

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 24 October 2016 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Hall (Chair), Gareth Siddorn (Vice-Chair), Paul Bell, Andre Bourne, Bill Brown, John Coughlin, Liam Curran, Brenda Dacres, Colin Elliott, Carl Handley, Maja Hilton, Sue Hordijkenko, Stella Jeffrey, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Jim Mallory, David Michael, Jamie Milne, Pauline Morrison, John Muldoon, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa, Pat Raven, Joan Reid, Jonathan Slater, Eva Stamirowski, Alan Till, Paul Upex and James-J Walsh

APOLOGIES: Councillors Obajimi Adefiranye, Abdeslam Amrani, Chris Barnham, Peter Bernards, David Britton, Suzannah Clarke, Amanda De Ryk, Simon Hooks, Mark Ingleby, Roy Kennedy, Hilary Moore, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Luke Sorba and Susan Wise

ALSO PRESENT: Barry Quirk (Chief Executive), Barrie Neal (Head of Corporate Policy and Governance), Ralph Wilkinson (Head of Public Services), Georgina Nunney (Principal Lawyer) and Salena Mulhere (Overview and Scrutiny Manager)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2016

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr Muldoon declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 4 as a member of SLaM
Cllr Hall declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 4 as a member of SLaM
Cllr Walsh declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 4 as an employee of South Bank University (which provides training for NHS nurses)
Cllr Bell declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 4 as a member of Kings NHS Foundation Trust

3. Appointments to Select Committees

Councillor Jacca was appointed to Public Accounts and Safer Stronger Communities Select Committees.

4. Update on Devolution

Barry Quirk gave a presentation to the Committee outlining the key areas of devolution relevant to the Council. The Key points to note were:

- Devolution already exists in London with the London Mayor exercising devolved powers in relation to Policing, Fire, Transport and Economic Development across London
- Further sub regional devolution needs to be understood and developed in a way that takes account of the demographics of London Boroughs.

- The daytime population in London is 9.5 million, 1 million more than those resident overnight in London, and in the context of a total population for the rest of England of 45 million.
- Two thirds of the Council's activity is providing people-based services, the costs of which will rise greater than inflation. Reliance on property taxes raised solely within the borough for income would be extremely difficult.
- In London 6 Local Authorities collect 60% of all business rates collected in London. Lewisham is in the bottom five London boroughs for total business rates collected. A large proportion of the Lewisham business rates income is from one national business which currently happens to have its office based in Lewisham.
- Property taxes (business rates and council tax) taken on a borough by borough basis will not be sufficient in areas of high need.
- When mapped by population and socio-economic need, Lewisham is in the top quartile.
- When mapped by property tax and socio-economic need Lewisham is in the bottom quartile (low income, high need)

In response to questions from the Committee Barry Quirk advised:

- Without appropriate redistribution based on need on a regional level, business rates retention will not be sufficient to replace regional support grants in Lewisham, given the high population and high levels of need in relation to other London Boroughs and the limited "headroom" for growth of income. A fair distribution is needed for those boroughs with high need but low income generating opportunities.
- Further devolution in London is complicated across all areas, with different arrangements currently being developed across Health and Economic Development (and skills). London Councils and the Greater London Authority (GLA) have been working together to develop understanding of the opportunities and limitations
- Lewisham is a diverse and popular borough that is a vibrant place to live.
- Lewisham is involved in the One Health pilot to look at asset and estate management in partnership with the Health sector.
- The STP is not part of the devolution agenda, it makes no governance changes to either the NHS or Local authorities. It is an NHS strategic delivery plan, developed by NHS officers with a small number of Local authority officers involved in some meetings. It does not address the funding challenges for Social Care that Local Authorities face.
- In a document of approximately 30 pages, the draft STP document has approximately a paragraph or two on social care. The acute trusts have been working well together and with the CCGs on the plans in South East London, which has not been the case in other areas of the country.
- Good relationships exist between Local Authorities in South East London, and Lewisham Council has a good relationship with the CCG and the local hospital trust.
- The impact of Brexit on financial services in London and EU workers in London remains to be seen and understood. London is in a better position than other regions at the moment, but time will tell how an "open" city in a

“closed” nation will work. If London is vibrant and thriving then people across the UK and the world will continue to want to live and work here.

- Regulation of housing markets is needed with increasing proportions of tenure being private rented. This needs to be regional where possible for the required impact.
- The principles of distribution based on need rather than income generation can apply across the entirety of the UK, not just in relation to London.
- The principles of fairness, of distribution based on need, are broadly accepted across the London political spectrum.
- Local services need to be more understanding of and responsive to the communities they serve, particularly in areas of diversity. The impacts of diversity on service delivery need to be fully understood.

After discussion, the Committee noted the following views:

- The STP should be published as soon as possible and consultation with local people commence
- Distribution of Business Rates across London based on need should be sought
- Officers should consider the impact of Brexit on the Council and Lewisham
- The London Finance report should be circulated to PAC and OSBP members when it is published, for their further consideration

The meeting ended at 9pm.

5. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

There were none

The meeting ended at 9pm.

Chair:

Date:
