeting of OSC of this administration. There are no further meetings scheduled.

CHAIR: Councillor Charles Wright

Signed by Chair

Date