MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
BUSINESS PANEL
Tuesday, 5 April 2016 at 7.00 pm

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hilary Moore

141. Minutes

The Chair confirmed that the Housing Select Committee, and the Sustainable
Development Select Committee would be carrying out an investigation on the
Bermondsey and Catford Housing Zone projects, this item would be added to the
Select Committees Work Programme.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the open meeting held on 15 March 2016 be
confirmed as a correct record.

142. Declarations of Interests

None.

143. Outstanding Scrutiny Items

Report noted.

144. Notification of Late and Urgent Items

Report noted.

145. Decisions Made by Mayor and Cabinet on 23 March 2016

Ofsted Inspection of ‘Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection,
Children Looked After and Care Leavers’ and the Lewisham Safeguarding Board

The Executive Director for Children and Young People introduced the report.

The Chair asked whether the comments from the Children and Young People
Select Committee would be integrated in the plan, and was told they had been
included. The Executive Director for Children and Young People added that a lot
of work had gone into this to ensure there was sufficient resources to deliver the
overall digital strategy.

The Chair also asked about the outcome of the review of the CSE arrangements,
and was told that a report would be going to the Safeguarding Children Board, and
a revised Terms of Reference would be considered by the CSE sub-group. The Executive Director, CYP added that work was in progress.

The Chair asked about the Leadership and Management action plan and was told the main action was for the Chief Executive to challenge performance and take a report to the responsible Cabinet Member by 31 March 2016. The Executive Director for Children and Young People said she would be meeting with the Chief Executive soon about this work. The Chair asked for an update of actions to be circulated to the Children and Young People Select Committee when completed to give Members reassurance. The Chair thanked officers for the report.

Action >>>>>>> ED, CYP

RESOLVED that the decision of the Mayor be noted.

Housing Allocations Policy

The Housing Needs Manager introduced the report.

The Chair asked if this report was different from the one that went to the Housing Select Committee, and was told it was the same report. The Housing Needs Manager said it would be going out to consultation and officers were planning to do an in-depth equalities impact assessment and a report to Mayor and Cabinet.

The Chair asked when the outcome of the consultation would be published, and was told consultation would take place in the next 4 weeks, and the report would follow. The Chair asked that the completed report on the consultation be sent to the Chair and members of the Housing Select Committee.

Action >>>>>>> ED, Customer Services

Councillor Handley, Chair of the Housing Select Committee stated a member of the public had submitted a suggestion on definitions of homelessness and that this was being considered by officers.

Councillor Handley added that some of the information and definitions in the report ought to be made very clear, he then gave examples of information in the report that could be misconstrued. The Housing Needs Manager said officers would clarify some of the terminologies, and parts of the Housing Acts that were confusing before consultation. The Chair proposed that Business Panel formally receive the representation made by the Chair of the Housing Select Committee and requested that the comments are incorporated into the consultation, this was agreed.

Action >>>>>>> ED, Customer Services
Following a detailed discussion with contributions from Councillors Muldoon and Dacres, Business Panel noted the decision of the Mayor and agreed to request the outcome of the consultation be sent to the Housing Select Committee.

RESOLVED that

i. the decision of the Mayor be noted.
ii. the representation from the Chair of the Housing Select Committee be forwarded to officers for a response.
iii. the result from the consultation process be circulated to the members of the Housing Select Committee.

146. Overview and Scrutiny Select Committees Work Programmes 2015-16 - verbal update

The Interim Scrutiny Manager informed Panel Members that the Scrutiny Team was working with Select Committee Chairs to finalise the 2016/17 work programmes, and a report would be coming to the Panel’s next meeting. He added that possible overlaps would be highlighted. The Scrutiny Manager said there would be 2 Joint Health Scrutiny meetings in April.

The Chair said coming to the new Municipal Year members have to ensure they have capacity for internal scrutiny as there might be some major budget issues. The Chair added that he had asked Scrutiny Managers to collate all select committees work programmes to ensure the work is broadly balanced.

The Chair said he would be meeting with Select Committee Chairs to look through the programmes and terms of references of some of the Select Committees. He said finance officers have been asked to collate all budgetary considerations including last year’s proposals that had not yet been decided, and this year’s proposals as soon as possible. These were expected in September.

Councillor Mallory said he was concerned about an emerging suggestion that a Parish Council be created in Deptford. He urged that the Council actively manage any application that is received and not be at a reactive position as seemed to be the case with the arrival of Neighbourhood Forums.

Councillor Mallory said this could result in financial, duplication and political issues, which would need to be addressed sooner rather than later. He asked that the Chair and Vice Chair of Business Panel consider the emerging difficulties so that they could be dealt with in a proactive manner.

The Chair said it would be prudent to wait for the receipt of the petition, then the Chief Executive could be asked for a timetable to address the issues raised, and the proper channel it would follow i.e Council, Executive process or scrutiny process. The Chair said if it resulted in a Scrutiny process he would be happy to facilitate this.

Councillor Curran said members would need a briefing on what they could do within legal constraints. The Chair said the Head of Law had produced a briefing which had been circulated to members, but the timeframe would need to be
added. He expressed disappointment that a legal officer was not present at the Business Panel.

The Chair said the Chief Executive should be asked to respond to Business Panel's request to outline the timetable and proper process to follow, this was agreed.

Action >>>>>>>> CE

147. Exclusion of the Press and Public

148. Decisions Made by Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) on 23 March 2016

149. Decision Made by an Executive Director Under Delegated Authority - Contract Award for Works Contract to Convert Hamilton Lodge from Residential Care to Temporary Accommodation

150. Decision Made By Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) on 30 March 2016/ Decision Made by an Executive Director Under Delegated Authority - The Provision of Telephony Services Under the ICT Shared Services - to follow