

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUSINESS PANEL

Tuesday, 19 March 2019 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Bill Brown, Juliet Campbell, Jim Mallory, Joan Millbank, John Muldoon and Luke Sorba

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Kevin Bonavia, Alan Hall and Silvana Kelleher

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Liam Curran, Councillor Pauline Morrison and Councillor Susan Wise

179. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the open meeting held on 19 February 2019 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

180. Declarations of Interests

None received.

181. Outstanding Scrutiny Matters

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

182. Notification of Late and Urgent Items

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

183. Decisions made by the Joint Committee of Brent, Lewisham and Southwark on 5 March 2019

This report was not identified for further discussion.

184. Decisions made by Mayor and Cabinet on 13 March 2019

Lewisham Homes Articles Amendment

The Housing Policy Partnership Manager introduced the report.

Councillor Millbank asked what the rationale was behind the change in the composition of the Board and was told that it was part of the process of nominating a Council Member to the Board, and a Councillor who is a tenant could be good nominee to scrutinise decisions.

Councillor Millbank asked what consideration had been given to potential conflict of interests, and whether this was discussed by the Board. She said this decision

might give Council Members on the Board more power. The Housing Policy Partnership Manager said any conflict of interest would be dealt with by Lewisham Homes. The Housing Policy Partnership Manager said officers view was to give more power to Tenants.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer informed Members that Declarations of Interests would be dealt with in accordance with the Constitution of the Board. Councillor Muldoon said he was concerned by the word “instruct” used in recommendation 2 of the report as the Member’s obligation would ultimately be with the Trust. In response to concerns raised Councillor Millbank was told that although Tenants representatives received remuneration, the Council Tenant Member would not get any payment.

Councillor Hall said Council should have discussed this amendment, and asked whether a governance review took place that resulted in the amendment. He said as far as he was aware he was the only Councillor who was a Lewisham Homes tenant.

Councillor Sorba asked if this change was made for convenience and was told it was done to diversify the representatives on the Board, and to make it more flexible for Council Members on the Board. Panel Members stated that the change was not clear.

Following a detailed discussion Business Panel agreed unanimously to call-in the Mayor and Cabinet decision.

RESOLVED that the decision of the Mayor and Cabinet be called in for the reasons stated below:

- i. Business Panel have specific concerns and agreed the call-in to enable Mayor and Cabinet to be more fully appraised by officers of the background to, and reason for Recommendation 2;

“Instruct the Council Representative to sign a written resolution by the Member of Lewisham Homes giving effect to this change with immediate effect”
- ii. Business Panel would like Mayor and Cabinet to ask officers to further clarify for the purposes of good governance and perception, practices in place to deal with any likely examples of potential conflict of interest at the Board.

Approval for Budget to start redevelopment plans at PLACE/Ladywell site

The assistant Interim Director Regeneration and Place introduced the report. Councillor Hall asked how he would define Council Social Homes, and was told they were homes managed by Lewisham Homes and set up at social rents, similar to London affordable rents.

Councillor Hall asked how many of the homes would be affordable and was

told 50% would be London Affordable Rent, and rest would be market rate sales and rentals to cross subsidise the cost. Councillor Hall stated that London affordable rent was regarded as not affordable. Councillor Hall said 'Council Social Homes' was a nebulous term and should not have been used in the open report.

A description of London Affordable rent was given by the Interim Director Regeneration and Place following a question from Councillor Sorba. There was further discussion about the various types of affordable housing in both the open and closed meeting Business Panel agreed make a referral to Mayor and Cabinet, to instruct officers to amend recommendation 2.6 on the part 1 report to ensure both part 1 recommendations, and part 2 recommendations are identical, by replacing 'Council Social homes' with 'London Affordable Rent'

RESOLVED that:

- i. the decision of Mayor and Cabinet be noted.
- ii. Mayor and Cabinet be requested to instruct officers to amend recommendation 2.6 in the part1 report, by replacing 'Council Social homes' with 'London Affordable Rent'

185. Overview and Scrutiny Select Committees Work Programmes 2018-19

The Scrutiny Manager introduced the report and informed Panel Members that the final round of Select Committee meetings in the current Municipal year would end with the meeting of the Public Accounts Select Committee tomorrow, 20 March. The dates for meetings for the next Municipal Year would be agreed at the AGM, on 3 April 2019. As there are no inductions this year, each Select Committee would have 8 meetings in the year.

The Scrutiny Manager informed the Panel that the Local Democracy Review has now published its draft recommendations. Two recommendations relates specifically to scrutiny:

- A review should be carried out to identify the best structure and approach for overview and scrutiny and the revised structure should be ready for implementation at the Council AGM in 2020.
- Whilst the review is underway (this coming Municipal year) Scrutiny should place a greater focus on early and pre-decision scrutiny, and community engagement where possible.

The Scrutiny Manager said many committees had undertaken a lot of engagement work outside and inside formal committee meetings this year and she was sure this would continue.

Select Committee Chairs were told they might want to have informal meetings prior to their first scheduled meeting to meet and greet new members to their committees, and to have informal discussion on their work programmes.

Councillor Muldoon informed Panel members that the Healthier Select Committee visited the Crisis Restaurant at Lewisham Hospital. He said it was a very useful resource base. He said that emergency units and some GPs utilise the space.

Councillor Mallory said the Public Accounts Select Committee's work around the budget, income generation and big spending would continue to keep them occupied.

Councillor Sorba said the Children and Young People Select Committee was very serious about community engagement and this would continue going forward. He added that a scrutiny review would not be meaningful without reviewing the Executive function. The Chair said nothing could be looked at in isolation.

Councillor Juliet Campbell informed Panel Members that this would be her last meeting as Vice Chair of the Panel, as she would be taking up her duty as Chair of Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee in the next Municipal Year. The Chair thanked Councillor Campbell for her support in the past year.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

186. 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:-

This is a summary of the discussion that took place at the closed meeting:

187. Decisions made by Mayor and Cabinet on 13 March 2019

Extension of Youth First Contract

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

Councillor Sorba said he was a supporter of the scheme. He asked how self sufficient Youth First was, what it could deliver, and how much funding it receives from the Council. It was noted that they had started attracting income, but there was still a gap in the budget.

Panel Members noted that Youth First was providing very good support service, and were proving to be a value for money service. It was also noted that the extended contract would cost the Council less than the original contract, which made it attractive.

RESOLVED that the decision of Mayor and Cabinet be noted.

188. Decision made by an Executive Director Under Delegated Authority - Framework Agreement for the provision of Services to Adults with Learning Disabilities 2019-2023- Stage 1 Approval Shortlist

This item was not requested for further discussion.

189. Decision made by an Executive Director Under Delegated Authority - Extension of the Reed Training Professionals Contract

This item was not requested for further discussion.

Meeting ended: 9:00pm Chair