MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 26TH OCTOBER 2026, 7.00 - 9.55pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Lucia das Neves (Chair), Luke Cawley-Harrison (Vice-Chair), Anne Gray, Marc Jenner and Adam Small

36. 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.

37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

38. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

40. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

41. MINUTES

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were received by the Committee as part of the supplementary agenda pack. The Chair proposed that the draft minutes be deferred until the next meeting so that Councillors could have more time to consider the details.

Cllr das Neves advised that an action tracker for the Committee had been compiled and would be circulated to Councillors shortly with details of the responses received.

RESOLVED – That consideration of the minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2026 be deferred until the next meeting.

42. GROUP-BASED CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Attendees for this item:

Det Supt Joe Derilo - Metropolitan Police
Det Chief Inspector Philip Moor - Metropolitan Police
Sophie Skiba – Independent Author - Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership
Ann Graham – Corporate Director of Children's Services
Dionne Thomas – Director of Safeguarding & Social Care

Cllr Georgia Twigg – Cabinet Member for Children & Schools
Cllr Ata Berk Aksit – Cabinet Member for Communities

Cllr das Neves opened this item by explaining that the purpose was to consider the data provided on relevant offences for group-based child sexual abuse (CSA) in Haringey. She noted that Baroness Casey's recent Review on this topic had set out the importance of scrutiny and of what can go wrong when scrutiny committees do not play the role that they should in holding leaders accountable. By being proactive in this area and having access to the right data, the Committee aimed to scrutinise in the correct way and to centre the community and children & young people at the heart of it.

Det Supt Joe Derilo of the Metropolitan Police thanked the Committee for the invitation to the meeting and agreed that some of the issues raised by Baroness Casey were about strong communication which was why these conversations were important.

Sophie Skiba of the Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) introduced the written report that she had prepared for the Committee which brought together the available police evidence, national findings and the wider safeguarding partnership response. She highlighted three key areas – what the data tells us, the national learning and the partnership response:

- The principal finding was that the available Police evidence had not identified organised group-based child sexual exploitation operating in Haringey. There were currently no identified offender networks, intelligence packages or investigations indicating an organised grooming gang relating to group-based child sexual exploitation and abuse within the Borough.
- The Metropolitan Police analysed recorded CSA offences for 2024, 2025 and the first eight months of 2026. During that period between 4% and 6% of recorded reports involved indicators of more than one suspect.
- She noted the increase in recorded CSA offences in 2026 and it was believed that improved recording and reporting were likely contributing factors.
- New Police recording arrangements introduced in September 2025 distinguished between three levels:
    - Level 1 related to individual offending
    - Level 2 related to group-based offending
    - Level 3 related to organised offending, involving planning and coordination
- Of the Haringey reports, approximately 92% were categorised as Level 1, 8% as Level 2 and there was no Level 3 offending recorded. This was broadly in line with London-wide figures.
- Successive national inquiries, particularly those led by Professor Alexis Jay and Baroness Casey had highlighted the challenges that agencies can experience

in identifying organised group-based exploitation. They referred to incomplete data, inconsistent definitions and difficulties connecting information held across agencies. The central learning was that an absence of identified organised networks should not be interpreted as an absence of risk.

- A key consideration was therefore whether the partnership in Haringey had the arrangements to recognise wider patterns and connections should they emerge.
- She was pleased to see a tremendous amount of work in Haringey to identify and respond to CSA. This had been a strategic priority for the HSCP since early 2025 and this work would continue to support the response to Baroness Casey's findings.
- The report sets out a substantial programme of existing and developing activity across the partnership, including operational and strategic multi-agency child exploitation arrangements and the HSCP independent scrutineer. A multi-agency CSA task and finish group had developed a CSA strategy and action plan.
- Strengthened data and intelligence included improved reporting, multi-agency analysis and the addition of CSA to an existing performance framework. There had also been a multi-agency practice week focused on sexual exploitation, the strengthening of health pathways and access to specialist services for children affected by sexual abuse.
- The HSCP worked with specialist organisations including The Lighthouse, The Havens, Open Door and the REIGN Collective. The REIGN Collective drew on specialist expertise and survivor informed learning.
- The HSCP carried out multi-agency quality assurance oversight and audits through the partnership subgroups, including learning from safeguarding reviews where there had been a group-based sexual exploitation element. It also held 'challenge sessions' with the independent scrutineer which allowed agencies to be held accountable for their safeguarding arrangements.
- The HSCP operated within wider London safeguarding arrangements and there were further development links with the Haringey Integrated Adolescent Hub.
- The new statutory independent inquiry into grooming gangs had been established with London among the first areas to be examined. This would provide further valuable national learning.

Attendees then responded to questions from the Committee:

- Cllr das Neves asked about the anticipated timeline for the London element of the statutory inquiry and Haringey's role in this.
    - Sophie Skiba replied that the inquiry was already underway and had powers to require information from local authorities.
    - Ann Graham added that the Council would be informed if required to give evidence but she suspected that this would not be necessary. She also noted that she may be required to give evidence separately as part of her role with the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS).
    - Det Supt Joe Derilo informed the Committee that he was unable to speak about the details of evidence provided to the national inquiry. However, he noted that National Crime Agency (NCA) was running Operation Beaconport and the Metropolitan Police was running a sub-

operation below that, the purpose of which was to examine historic cases and ensure that they were investigated properly.

- Cllr das Neves requested further information about the influence of the recent Casey Review.
    - Sophie Skiba explained that the audit from this was now one year on and there had already been significant progress on the recommendations at a national level.
    - Det Supt Joe Derilo's view was that there was a lot of work regarding victim identification and that he wanted to see more focus on the identification of perpetrators. He added that, just because the data did not show any level 3 exploitation, this did not necessarily mean that it did not exist. It was therefore necessary to have the right local structures in place, as recommended by Baroness Casey.
- Asked by Cllr Cawley-Harrison about potential areas for improvement, Sophie Skiba said that a number of areas had been looked at through audits including:
    - Examining data from voluntary organisations as part of the multi-agency data set.
    - Co-ordination of cross-borough cases including through the MACE (Multi-Agency Child Exploitation) process.
- Cllr Cawley-Harrison asked what previous improvements had been made that were not influenced by government or from outside of the borough.

Ann Graham commented that:

- In previous decades, CSA had been dealt with by specialist teams but that it had been realised that this was not helpful due to the complicated nature of the way that people disclosed abuse against them.
- Despite improvements, there had been examples in other parts of the country where things had gone badly wrong and so it was necessary for the partnership in Haringey to be assured that the standard of practice here was high and that the child's voice was clearly embedded within it. This included through regular training and routine audits of casework.
- There were other complicating factors. When an online initiative about sexual harassment called Everyone's Invited was started, a lot of children talked about their experiences of alcohol and drugs in their sexual relationships and how they felt exploited. Online harms were also a significant concern.

Det Chief Insp Philip Moor added that:

- Part of the Operation Beaconport involved looking at missed opportunities in historic crimes where it had been decided that no further action would be taken. This would be an opportunity for future improvement from examining previous practice.

- Asked by Cllr Cawley-Harrison about the approach with schools, Ann Graham referred to the more systematic use of Section 11 audits which ensured that safeguarding at schools was of a high quality.
- Cllr Cawley-Harrison requested further details on the investigations of cases at the different levels that had been described. Det Chief Insp Philip Moor explained that:
    - A sexual offence against a child would be entered into the crime recording system with a tag of level one, two or three. While this would be based on the judgment of an individual, this was subject to a process of supervision.

    - Once the correct level had been determined, a process was followed. Level 2 cases would be reviewed by another Detective Sergeant and Level 3 cases would require a review from a Detective Inspector or above within 24 hours.
    - In 2026, 96% of cases in Haringey had the tag applied and the remaining 4% would need to have the tag applied before the case could be completed.
    - Asked by Cllr das Neves how incorrect tags could be changed, he explained that this involved a simple press of a button and that the supervision process was in place to ensure that any errors were corrected.
- Cllr Cawley-Harrison asked how issues were captured when the main offence was something else but where sexual exploitation could be a high risk, for example drug dealing or in circumstances where a child was missing. Det Chief Insp Philip Moor explained that there were other mechanisms such as exploitation teams that may handle cases where a child has been arrested in possession of drugs but where it became apparent that coercion was a factor. Other types of criminal exploitation were therefore considered alongside sexual exploitation as they can overlap, including the risk that sexual exploitation may be less visible where a child is primarily identified through criminal exploitation, drug-related activity or missing episodes. There may also be Metropolitan area-wide or national operations that consider wider issues. Det Supt Joe Derilo added that issues of vulnerability would be shared with the local authority and the wider Safeguarding Partnership.
- Cllr das Neves asked about local Police training with particular reference to attitudes towards women and girls. Det Supt Joe Derilo acknowledged that the Metropolitan Police had not always been good in this area and was working to improve trust and confidence including through training on issues relating to violence against women and girls to tackle issues such as victim blaming and to ensure a focus on listening to victims.
- Referring to the increase in the number of offences, Cllr Gray queried how the analysis could distinguish between an increase in reporting and the trend with actual offences. Det Chief Insp Philip Moor's view was that the numbers were going up because reporting mechanisms were better and people had more confidence to report. He noted that this type of crime was hugely underreported and so an increase in reporting was a positive as more information was being captured and could be acted upon. Det Supt Joe Derilo added that the context had also changed with more online exploitation.
- Asked by Cllr Small for more detail on the issues specific to Haringey, Ann Graham commented that she had worked in a number of local authorities and did not see anything different and specific to Haringey, including in the data, that she hadn't seen elsewhere. Dionne Thomas added that there was a community network of practice on safeguarding which involved dialogue across London local authorities and they were reporting broadly similar matters, such as increased awareness and reporting.
- Asked by Cllr Small about possible improvements to partnership working:
    - Ann Graham said that she didn't feel that there were any glaring omissions but that there were areas where more could be done. She highlighted the specialist organisations referred to previously including

The Lighthouse which had been operating for around 20 years but was now under significant threat financially.
    - Ann Graham reiterated her concerns about online harms and possible lack of skills to know how to work well in this area. She suggested that more needed to be done to advise parents and schools on how to support children in relation to online harms.
    - Sophie Skiba added that, in her experience, the HSCP was very good in terms of strategic priorities and understanding communities. However, she agreed that there were some areas where more could be done, particularly as the understanding of risk improved within the field of social work.
    - Dionne Thomas explained that some of the work in the past 18 months had been developed in line with the London Child Protection Exploitation Protocol. The Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) approach provided an opportunity to look at data sharing and the opportunities to disrupt harm. This included awareness raising about online harms.
    - Det Supt Joe Derilo added that it was important to measure progress not just through arrests but on how abuse was being prevented and how incidents were escalated. It was also important to ensure that Police officers were suitably skilled up in this area, to do more with regard to assumptions and stereotypes and to ensure that the work was evidence-led.
    - Det Chief Insp Philip Moor emphasised the need to avoid victim-blaming language through learning, training and creating circumstances where people feel comfortable to challenge mistakes.
- Cllr Small referred to the Police analysis of cases since 2024 and asked whether this was based on first-line summaries or a deeper examination of the cases. Det Chief Insp Philip Moor explained that, from September 2025, the tagging system had been operational but that, prior to this, the analysts had relied on the free text in the reports which was a less accurate way of capturing the data. The Beaconport operation would look back over a much longer time period and would cover a wider geographical area but was expected to take at least three years to complete.
- Cllr Jenner referred to the rise in offences from 90 to 167 from 2025 to 2026 and queried whether this substantial rise could be fully attributed to increased reporting.
- Cllr Small commented on possible areas for improvement with Police training on Violence Against Women & Girls, with particular reference to the ‘adultification’ of children and how officers were able to identify vulnerabilities.
- On the issue of online harms:
    - Cllr Jenner commented that as part of the younger more online generation, he could recall multiple instances of classmates experiencing sexual abuse online both from predators and also between each other.
    - He felt that this was not always well understood by older generations and some young people were banned from social media/phones by their parents which just resulted in them being ostracised as they lost the social connection to their classmates.

- He emphasised the importance of children and young people being actively consulted in relation to the mitigations and safety measures they may be developed.
- Ann Graham responded that she was incredibly worried about online harms, acknowledged the issues relating to generational change and that learning needed to continue on the benefits and harms resulting from increased connectivity.
- Cllr Twigg agreed that young people needed to have the technology to stay connected to their peers and that robust plans around online harms needed to take their views into account to avoid taking away this access and their sense of identity building.
- Ann Graham referred to the recent Fonagy review on mental health issues which explored issues of isolation and pressures resulting from social media experienced by many young people. She also highlighted the recent review from Alan Milburn on young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Dionne Thomas informed the Committee about the development of a local child sexual abuse strategy and an action plan being brought forward through the REIGN collective. She emphasised the importance of maintaining a dialogue with young people and parents about the pace of technological change and the safeguarding strategies required.

- Cllr Cawley-Harrison observed that, according to the report, consideration was being given to the creation of a Multi-Agency Repeat Missing Children Problem-Solving Panel and asked why this was not yet in place.
  - Det Chief Insp Philip Moor explained that this had been launched locally (Haringey & Enfield) but involved only the police at this stage while the structures were developed. The primary purpose was to give an enhanced focus on some of the most at-risk children and the next steps would be to develop the partnership approach.
  - Dionne Thomas reported that the Council had a regular missing person's panel which had been in place for some time and involved local partner agencies. This had a role in strengthening responses on individual children and also on 'return home' interviews which aimed to establish the reasons for going missing.
  - Det Chief Insp Philip Moor clarified that the new police initiative focused on a small cohort of the most at-risk children whereas the local authority panel had a wider remit.
- Cllr Cawley-Harrison commented that, while there were partnership arrangements in place to deal with identified cases, the greatest risk appeared to be the "pre-data" risk associated with unreported cases.
  - Ann Graham acknowledged that "we don't know what we don't know" and so the aim was to continue to educate and train people to be as alert as they could be and to take action. She acknowledged that the concern was about spaces where a light had not yet been shone.
  - Det Supt Joe Derilo added that the narrative around grooming gangs was different 15 years ago with a narrative around lifestyle choices of the girls rather than the abuse that was taking place. It was necessary to have systems and structures in place to identify issues, to allow young people to report as easily as they could and to support colleagues in areas such as education and health to spot the signs.

- Det Chief Insp Philip Moor agreed that the data could not be assumed to capture everything that was happening and nor could a percentage of what it was capturing be attributed to it. Therefore the approach was to continue to strive to identify more cases rather than to be satisfied that reporting rates were increasing.

Cllr das Neves proposed the following recommendations **(ACTION):**

- That there should be a similar report provided to Scrutiny on an annual basis in future with consideration given as to whether this should be received by the main Overview & Scrutiny Committee or the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Panel.
- That in future reports it would be useful to hear more about the focus on perpetrators, training for Police and about a change in culture so that young people are listened to and believed.
- That consideration should be given as to what more could be done with parents, families, carers and the community generally, both in listening to the needs of young people and in understanding what more could be done, particularly in relation to online harms.

In relation to the proposal for regular annual reports, Ann Graham said that she was mindful of the need to consider the forthcoming outcome and recommendations from the public inquiry and suggested that it would be beneficial for this to take place before commencing annual reporting.

Cllr Small emphasised the importance of the HSCP considering the areas and levels of risk at all times so that potential vulnerabilities were identified. He added that further consideration should be given to protecting the funding for the Lighthouse charity organisation given the importance of their work in supporting children and young people. Cllr Aksit indicated that he would be willing to raise this issue further with officers. **(ACTION)**

Cllr das Neves suggested that future reports to scrutiny should include sections to explain the future priorities, the questions to which answers were not yet known and the future policy and operational implications.

It was also noted that, in a recent Children's Commissioner report, Haringey had been ranked third in London and seventh in the country on the least challenging places to be a child which was welcomed following the work done in this area.

43. PROCUREMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Anthony Oliver – Chief Procurement Officer
Taryn Eves – Corporate Director of Finance & Resources (S151 Officer)
Josephine Lyseight – Director of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)

Cllr Johann Beckford – Cabinet Member for Finance & Corporate Services

Taryn Eves introduced the report for this item noting that this report attempted to set out a range of issues that covered procurement arrangements in an open and transparent way. She acknowledged that this was recognised as an area for

improvement, not just around procurement but also commissioning and contract management.

There were two key programmes underway:

- Taryn Eves explained that the Commissioning Modernisation Programme was set up 12 months ago but was mostly underway from the start of 2026/27. This looked at commissioning, procurement and contract management as well as all third party spend. Through the Commissioning Panel it aimed to challenge on what outcomes were sought and the evidence/data for this. On procurement it looked at how best to go to market and the commercial expertise. On contract management, there was a new framework being rolled out and there were pockets of good practice but it was recognised that there were also areas for improvement.
- Anthony Oliver explained that the Procurement Effectiveness Review was a benchmark model used in a number of local authorities. It would look at a number of key themes and enable the Council to identify its strengths and weaknesses.
- He added that procurement and commissioning colleagues needed to work closely together to look at the whole cycle and to ensure that savings identified through procurement were not lost through contract management activity.

Cllr Beckford commented that this was an important area to make progress on and that auditors had highlighted it as a primary issue to act upon. It was also an opportunity to recognise that a high proportion of spending went to third parties, that the Council had purchasing power and could focus this on priorities and values that the administration wished to pursue.

Officers and the Cabinet Member then responded to questions from the Committee:

- Cllr Jenner asked about how social value could be maximised, particularly in relation to local employment and community wealth building.
    - Cllr Beckford responded that he would be keen to introduce a social value policy as there was not one in place at present. This would prioritise what specifically the Council wanted to achieve and be linked to the ongoing commissioning and procurement reviews.
    - Taryn Eves added that the new Corporate Delivery Plan would help to define the priorities. She also noted that social value was currently included in contracts and the portal used by contractors. Feedback had been to make the social value requirements narrower and more targeted.
    - Taryn Eves said that an area of improvement was the contract management arrangements to ensure that commitments were being delivered.
    - Anthony Oliver also highlighted the importance of aligning social value commitments to the corporate delivery plan and so this would be picked up as part of the Procurement Effectiveness Review. In addition, the Contract Management Framework was ensuring that there was a focus on those commitments being delivered through the contract management activity.

- Asked by Cllr Jenner about the specific improvements that might be expected through an updated procurement and social value policy, Anthony Oliver said that it needed to be targeted and clear about social, economic and environmental outcomes. There could also be opportunities to broaden this to include sustainability in supply chains and ethical procurement.
- Cllr Small queried the evaluation process of the Contract Management Framework including the risk of 'marking our own homework' by assessing impact on the Council's own priorities and also how this aligned with the delivery of value for money.
    - Anthony Oliver explained that 10% of the evaluation criteria on contracts of over £500k had to include social value deliverables. This was why it was important that the commitments made by the contractors were actually delivered through the contract management activity.
    - Taryn Eves added that there would be a conversation at officer level about the split between quality and price in order to test for value for money and to obtain the right balance, including on social value.
- Referring to the analysis of direct awards on page 28 of the agenda pack, Cllr Small noted that the large majority of these related to adults, housing & health and asked about additional oversight on high value contracts to ensure value for money.
    - Anthony Oliver explained that there were two types of direct award – the first was compliant direct awards to frameworks involving competitive tenders and the second was single tender actions, perhaps due to unforeseen circumstances. These figures included both types. Cllr das Neves said that it would be useful for the Committee to receive a breakdown of these figures. **(ACTION)** Cllr Small added that some further explanation on the types of route to market on illustrated on page 27 would also be useful. **(ACTION)**
    - He said that there was an element of maturity in the commissioning model in terms of planning and thinking ahead which was resulting in direct awards. There was a level of reorganisation of operating models going on in adult social care across the country with contracts being restructured. The commissioning board now provided more challenge on the service to place greater emphasis on the need for a competitive process. Procurement officers therefore needed to be engaging with commissioners at an earlier stage.
    - Taryn Eves added that there was a lot more oversight on the pipeline and the contracts register when compared to two years previously. This was being used more rather than waiting for services to come forward and, as this improved, work with commissioners on contract could be planned earlier.
- Cllr Small referred to paragraph 5.20 of the report which stated that "commercial maturity is an ongoing journey" which suggested that there were some areas that had not quite been gripped yet. Anthony Oliver responded that the issue of improving data had previously been alluded to. This included:
    - Looking at contract data and how much the Council spent through a procurement lens as well as a finance lens.
    - Optimising category management which involved identifying opportunities to aggregate expenditure.

    - Being innovative and creative in the design of procurement and working collaboratively with commissioners.
    - A standardised approach to sourcing and contract management activity would help to address data issues, manage risk and achieve savings.
- In response to a request for further clarification, Taryn Eves explained that there were currently multiple systems and manual arrangements in place. The new system aimed to bring together all those legacy systems together so it wasn't that there was no data but rather that there was no indication as to whether the data was complete.
- Referring to paragraph 11.3 of the report, Cllr das Neves expressed surprise that the Council did not have the ability to report the number of VCSE or SME organisations in its supply chain.
- Referring to paragraph 4.2 of the report, Cllr Gray noted that the Procurement Act 2023 required the maximisation of public benefit which she regarded as being about the quality of what was delivered in the eyes of the residents. With that in mind, the life cycle management of the contract would therefore include the monitoring of the public benefits and she asked how the Council and the contractor would take into account the views of the residents. An example of this would be housing provision and the use of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funds.
    - Anthony Oliver responded that it was crucial to have KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) built into the contract and to ensure that they were realised. The contracts had to be measured as part of the Contract Management Framework which was in the process of being rolled out. Any public engagement would typically involve working with commissioners to build the right requirements into the contract and then the suppliers required to set out how they would be able to assist when competing for the contract.
    - Taryn Eves explained that one of the questions asked at the Commissioning Panel, particularly in relation to services such as adult social care, was what engagement had been carried out with residents. In some cases the service would be co-designed. These questions were now asked at an early stage of the process.
    - Taryn Eves added that the scope of the Commissioning Panel was being slowly expanded and, while she hadn't yet seen one funded by CIL, the funding source did not matter as they would still go through this process.
- Cllr das Neves referred to a previous point about being more commercially focused and asked about possible tensions between commercial requirements and issues of social value and equality impact.
    - Anthony Oliver replied that the report referred to key requirements including 'value', 'opportunity', 'innovate', 'commercial' and 'engage' with the balance looked at through evaluation scores. The evaluation criteria on social value was weighted at 10%, but quality was also evaluated as well as price.
    - Taryn Eves added that there was a split between price, quality and social value and so careful thought was given to the questions asked to contractors to establish the outcomes that were required.
- Cllr Cawley-Harrison asked if there was a refocus in the organisation about how contracts were handled given that contracts were effectively handled by each service in terms of the framework or scoring ratios. He queried whether

more of this would be handled centrally in future, including the oversight, accountability and monitoring. He also commented that much of the social value aspect was not actually achieving social value as the achieved £7m referred to in the report was arbitrary, such as the creation of 27 jobs, and did not necessarily stay within Haringey. He suggested that a better approach would be more like CIL where the developer paid a premium which was then spent by the Council.

  - In response, Anthony Oliver clarified that 26 jobs had been validated as clear commitments that were made and delivered with a good confidence level.
  - He commented that some organisations calculated social value by applying monetary values to every measure, such as volunteering hours for example. These figures typically accumulated to high levels which could therefore lack credibility and so this was not the approach used by Haringey.
  - He acknowledged that a refresh was required involving more targeted commitments from suppliers, capturing these commitments and then ensuring that they were delivered through the contract management activity.
  - He added that suppliers in local government were now familiar with delivering social value and so it was reasonable to ask for contributions in this way rather than not.
  - Taryn Eves commented that the Commissioning Modernisation Programme was cross-Council and that the governance that had been established was a matter of good practice rather than a response to the Council's financial position. There was also buy-in from the services.
  - She acknowledged that, in the past, the process had been owned by the services, but a decision had not yet been made on what this would look like going forward as this would be picked up through the two reviews. However, it would be important to ensure that people with the right skills, roles and responsibilities were in the right place so there was a significant workforce development element to this work which was underway.
  - She added that it had been around 18 months since the requirement was made for all contracts above £25k to come to the strategic procurement team and this was now largely happening. There was therefore greater oversight and challenge, but forward planning was necessary for this to be effective.
  - Anthony Oliver added that there was a point around innovation with some activity. An example was a significant number of small value consultancy contracts, but it may be possible to change the model to get better outcomes and commercial results. There were therefore various spend areas that could be more efficient and effective.

- Cllr Cawley-Harrison suggested that there should be a specific value for money policy, commenting that there were likely to be differences between what different services judged to be quality and value for money.
- On the issue of thresholds, Cllr Cawley-Harrison expressed concern about examples of the same supplier having multiple small contracts to avoid the threshold at which it would require further scrutiny by Cabinet. Taryn Eves responded that there were challenges in this area particularly when

procurements were broken down to a certain value. Cllr Cawley-Harrison suggested that these challenges should apply not just to the companies but also to the directors as well.

- Cllr Cawley-Harrison suggested that the use of pooled frameworks could result in quite expensive suppliers being used with only a certain number of large companies able to bid. This may exclude smaller companies and could even involve the larger companies then sub-contracting parts of the work to the smaller companies when this could have been provided directly. He said that the Council could potentially save money by avoiding huge mark-ups and that this also impacted on leaseholders who were sometimes faced with large bills for contracted work.
    - Anthony Oliver commented that frameworks reduced procurement costs but were not always the right route to market. A framework that was five years old would probably no longer be competitive. The approach needed to be commercial, looking at all the routes to market and deciding if the framework was right or whether an open competitive procurement would be better.
    - He said that the Council would not encourage SMEs (Small/Medium sized enterprises) to bid for very high value contracts, but he acknowledged that there was an issue about designing procurement with commissioning colleagues in a way that did not rely too heavily on frameworks.
- On contract management, Cllr Cawley-Harrison suggested that a robust policy was required to prevent extensions which normally happened because the service hadn't been able to move quickly enough to re-tender, thereby potentially missing better value opportunities. He added that there needed to be closer recording and management of what was actually supposed to be supplied by a contract. Anthony Oliver said that when a contract was awarded, procurement colleagues should specify what had been purchased, including KPIs, as part of a handover document. This would need to be maintained by the contracts manager. Every contract has a nominated contracts manager and, should they leave the organisation, then a new contracts manager was nominated.
- Cllr das Neves queried whether opportunities for local investment were being fully utilised and how the Council assessed the impact on local organisations that it worked with and the wider local economy. Anthony Oliver acknowledged that there was more that needed to be done and that there was a balance to be achieved between the right commercial outcomes and getting what would contribute to the local economy.
- Asked by Cllr das Neves about where the key principles for social value would come from, Cllr Beckford said that areas including community wealth building, ethical procurement and environmental outcomes were the starting point from a values perspective. This would then be applied through the Corporate Delivery Plan and the Procurement Strategy. He acknowledged that there were many different indicators in a social value portal and so the challenge would be really targeting the outcomes required. He also agreed that he did not want to see the value from procurement drift out of Haringey so there was an element of pragmatism that would be required when designing policy that would come through the Cabinet.

Cllr das Neves suggested that a further discussion on some of the themes raised could take place in six months or so when further progress had been made, particularly on key policy principles, value for money, contract management and achieving social value. **(ACTION)** She also noted that an update on the Corporate Delivery Plan was expected in November. She added that other areas of interest included the role of lived experience, fee stacking and applying equality impact to the decisions made in commissioning.

Taryn Eves reminded the Committee that she would also be discussing procurement at the Audit Committee. However, she felt that duplication could be avoided given the areas highlighted by Scrutiny as the Audit Committee would be focusing more on the controls and assurance.

44. NEIGHBOURHOOD MOVES SCHEME

Cllr das Neves explained to the Committee that the report for this item outlined the background of the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme which was considered by the Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel in 2025/26 and proposed recommendations to the Cabinet. However, she noted that that a statutory consultation process around the Allocations Policy was due to take place later in the year. It was therefore suggested that the comments and recommendations from the Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel should be submitted as part of this consultation process, a report for which would be presented to the Cabinet, rather than as a separate set of recommendations to the next Cabinet meeting.

Cllr Small then provided some further background information as the former Chair of the Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel in 2025/26:

- Although the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme had good aims, including on community disruption, the Panel had been informed that 36% of moves under the scheme were in situations where there was no net-gain to housing needs. Considering the length of the waiting list, the Panel considered whether properties should be prioritised when there was a net gain.
- Other recommendations included a restriction around moving more than once, amending the priority band given to residents based on their proximity to a new scheme, as set out in the report, and consideration of the impact of voids resulting from refurbishment and repair required before a property could be re-let.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations on the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme from the Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel be approved and submitted as part of the consultation on the Allocations Policy.

45. APPOINTMENT OF NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER TO SCRUTINY PANEL

It was noted that this item was to seek formal approval for the appointment of Natasha Benn, current Chair of the Haringey Joint Partnership Board, as a non-voting co-opted member to the Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel for the rest of 2026/27. This proposal was approved by the Committee.

RESOLVED – That Natasha Benn be appointed to the Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel for the rest of the 2026/27 municipal year.

46. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

Cllr das Neves referred to the supplementary agenda pack which included a revised version of the Scrutiny Protocol. This tightened the wording in order to provide a safeguard that the budget scrutiny meetings were chaired by a member of the opposition. The revised version of the Scrutiny Protocol was approved by the Committee.

Regarding the Committee's Work Programme for 2026/27, Cllr das Neves noted that the budget scrutiny meeting was scheduled for 30th November and the Quarter 2 in-year Finance Update was scheduled for 10th December. She also noted that the Committee had previously requested a full update on the new Corporate Delivery Plan (CDP) and it was anticipated that this would be brought to the Committee at the 30th November meeting.

Cllr das Neves requested that any further suggestions for the Work Programme be submitted from the Committee Members by email, particularly in cross-cutting policy areas.

RESOLVED – That the revised version of the Scrutiny Protocol be approved.

47. FUTURE MEETINGS

- Mon 30th Nov (7pm)
- Thurs 10th Dec (7pm)
- Mon 18th Jan (7pm)
- Thurs 25th Feb (7pm)
- Thurs 18th Mar (7pm)

CHAIR: Councillor Lucia das Neves

Signed by Chair ……..

Date ……

This page is intentionally left blank