

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on Monday 8 April 2019 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Bill Williams (Chair)
Councillor Maria Linforth-Hall
Councillor Humaira Ali
Councillor Peter Babudu
Councillor Victor Chamberlain
Councillor Tom Flynn
Councillor Jon Hartley
Councillor Margy Newens
Councillor Jason Ochere

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Rebecca Lury - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Equalities and Communities
Councillor Jasmine Ali - Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Adult Care
Councillor Johnson Situ - Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning
Councillor Barrie Hargrove - Chair of the Healthy Communities Scrutiny Commission

OFFICER SUPPORT: Norman Coombe - Head of Corporate Team
Shelley Burke – Head of Overview & Scrutiny
Fitzroy Williams – Scrutiny Officer
Fiona Dean – Director of Leisure
Rebecca Towers – Interim Director of Leisure
Stephen Douglass – Director of Communities
Nine Genieve Lawlor – ?
Jay Stickland – Director of Adult Social Care
Kevin Fenton – Strategic Director, Place and Wellbeing
Alistair Hugget - Planning Projects Manager

1. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

2.1 There were none.

2. APOLOGIES

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alice MacDonald, Helen Dennis and Mr Martin Brecknell.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

3.1 There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

4. INTERVIEW OF DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE - COUNCILLOR REBECCA LURY

4.1 Councillor Rebecca Lury attended the committee for her annual scrutiny interview - her portfolio is Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Culture. The chair invited her to give the committee an overview of her role and to answer members' questions.

4.2 Councillor Lury gave an update on the following area of her portfolio::

- The Cabinet agreed in March 2019 a budget of £500,000 over the next three years for 20,000 primary school children to receive free visits yearly to theatres within Southwark.
- Free swimming lessons for Southwark residents, starting a pilot programme September 2019 which will target key groups who had never swum before and to roll out a 12 week programme for them to learn how to swim.
- Library and Heritage strategy was agreed in January 2019 - we have looked at libraries being open when our residents need them and is aimed at books, work space and community events. Particularly looking at heritage and our new library in Walworth Heritage Centre which should be ready by the end of the year and the new library in Grove Vale which opened earlier this year. There is also a commitment for £1 million over the next 4 years from the London Devolution Deal money and business rate pool to maintain current library hours.
- Events in Parks: the ambition for the events team is to be self financing, we have come close this year in bringing in the right amount of money and are currently conducting a review including a public consultation that is open for people to comment on how the events programme works. Gala and Alice in Winterland were the first two events we had held in our parks to try and generate income. We have the highest number of green flag parks ever, and have opened Peckham Rye and Leyton Square playgrounds in the last year. We have also obtained an extra £500,000 for adventure playgrounds and opened the Mint Street adventure playground. There had also been a lot of work on the football pitches in Burgess and Brimington Park and the service is trying to get match funding to help with costs.
- Car Parking Charges in Parks: There is a consultation open at the moment; the key parks concerned are Burgess, Belair, Dulwich, Honor Oak, Peckham Rye and Southwark parks.
- Principles of Consultation and Engagement: presently working with officers on a set of principles that the Council can adopt. The report will be going to Cabinet later this month.
- Faith Strategy was published earlier this year.
- Common Purpose grant programme funding
- Community Councils: looking at a new structure and having discussions as well as considering the new boundary lines.

4.3 The committee asked questions about faith strategy and the role faith communities can play in tackling youth violence; the consultation on car parking in parks; how many voluntary & community organisations the cabinet member had met; was there a way to quantify the quality of the libraries; what was the council doing to promote LGBT spaces and safe places; trees causing damage to properties; improving engagement with hardest to reach communities; diversity standard; youth centres and equalities; whether lessons had been learned from the events held in parks; what was being done to promote unity in the borough; how will the council consult with the public on community council changes.

5. INTERVIEW OF CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN - COUNCILLOR JASMINE ALI

5.1 Councillor Jasmine Ali attended the committee for her annual scrutiny interview, her portfolio is Cabinet member for Children, Schools and Adults. The chair invited her to give the committee an overview of her role and to answer members questions.

5.2 Councillor Ali told the committee that there had been lots of external scrutiny this year, and highlighted the following areas ofsted focus visit on children in care, SEND review, ADASS peer review and all went well and undertook to will circulate feedback. Children's services there was strong and positive feedback on social workers way of working. Children safeguarding were working closely with partners and across the council. Launching keeping families strong initiative at the levels in Peckham and treating parents as experts. Parents said they want to form their own association. We were first local authority to pledge CAMHS support to all children with diagnosable mental health conditions. Scholarship programme. DSG deficit. Adult services have gone with the hub model. Older people's hub and disability hob, have organised training for councillors. Positive peer review. Gateway 1 on nursing homes. Growing mass of critical friends.

5.3 The committee asked questions about the review of SEND - how was the council mitigating the risks, what were the areas for improvement in adult services and what are the budget issues, corporate parenting, what improvements have there been.

5.4 The Committee asked questions relating to Housing needs for vulnerable adults - as things change in people's lives, how can the council help, what is the strategy on pensioner poverty, are the young people and CAMHS pledge achievable, ofsted reported quite a few areas for improvement, How can more members be involved in corporate parenting.

5.5 Cross party politics agreement required. Gender equality and sexuality teaching in schools. What are you doing with Southwark schools, services for people with HIV.

5.6 Members asked questions about London councils did not agree to full funding of access to Pret, what can we do for people with dementia who need to move house before their illness increases, school exclusions - Southwark has 4th highest rate in inner London, how are we working with academies, can we have some stats on exclusion, young people involved in drug dealing and police don't have resources to focus on it.

5.7 Members had visited children's centres and had lots of good to say about them. But cuts are showing - free fruit cut and children can no longer come with child minders/nannies. What can we do to maintain, any way to draw on the resources of the independent schools, Given they are charities and get business rate reductions, CAMHS target - how are we guarding against risk of unintended side effects, special guardianship -

how do we ensure parity of esteem with adopters/foster parents, what is the council doing for the parent who doesn't deem themselves expert, Vulnerable parents who don't feel skilled, how will you judge success, DSG - confident schools working together on the solutions,

6. ALLOCATION OF LOCAL COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY FUNDING - REPORT BACK

6.1 Councillor Johnson Situ welcomed the opportunity to report back on the Community Infrastructure Levy Funding report and recognised the call-in had sharpened up the process and proceeded to explain that this paper was not the final statement of position but a response to scrutiny recommendations. He reported that he was happy to bring it back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee before the final paper goes to Cabinet.

6.2 Members stated it would be useful to get more clarity on timescales and Ward boundaries and would appreciate a 1 side of A4 that explains what CIL is and what it can be spent on.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to place CIL on workplan for next year.

7. REDUCING HEALTH INEQUALITIES THROUGH COUNCIL SERVICES AND PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

7.1 Councillor Barrie Hargrove chair of the Healthy Communities Scrutiny Commission presented the report to the committee.

7.2 Members welcome and thanked the Chair as it was the only report from scrutiny commission and it was noted as a reflection on its effectiveness.

7.3 The Committee agreed to scale back recommendation 17.

RESOLVED: That the report was agreed as amended.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

8.1 The Chair with the agreement of the Committee:

RESOLVED: That the following items of business be added to the work programme for 2019/20.

1. CIL, district heating,

2. Potentially housing repairs

Meeting ended at 10.10 pm

CHAIR:

DATED: