



## Public Accounts Select Committee

### **Sustainable Development Select Committee comments on the budget reduction proposals**

**Date:** 1 December 2022

**Key decision:** No.

**Class:** Part 1.

**Ward(s) affected:** All (none specific).

**Contributor:** Sustainable Development Select Committee

### **Outline and recommendations**

This report informs the Public Accounts Select Committee of the comments and views of the Sustainable Development Select Committee, arising from discussions about proposals for budget cuts.

The Public Accounts Select Committee is asked to consider the views of the Sustainable Development Select Committee as part of its overall consideration of the budget cuts. The referral from Sustainable Development Select Committee will be submitted to Mayor and Cabinet alongside any comments from the Public Accounts Select Committee.

### **Timeline of engagement and decision-making**

2 March 2022 – Budget report to Council

6 July 2022 – 2022/23 financial monitoring report to Mayor and Cabinet

6 July 2022 – Medium Term Financial Strategy to Mayor and Cabinet

5 October 2022 – 2022/23 financial monitoring report to Mayor and Cabinet

Budget reduction proposals report to scrutiny committees:

- 1 November 2022 – Healthier Communities Select Committee
- 3 November 2022 – Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee
- 17 November 2022 – Housing Select Committee
- 24 November 2022 – Children and Young People Select Committee
- 30 November 2022 – Sustainable Development Select Committee

1 December 2022 – budget reduction proposals to Public Accounts Select Committee

7 December 2022 – budget reduction proposals to Mayor and Cabinet

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1. On Thursday 30 November 2022, the Sustainable Development Select Committee considered a report from officers on budget cuts proposals ([agenda for the meeting of the Sustainable Development Select Committee on 30 November 2022](#)). The Committee received an overview of the report from the Director of Finance as well as the Executive Director for Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm and the Director of Public Realm. Following questions to officers, the Committee agreed to refer its views to the Public Accounts Select Committee.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1. The Public Accounts Select Committee is asked to consider the Committee's comments and submit them as part of its combined referral to Mayor and Cabinet.

## **3. Sustainable Development Select Committee views**

- 3.1. In relation to the Housing Regeneration and Public Realm savings proposals for income generation (for bulky waste, fridge/freezer collection, and mattresses) Committee members were concerned about the potential impact of the increased charges on household budgets, particularly given the recent increases in the cost of living. The Committee recommended that, if feasible, work should take place to review the effect of the changes on household budgets over time.
- 3.2. The Committee was also concerned about potential increases in littering and

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fly-tipping. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that additional emphasis, and (where feasible) increased publicity, should be placed on the Council's enforcement processes and the options for the legal disposal of waste.

- 3.3. The Committee is concerned about the proposed reduction in opening hours at libraries (COM\_SAV\_08) particularly in relation to the Council's offer of 'warm welcomes' to households and vulnerable individuals experiencing fuel poverty.
- 3.4. The Committee recommends that careful consideration should be given to any future proposals for income generation in the borough's parks and open spaces.

#### **4. Financial implications**

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, there may be implications arising from the implementation of the Committee's recommendations. These will need to be considered as part of the response.

#### **5. Legal implications**

- 5.1. The Constitution provides for select committees to refer reports to the Mayor and Cabinet, who are obliged to consider the report and the proposed response from the relevant Executive Director; and report back to the Committee within two months (not including recess).

#### **6. Equalities implications**

- 6.1. Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act included a new public sector equality duty, replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 6.2. The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
  - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 6.3. There may be equalities implications arising from items on the work programme and all activities undertaken by the Select Committee will need to give due consideration to this.

#### **7. Climate change and environmental implications**

- 7.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. There may be climate change and environmental implications arising from the implementation of the Committee's recommendations – these will need to be considered in the

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response.

## **8. Crime and disorder implications**

- 8.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. There may be implications arising from the implementation of the Committee's recommendations – these will need to be considered in the response.

## **9. Health and wellbeing implications**

- 9.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. There may be implications arising from the implementation of the Committee's recommendations – these will need to be considered in the response.

## **10. Report author and contact**

- 10.1. If you have any questions about this report then please contact: Scrutiny Manager, Timothy Andrew ([timothy.andrew@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:timothy.andrew@lewisham.gov.uk)) 020 8314 7916

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