MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUSINESS PANEL

Tuesday, 23 April 2019 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Bill Brown, Sakina Sheikh, Juliet Campbell, Patrick Codd, Liam Curran, Jim Mallory, Joan Millbank, John Muldoon and Luke Sorba

190. Minutes

The Chair welcomed new Members to the Panel.

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

191. Declarations of Interests

None received.

192. Outstanding Scrutiny Matters

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

193. Notification of Late and Urgent Items

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

194. Decisions made by Mayor and Cabinet on 27 March 2019

Local Safeguarding Partnership Future Arrangements

The Chair of the Children and Young People Select Committee, Councillor Sorba informed Panel Members that he had requested further discussion of this item as he thought there was going to be a major change of a sensitive Statutory function it would need thorough scrutiny. He said he noted that Lewisham would be merging with Bexley and Greenwich Councils and would be sharing one Borough Commander amongst them, instead of one each. The Executive Director for Children and Young People responded that local authorities do not have a choice in the matter, as there was a Legislative Framework. She said the partnership arrangements was for economies of scales, and there was also value in working together.

The Executive Director for CYP informed Panel Members that the Board arrangements would be done within each Borough, with an overview joint arrangement which would include joint meetings.

Councillor Sorba stated that the key position of the Independent Chair was to be replaced by an Independent Scrutineer. He asked that the criteria and job

description of the post be shared with Business Panel Members. The Executive Director for CYP said partners had not yet signed off a job description, as the template was still being discussed amongst Local Authorities. She said it would likely be similar to that of the Chair of the Board.

Action >>>>>> ED CYP

The Executive Director for CYP said that responsibility for Scrutiny would sit with the Safeguarding Partnership i.e. Health Trusts, Police and Local Authorities, but the Scrutineer would report to the Chief Executive of the Council to ensure an additional layer of responsibility. She said the Scrutineer would be an external detached role that would look at how well the Partners were working.

Councillor Millbank commented on the timetable, and asked if there would be an opportunity for a pay review. She asked why Lay Members would be employed for only 18 months. Councillor Millbank also asked how the Child Death Overview Panel would work.

The Executive Director for CYP explained how the process would work emphasising that the Tri Borough arrangements would add a layer to the local safeguarding process, but all the real business would be dealt with at local level. She said that although Lay-Member involvement was no longer required, the partners thought it would be wise to roll them over to the new arrangements to give partners the opportunity to review the role. Panel Members heard that the Child Death Overview Panel would be a valuable umbrella of support that would focus on all aspects of Child Deaths.

Councillor Millbank commented that an external person might find it difficult to get information. She asked how this would be dealt with and was told that as it was a Statutory role they would have the power to request information to fulfil the role, and co-partners would ensure they were effective. Councillor Millbank said it would be useful for the Job Description to be circulated to CYP Select Committee Members once it has been finalised.

Councillor Curran said he was concerned that the possibility remained that important issues could be missed between the Tri Borough arrangements and the Child Death Overview Panel. He emphasised that both parties might mistakenly assume that the other was dealing with an issue, and this might not be the case. He asked how the partners would work together to ensure nothing gets missed. The Executive Director for CYP responded that the arrangements were very clearly set out, and responsibility sits at Borough level. She said there was no risk of blurred responsibilities and the Partners would ensure there was a detailed document that set out how things would work.

The Panel discussed in detail the method of funding which they thought was not well spread out. Panel Members were concerned the funding might not be sufficient to do the work, but were told officers may have to ask for more funding if necessary.
The Chair thanked the Executive Director CYP for the report.

RESOLVED:

I. that the decision of Mayor and Cabinet be noted.
II. that Mayor and Cabinet be requested to ask officers to construct an Executive Management Structure chart with a clear reporting line for the Child Death Overview Panel.
III. that Mayor and Cabinet be requested to ask officers to circulate details of the person specification and Job description for the Independent Scrutineer to the Children and Young People Select Committee when finalised.

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

The Scrutiny Manager introduced the report and informed Panel Members of the following:

- The first round of Select Committee meetings has started, and committees would be agreeing their annual work programmes, which would be considered by Business Panel on Tuesday 7 May 2019.

- As the by-elections would be taking place on Thursday 2 May, the meeting of the Public Accounts Select Committee scheduled for that evening has been moved to Thursday 9 May. Its work programme would be considered separately at Business Panel on Tuesday 21 May.

- At the request of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Chief Whip, the Scrutiny Manager had contacted the CfPS regarding arranging some in-house Scrutiny Chairing training to support select committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs. The proposed date for the training is Wednesday 5 June 2019.

Councillor Mallory suggested the training should be open to all Scrutiny Members as some might become Chairs and Vice Chairs in future. The Chair endorsed this suggestion but added that because of practical reasons and the interactive element of the course, places would be limited. He added that if there were remaining places, aspiring Chairs would be welcome to attend.

The Scrutiny Manager informed Panel Members that a broader training for all scrutiny members could be arranged for later in the year. Councillor Muldoon endorsed the training proposals. He said Select Committee Members still awaited guidance from the MOCLT.

Councillor Muldoon said Healthier Communities Select Committee would be visiting Wigan to learn about the Wigan Deal for Adult Social Care.

Councillor Sorba asked if the European Elections would affect the Select Committees meeting Calendar, and was told Sustainable Development Select Committee which was scheduled for 23 May might have to be re-scheduled.

Councillor Curran stated that at their last meeting they had been discussing fire safety in tall buildings, and he would urge Members to keep an eye on this issue

especially in private buildings. He requested that Business Panel discuss this very important issue at a future date as he was concerned that it might get overlooked.

196. Exclusion of the Press and Public

This item was not required.

197. Decisions made by Mayor and Cabinet on 27 March 2019

These items were not requested for discussion.

Meeting ended: 8.00pm Chair…….