

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
MONDAY, 17 JANUARY 2011**

Councillors Councillors Bull (Chair), Browne (Vice-Chair), Alexander, Basu, Ejiofor, Newton and Winskill

Also Present: **Co-optees:** Helena Kania (Local Involvement Network (LINK)), Yvonne Denny (Church of England Representative)  
**Councillors:** Councillor Kober (Council Leader), Councillor Pat Egan, Councillor Robert Gorrie  
**Officers:** Kevin Crompton (LB Haringey Chief Executive), Kevin Bartle (Chief Financial Officer), Lisa Redfern (Assistant Director – Adults), Rob Mack (Scrutiny Officer), Natalie Cole (Clerk)  
**Also Attending:** 4 members of the public

<b>MINUTE NO.</b>	<b>SUBJECT/DECISION</b>
<b>OSCO153.</b>	<b>WEBCASTING</b>  The meeting was web-cast for live or future broadcasting on the Council's website.
<b>OSCO154.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>  There were no apologies for absence.
<b>OSCO155.</b>	<b>URGENT BUSINESS</b>  There were no items of urgent business tabled however the Chair asked the Committee to agree to consider a date for the next Budget Scrutiny session. The discussion is recorded under minute number 160 below.
<b>OSCO156.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  The Chair declared a personal interest in item 7 where the Haynes Centre was discussed, as the Centre was the ward he represented.
<b>OSCO157.</b>	<b>DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS</b>  There were no such items.
<b>OSCO158.</b>	<b>MINUTES</b>  Approval of the minutes was deferred until the next meeting.
<b>OSCO159.</b>	<b>BUDGET SCRUTINY - REVIEW OF FINANCIAL PLANNING FOR 2011/12 TO 2013/14</b>  The Committee received the budget proposals for 2011/12 to 2013/14 introduced by the Council Leader, Councillor Claire Kober who emphasised the Council's intention to transform services as a result of the unprecedented reduction in local government funding.

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
MONDAY, 17 JANUARY 2011**

In response to a question about sharing services the Leader explained that the announcement of the reductions had halted the plans of some boroughs to join functions; when public services funding was cut councils needed to focus on their budgets and changes in structures and ways of working rather than other agendas.

The Committee asked supplementary questions to those raised at the Budget Scrutiny meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2011. The responses are recorded below.

Re. Q1 – Adult Social Care – Reduced Contributions from NHS

The Committee noted that the deficit position of the Primary Care Trust (PCT) would continue into next year as the PCTs merged. Council Leaders met regularly to discuss the situation and the Council had an honest dialogue with NHS Haringey although there were challenges on the part of both agencies regarding funding.

Re. Q4 & Q5 – Adult Social Care Transition and Children & Young People Service (CYPS) Demographic Pressures

The Leader confirmed that the £4 million investment in Children's Services next year was due to the 172 additional children in care; there were also 16 additional children on child protection plans. More children requiring services were expected to move into Haringey when the housing benefits system changed in April 2011 and there would be associated legal costs.

The Committee noted that Ofsted had approved the Council's child protection thresholds and that the Leader had written to the Minister for Children & Families about Haringey's unique situation and the impact of the reduced local government funding settlement.

The Committee was informed that the Council had put in place the Local Preventative Strategy with the PCT and the Police including a series of measures to help prevent children and families coming into the system in the future. It was reported that research showed that two years of such measures would result in significant service cost reductions. The Council was also recruiting more foster carers to reduce the cost of agency carers.

Re: Q5 – CYPS – increased legal cost budgets

The Committee requested benchmarking information on legal costs per child safeguarding case. (Action No. 159)

Re. Q9 – Inflation

A copy of the working paper analysing the inflation provision would be circulated to the Committee and Councillor Gorrie (Action No. 159.1).

Re: Q10 – NLWA – Increase in Landfill Tax

The Committee noted that the cost of recycling increased each year and that from April 2011 the Council's recycling contractors would be responsible for raising awareness of recycling. The Council would judge the contractors on resident perception and recycling performance.

Re. Q11 – Concessionary Fares

The Committee noted that, due to a change in the method of apportioning costs

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
MONDAY, 17 JANUARY 2011**

across London, the total cost to Haringey was now based on usage by Borough residents and this had led to an increase. Councillor Gorrie and Committee Members expressed concern that, at the call-in meeting of the Parking Charges decision (CAB75) held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2010, it was stated that some of the revenue raised by the increase in charges would be spent on concessionary fares. The Lead Finance Officer, Kevin Bartle, stated that revenue from parking charges was ring-fenced and could only be used for specific purposes.

Re. Q12 – Increase in Employers Pension Contribution

The Committee noted that variation reference 7 – Increase in Employers Pension Contributions – would be withdrawn and not included in the final budget.

Re. Q13 – Council Tax Benefits Subsidy

The Committee requested a briefing note on the Council Tax benefits subsidy calculation that could produce a cost to the Council of £4m. The note should identify the estimated level of subsidy being withdrawn by central Government. (Action No. 159.2).

RE. Q17 - Staffing

Further to the Committee's questions it was reported that the Council was seeking to reduce employment costs and not wages with this proposal. The Leader recognised that job losses would have a direct impact on the Council. In relation to the suggestion that wages reductions be considered the Leader stated that whilst redundancies were being considered it was not an appropriate time to consider such changes in terms and conditions of employment. The Committee noted that approximately 50% of the Council's senior managers had voluntarily declined this year's performance increment.

Re. Q18 – Human Resources – Apprenticeships

The Committee was informed that this proposal was to cut the internal apprenticeship schemes which required resources. The Council would still provide apprenticeships through procurement exercises and government schemes.

Re. Q19 – Corporate Property

The Committee asked for details of the overall Council budget for repairs and maintenance (Action 159.3).

Re. Q22 – IT (Implementing Value for Money)

The Committee asked for more information than was given in the answer on IT savings and what percentage contribution to the overall savings target this proposal represented. The Committee was informed that more IT savings would be included in the next set of savings and the data provided for the next Budget Scrutiny session should address members' concerns. (Action No. 159.4). It was noted that Adults and Children's Services relied on good IT systems.

Re: Q25 – Reduction in use of Mobile Phones

The Committee noted that the Council had negotiated a significant reduction in costs of telephone calls to landlines. Further details were requested to be provided (Action No. 159.5). In response to a question from a Committee Member it was noted that the Council still received fees from mobile phone

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
MONDAY, 17 JANUARY 2011**

companies for installing mobile phone masts on Council estates and this money went straight into the housing revenue account. It was reported that staff who needed a mobile phone to do their job would still have access to one.

Re. Q27 – Customer Contact (shift to online transactions)

In response to the Committee's concerns that this proposal would exclude certain members of the community, the Leader explained that whilst a percentage of the population preferred to use internet services and found it easier there was no proposal to eliminate face to face services entirely.

Re. Q29 – Spans of Control and delayering

The Committee noted that this proposal would see fewer layers of managers between the top and bottom of the staffing structure. There was an average of 5 people in between senior managers and frontline staff.

Re. Q32 – Recreation Services (Tottenham Green Leisure Centre – Reduction of reception cover

It was reported that the automated machine system would reduce pressure on reception staff, allowing people to swipe their Active Cards to enter the Centre, but that there would still be access to face to face service.

Re. Q34 – Closure of Day Centres and Drop-in Centres and Care Homes

The Committee noted that approximately 400 people had signed up to the new Personalised Budgets scheme so far, in addition to the current number of people on the Direct Payments scheme.

It was reported that the Council was looking at what drop-in services could stay open and be independent. The Committee noted that the wages cost of the Council's day centres were high and if a service was transferred into the private sector the staff terms and conditions would also be transferred which would not accord with the terms and conditions of other providers. The cost of the Council's in-house provision was much higher than in the private sector (£36 per hour for in-house care compared to £11.50 for external provision) and the quality of service in older people's care from the Council's private sector providers was very high. Currently two thirds of the Council's placements were in the private sector therefore the proposals would result in a significant revenue saving.

A further piece of work would be done on the properties and the opportunities for each building. Committee Members suggested that suitable emptied buildings should be offered to voluntary sector groups for rental.

In response to the Committee's concerns that transition could be traumatic for vulnerable people it was reported that transfers would be dealt with sensitively and in terms of quality, geography (from service users' families to minimise travel costs and disruption) and cost. Apart from Jackson's Lane, which would close on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, the Council's drop-in centres would close in the summer of 2011.

The Committee asked for the number of dementia patients at Cranwood Lodge and what private provision was available in the local area if Cranwood Lodge was closed (Action No. 159.6).

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
MONDAY, 17 JANUARY 2011**

The Committee received questions from a representative of the Haringey Alliance Public for Services (HAPS) in relation to costs of running services and noted the figures in answer to Q34. She emphasised that drop-in centres assisted in keeping elderly people healthy and active and prevented dementia - a comment supported by officers and committee members. The speaker urged members to encourage the Council to keep its drop-in centres open.

The Leader stated that if possible the Council would seek to find other organisations who could take over the drop-in services. The Assistant Director of Adult Services added that neighbourhood networks and developing community hubs and user led organisations were being considered as cost free alternatives which would rely on strengthening the role of volunteers. This would not, however, result in a like for like service. Committee Members reminded officers that community halls could be utilised for activities for older people and noted that options such as this would be considered as part of future smarter working improvements.

In response to comments from a representative of the Muswell Hill Library Support Group, the Leader confirmed that there would be no library closures although consideration would be given to how other services could be run from libraries. The Committee noted that book groups were available for older people as a means of socialising.

Councillor Pat Egan highlighted that residents of Haringey were concerned about the closures detailed in Q34 and urged the Committee to recommend that these proposals be reconsidered.

In response to concerns that some of the savings made in Q34, Q35 and Q36 would not be realised until 2012/13 the Leader explained that the Council had to consider residents and their transition into new homes; equalities impact assessments needed to be conducted and individual plans drafted.

Re. Q36 – Close In-House Home Care Service – Create Reablement Service

In response to concerns that the loss of the service would result in a poor quality of service if more agencies were involved it was noted that two thirds of the Council's services were already provided by the private sector and quality was monitored by both the Council and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Generally people used this service for 6 weeks but the Council currently worked with 30 long term Home Care service users who would be transferred to external providers and the Home Care service closed and the reablement service opened.

*Clerk's note: 12:00 hrs The Committee adjourned for a 5 minute break and reconvened at 12:05.*

Re. Q39 – Remaining OP Residential Home

More detail on the costs of the Council's three residential homes and how they compared with alternative provision within the independent sector was requested by Committee Members (Action No. 159.7).

It was reported that the Council had been billed by the PCT for additional

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
MONDAY, 17 JANUARY 2011**

running costs of the Haynes Centre which had not been agreed by the Council. The Chair stated that he would write to the PCT about these costs (Action No. 159.10). The Committee noted the Council's plans to merge the Borough's dementia care provision; the Grange, which was in the east of the Borough and the Haynes in the west.

A Committee Member suggested merging the Haven Day Centre and Woodside Day Centre and the Leader and Senior Officers recognised the value of such services. The Committee noted that both centres had to be closed to meet the level of savings required and that service users would be provided with suitable alternative placements in the private sector, although not a like for like provision. There was a general consensus that that this proposal would risk the quality of life of the vulnerable service users who would no longer have a centre to visit.

The Committee asked for a briefing note on how the consideration of risk in Adult Services and Children's Services savings proposals had been assessed. (Action No. 159.8).

The Committee noted the comments of a representative of the Older People's Partnership Board including concerns about whether there were enough places to meet the needs of dementia service users. It was reported that the Haynes Centre was under occupied.

The Committee noted that the Grange Centre was open seven days a week and would be sent details of the opening hours of the Haynes Centre (Action No. 159.9).

Re. Q40 – Increase Adult Services Fees and Charges

The Committee asked how people would be expected to pay the increases in charges for residential care and noted that charges would be means tested, i.e. based on a service user's ability to pay once assessed. The Committee asked for justification for the increases and it was reported that the increases would bring Haringey's fees and charges in line with national averages.

Re. Q44 – Behaviour Support and Inclusion Management

The Committee requested to see the Equalities Impact Assessment for this saving proposal when it was completed (Action 159.11).

The Committee asked for information on what the take up of places at centres for pupils who had been excluded was and what Children's Services were doing about poor attendance (Action 159.12).

Re. Q46 – Enforcement

The Committee requested further details on the potential implications of the various Enforcement saving proposals. It was noted that the Council was exploring the possibility of shared regeneration services with neighbouring boroughs but services had to be reduced to enable savings.

Re. Q49 – ACCS Alexandra Road Crisis Unit

The Committee noted that the Council was in discussions with the Mental Health Trust about future use of the Alexandra Road Crisis Unit. Committee members asked that it be a recommendation that there were no further cuts in mental

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
MONDAY, 17 JANUARY 2011**

	<p>health provision.</p> <p>The Committee emphasised that the task of scrutinising the budget remained difficult because the Committee felt that they had not yet been presented with the full budget. The Lead Finance Officer reminded the Committee that the remaining savings proposals would be brought to members at the next meeting.</p> <p>The Committee's recommendations would be agreed at the next budget Scrutiny meeting.</p>
<b>OSCO160.</b>	<p><b>FUTURE MEETINGS</b></p> <p>The Chair proposed Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January for further Budget Scrutiny and made reference to section 19c of Section H, Part 4, of the Council's constitution (Call-in Procedure Rules). Committee noted that by considering the Budget on 31<sup>st</sup> January in advance of the actual decision being taken the decision could not be called-in again after the final decision had been taken.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> that the next Budget Scrutiny meeting will be held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2011 starting at 10am.</p>

COUNCILLOR GIDEON BULL

Chair

**SIGNED AT MEETING.....DAY**

**OF.....**

**CHAIR.....**