

# **MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUSINESS PANEL**

**Tuesday, 17 February 2015 at 7.05 pm**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Alan Hall (Chair), Gareth Siddorn (Vice-Chair), Liam Curran, Brenda Dacres, Carl Handley, Jim Mallory, Jamie Milne, Pauline Morrison and John Muldoon

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Paschoud

**14. Minutes**

**15. Declarations of Interests**

The Chair declared a personal interest in item 7 as a member on the Phoenix Community Housing Board.

Councillor Muldoon declared a personal interest in item 7 as a Board Member of the South London and Maudsley Foundation Trust.

**16. Outstanding Scrutiny Items**

Report noted.

**17. Notification of Late and Urgent Items**

Report noted.

**18. Revenue Budget 2015/16 Savings Proposals Delegated to Executive Directors Adult Social Care Charging**

The Head of Strategy and Performance introduced the report. Councillor Muldoon said there was a potential for discrepancy of service provision with different levels of needs. He added that with the amount of savings taking place it would be necessary to ensure proper monitoring systems were put in place. The Chair said the Executive Director for Community Services had explained to him how quality provisions would be measured. The Chair said these savings would have to be monitored, and revisited in the future, as further budget needs were brought forward. The Chair thanked officers for the report.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**19. LGA Peer Challenge**

The Chair requested this report to be deferred to the 17 March 2015 Business Panel meeting, this was agreed.

## **20. Decisions Made by Mayor and Cabinet on 11 February 2015**

### Lewisham Future Programme 2015/16 Revenue Budget Savings Report

The Chair said further decisions were being made at the 18 February Mayor and Cabinet meeting, and most of the A savings had been subjected to numerous discussions, therefore in-depth discussion would not be necessary for most of them.

#### A1 Adult Cost Effective Care Packages - Meals on Wheels

Councillor Mallory said that he noted that Meals on Wheels had been to Mayor and Cabinet following consultation. He said he was aware that during the review of contracts there would be an opportunity to remodel this service, adding that it would be a shame to lose some of the personal elements of this service, especially the face to face contact. The Head of Joint Commissioning said the work would start after the current contract comes to an end in 2016. She added that officers recognised that users did not just value the meals provided, but also the personal contact involved. Councillor Muldoon said Meals Services was a preferred term to Meals on Wheels. The Chair thanked officers for the report.

#### B1 Reduction and Remodelling of Supporting People Support

The Chair asked if all the savings had been accepted, and the Executive Director for Customer Services, said they had. The Chair then said that the relevant Select Committee Members need to see the appendix that was done for this area of savings as there might be some elements they would need to be aware of. The Executive Director for Customer Services assured the Chair that Select Committees would be fully informed and the appendix circulated as requested.

#### G1 Charging A Fee for Administering the Blue Badge Scheme

The Chair said there had been an extensive piece of work done for Mayor and Cabinet on this item, and requested this information to be sent to Members of the Safer Stronger Select Committee. The Executive Director for Customer Services said the request would be actioned.

#### H1 Restructuring of Enforcement and Regulatory Services

The Chair said he was aware the Mayor had not made any decision on this area, requesting further consultation with Trade Unions. The Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration gave Business Panel Members a brief update on the current situation. Panel Members were informed Mayor and Cabinet will be looking at the report again on 18 February.

The Chair said he was conscious that informal consultation was going on between Unions concerning Licensing Enforcements. He said he assumed Licensing enforcement functions would continue. The Executive Director for Customer Services said that he had re-assured the Chair of Licensing Committee that the changes would not affect the quality of service and advice at meetings. The Chair

said the amalgamation of these services could have its issues, and the results would have to be reviewed for effectiveness.

#### L4 Broadway Theatre

Business Panel noted that the savings were accepted by the Mayor, and the theatre would be kept functional on a reduced budget.

Councillor Walsh said he was surprised that services of one of the biggest historical facilities within his Ward was being reduced, and asked whether consideration had been given to the equalities impact. The Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration said that it would have neutral effect.

Councillor Walsh said the Broadway Theatre was one of the facilities that showcase a lot of BME work, with a large audience in comparison only to Hackney and Lambeth. He asked how this decision fitted with the capital regeneration of Catford. He said he was concerned there would be less cultural activity while the community wait for the regeneration to take place, and this regeneration seemed to have been delayed for a significant length of time.

Councillor Walsh said regeneration of Catford was supposed to follow on from that of Lewisham Town Centre, but nothing has been said on the matter. He added that this report came late in the process, and did not give sufficient time for proper scrutiny. Councillor Walsh said it did not seem as if any thought had been given to other uses for the theatre e.g. as a cinema or other community use.

Councillor Muldoon said there seemed to be a lack of vision and creativity in relation to one of the Council's major assets. He added that a year ago the building structure received a substantial facelift whilst its inside was decaying. Councillor Muldoon said officers could look at external funding to refurbish the building, stating that if it could be leased externally, the tenants could apply for lottery funds. The Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration said the building was given a facelift some years back, but there was insufficient funds to refurbish the internal fabric. She stated that most recently health and safety issues have been raised.

The Executive Director for Customer Services said they had looked at several options, and at one stage there were 12 interested Providers, but none saw it through. He said a lot of work had gone into looking for alternatives, including turning it into a cinema. He said BME groups have been assured that they would have access to the theatre, whilst the Council continue to look for external funding. He added that officers were also in discussion with TfL about the South Circular, whether to move it or not, and this might take up to a year.

Councillor Curran said the theatre was a significant vehicle which was important to drive traffic to local shops, centres and attractions. He said that he was not impressed with the excuse from officers about having a dialogue with the GLA on moving the South Circular, as members have heard this same proposal several years back and nothing had come off it.

Councillor Curran suggested that the Council should put a task force together to raise funds. He added that if £3.8m external funds could be raised for a pub down

the road, he did not see why the same principle could not be applied to the theatre. Councillor Curran said a lot of town centres would be proud to have a building of that quality.

Councillor Dacres said she supported the concerns raised by other members. She added that it was disgraceful that a building of that quality should be allowed to get to such a state that health and safety became an issue. Councillor Dacres said that the theatre was a very important venue for historical BME productions that this group and others go to see. She said no interesting proposal had been put forward in the report. She asked why the café could not be put into effective use to raise funds.

Councillor Dacres said that the glass windows could be used effectively as a billboard, and this could attract interest to the theatre. She said if the theatre was not refurbished and restored to its former glory, it would seem as if Lewisham did not care for Arts and Culture and this would reflect badly on the Council. Councillor Handley said the proposal to move the South Circular started since the late 80's and he did not think it was clever to link it to the development of the theatre.

The Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration said the proposal was not to close it down but to keep it on a reduced programme, but she had taken on board all the comments from members. Councillor Curran said if the Mayor was looking for someone to Chair the working group he would be happy to volunteer. Councillor Mallory said he hoped this proposal would be accepted.

The Chair said nothing had been heard about the Catford regeneration scheme for a long time, and Panel Members need a clear understanding of what was happening with this. The Chair said the Theatre would benefit from a working group to look at alternative funding, its management functions and service provisions. Business Panel agreed the recommendations shown below should be put forward to Mayor and Cabinet the following day.

RESOLVED that the Mayor be requested to:

- i. ask officers to investigate alternative funding that would fund internal building works necessary to develop the theatre to its former glory.
- ii. ask officers to provide options for management functions and service provisions that are not too risk averse, and could yield better gains.
- iii. ask officers to ensure that a robust marketing strategy is put in place to attract funds to maintain this Catford Heritage.
- iv. ask officers if the BME impact has been fully considered.

#### N1 Reduction in Maintenance of some parks, highways 7 Mngt.

The report was introduced by the Executive Director for Customer Services. Business Panel noted that the Mayor had requested additional work to be done on maintenance and highways closures, and an amended report would go back to Mayor and Cabinet as soon as possible. The Chair asked if this would be before the budget Council meeting, and was told it would be after. The Chair said he was pleased that the Mayor had decided not to accept this savings at this time, and Business Panel awaits an amended proposal.

## N2 Reduction in Street Cleansing Frequency & Mngt.

Business Panel noted that this report would be going back to Mayor and Cabinet.

Q1 Improve Triage for Children's Social Care Services and re-design Children Centre early intervention offer

The Head of Resources and Performance, CYP said the savings had been agreed but there would be a consultation, on individual centres the results of which would go back to the Mayor and Cabinet. Business Panel welcomed the decision of the Mayor, and thanked officers for the report

The Chair thanked members and officers for their patience in dealing with the budget savings reports.

RESOLVED that the decision of the Mayor be noted.

### **21. Overview & Scrutiny Select Committees Work Programmes 2014/15 - verbal update**

Nothing to report.

### **22. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act, as amended by the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to information) (Amendments) (England) Regulations 2006 and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information:

The following is a summary of the items considered in the closed part of the meeting:

### **23. Decisions Made By Mayor and cabinet on 11 February 2015**

#### Commissioned Youth Provision 2015-16

RESOLVED that

- i. the decision of the Mayor be noted.
- ii. assurance had been given by the Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration that the delegated decisions made by the Executive Director, CYP on this item will be reported to the Children and Young People Select Committee, and Business Panel for Scrutiny.

**24. Decisions Made By Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) on 11 February 2015**

No Item was identified for further discussion.

**25. Decision Made by an Executive Director Under Delegated Authority - Healthwatch Award of Contract 2015/16**

RESOLVED that the decision of the Executive Director of Community Services be noted.

Meeting ended 8.30pm