

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS
MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.15 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 9 MAY 2017

**C1, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT,
LONDON, E14 2BG**

Members Present:

Councillor John Pierce (Chair)
Councillor Abdul Mukit MBE (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Muhammad Ansar Mustaqim
Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor Andrew Wood

Co-opted Members Present:

Dr Phillip Rice	– (Church of England Representative)
Fatiha Kassouri	– Parent Governors
Shabbir Chowdhury	– Parent Governors
Christine Trumper	– Parent Governors

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor Rabina Khan
Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs

Apologies:

Asad M Jaman	– Muslim Faith Community
Councillor Julia Dockerill	
Councillor Clare Harrison	

Officers Present:

Claire Belgard	– (Interim Divisional Director, Youth Services)
Janet Fasan	– (Divisional Director, Legal)
Afazul Hoque	– (Interim Service Manager, Strategy, Policy & Performance)
Ronke Martins-Taylor	– (Interim Divisional Director, Youth Services)
Christine McInnes	– (Divisional Director, Education and Partnership, Children's)
Peter Quirk	– Senior Strategy, Policy & Performance Officer
Pat Watson	– (Head of Building Development,

Gillian Beadle Phelps

- Children's and Adults Resources)
- Service Manager for Community & Hospital Integrated Services
- (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

David Knight

1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest.

2. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

Item deferred

3. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

Nil items

4. FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

Noted

5. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

The Committee received and noted the Annual Report that provided a summary for Council the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, the Health, Housing and Grants Sub Committees in the 2016-2017 municipal year.

The questions and comments from Members on the presentation are outlined as follows:

The Committee:

- Noted that over a number of years the scrutiny function has operated as part of the overall governance framework of the Council and has been structured with a main Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported by a Health Scrutiny Sub Committee;
- Was reminded that in 2016-2017 the Council had introduced changes to the scrutiny arrangements recognising the need for scrutiny to adopt and embrace the changing structural and governance environment which it operates within;
- Was reminded that in Tower Hamlets the majority of the social housing provision is managed by Registered Social Landlords and housing is a key priority for local people as noted in the Annual Residents Survey. Accordingly recognising this importance the Council established in 2016 a Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee which provided a vehicle for scrutiny and dialogue with the decision makers within those bodies;

- Noted that a Grants Scrutiny Sub Committee has also been set up as part of the Best Value Action Plan with the aim of scrutinising the grants making process and overall approach to grants ensuring that an objective, fair, transparent and co-ordinated approach is adopted and implanted;
- Noted that Tower Hamlets is also the current host of the Inner London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee comprising of the neighbouring boroughs of Newham, Hackney and City of London. This Committee has considered the local Sustainability and Transformation Plan;
- Agreed to formally place on record their thanks to Victoria Ekubia who had passed away recently. Victoria had been a Co-opted Member for a number of years on this Committee and a stalwart of the local and voluntary community sector. She had made a very positive input to the deliberations of the Committee particularly with reference to provision of children's services and that she had been deeply committed to the Roman Catholic Church and a governor on two local Catholic Schools;
- Noted that Councillor Muhammad Ansar Mustaquim as the Scrutiny Lead for Governance would be undertaking a scrutiny challenge session on opportunity and integration, in Tower Hamlets;
- Noted that the Mayor and the Cabinet wanted to be challenged effectively on a range of the issues and to engage with elected members on those issues that needed to be addressed.

As a result of a full and wide ranging discussion on the above the Chair Moved and it was:-

RESOLVED

To **note** the Annual report.

5.2 Social Value Act - Challenge Session

The Committee received and noted a report that highlighted the approach, methodology and evidence gathered during the challenge session and subsequent review which were then used as the basis for developing the recommendations from the Social Value Act challenge session. The session formed part of the annual work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2016/17.

The challenge session provided an opportunity to review the opportunities that the Social Value Act offers for the communities of Tower Hamlets. The review built upon the excellent work carried out by the Council as an early adopter in introducing social value clauses into major contracts which has delivered significant economic and community benefits to date.

However, the Council now needs to further develop its approach to social value and work on a more joined up approach to the management , measurement and monitoring of the social value element of contracts . In

In addition the challenge session has identified the need to clearly evaluate the impact of the social value requirements for the communities of Tower Hamlets through some form of social impact assessment tool. In addition, it was accepted that it is important to communicate effectively with potential providers and the local communities demonstrating the benefits and impact of social value.

The questions and comments from Members on the presentation are outlined as follows:

The Committee **noted**:

- That the challenge session was held on 9 March 2017 and had reviewed the existing procurement and commissioning approach to social value;
- The assessment of the monitoring, measurement and review of social value clauses and requirements in contracts;
- That the session had reviewed of the approach to assessing social value impact;
- That the session had recommended that the Council should develop a Social Value Policy including associated social value priorities and carry out a review of synergies and linkages with other complementary Council policies and strategies;
- That it was recommended that the Council should develop an approach to monitoring and measuring the social value outputs and deliverables; which could be through a standard framework, flexible to needs and nature of each contract;
- As a result of the challenge session it had been recommended that there should be an examination of the options to develop a social value impact and outcomes assessment tool, to determine the impact of social value activity and gauge its contribution to the Mayoral priorities;
- There should be a determined approach to cross organisation working to ensure that there is collective ownership of social value throughout the commissioning and procurement cycle; and
- A Social Value Communication and Engagement Plan should be developed so as to ensure that providers and communities are aware of the opportunities and impact of social value delivery in Tower Hamlets.

As a result of a full and wide ranging discussion on the above the Chair Moved and it was:-

RESOLVED to

1. **Agree** the Scrutiny Challenge Session Report and its five (5) recommendations; and
2. **Authorise** the Divisional Director Strategy, Policy and Performance to amend the draft report if necessary before submission to Cabinet, after consultation with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5.3 Youth Service - Challenge Session

The Committee received a report that highlighted the approach, methodology and evidence gathered during the challenge session and subsequent review which were then used as the basis for developing the recommendations from the Youth Service challenge session. The challenge session was prompted by concerns about whether the significant changes made to the youth service (i.e. the interim delivery model put in place from July 2016) and the larger changes to come as a result of service review and reorganisation, adequately address the “lessons learned” from previous shortcomings in service delivery and provide the right service for local young people. The challenge session aimed to ensure that the future plans for the youth service have properly absorbed “lessons learned” from past work and have explored innovative approaches to achieving desired outcomes. It was noted that the three main areas of focus during the challenge session were the:

- resilience of the service,
- staffing of the service, and
- approach to outreach.

The questions and comments from Members on the presentation are outlined as follows:

The Committee:

- Commented that it would wish to see in future more details on the numbers attending youth centres in the Borough;
- Indicated that it would wish to see how the offer provided by the Youth Service measured up against other providers. In response it was noted that best practice from such providers would be considered;
- Would wish to see further evidence that would illustrate the benefits of the new ways of working;
- Noted that once restructure of the Service is completed then Members would receive an update;
- Noted that the Executive wished to develop a Service that provided value for money;
- Noted that incidences of Anti-Social behaviour near Youth Centres was being addressed by the Council and partner agencies but the perpetrators were not those using the Centres;
- Agreed that it was important to get the message out to the community as to what was being done to deliver an improved delivery of the service;
- Commented that it needed to be recognise the challenge that gangs present now that they are very much embedded in our communities and the impact upon young people; and
- Agreed that it was important that the Service should have access to funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106

As a result of a full and wide ranging discussion on the above the Chair Moved and it was:-

RESOLVED to

- **Agree** the draft report and the recommendations.
- **Authorise** the Divisional Director Strategy, Policy and Performance to amend the draft report if necessary before submission to Cabinet, after consultation with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5.4 Free Schools - Challenge Session

The Committee received and noted a report that submitted the report and recommendations of the Free Schools Site Allocation Challenge Session. The Challenge Session took place on 26th February 2017 as a result of concerns amongst some Members about how the Council would be implementing the free school presumption process. Whilst the DfE has opened new free schools in Tower Hamlets, a number of site allocations for schools have been achieved through negotiations with developers for which the free school presumption process will apply.

It was noted that concern had been expressed that there was a risk that the Council can retain a large degree of control which could be seen as being contrary to the free school ethos. There is an additional risk that the Council, in being able to define the specification and design of new buildings, and consultations for a new school, could influence the outcome of the free school process such that any new school does not meet the expectation of local parents and children. The aim of the Session had been to explore ways in which the Council can ensure it offers families the kind of school places they seek, sufficient to meet demand both now and in future.

As a result of a full and wide ranging discussion on the above the Chair Moved and it was:-

RESOLVED to

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (a) **Agree** the draft report and the recommendations.
- (b) If necessary **authorise** the Divisional Director strategy, policy and partnership to amend the draft report before submission to Cabinet, after consultation with the Scrutiny Lead.

5.5 Reablement Scrutiny - Scrutiny Review

The Committee received and noted a report that outline what the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee had done through a thematic approach to its work programme to focus on those issues relating to the access of health and social care services in Tower Hamlets. As part of this, the Sub-Committee had identified the performance of the Council's Reablement' Service as the subject for a Scrutiny Review, as it is a key gateway into the social care system from both acute and community health services. The ever increasing pressure on the NHS and adult social care arising from the needs of a growing, older population and continued public spending restraint, means the performance of the Reablement Service is an issue of major importance to the sustainability and effectiveness of the boroughs social care services.

The questions and comments from Members on the presentation are outlined as follows:

The Committee:

- Wanted to know which Housing Providers were seen to be good as supporting discharges through housing adaptations;
- Agreed that an effective Reablement Service is beneficial for residents, local authorities, and the NHS as it assists individuals to lead full and independent lives whilst reducing the overall cost of provision;
- Noted that the Reablement Service offers a short-term, six week Occupational Therapy-led intervention that supports people to regain their abilities to manage everyday tasks following an accident, ill health, disability or a stay in hospital, enabling them to live as independently as possible in the community; Acknowledged that an effective Reablement Service is beneficial for residents, local authorities, and the NHS as it assists individuals to lead full and independent lives whilst reducing the overall cost of provision.
- Recognised that Reablement can play a decisive role in helping people to regain their independence and maximising their health and wellbeing following hospitalisation or ill health; and
- Noted that Reablement can also reduce the amount of time a person needs to stay in hospital, therefore aiding faster recovery.

As a result of a full and wide ranging discussion on the above the Chair Moved and it was:-

RESOLVED to

Formally **note** the recommendations of the Health Scrutiny sub-committee's review of the LBTH Reablement Service.

6. VERBAL UPDATES FROM SCRUTINY LEADS

Nil items

7. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

Nil items

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The agenda circulated contained no exempt/ confidential business and there was therefore no requirement to exclude the press and public to allow for its consideration.

9. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

Nil items

The meeting ended at 7.15 p.m.

Chair, Councillor John Pierce
Overview & Scrutiny Committee