

MINUTES OF THE SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 12 July 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Pauline Morrison (Chair), James-J Walsh (Vice-Chair), Brenda Dacres, Colin Elliott, Sue Hordijkenko, Councillor Joyce Jacca, Jim Mallory and David Michael

APOLOGIES: None

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Joe Dromey (Cabinet Member Policy & Performance), Andrew Jacobs (Organisational Learning and Talent Manager), James Lee (Service Manager, Inclusion and Prevention and Head of Cultural and Community Development), Barrie Neal (Head of Corporate Policy and Governance), Antonio Rizzo (Library and Information Services Manager), Simone van Elk (Cabinet Officer) and Katie Wood (Scrutiny Manager)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2017

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 26 June 2017 be agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

2. Declarations of interest

Councillor Walsh declared a personal interest in item 5 as he was employed by the London Southbank University Students Union.

Councillor Mallory declared a personal interest in item 6 as he was Chair of Lee Green Lives.

3. Response to Referrals from this Committee

RESOLVED:

That the responses to referrals be agreed.

4. Poverty Commission Update

4.1 Councillor Joe Dromey, Executive Member for Policy and Performance, introduced the report to the Committee. During his introduction and in response to questions from members of the Committee the following key points were highlighted:

- The Poverty Commission had been set up in response to recommendations from the Poverty Review by the Safer Stronger Communities, Select Committee. The Commission included 4 members of the Safer, Stronger Communities, Select Committee.

- A Poverty Summit had taken place on the 12 July 2017. There had been 70 attendees including many local stakeholders. Members of the Committee who attended reported that it had been very interesting and valuable.
- The review focused on: Employment and Skills; Housing; Child Poverty; and Community Resilience.
- The draft report would be prepared by the end of August and the final report was on the Committee's work programme for November.
- Members of the Committee reported that presentations by the Commission to Local Assemblies had been interesting and very well received.
- Members of the Committee welcomed the collaborative approach between scrutiny and Executive Councillors that had taken place through the Commission.

4.2 **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

5. **Library and Information Service Annual Report**

5.1 Antonio Rizzo, Service Manager, Lewisham Library and Information Service, presented the report to the Committee and tabled a summary brochure of the DCMS paper "Libraries Deliver" and a sketch plan of the proposed ground floor at Catford Library. Copies of these documents would be included with the agenda documentation for the meeting. During the presentation the following key points were noted:

- LB Lewisham had one of the best library services in London and this was reflected in the usage data and satisfaction levels which were very high.
- Library opening hours had increased. There was a fall in numbers of book loans of 12.7% compared with the last year which was a concern, however the number of e-book loans had doubled in the same time period and online resources and e-newspapers access had also increased.
- The IT in libraries was used widely and users liked the WiFi access with usage increased by 11.7% and more than 19,000 sessions provided across the libraries last year and an average of 104 hours WiFi access per day.
- Lewisham had the eight largest population of any London borough and the third highest number of active borrowers. Libraries in Lewisham cost approximately £1.27 per month per resident.
- Two externally funded projects were taking place across the libraries: "Mi WiFi Project" which was testing the concept of enabling residents to borrow internet enabled tablet computers from the library; and "What's the Story" which was a summer school journalism project.

5.2 In the discussion that followed, the following key points were raised:

- Members of the Committee were very impressed with the work of Lewisham staff and volunteers in ensuring the success of the library provision in Lewisham.
- Councillor Morrison left the meeting between 7.30pm and 7.35pm during this time the Vice-Chair chaired the meeting.

- It could be useful to have infographics available on library usage statistics that were easily understandable by Councillors and the public.
- The Lewisham library service is unique and an example of excellent partnership with the local community in delivering an outstanding provision.
- Universities could be approached to see if they were interested in working collaboratively for free with Lewisham libraries. Universities spent large amounts on attracting students and therefore might see it as an interesting investment.
- The importance of good IT infrastructure and WiFi access was raised, it was important to ensure the Council was supporting libraries with this.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

That a referral to Mayor and Cabinet be made highlighting the following comments:

- 1) That the Committee highlighted the need to properly resource support for the changing role of libraries. In particular, Members acknowledged the growing need for WiFi and WiFi access.
- 2) That the Committee felt that the promotion, both internally and externally, of news stories connected to libraries, must be done in an accessible way (for example, a greater use of infographics).
- 3) That members emphasised the need to connect the importance of libraries to the work being undertaken by the Poverty Commission.

6. Update on Main Grants Programme

6.1 James Lee, Head of Service, Culture and Community Development, presented the report to the Committee. In the discussion that followed, the following key points were raised:

- There was positive feedback regarding the target criteria for the new infrastructure offer. The outcome based approach to performance monitoring was also welcomed by members of the Committee.
- The importance of data being transparent and accurate was stressed particularly in the context of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) coming into force in May 2018.
- The development of the new infrastructure offer had been a complex process and the Council had worked closely with Voluntary Action Lewisham (VAL). There could be further discussion with VAL as to whether more financial criteria could be used as part of the offer and whether this could be included as an addendum.
- Additional detail was requested by the committee on information sharing following the introduction of the GDPR.
- The Council was intending to submit a bid to the GLA for the title of London Borough of Culture. The closing date for entries was December 2017.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

7. Council's Employment Profile

7.1 Andrew Jacobs, Organisational Learning and Talent Management Manager, gave a presentation to the Committee, a copy of which will be included in the agenda documentation and on the website. In the discussion that followed the following key points were raised:

- The figures in the report for “unknown” characteristics included people actively choosing not to declare.
- There had been a push to offer more training and development opportunities for staff and uptake was increasing.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

8. Select Committee work programme

8.1 Barrie Neal, Head of Corporate Policy and Performance introduced the report to the Committee, during this introduction and in the discussion that followed, the following key points were raised:

- The Local Police Service Update was now on the work programme for September and a request had been made to include information on School's Police as part of this.
- Following the last meeting, the Chair had made a request to Business Panel regarding disproportionality across service areas. Business Panel was happy for Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee to consider an item on this if they chose to.

8.2 **RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the Chair write to the Executive Director for Children and Young People highlighting concerns raised during the meeting regarding the potential loss of LGBT youth service provision.
- 3) That a position paper be prepared for Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee Members highlighting the role of the committee in relation to disproportionality across service areas.

9. Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet

9.1 **RESOLVED:**

That a referral be made to Mayor and Cabinet on the Library and Information Service Annual Report as listed under the minutes for agenda item 5.

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm

Chair:

Date:
