



OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the meeting of the OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held on 9TH JUNE 2003 at 7.00 P.M. at the Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

PRESENT: Councillor Kim Humphreys (Chair)
Councillor Linda Manchester (Vice-Chair)
Councillors John Friary, Barrie Hargrove, Eliza Mann, Andy Simmons,
Neil Watson and Anne Yates

CO-OPTED MEMBER (VOTING) Mr Godson Agomuo (Elected Parent Governor Representative)

OFFICER SUPPORT Shelley Burke – Head of Scrutiny
Linda Campling - Head Of Strategic & Departmental Procurement, Environment & Leisure
Jon Horne – Corporate Strategy
Lucas Lundgren – Scrutiny Team
Lyn Meadows – Assistant Borough Solicitor
Kevin Peters – Senior Project Manager, Modernisation Team
Rachel Prosser – Borough Solicitor's Office
Maggie Sullivan – Corporate Strategy
David Wallis - Early Years, After School & Play Services Manager

ALSO PRESENT Natalia Sali – Assistant Director, Southwark Community Care Forum
Angela Stanworth – Director, Southwark Community Care Forum

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Mrs Josie Spanswick.

CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

The Members listed as being present were confirmed as the Voting Members.

NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS AS URGENT

The Chair agreed to accept the following items as late and urgent for the reasons set out in the reports, i.e.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of interests made nor dispensations notified.

RECORDING OF MEMBERS' VOTES

Council Procedure Rule 1.17(5) allows a Member to record her/his vote in respect of any motions and amendments. Such requests are detailed in the following Minutes. Should a Member's vote be recorded in respect to an amendment, a copy of the amendment may be found in the Minute File and is available for public inspection.

The Committee considered the items set out on the agenda, a copy of which has been incorporated in the Minute File. Each of the following paragraphs relates to the item bearing the same number on the agenda.

MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Open minutes of the meetings held on 16th April, 19th and 21st May 2003 be agreed and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

VARIATION OF AGENDA ORDER

The Chair gave notice of variation of the published order of business, taking into account the deputation request in respect of Item 4. Accordingly the deputation request in respect of Item 4 was considered at the start of the meeting, followed by Items 4, 2, the briefing on individual decision making and Contract Standing Orders, items 3 and 5.

4. EARLY YEARS BEST VALUE REVIEW: IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS (see pages 40-71 & 86-89)

The Committee agreed to receive representations from the Director of Southwark Community Care Forum (SCCF) in respect of this item, a copy of which is on the Minute File. An addendum to the officer report and written copy of SCCF's representation were circulated to those present.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That Overview & Scrutiny Committee requests that the Executive and the Borough's three Members of Parliament lobby the government for improvements in the administration of tax credits, and highlight the difficulties being experienced by both community and Council-run nurseries in administering this policy.
 2. That Overview & Scrutiny Committee notes with concern that children have already been withdrawn from community nurseries by their parents as a result of fee increases and asks the Executive to take action to address this.
 3. That Overview & Scrutiny Committee notes that the Council's anti-poverty work is in danger of being undermined by the withdrawal of children from nurseries.
 4. Overview & Scrutiny Committee requests that the next report back on the implementation of the Early Years Best Value review focus in more detail on affordability.
 5. Overview & Scrutiny Committee notes that report-backs will be made to the Executive in October 2003 and February 2004, and asks officers to bring this information to scrutiny in advance of these dates.

2. **FINAL REPORT: DRAFT ENTERPRISE STRATEGY AND EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY [FROM HOUSING & REGENERATION SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE]**

The former Chair of Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee presented the final report from this Sub-Committee. Members considered the final report and agreed the recommendations as amended below, i.e.

RESOLVED: That the following recommendations be referred to the Executive, i.e.

“That, in respect of the draft Enterprise Strategy, Members felt that the draft Enterprise Strategy document does not make clear enough that this is a work-in-progress, a vision statement and a map of what is currently being undertaken. Members consider it needs to make explicit that during the first year there are essential initial tasks which need to be undertaken so that the Southwark Alliance can determine whether or not the aims of the Strategy are being met.

We recommend that a specific section be inserted into the Draft Enterprise Strategy document stating this and describing these tasks.

We recommend that initial tasks should include:

1. That further economic research be undertaken – to understand the local economy and the contribution of local business activity to wealth creation, jobs and sustainability to establish a baseline position;
2. That realistic, useful, challenging and relevant performance measures and evaluation mechanisms in respect of enterprise support provision within the borough should be devised;
3. That the Council’s provision/service should be comprehensively mapped;
4. That communication between businesses and other partners requires improvement;
5. That different approaches to town centre management - appropriate to the specific location within the borough in question - should be explored and followed;
6. That provision for young people should be an early priority.

That in respect of both the Enterprise Strategy and the Employment Strategy:

7. Members recommend that the Regeneration Department produce a document that articulates the Council’s vision of its own role and responsibilities as a key partner in

supporting the Enterprise and Employment Strategies;

8. Members recommend that one such key role for the Council is to ensure the provision of a comprehensive, central and properly updated reference point for use by those seeking information on enterprise and employment in the borough;
9. Members recommend the Southwark Alliance be asked to give consideration to providing a “one-stop-shop” to inform residents about the initiatives of all its partners;
10. That the lack of reference within both strategies to the recently established Community Councils be addressed.”
11. That the Executive report back to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in six months time.

MEMBER BRIEFING: INDIVIDUAL DECISION MAKING & CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS (1-12 & 91-95)

The Head of Strategic & Departmental Procurement and a representative from Corporate Strategy gave briefings on individual decision making and proposed changes to Contract Standing Orders respectively, and together with a representative from the Borough Solicitor’s Office responded to Member questions.

Having discussed the matter Members requested the following additional information for the July 2003 meeting, i.e.

- Officers to invite representative from London Borough of Hillingdon [a politically finely balanced authority] to OSC in July 2003 – in particular to discuss the way in which they deal with key decisions;
- Officers to provide further advice about whether a called-in individual decision where reconsideration is recommended should be referred back to full Executive or only to the individual Executive Member;
- Examples of arrangements for individual decision-making operating in other authorities were requested [e.g. arrangements for taking decisions on set days etc];
- Further ideas about how to improve Forward Plan [including general exception notices] should be brought forward for Member discussion;
- Officers to invite the Chair of Westminster City Council’s Scrutiny Overview Committee to discuss the way in which that authority managed risks associated with letting of their Customer Call Centre contract; and
- Officers to invite a Newham Council representative to share their experiences in respect of points 1)-11) of the CSO briefing paper.

3. CONSIDERATION OF SCRUTINY BUSINESS FOR FORTHCOMING MUNICIPAL YEAR 2003/04

The Head of Scrutiny gave a presentation to Members, a copy of which can be found on the Minute File. The Modernisation Team Senior Project Manager made a short presentation on the Customer Service Centre project, a copy of which is on the Minute File.

The Office for Public Management session with Members had been arranged for Monday 30th June 2003 at Charter School, with the start time to be confirmed.

RESOLVED:

1. The Head of Scrutiny to report back to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in September 2003 on outstanding responses to scrutiny recommendations/reports from OSC and its Sub-Committees, and to continue to develop a means of tracking and monitoring decisions arising from scrutiny.
2. That as part of the work programming for each scrutiny Sub-Committee the business outlined in the Head of Scrutiny's presentation be considered together with the following supplemental information, i.e.

Education, Youth & Leisure: no further additional information.

Environment & Community Support:

- progress on litter/dog fouling/fly tipping: Members to receive an update on action via general audit of scrutiny decisions already requested;
- Alternatives to landfill: this issue to be incorporated into wider review of waste management;
- Community Councils: the community involvement aspects to be dealt with by Environment & Community Support Scrutiny Sub-Committee – possible amendments to be made to TORs by OSC to reflect this.

Finance & Economic Development:

- Community Councils: community involvement aspects to be dealt with by Environment & Community Support Scrutiny Sub-Committee – possible amendments to be made to TORs by OSC to reflect this.

Health & Social Care:

- Sub-Committee Chair suggested a future joint scrutiny review to focus on Children's services

Housing:

- Co-optees: Sub-Committee to reconsider appointment of co-optees;
- Tenants Halls: issue to be added to list

Regeneration & Transport:

- Unitary Development Plan: second draft on deposit anticipated October 2003, and set to include reference to scrutiny input into UDP process.

5. SCRUTINY DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2002/03: MAKING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK (see pages 72-85 & 90)

RESOLVED:

1. That the Chair of each scrutiny Sub-Committee consider the draft Annual Scrutiny Report, recommend any changes to the Head of Scrutiny – for incorporation into the draft report to be

brought back to OSC in July 2003 for final agreement.

2. That the Office for Public Management's [OPM] recent evaluation of the scrutiny function be reflected with greater emphasis in the scrutiny Annual Report.
3. That a further copy of the OPM report be emailed to all Overview & Scrutiny Committee Members.

The meeting ended at 10.10 p.m.

CHAIR:

DATED: