

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON Monday, 30th November, 2015, 7.06 - 9.10 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Charles Wright (Chair), Pippa Connor (Vice-Chair), Kirsten Hearn and Adam Jogee

Also Attending: Kathryn Booth (Policy and Equalities Officer), Martin Bradford (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Jim Brady (Service Manager, Revenue and Benefits Team), Jeanelle De Gruchy (Director of Public Health), Tracie Evans (Chief Operating Officer), Christian Scade (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Natalie Layton (Clerk)

Observing: Councillors Gideon Bull, Peray Ahmet, Sheila Peacock and Anne Stennett for agenda item 8 (Benefits Reform).

55. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein'.

56. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ayisi, Yvonne Denny and Kefale Taye.

57. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Connor declared a general personal interest (not specifically related to any items on the agenda) by virtue of her sister working as a GP in Tottenham.

59. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

RECEIVED the following questions from Lauritz Hansen-Bay concerning neighbourhood watch and the community:

- a. What is the Council's policy on neighbourhood watch with regard to community safety?
The Council has financially supported Neighbourhood Watch over the last four years. During this time Neighbourhood watch has been strengthened and expanded to incorporate parks, allotments and local open spaces. It serves as

a valuable intelligence gathering and communication vehicle on a variety of issues. The Council plans to continue to support this in the future at least within the remainder of the current Medium Term Financial Strategy.

- b. Has the Council consolidated with the Police and Haringey's community on the future of neighbourhood watch?
The police have an on ongoing review of Police resources as part of their planned budget savings and have identified this post at risk. The council has been in discussion with the Police to confirm the councils position and commitment to future funding.
- c. If the link officer for Haringey neighbourhood watch was made redundant who would do this job?
The council and the police share responsibilities for community safety and would need to achieve the joint community safety outcomes in a different way.

Tracie Evans, Chief Operating Officer recognised the importance of the community safety network and confirmed that there were no current plans to make the neighbourhood watch link officer post redundant . Written responses to the questions raised would be provided after the meeting.

ACTION: CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Post Meeting Note – responses shown in italics

60. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2015 were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

61. MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL MEETINGS

RECEIVED the minutes of the following Scrutiny Panel meetings:

- a. Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel, 5 October 2015

NOTED the minutes of the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel held on 5 October 2015.

- b. Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel, 5 November 2015

NOTED the minutes and recommendations of the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel held on 5 November 2015 (page 27). Since the recommendations were drafted, the Outcome of Consultation and a decision on proposals relating to adult services had been taken by the Cabinet at its meeting on 10 November 2015.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the feedback to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, referred to in the report, be noted;

- (ii) the recommendations ((b) on page 27 of the Adults and Social Care minutes, 5 November 2015) be noted;
- (iii) the recommendations not be taken forward as the Cabinet had already considered the issues raised at its meeting on the 10th November 2015. The Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel would continue to monitor implementation of the changes to adults services going forward.
- c. Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel, 13 October 2015
- NOTED the minutes of the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel, 13 October 2015.
- d. Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel, 13 October 2015
- NOTED the minutes of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel, 13 October 2015.

62. WELFARE REFORM

RECEIVED the report on the impact of welfare reform, including Universal Credit and Benefits Cap, introduced by Jim Brady (Service Manager, Revenue and Benefits Team) as laid out in the report (pages 49-56).

NOTED that

- a. it was unlikely that Haringey would be included in tranche 1 of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) digital programme for housing benefit payments;
- b. the Council would work with DWP to assist transition to universal credits;
- c. in response to questions:
- *about IT problems (10)* – if the Council was invited to move to the digital programme a back-up system would be in place to manage any potential collapse of the Government’s system. There would be a slow transfer to this system by groups of benefit recipients;
 - *about who was meant by ‘vulnerable claimants’*: the term did not refer to specific groups but could include those who did not have access to the internet or those with disabilities;
 - *about local independent agencies/ voluntary groups available to support people*: the Council worked with HAVECO and would ensure communication between HAVECO and DWP;
 - *about people affected by the benefit cap*: large families were hit hardest by the cap. This group had high rents and already received a large amount of funding from the state. Families would be further affected when the benefits threshold reduced to £23,000.
 - *about people having to move out of the Borough into cheaper accommodation*: the Council would support residents through discretionary housing payments if they wished to stay in the Borough and if they were engaging with the housing benefits team. This, however, was not a sustainable strategy;

- *about the use of Council reserves:* housing benefit was not expected to exceed budget by a large amount but it would be one of the many areas of overspend covered by earmarked reserves. The Committee were reminded that overspend projections were contained within the Budget Report (second dispatch) [here](#) presented at the last meeting;
- d. Councillor Hearn expressed concern that some groups might be opposed to being referred to as vulnerable. She suggested that an equalities impact assessment be conducted to establish a list of people at risk;
- e. Jim Brady explained that the expectation would be on the DWP to be more explicit about the groups they wanted local authorities to engage with;
- f. Councillor Gideon Bull drew the Committee's attention to previous work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Benefits Take Up and Bedroom Tax. He urged the Committee to review the recommendations that had been made in previous reviews, particularly in relation to Benefit take up;
- g. *in response to Councillor Bull's request:* the Council had not run a benefits take up campaign for some time but the Revenue and Benefits Team engaged with residents to assist with access to benefits;
- e. the Welfare Reform Club had been commissioned to investigate the cumulative impact of the welfare reform. A report was expected in December and an action plan would be developed and could be reported to the Committee in the future.

ACTION: KATHERYN BOOTH

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report.

63. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS - CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABILITY

a. Cabinet Member questions

RECIEVED a verbal update from the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Social Inclusion and Sustainability, Councillor Joe Goldberg on his portfolio areas.

i. Carbon Emissions

NOTED that

- A. Haringey was a leading London borough in the reduction carbon and the Borough's growth in population compared to its carbon emissions demonstrated success;
- B. the smarter homes project had been successful in improving energy efficiency;
- C. large homes in the wealthy areas of the Borough were a concern and needed investment to become more efficient;
- D. the Tottenham Hotspur Football Club development would include an energy centre to supply heat to the stadium and local estates;
- E. in response to questions:
 - Haringey's schools were all at 45% carbon emission levels. The Council provided sustainable investment funds (SIF) to

implement energy efficiency measures. The SIF was used to make Haringey's swimming pool pumps more efficient;

- the procurement team would be requested to provide numbers of schools which had taken up SIF funding;

ACTION: COUNCILLOR GOLDBERG

- the way energy would be generated to new homes built as part of the Tottenham regeneration project was a concern to the Cabinet Member. Solar panels should be supported to generate some energy, decentralised energy was a better idea but not the Council had not adopted the technology to support this. Low carbon buildings were not aesthetically pleasing with small windows and no baths so that residents consumed less water);
- expectations of developers and the Mayor of London were clear and the Council and Planning Committee were responsible for ensuring policies relating to energy efficiency were followed. Fines could be imposed if developers did not meet the requirements;
- whilst recycling was not within the Cabinet Member's remit he recognised the role that fewer weekly waste collections played in reducing emissions;
- the community could be encouraged to reduce carbon emissions with the provision of more electric vehicle charging points, making the Borough more cycle friendly and more pedestrian friendly. The 40:20 initiative was created to change behaviour and attitudes and communities were able to apply funds towards community initiatives to improve awareness. Partners including 21 Century Homes in Highgate, voluntary sector organisations and the N10 energy co-operative have conducted some good work in educating the community.

RESOLVED to note the successes achieved through the 40:20 Ambition programme.

b. Economic Development

- i. the economic growth paper aimed to create 20,000 local jobs by 2030 and ensure that local residents had the skills for these jobs;
- ii. the Opportunity Investment Fund (OIF) for Tottenham subsidised small businesses setting up in unused spaces;
- iii. Chicken Town and the Fashion and Technical College(FTA) Academy (the only manufacturing college in Europe) were among four pilot schemes through the OIF and further projects were in progress;
- iv. the Council provided opportunities to increase the skills of 16-24 year olds and enable their employability. This initiative was supported by some large businesses;
- v. an apprenticeship drive in March 2015 resulted in 130 apprenticeships being agreed (the target had been 100);

- vi. the next stage would be to replicate the economic growth offer in Wood Green and ensure the infrastructure for transport and broadband was in place;
- vii. the Council gave charities 100% business rate subsidies the same offer could be used to encourage non charitable businesses to the Borough's high streets for a limited amount of time.

RESOLVED to note the successful economic growth work of the Council.

Clerk's note: 20:25hrs Cllr Jogee left the meeting and returned at 20:27hrs

c. Social Inclusion

RECEIVED the report on Social Inclusion (pages 57-60) introduced by Jeanelle de Gruchy, Director of Public Health and Lead officer for A Fair and Equal Borough, and the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Social Inclusion and Sustainability, Councillor Joe Goldberg

NOTED that

- i. the Haringey Stat had considered key areas of concern for social inclusion and explored the definition of social inclusion and what drives exclusion with the aim of developing areas in the corporate plan to reduce inequalities;
- ii. exclusion disadvantaged a person through a life time (where they were not getting the best start in life);
- iii. it was often specific groups who were excluded and there was a strong link between poverty and deprivation. Haringey's figures for poverty were improving in line with London although some areas such as Northumberland Park showed little improvement;
- iv. it was recognised that the Committee's and Panels' work programmes already comprised inclusion element such as early years and youth transition;
- v. scrutiny of social inclusion to assist with finding solutions to reduce inequalities and social exclusion;
- vi. in response to questions:
 - the work on social inclusion would not seek to replicate the Equalities Impact Assessments (EQIAs) which already took place in other areas of the Council. These were informative and assisted to set the brief for action to be taken to reduce inequalities;
 - a clear definition of what social inclusion looked like in Haringey was key including temporary accommodation, diversity, ethnic group exclusion;
- vii. successes included reduced teenage pregnancy improved data,
- viii. the Committee suggested the following areas be considered in future work programming:
 - main social inclusion indicators to be considered by the Panels;

ACTION: CABINET MEMBER/ KATHRYN BOOTH

- poor outcomes for people in the Campsbourne area;
 - what worked well in other boroughs and lessons learnt;
 - what drove people to leave Haringey;
 -
- ix. officers supported suggestions to look at case studies and geographical areas, learning from successes and delving deeper into specific areas where there was less evidence;
- x. the Committee was encouraged to think about how particular groups were being further included and equalities were reducing in their current work plans.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report and to work with officers to focus the work programme for 2015/16 and scoping areas to add value to the Council's approach to social inclusion.

64. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

65. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

RECEIVED the scrutiny work programme update report (pages 61-92).

NOTED that

- a. the recommendations from three completed scrutiny projects, agreed by the Committee in October, would be presented to Cabinet in December 2015;
- b. member training on monitoring performance was being arranged;
- c. the item on Customer Service Transformation had been deferred from the meeting on 25th of January to the 8th of March 2016;
- d. an update on previous scrutiny projects on the bedroom tax and benefits would be provided at the meeting on the 8th of March 2016;
- e. the Environment and Community Safety Panel had agreed to scrutinise the issue of crime in Haringey's parks and the wider element of the pressures facing the Police;
- f. the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Peter Morton would be invited to engage with the Committee on the co-design of future adult social care;

ACTION: CHAIR & CHRISTIAN SCADE

- g. the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel was progressing with the youth transition project. There had been difficulties in gathering evidence particularly from schools. A final report was expected to be presented to the Committee early in 2016.

RESOLVED to note the proposed scrutiny work programme for the remainder of the municipal year and the updates detailed above.

66. FUTURE MEETINGS

NOTED the following dates:

- Thursday 17 December 2015
- Monday 25 January 2016
- Tuesday 8 March 2016

CHAIR: Councillor Charles Wright

Signed by Chair

Date