



Mayor and Cabinet

Comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Asset Management

Date: 1 November 2023

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1.

Ward(s) affected: All (none specific)

Contributor: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Outline and recommendations

This report informs the Mayor and Cabinet of the comments and views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, arising from discussions on Asset Management.

Mayor and Cabinet is asked to consider the Committee's comments and ask the relevant officers to provide a response.

1. Summary

- 1.1. On Tuesday 3 October, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) considered a report from officers on Asset Management ([link to the agenda](#)) The Committee reflected on the contents of the report – and received a presentation from officers. Following questions to officers, the Committee agreed to refer its views to Mayor and Cabinet.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Mayor and Cabinet (M&C) is asked to consider the Committee's comments and ask the relevant officers to provide a response.

3. Overview and Scrutiny Committee views

- 3.1. The Committee recognises that, given on-going cuts to local government spending, the Council is currently operating within very severe financial constraints and resources are stretched. Officers are having to show immense agility, creativity, pace, leadership and resilience; and ensure that scarce resources are effectively prioritised. Notwithstanding this challenging context, the Committee would like to make the following recommendations:

That:

- The asset management strategy should come to OSC prior to its consideration by M&C (at the OSC meeting on 6 February 2024, if timelines allow)
- There should be a wider consideration of the value of land - its economic value, geographical location and social value should all be key considerations in the decision-making process for the development or disposals of assets
- Master planning for the long-term use of the Council's assets should take place, including combined use, creative zones and industrial units
- The Council should consider a wider acquisition strategy
- A more ambitious investment partnership strategy should be adopted
- All assets proposed for disposal or change of use should be highlighted to scrutiny, and ward councillors, including those below the key decision threshold of £1.5m
- Equalities considerations should be part of all asset management decisions, with Equalities Analysis Assessments (EAAs) carried out where required
- Ongoing clarity should be provided in relation to existing and potential plans for meeting net zero ambition, including planned and necessary works, as well as secured funding and gaps.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. However, there may be implications arising from their 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 are no direct equalities implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

7. Climate change and environmental implications

7.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendation in this report. However, in February 2019 Lewisham Council declared a Climate Emergency and proposed a target to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030. Asset Management will play a key role in this agenda.

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.

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

If you have any questions about this report, then please contact: Charlotte Dale
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