

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUSINESS PANEL

Tuesday, 21 May 2019 at 7.05 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Bill Brown, Peter Bernards, Juliet Campbell, Patrick Codd, Liam Curran, Joan Millbank, John Muldoon and Luke Sorba

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Paul Bell, Louise Krupski and Joani Reid

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sakina Sheikh and Councillor Jim Mallory

207. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the open meeting held on 7 May 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

208. Declarations of Interests

None received.

209. Outstanding Scrutiny Matters

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

210. Response to the Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel Referral to Mayor and Cabinet - Facilities Management/Sound System Provision in Meeting Rooms - verbal update

The SGM Capital Programmes Regeneration and Place introduced the response, and apologised to Panel Members for giving a verbal response. He informed them that he would be contributing to the overall equalities response that would be going to Mayor and Cabinet.

Panel members were informed that a review of the audio systems in the Civic Suite, which included those in meeting rooms 1,2,3 & 4 would form part of the Democracy Review work. This would focus on the improvement of access to the public to participate in Lewisham's democracy process. The SGM Capital Programmes Regeneration and Place said that the wireless microphones in meeting rooms 1 & 2 were not working properly because of interruptions from online phones, but a robust system would be put in place in both rooms. He added that meeting rooms 3 & 4 were smaller rooms and he hoped there would not be problems in those rooms, but would address issues if necessary.

The SGM Capital Programmes Regeneration and Place told Panel Members that the projection systems in meeting rooms 3 & 4 were out of date and consideration was being given to update them to LED Systems. Officers were also looking at

ways of sending wireless information, to limit health and safety risk. He said webcasting of Council meetings will also be introduced as part of the Democracy Review, and the facilities for people with hearing impairment was being reviewed with the possibility of bringing back the loop system for easy access, plus the digital system.

The Chair asked how soon these systems would be put in place and was told it might take months because the meeting rooms were fully booked most of the time, and contractors do not want to work overnight and during weekends. Councillor Campbell said the loop system would be needed in all the meeting rooms as WIFI systems were not effective. She added that officers should also improve signage in the Council buildings. The SGM Capital Programmes Regeneration and Place said all of these issues would be looked into and the best value for money option would be selected.

Councillor Muldoon said officers could look at best practices in other boroughs. He said when webcasting was being done officers should investigate the possibility of simultaneous subtitling and the new projectors should be located at the best possible place. The SGM Capital Programmes Regeneration and Place said officers did some research into what other boroughs were doing. He said cameras would be focused on speakers and simultaneous subtitling would be done.

Councillor Bernards said he was disappointed this response was not in writing as people who did not attend the meeting might want to find out what was been proposed. He added that £26k had already been paid to a company who had not provided a service. The SGM Capital Programmes Regeneration and Place explained to Panel Members the contract that was agreed, highlighting that the Council only paid the infrastructure. He said the left over hours would be rolled over to provide service going forward. Councillor Bernards asked whether officers thought that money already spent was value for money. Councillor Millbank said that it was premature to evaluate the service before it had been provided and tested.

The Chair thanked officers for the update.

211. Notification of Late and Urgent Items

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

212. Decisions made by Mayor and Cabinet on 8 May 2019

Public Health Approach to Reducing Violence

Councillor Reid, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities introduced the report.

Councillor Muldoon said he acknowledged what was being done in Glasgow. He asked how much control officers would have over the exercise when they examine evidence based practice to address Lewisham issues. He added that an Oxleas Philosopher had rightly said every young person should have an older person as a Mentor, as mentoring was very important.

Councillor Campbell commented that the information was useful, but evidence was already there and work should start now, as the impact of not starting now might be huge. Councillor Campbell stated that work for Adults and Children should be separated as the agenda seemed too large, and she asked how the impact would be measured.

The Director of Public Protection and Safety responded that Goldsmith and Bedford Universities would be providing evidence based practice, as they would be looking at different aspects of the work whilst focusing on Lewisham. Councillor Reid said she was aware that most of what Lewisham was doing had already been done, but Lewisham could still improve the work, building on the knowledge base. She said evidence based practice would build on present work and help Lewisham move forward.

The Director of Public Protection and Safety said she agreed with the idea of using older people as Mentors, hence Lewisham was investing in Community Champions which would build relationships in the community. She added that violence was complex, as adults were often both victims and perpetrators, and children witnessed this. The Director of Public Protection and Safety said 1/8 of domestic violence incidences involved knives and adults. She said officers would look at the strategic needs assessment.

Councillor Millbank asked about MOPAC, borough boundaries, community engagement and the timeframe involved. She also asked about the role of the 30 community members. Councillor Sorba said this was an extension of an existing approach. He said he was also interested in the opportunity available for the community to contribute in a co-ordinated and targeted way. He wanted to know if there was existing resources available to do the work. He concluded by mentioning the correlation between excluded school children and knife crime.

Councillor Reid responded that the approach would be changed as new evidence emerges. She said there would be a violence reduction meeting next week, and the work would be concluded within 6-9 months, but it would remain a living document. She said officers have a close working relationship with MOPAC, and they had provided some funding. The Director of Public Protection and Safety said there was some money from existing fund, and officers were doing all they can to get some more money. She added that the Council would need to show it was succeeding to get additional funding.

Councillor Millbank said community members needed to be briefed about their role and objectives as they would be acting as facilitators. The Chair thanked Councillor Reid and officers for the report. He said he looked forward to the update to Mayor and Cabinet.

RESOLVED that the decision of Mayor and Cabinet be noted.

213. Overview and Scrutiny Select Committees Work Programmes - 2019-2020

The Scrutiny Manager introduced the report, reminding Panel Members that at their last meeting they had agreed the work programmes of 5 Select Committees.

She also reminded Panel Members that Safer Communities Select Committee and Sustainable Development Select Committee were both considering NCIL, and their Chairs were told to discuss potential duplication and reach an agreement going forward.

They have now agreed that there would not be any overlap as the focus was different. Safer Communities Select Committee was looking at NCIL in terms of the involvement of Local Assemblies in the allocation of funding, to be done at the end of the year, whereas Sustainable Development Select Committee would be conducting pre-decision scrutiny of the Mayor and Cabinet decision around the setting up of the whole process for the use of NCIL funding and it would do that at its next meeting. She added that the Chairs were happy for Select Committees Members to attend their meetings on NCIL.

The Scrutiny Manager informed Panel Members that for this meeting Business Panel was being asked to agree the Public Accounts Select Committee's (PAC) annual work programme, and to consider its referral to Business Panel. Councillor Krupski, Vice Chair of Public Accounts Select Committee was present at the meeting, to take questions.

Councillor Curran stated that it would make sense for them to look at the NCIL process to ensure it was transparent and transferrable. Councillor Muldoon commented that maybe a holistic approach should be considered.

Councillor Campbell informed Panel Members that following the last meeting members comments have been incorporated into the Safer Stronger Communities referral, and she had found the amended report very useful.

Business Panel agreed the referral from Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee to Mayor and Cabinet.

RESOLVED that Mayor and Cabinet be requested to direct officers to ensure that :

- i. Equalities and the issues surrounding it are addressed in reports as part of contract compliance.
- ii. Equalities implications become an explicit part of the decision making process.
- iii. All reports to explicitly include equalities implications or an equalities impact assessment, and evidence that the equalities impact has been considered at every step of the decision making process (at the beginning, throughout the duration and at the end).
- iv. Looking beyond the Equalities Act; Class should also be included as part of equalities implications.

Councillor Krupski informed Panel Members that PAC had made the referral to Business Panel as they had decided it was important that savings features constantly in Select Committees Work Programmes, and that each Select Committee considers relevant capital expenditure that falls within their remit. Business Panel agreed the proposal from the Public Accounts Select Committee.

RESOLVED that all select committees give due consideration to scrutiny of the Council's finances in the development of their 2019-20 work programmes. In

particular, that the relevant select committees should be tasked with scrutinising the capital programme expenditure within their remit (including the schools programme; major regeneration projects and the housing revenue account allocation) as well as the dedicated schools grant and the complete housing revenue account.”

Councillor Sorba said Children and Young People Select Committee had a slimmed down work programme and the report on school exclusions was being finalised. He said they would also be looking at children social care as it was an important programme, together with the children social care budget. Councillor Sorba said they would also be identifying issues with CAHMS, and keeping a keen eye on children with SEN, ECHP and safeguarding issues. He concluded by highlighting the importance of involving the public. Councillor Codd said he welcomed that, as public involvement was discussed at the Democracy Review Working Group.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

214. Exclusion of the Press and Public

This item was not required.

215. Decisions made by Mayor and Cabinet on 8 May 2019

These items were not requested for discussion.

Meeting ended: 8.20pm

Chair