

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 30 APRIL 2012**

Councillors Councillors Bull (Chair), Winskill (Vice-Chair), Alexander, Browne, Diakides, Ejiofor, Engert and Waters

Apologies Councillor Christophides

Also Present: **Co-optees:** Helena Kania (Local Involvement Network (LINK)), Yvonne Denny, Sandra Young (John Loughborough Secondary School) and Mariatta Ezeji (St Francis de Sales RC Infants and Primary Schools)

Councillors: Bevan and Reece

Officers: Kevin Bartle (Assistant Director, Finance), Avi Becker (Business Intelligence Manager), Libby Blake (Director – Children & Young People’s Service), Kevin Crompton (Chief Executive), Debbie Haith (Deputy Director Children & Families), Phil Harris (Deputy Director, Community Housing Services), Rob Mack (Senior Policy Officer (Scrutiny)), Susan Oiti (Assistant Director – Public Health), Melanie Ponomarenko (Senior Policy Officer (Scrutiny)), Lisa Redfern (Deputy Director, Adult and Community Services), and Felicity Parker (Committee Clerk)

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION
OSCO114.	<p>WEBCASTING</p> <p>NOTED that the meeting was Webcast.</p>
OSCO115.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Christophides.</p>
OSCO116.	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>The Chair allowed a request from the Vice-Chair that the following business be allowed and discussed under ‘New Items of Urgent Business’ (minute 126):</p> <p>Communication with Members and the general subject of ‘need to know’.</p>
OSCO117.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>The Chair and Vice-Chair both declared a personal interest in respect of item 6 (minute 119), as they were both leaseholders.</p> <p>Councillor Engert declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 (minute 122), as a close family relative worked for the Government’s Education department.</p>
OSCO118.	<p>DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS</p>

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	<p>There were no deputations, petitions, presentations or questions for the Committee to consider.</p>
<p>OSCO119.</p>	<p>CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS - CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING</p> <p>The Committee received a brief update of the Cabinet Member Portfolio for Housing.</p> <p>NOTED the following in response to questions and discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The database for social housing stock was being updated. • Homes4Haringey were working with other Housing Associations to carry out benchmarking exercises. • The number of people in Temporary Accommodation was 2943. The waiting list was 10,392, which had decreased from over 21,000 in 2011. • There were only 11 unoccupied properties for sheltered housing. • It was hoped that some new builds would be started in the next 1-2 years, but this depended on the amount of funding available. • In response to how the benefit / welfare reforms would impact, it was expected that single people under 35 would be most impacted – 800 in LB Haringey. No decision had yet been made about placing tenants in properties outside the Borough, but a range of options would be required to mitigate the impact. Landlords were not obligated to reduce their rent in order to allow tenants to afford their properties. • HMO licensing pilot – a bid was being prepared under the 1 Borough fund. The pilot was working well in Haringey ward. There were plans to extend into the Tottenham ward, but this would be resource intensive. • Information was requested on comparison of voids turnovers by LB Haringey compared to other boroughs / nationally. (Action 119.1) Cllr Diakides • The Chair asked for an update on Protheroe House. (Action 119.2) Cllr Bull • Councillor Engert asked for details of properties under the sheltered housing/good neighbourhood scheme, particularly in Clissold Close. Councillor Bevan informed the Committee that all properties under the sheltered housing scheme had been repaired to Decent Home standard (apart from 5 or 6, due to access issues). It was agreed that a detailed briefing would be provided. (Action 119.3) Cllr Engert • Decent Homes funding was an indicative £35million over the next 2 years. The Chair informed Councillor Bevan that some of the works carried out were not up to Decent Homes standard and that care needed to be taken when signing off works to ensure that they were up to the required standard. • The Chair asked about properties outside of the borough and whether they had been repaired to Decent Homes standard. Councillor Bevan confirmed that all properties outside of the borough had been repaired to Decent Homes standard. <p>The Committee thanked Councillor Bevan and Phil Harris - Deputy Director, Community Housing Services.</p>
<p>OSCO120.</p>	<p>BUDGET MONITORING</p> <p>RECEIVED the Council's Financial Performance Forecast report as at 31 December 2011, introduced by Kevin Bartle, Assistant Director – Finance.</p>

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NOTED the following in response to questions and discussion:

- Financial information was reported quarterly - the 4th quarter report (to 31 March 2012) would be reported with the close of accounts. Kevin Bartle drew the Committee's attention to the paragraph on the covering report, which detailed the reasons for figures up to 31 December 2011 being reported to a meeting in April 2012.
- The Chair made reference to the forecasted underspend within Adult and Community Services and asked how the service would respond to possible questions from the public on cuts to service provision, despite an underspend. Lisa Redfern – Deputy Director, Adult and Community Services – explained that the underspend was a one-off, following the budget cuts in 2010. These savings were part of the Council-wide budget savings exercise.
- Two day centres had been closed, however whilst this meant a disruption to services, there had been no loss in services as they were available in different places. It had been identified that there was a need for more services (both locally and nationally), and this needed to be monitored, tracked and reviewed, for future planning.
- The pressure on Local Authorities to achieve savings was still great. LB Haringey were still to identify £25million savings for the next two years. It was anticipated that, like Adult and Community Services, other services would be able to make a one-off underspend, but would struggle to identify further savings in coming years.
- In response to a question of where the underspend would go, the Committee were informed that this decision would be taken at the end of the year, and it was likely that services would put in a request to carry forward some of the underspend achieved.
- Schools with overspends were being worked with in an attempt to control the deficits. Deficits were variable, and some could be recovered in the next financial year. Information was requested on which schools had an overspend (licensed and unlicensed). **(Action 120.1) Cllr Ejiofor**
- The £400k overspend within the Place and Sustainability Directorate due to the underachievement of budgeted levels of rental income within Commercial Property may be supplemented with an underspend across the directorate.
- Councillor Winskill informed the Committee that he had repeatedly requested information with regards a breakdown of overspends in the Children & Young Peoples Service. The Chief Executive expressed his disappointment that Councillor Winskill had felt he had not been listened to and added that the strategy for improvement plans within the service would take time. Debbie Haith - Deputy Director Children & Families – added that the biggest challenge was not to over-promise on timescales and the most important aim was to build strong foundations, to lead to a sustainable future.
- An up to date report was requested on the Technopark. **(Action 120.2) Cllr Engert**
- Further information was requested on the status of the project on the reprovision of the recycling centre. **(Action 120.3) Cllr Engert**
- The Chair asked whether there was a report or explanatory note with regards to the Accommodation Strategy Phase 2. **(Action 120.4) Cllr Bull**
- A breakdown of costs for expenditure on all areas of the Tottenham regeneration project was requested. **(Action 120.5) Cllr Winskill**

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	<p>RESOLVED that the report be noted and the actions above be reported back to Committee Members.</p> <p>At this point in the meeting, the Chair varied the order of the meeting. The minutes follow the order of the agenda.</p>
<p>OSCO121.</p>	<p>REVIEW UPDATE: SEXUAL HEALTH</p> <p>RECEIVED an update from Susan Otiti - Assistant Director of Public Health – on the Sexual Health review carried out in 2010.</p> <p>NOTED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of the recommendations following the review had been implemented. • The need to make savings had resulted in the loss of a full time Sexual Health Commissioner, and two Public Health Officers. • The responsibility for commissioning Sexual Health services had moved to NHS North Central London. • Public Health provision was due to transfer from the NHS into Local Authorities by April 2013. Sexual Health provision would then become the responsibility of the Local Authority. <p>The following information was noted in response to questions from the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teenage pregnancy in the borough was still on a downwards trajectory, based on 3 year average trends. The 2010 figures released by the Department of Health however, showed an increase. It was agreed that Susan Otiti would circulate a briefing paper on teenage pregnancy. (Action 121.1) Chair <p>RESOLVED that the report be noted and the actions above be reported back to Committee Members.</p>
<p>OSCO122.</p>	<p>REVIEW UPDATE: EXAM RESULTS</p> <p>RECEIVED the report as introduced by Libby Blake – Director of Children’s Services – and Avi Becker – Business Intelligence Manager – on the analyses of school results at the end of the Foundation stage, Key Stages 1, 2, 4 and Post 16 for 2011.</p> <p>NOTED the following points of discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Ejiofor commented that although there were many ‘good news stories’, the report was 121 pages long and it would be useful to have a few ‘headline’ stories. • Concerns were raised over the number of schools ‘falling beneath the floor’ and requested information on which schools were affected and what strategies were in place to combat this. It would be useful for Ward Councillors to be informed if these schools were in their wards. It was agreed that this information would be provided to relevant Ward Councillors.

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	<p>(Action 122.1) Councillor Ejiofor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Ejiofor referred to the difference in attainment for black children and asked whether this was across the whole Borough or in specific areas. This had been raised when discussing the last report, but no information had been provided. It was agreed that this analysis would be provided. (Action 122.2) Councillor Ejiofor • Information was requested on 'Link Officers'. (Action 122.3) Councillor Waters • The East-West gap has been of concern in the past, with schools in the West of the borough achieving more 5 GCSE A-C passes than schools in the East of the borough. The gap has been closing over the past few years, although further support was required to close the gap further. • The topic of Scrutiny Panels being introduced was raised and it was suggested that the achievements of Looked After Children could be looked at in more detail, as could the impact of school improvements on a local area. <p>RESOLVED that the report be noted and the actions above be reported back to Committee Members.</p>
<p>OSCO123.</p>	<p>REVIEW REPORT: MEN'S HEALTH</p> <p>At this point in the meeting, the Chair passed the Chairmanship to the Vice-Chair for consideration of this item, and briefly vacated the meeting.</p> <p>RECEIVED the report on Men's Health as introduced by the Vice-Chair. The review looked at the life expectancy gap and made recommendations to improve this.</p> <p>NOTED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to technical issues, a short video could not be played to the Committee. A link to the video can be found here - http://vimeo.com/39963402 • Melanie Ponomarenko - Senior Policy Officer (Scrutiny) – informed the Committee that a short paragraph needed to be included within the report and a revised version would be circulated to Committee members. • Councillor Winskill thanked all who worked on the review for their hard work. <p>RESOLVED to approve the report and recommendations to be taken forward to Cabinet and other appropriate bodies.</p>
<p>OSCO124.</p>	<p>REVIEW REPORT: MISSING CHILDREN</p> <p>The Chair returned to the meeting and resumed chairmanship.</p> <p>RECEIVED the report as introduced by Councillor Alexander. The review was set up in light of a recommendation of the Scrutiny Review of Corporate Parenting in response to concerns that were raised in respect of missing children during the course of the review.</p> <p>NOTED the following points of discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual Corporate Parenting report would be available for Councillors in late Summer/early Autumn. • Councillor Ejiofor highlighted the recommendation of the review that

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	<p>additional capacity to carry out return home interviews be commissioned. Debbie Haith - Deputy Director Children & Families – explained that this was being explored, and Barnados had been commissioned to carry out the interviews. A full response would be given to each recommendation in the review update report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was suggested that further work was required in terms of integrated reporting between services. These links could help to identify patterns / potential issues. <p>RESOLVED that the report be approved and the recommendations noted.</p>
<p>OSCO125.</p>	<p>FEEDBACK FROM CHAIRS OF AREA COMMITTEES</p> <p>NOTED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HMOs were raised as an issue at the Muswell Hill, Alexandra, Fortis Green and Highgate Area Forum – further clarification had been requested on what procedures were in place for reporting unlicensed HMOs and what actions could be expected. • The Pay & Display review was raised at the Crouch End, Hornsey and Stroud Green Area Forum – there were concerns from both residents and Ward Councillors with regards to the lack of consultation. The Chair suggested that a letter be sent to the Cabinet Member for Environment requesting that the review be suspended until local traders and residents have been given the opportunity to comment. A copy of the scoping document for the desk-top review would also be requested. (Action 125.1) <i>Councillor Winskill / Chair</i> • Young people complained of bullying in schools at the West Green and Bruce Grove Area Forum – it was suggested that this could be a good subject for a future Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel. • Fortnightly waste collections were a general issue across the Area Forums – concerns over overflowing bins, lack of education about the scheme and a lack of feedback on where the scheme had already been introduced.
<p>OSCO126.</p>	<p>NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p><u>Communication with Members on child protection issues and Member ‘need to know’</u></p> <p>Councillor Winskill addressed the Committee to raise concerns over late / little communication with Members, particularly in relation to the recent press coverage of a child protection case where a briefing was only provided to Members after the Daily Mail had published an article. Assurances were sought that all Members would receive advanced briefings and be kept up to date with issues concerning the Local Authority.</p> <p>The Chief Executive responded to the Committee and explained that he had not been made aware of the case until the article was due to be published in the Daily Mail – this was because the Children’s Services team had been dealing with the case in the proper manner and although the case was complex, it was not thought that this case should be singled out for a briefing over the rest of the caseload. The Chief Executive also pointed out that Members had been alerted</p>

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	<p>on the Thursday, and the article published the day after. He informed the Committee that the Judge had not referred to the Authority whilst summing up, although the journalist had stated that he had.</p> <p>Councillor Reece addressed the Committee and echoed Councillor Winskill's concerns. She added that it was important that Members were briefed on issues so that they in turn could respond to concerns from their constituents.</p> <p>The Chair agreed that Members could not expect a briefing on every case, but reminded officers that it was important that Members' were considered and essential briefings were provided. He added that if the Children's Scrutiny Panel was introduced in the next Municipal Year then that would be best placed to receive reports on cases and ensure that Members' 'need to know' was being considered and applied.</p>
OSCO127.	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>NOTED that outstanding actions needed to be chased and reported back to the Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 6 February 2012 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting.</p>
OSCO128.	<p>FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <p>The Chair thanked all Committee members and officers for their hard work over the past year.</p> <p>NOTED the provisional date of the next meeting as 23 July 2012.</p>

COUNCILLOR GIDEON BULL

Chair