

## **EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LEISURE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the Education, Children's Services and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on Wednesday 12 September 2012 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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**PRESENT:** Councillor David Hubber (Chair)  
Councillor The Right Revd Emmanuel Oyewole (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Columba Blango  
Councillor Sunil Chopra  
Councillor Rowenna Davis  
Councillor Rosie Shimell  
Colin Elliott  
Leticia Ojeda  
Lynn Charlton

**OTHER MEMBERS** Councillor Veronica Ward

**PRESENT:**

**OFFICER** Deborah Collins; Strategic Director of Environment and Leisure  
**SUPPORT:** Rory Patterson; Deputy Director, Specialist Children's Services  
Merril Haeusler; Deputy Director of Children's Services –  
Education  
Colin Gale; Free Healthy School Meals Project Lead  
Julie Timbrell; Scrutiny Project manager

### **1. APOLOGIES**

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cleo Soanes; Councillor Althea Smith attended as a substitute. Councillors Columba Blango and Rowenna Davis gave their apologies and left before the end of the meeting.

**2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT**

2.1 There were none.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

3.1 There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

**4. MINUTES**

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of 10 July 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

**5. SWIMMING POOL PROVISION**

5.1 This item was covered under the item 7, the cabinet member interview, as one the themes.

**6. OLYMPIC LEGACY**

6.1 This item was covered under the item 7, the cabinet member interview, as one the themes.

**7. CABINET MEMBER INTERVIEWS: COUNCILLOR VERONICA WARD**

7.1 The chair welcomed Councillor Veronica Ward, Cabinet member for culture, leisure, sport, the Olympics and regeneration (South), to the committee for her annual cabinet member interview on the six themes set by the committee :

- a. What is the swimming pool provision for the communities in our borough?
- b. Given the contributions made by Southwark residents, both in financial terms and in their acceptance of inconvenience, do you believe that Southwark has benefited from the 2012 Olympics as much as it could or should have?

- c. What do you think will be Southwark's lasting legacy from the 2012 Olympics?
- d. Do you have any policies in mind for keeping up the momentum of enthusiasm for sport and physical activity particularly amongst young people in Southwark?
- e. Are you satisfied with the current operation of Surrey Docks Water sports Centre?
- f. Could you give the sub-committee an update of progress on the various recommendations made in respect of library services by the former Regeneration scrutiny sub-committee?

7.2 The cabinet member introduced the first theme on Southwark's swimming pool provision and referred to the paper circulated under agenda item 5. A member of the committee commented that there is quite a lot of private provision available and asked if the council could make more use of this. He went on to note that he had heard of one case where an initiative, which planned to teach children swimming, had encountered difficulty getting planning permission. The cabinet member responded that the council is looking at making better use of swimming pools in schools.

7.3 A member commented that he had heard of faith groups needing to go outside the borough for baptism. Deborah Collins, Strategic Director for Environment and Leisure, confirmed that there is provision on Saturday afternoons for hiring out swimming pools for baptisms, parties or other uses. However, she noted that there is a huge pressure for pools to be used for triathlon, water polo and other sporting events and that limits private hire opportunities. She went on to comment that the report details both the significant investment the council has made and the rising demand for swimming and related activities.

7.4 The member responded that the council need to make provision for all aspects of the community under equal opportunities. The Strategic Director agreed with this but noted that the council needs to balance competing pressures; and that taking a pool out of use can stop many other groups accessing provision. She went to comment that the opportunity raised with private pools might offer a possible solution for baptisms and other uses.

7.5 A member asked for confirmation that there are four pools for the whole population. The cabinet member noted that Elephant and Castel has been given initial approval and that the outline design includes a six lane pool. The chair added that a pool at Canada Water is still a possibility.

- 7.6 It was noted by a member that the committee have received useful information on participation in the report; however, information on revenue generated would be helpful. Officers agreed to look into supplying this.
- 7.7 A member commented that there is a perception in some quarters that the Surrey Docks water sports are a nuisance, or at least not a core part of the sports offer. The cabinet member responded that a huge amount of work has been done promoting this facility, including the disability sailing offer by Tideway Sailability, and attendance had increased considerably. A member commented that Tideway have sometimes indicated that they feel that they cannot always access the water. The cabinet member emphasised her commitment to Tideway and reported that there is an ongoing discussion between Tideway and Fusion concerning access.
- 7.8 The chair asked the cabinet member to speak about the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics. The cabinet member introduced the theme by commenting that this had been a wonderful summer and that young people in particular have become very enthusiast about the Olympics and sports participation. The cabinet member went on to say it is early days to measure the benefits for Southwark in tangible outputs, and the council do not yet know if people are taking more exercise, and if more people with a disability are participating, however she reported that the council are gathering evidence for a report.
- 7.9 The cabinet member went onto to explain that Southwark's Olympic and Paralmpic vision delivery programme had five key themes and a legacy programme, which it delivered with little or no additional budget. The council received 2500 free tickets and these were distributed to the community. The cabinet member went on to note some of the highlights, which included the accessible riverside walk; the highest number of volunteers in London; the Olympic and Paralympic torch relay; half the population on the street; 200 staff to trained as hosts and a wonderful atmosphere. The cabinet member noted the engagement with businesses and traders, with a festival delivered by the House of Switzerland near Southwark cathedral. She noted that the Get Set Bulletin and Southwark Life themed edition were very popular.
- 7.10 The cabinet member referred to the Capital Legacy Fund. The disability hoist for Peckham Pulse is due soon and there is an ongoing focus on at looking at the barriers preventing disabled people from participating in sports throughout the legacy programme.
- 7.11 The Dance Map has mapped out provision and 10 community sports events took place around Southwark. Leisure Centres have noticed a 15 percent increase in participation and the Boundless

festival saw over 100 people attend an event at the Surrey Docks Water sports centre. The cabinet member reported that the pop up Olympics in the north of the borough was hugely popular and the council is now looking at extending this. London youth games also did well and sports clubs have reported more activity and the council is waiting for the full numbers. The Elephant and Nun festival had many activities including Sacrilege – a Stonehenge replica.

- 7.12 The cabinet member noted concerns around the loss of community and school sports funding and that further anticipated cuts would put more pressure on delivery of programmes. The chair asked if the cabinet member would be looking at local business to contribute to funding, particularly given the limitations posed by the available funding, and the cabinet member assured members that she would encourage this.
- 7.13 The chair then invited the committee to ask further questions and a member thanked the cabinet lead for managed to deliver such an exciting programme on limited or no budget. She then went on to ask how the council worked with volunteers and the details of the Peckham Pulse work to increase accessibility and for general refurbishment. The Cabinet member explained that money has been set aside for a disability hoist so that disabled people can attend general swimming pools and access the main pool, as well as the hydro pool, which already has a hoist. She went on to explain that there was a dedicated volunteer programme. Southwark Volunteer Centre is looking at ways of sustaining and developing volunteers, and the council has a programme in libraries. The Strategic Director said that the strategy was for two years and that are outcomes for this year and next year.
- 7.14 A member congratulated the cabinet member on her role in delivering one of the best Olympics ever. The member went on to request details of volunteers in Southwark who took part by categories such as age, sex, ethnicity, disability and where they live. He noted that information on leisure participation will be forthcoming and that it is likely to have increased, and went to say it would be good to know what activities have seen most participation so the council can judge what sports are most popular .
- 7.15 The Strategic Director reported that the council have a meeting with the Olympic legacy board and that this will gather evidence on the legacy. She commented that many of the things that have been boosted are important activities that we want to carry on. The Strategic Director noted that the council did not keep the gender, ethnicity, age, disability breakdown on volunteers, and so this data could not necessarily be provided.

- 7.16 A member asked how many tickets were given to officers and members and who benefitted. The cabinet member replied that the 2500 free tickets went to children and that cabinet members and officers who attended and purchased tickets themselves.
- 7.17 The cabinet member was asked how the council would respond to the increase in demand for sports and she replied that there are a list of community sports that the council would like to support. She went on to note that there is a different pattern of sports that young people want to do and so the council need to try and make sure a diverse pattern can be made available. She explained that the council would need to rethink community games given potential budget cuts and the importance of using resources carefully, however sessions will continue on the ground.
- 7.18 A member commented that working with the business and voluntary sector is important part developing sports capacity and asked if the council encouraged sports role models to visit young people and local clubs. The cabinet member assured the committee that she agreed with this approach and that the business and voluntary clubs had been involved in delivery of Southwark's Olympic and Paralympic strategy.
- 7.19 A member of the committee emphasised that sports need to be considered in the context of personal development, community cohesion increasing community capacity. The cabinet member assured the committee that the emphasis is on delivering in that broad sports holistic context and that there is a focus on personal skills, confidence, accessibility and building community cohesion.
- 7.20 The chair then asked the Cabinet member about the last theme; an update on progress on the various recommendations made in respect of library services by the former Regeneration scrutiny sub-committee. The cabinet member drew the committee's attention to a written briefing that she had prepared in advance of the meeting. It was agreed this would be circulated to members [this is attached to the minutes]. The chair thanked the cabinet member for her interview.

## **8. REVIEW OF UNIVERSAL FREE HEALTHY SCHOOL MEALS**

- 8.1 The chair welcome Jillian Pitt; Nutrition and Health Advisor, and Claire Everette; Commissioning Manager London, from Food for Life who went through the presentation [attached to the minutes].
- 8.2 They reported that Food for Life has been going for over 5 years and is Big Lottery Funded. Garden organic is a partner and this introduces children to growing food. Foods for Life are aiming for half of all schools to be in the programme by 2020. Michael Grove commissioned the fast food producer Leon to work on healthy food.
- 8.3 Channel 4 dispatches television programme reported that all meals were getting worse because Academies are not required to conform to the same food standard as Local Authority maintained schools. This highlights the fear that Academies will not choose to meet these standards. However, Food for Life reported that many Academies were, however some were not. The presenters expressed disappointment that the Gold Flag of one provider was not focused on in the Dispatches programme.
- 8.4 The Nutrition and Health Advisor reported that there is a perception of cost, however she thinks the additional cost is worth it. Some parents think that they can provide lunch at a lower cost but there is a question of nutrient needs being met in packed lunches. A hot meal is also important. Farmers think that you can deliver organic food at the same cost if the economies of scale are met.
- 8.5 The Food for Life programme is not just about nutritional standards; the programme has a holistic approach to health. The synergies with food and exercise were highlighted, and Food for Life reported that they have a close working partnership with MIND and Sustains.
- 8.6 Foods for Life have an emphasis in local partnership. The presenters said there had been a shift and that people are keen to take up this initiative. The project emphasises the social experience – and that they promote the use of knives and forks and sensual involvement. Some schools have chickens and goats and utilise the grounds to grow food, even in deprived areas. They reported that some schools encourage parents to grow and sell food on Friday.
- 8.7 Food for Life encourages a place and time for pupils and parents to

be engaged and contribute. They reported that senior management and caterers are very important to drive the initiative forward.

- 8.8 The funding strategy is to get mainstream funding. Food for Life is also finding support from hospitals. They reported that the project is benefiting from a health and well-being focus on tackling obesity, reducing diabetes and other related health conditions.
- 8.9 An academic review demonstrated the positive impacts and the programmes is seeing an increase in vegetable consumption and a reduction in poor diet - both children and adults are increasing fruit and vegetable consumption by 40% as a result of the programme.
- 8.10 Locally Surrey Squares is a silver award and working to gold, with school lunches featuring apple crumble made from school grown apples.
- 8.11 The chair thanked Food for Life for the presentation and invited members to ask questions. A member asked how many schools are locked into a catering contract. Nutrition and Health Advisor responded that this is an issue, and that some are locked in. Colin Gale, Free Healthy School Meals Project Lead, explained that in Southwark 14 of our primary schools are using the Food for Life programme and that he is promoting it. He commented that members have visited a number of schools that would easily get the bronze award. He explained that all contracts delegated to individual schools and that some of the main contractors are Food for Life.
- 8.12 A member queried whether inner city schools had the space to grow food. Food for Life explained that there are opportunities to be creative and there is a partnership with Garden Organic. Food for Life commented that that if there is a will there is a way, and sometimes local partnerships can help find resources. Roof gardens are being used in schools and that works very well.
- 8.13 The clinical evidence for an impact on obesity was asked about. Food for Life responded that the academic study has focused on primary schools. There is a holistic approach which the evidence shows can have most impact. It is hard to say there is a direct affect on obesity - however they are looking at the child measurement programme and developing a framework, as the programme does need to be able to demonstrate to commissioners the value of the work.
- 8.14 The Headteacher representative commented that her school has found that it has a good effect on behaviours and that her school grows food on a very small amount of land.



- 8.15 A member said that expanding the awareness of healthy eating is very welcome. He went on to comment that the diversity of food is sometimes lacking in schools and raised concerns about the range of food on offer, and noted that this is sometimes limited, particularly given diverse communities in Southwark. Food for Life responded that they are not sure that it is limited and pointed out menus are usually on a three week cycle. Schools also often have theme days.
- 8.16 The Nutrition and Health Advisor said this highlights the importance of children's engagement, and that there is an opportunity for children to give feedback. She said that there usually there are a couple of options on the menu but there is a need to restrict option because of cost and the need to reduce wastage. The member said he thought a diversity of menu options important and officers explained that there is diversity over the menu cycle. A member noted that John Donne had held taster days and that these had helped expand the children's enjoyment of a wider range of food, and that there was a high level of children and parental involvement in developing the menus. Food for Life and Colin Gale agreed this was best practice and that some schools did this but others did not, and that this is something that both would like to see increasing.

## **9. REVIEW ON BULLYING**

- 9.1 The chair welcomed Merril Haeusler, Deputy Director of Children's Services -Education. The Deputy Director noted the scrutiny report completed in 2007, which was circulated with the agenda, and remarked that since then there has been significant change; now schools are responsible for their own bullying policies. She said that there is a good foundation for this shift in responsibilities given the existing good work. The Local Authority no longer receives funding for this work. Ofsted is one on the main systems of accountability. The inspectors always ask children if they know where to get help if they are being bullied. She reported that when she goes into schools bullying is taken very seriously by school councils.
- 9.2 The Deputy Director said that bullying is also on the school curriculum and part of a school's safeguarding role. She explained that there are a number of private companies that offer services - schools can choose those and do that with discretion. She concluded that anti bullying work was clearly a high priority during

2007 and she hopes the legacy is a system that schools can now take a leading role in delivering.

- 9.3 The chair invited questions and a member asked the Deputy Director if she could clarify that that this is no longer a statutory responsibility for the Local Authority. The Deputy Director said that there has been a major shift of responsibility to schools; however, the council maintains some high level responsibilities. Members asked for clarification, specifically what would the council do, and how would they be enforced? The Deputy Director said if they received a complaint from a parent then the council would act and follow up the issue. She said that although they do not have a statutory duty the council do have moral obligation.
- 9.4 The Headteacher representative commented that the Local Authority has done a lot of investment to enable schools to take up responsibility for tackling and reducing bullying. The Deputy Director commented that the Tool Kit is considered one of the best.
- 9.5 A member enquired how the council can be sure that schools are actually implementing their anti bullying policies effectively. The Deputy Director responded that Ofsted remains our overview and that they ask searching questions. She went on to say that the council still have people working in schools and that they would be asking these questions. The Deputy Director commented that we recently had a rigorous safeguarding inspection process - and the inspectors went into schools. The council received a 'good' report with 'outstanding' features.
- 9.6 The chair commented that children can be bullied because of difference – in care for example and remarked that he would like the committee to get the views of Southwark Youth Council, Speaker box and other perspectives. Members of the committee agreed and commented that bullying can be subtle.
- 9.7 An education representative commented that while Ofsted reports sometimes report on a school's implementation of anti bullying strategies helpfully and identify weakness, sometimes the reports give insufficient coverage.

## **10. REVIEW OF LOCAL AUTHORITY ROLE IN EDUCATION**

- 10.1 Merril Haeusler, Deputy Director of Children's Services – Education, commented that she understood that the committee are looking forward to a report for the following meeting. The chair confirmed that this was the case and commented that the committee intend to consider the governance arrangements now that that there is a shift towards academies and free schools. The

Deputy Director commented that her service believe that schools will still need support.

## **11. SAFEGUARDING**

- 11.1 The chair invited Rory Patterson, Deputy Director; specialist children's services, to present the Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services. The Deputy Director noted that Southwark Council had received a 'good' result with 'outstanding' features. He report that the service is pleased with that result, although of course they would have liked outstanding at every level.
- 11.2 The Deputy Director reported that inspectors talked many people including parents, children, social workers, partners and members. He commented that the report indicated that staff felt supported, which pleased the service. The Deputy Director emphasised that Southwark cannot rest on its laurels, because places like Sutton and Kingston have received inadequate reports.
- 11.3 He explained that Ofsted are moving to unannounced inspections. The next inspection is expected to be about children's journeys. He reported that that the inspectors noted the positive contribution made by this committee. The chair added that he had been interviewed by the inspectors.
- 11.4 The chair asked if Ofsted would still interview both cabinet and scrutiny members when they move to unannounced inspections. The Deputy Director confirmed that they would; for quality of ambition. The chair noted that the annual report and interview of the independent safeguarding chair is due in a few months time.

## **12. SOUTHWARK SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE**

- 12.1 The reported was noted.

## **13. WORKPLAN**

RESOLVED

A report will be requested reviewing projects supported by the Community Restoration Fund.

