

## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday 24 January 2023 at 7.00 pm at 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Ian Wingfield (Chair)  
Councillor Irina Von Wiese (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Suzanne Abachor  
Councillor Victor Chamberlain  
Councillor Jon Hartley  
Councillor Laura Johnson  
Councillor Sunny Lambe  
Councillor Margy Newens  
Councillor Jason Ochere  
Martin Brecknell (Co-opted Member)  
Marcin Jagodzinski (Co-opted Member)

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor Stephanie Cryan, Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities and Finance

**OFFICER SUPPORT:** Everton Roberts, Head of Scrutiny  
Allan Wells, Specialist Governance Lawyer

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ellie Cumbo and Leo Pollak.

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

There were no additional late items. The chair informed the meeting that a number of documents had been circulated to committee members in connection with the budget scrutiny process since the OSC meeting that had taken place on the preceding day, these were:

- Climate Change Budget 23/24 Cumulative Analysis
- Equalities and Human Rights Panel Feedback on Initial Cumulative Equality Analysis 2023/24

### 3. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

### 4. **MINUTES**

The head of scrutiny reported that the outstanding Minutes would be included in the next meeting agenda for approval.

### 5. **FORMULATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET ON THE POLICY AND RESOURCES STRATEGY 2023-24**

The committee heard further from Councillor Stephanie Cryan, Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities and Finance and Duncan Whitfield, Strategic Director of Finance and Governance.

The committee discussed the evidence gathered from the preceding day's scrutiny meeting, had regard to comments and advice from the cabinet member for communities, equalities and finance, and the strategic director of finance and governance and formulated their recommendations to be submitted to cabinet on the proposed policy and resources strategy.

#### **RESOLVED:**

#### **Recommendations relating to the budget scrutiny process**

##### Climate Change Impact Analysis

1. OSC notes that as part of the budget scrutiny process for 2022/23 it recommended that for the 2023-24 budget scrutiny process a more holistic approach is completed, similar to the line-by-line process for EQIA's, which seeks to quantify the climate impact of each budget measure (where appropriate).
2. OSC notes the climate change impact analysis document, but considers that the information contained within is not adequate, and was not circulated in a timely manner to enable OSC to properly consider or give weight to the climate change impact of the budget proposals. OSC recommends that a further fuller report including the methodology used and actual anticipated results is produced as soon as possible to enable impacts to be properly

factored into the rest of the budget setting process for 2023/24.

### Equalities and Human Rights Panel Feedback on the Cumulative Equality Analysis 2023-24

3. OSC notes the feedback from the Equalities and Human Rights Panel on the cumulative equality analysis for 2023-24, particularly around the analysis of the impacts on protected characteristics, and recommends that cabinet consider the content of the feedback document in the framing of the budget.
4. OSC recommends that cabinet invite the Equalities and Human Rights Panel to its next meeting in light of the concerns being raised by the panel.

### Timeliness of information being provided to OSC as part of the Budget Scrutiny Process

5. OSC notes the constrictions placed upon the council in preparing information on the budget in light of the timing of the announcement of the Local Government Settlement, but requests that the cabinet member and officers, endeavour to release as much information earlier where possible.

## **Recommendations relating to budget proposals**

### Health and Wellbeing Portfolio

6. Line 161 - That cabinet be requested to review the impact on users of the service and take mitigating actions into account.
7. Line 312 - That a full and further consultation be undertaken with the users of the respite services, and the portfolio holder look at how the service can be reconfigured to be less expensive, but be able to continue to offer the respite provided by Southwark, and not just through the use of direct payments. If the outcome of the consultation is not in support of the saving, then it is recommended that this line is removed.

### Jobs, Business and Town Centres Portfolio

8. Line 316 – That if a cut is proposed for this activity, it is recommended that the impact is clearly outlined to OSC, including what this would mean in terms of hitting targets around internships, employment, apprenticeships and training opportunities. Should the impact be severe then it is recommended that this line is removed and re-examined in its entirety, and consideration be given to other places which the council might be able to make efficiencies if possible.

## Children, Young People, Education and Refugees Portfolio

9. Lines 106, 113, 120, 122, 125, 161, 30, 308, 309, 310 - That cabinet be requested to review the impact on users of the services and take mitigating actions into account.

## Leisure, Parks, Streets and Clean Air Portfolio

10. Line 210 - OSC welcomes the intention of the council to raise £1m from on-street advertising that will help fund key services. OSC recommends that the Council explores the potential to generate additional income from on-street advertising.
11. Line 213 - That the impact of the increase in the bulky waste charge be monitored and a quarterly update be provided to OSC. Should the monitoring over a period of time show an increase in fly-tipping than previously seen, then cabinet be recommended to review the bulky waste charge. As part of a review, cabinet consider whether to offer the collection of fewer items for a smaller fee.

## Communities, Equalities and Finance Portfolio

12. Line 167 - That OSC recommends that the cabinet member continues with the work around the council rationalising its office space to make savings with a view to extending this.
13. Line 330 - That a report be submitted to OSC on the review of the mayor's budget and the operations of the mayor's office.
14. Line 401 / 402 - That OSC consider how it could use the voluntary sector as a commissioned service to deliver the work that the council has committed to around these areas.
15. Line 433 - That cabinet be recommended to provide more detail on this line in their report.
16. Line 448 - That OSC receives more information on this as it develops.

## Action points, not for cabinet consideration

- Discussions to be held around improving upon the budget scrutiny process for 2024/25.
- That the previous recommendation around the work of the housing scrutiny commission in respect of the temporary accommodation budget be revisited and actioned as appropriate.

- Consideration to be given around scrutiny review on 'improving customer services for council housing repairs' either by OSC or the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission – Discussion to take place between Chair and Vice-Chair.
- Capital budget refresh – report to cabinet to be presented to OSC.

## **6. POLICY AND RESOURCES STRATEGY 2023-24 TO 2025-26 UPDATE**

The policy and resources strategy 2023-24 to 2025-26 Update report was included with the agenda for information.

The meeting ended at 9.02 pm

**CHAIR:**

**DATED:**