

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUSINESS PANEL

Tuesday, 7 May 2019 at 7.05 pm

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

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Paul Bell

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Luke Sorba

198. Minutes

The Chair welcomed Councillor Bernards to his first Business Panel meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the open meeting held on 23 April 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

199. Declarations of Interests

None received.

200. Outstanding Scrutiny Matters

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

201. Notification of Late and Urgent Items

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

202. Decisions made by Mayor and Cabinet on 24 April 2019

None of the decisions made by Mayor and Cabinet was requested for further discussion.

203. Overview and Scrutiny Select Committees Work Programmes 2019-20

Comments of the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee on the Select Committees Work Programmes

The Chair of the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee introduced the report. She stated that at their first meeting the committee observed that most reports would state there was no equalities impact emerging from the proposals,

and some of those that do have equalities implications would not be explicitly documented.

Councillor Muldoon said he endorsed this statement, and the Health and Wellbeing Board had made people aware that this was a serious matter.

Councillor Mallory commented that he was unable to attend the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee meeting, but would like to say that the Select Committee was trying to raise awareness about the importance of equalities implications in the decision making process.

Councillor Mallory stated that he was concerned about the nature of reports, and got the impression that most of them were being agreed on the nod. He said there were a range of issues that would need to be addressed especially around contract compliance. Councillor Mallory added that work on equalities implications should be similar to the work that was done to raise the profile for the London Living Wage. Councillor Mallory added that a monitoring exercise with targets set out would be useful.

Councillor Millbank stated that consistency was what she thought should be required as there had been some excellent reports in the past that had properly addressed equalities implications. Councillor Campbell responded that she was aware that some reports had addressed equalities implications, but she needed to emphasise that all reports should have this, and it should be explicit.

Councillor Millbank said as a Labour controlled Council, Lewisham should look beyond the Equalities Act, and could also look at Class as part of under equalities implications. Panel Members agreed that the report should be amended to include the points that have been raised at the meeting, and brought back to the next Business Panel meeting.

Action >>>>> Scrutiny Manager

Councillor Curran said he would like to raise concerns about the inadequacy of the audio systems at meetings. He said this was not available in most meeting rooms, and he had difficulties hearing what was being said in some meetings.

Councillor Mallory commented that when Panel Members scrutinise reports they expected equalities implications to have been addressed properly in reports going to Mayor and Cabinet. He added that the Local Democracy Working Group had discussed this and would be looking at the way committees were run. Councillor Campbell said she was concerned that this issues would be discussed in silos because of the number of groups involved. She added that it would be ideal to get one group discussion. The Chair said he would have a discussion with Select Committees Chairs and a decision would be made when the report was brought back to the next Business Panel meeting.

RESOLVED that:

- i. Mayor and Cabinet be informed about the concerns raised on the inadequacy of the sound system in the Council Meeting rooms, and that adequate provision be made to ensure all meeting rooms in the Council buildings have adequate sound system to meet the needs of Council Members and the public, especially those hard of hearing, as commented upon in the Local Democracy Review.

The Scrutiny Manager introduced the Select Committees work programmes report. She informed Panel Members that the work programmes for five Select Committees were attached as an appendix to the report. She said the Public Accounts Select Committee's work programme had been delayed as its first meeting was rescheduled because of the by-elections on 2 May 2019.

Panel Members noted that three in-depth reviews have been put forward as follows:

i. Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee - Equalities

This review would link into the timeframe for consultation on the new Corporate Equalities Scheme and consider how equalities considerations are embedded across the Council including organisations funded by the Council; and how Equalities Impact Assessments are carried out in Lewisham and good practice.

ii. Housing Select Committee - Resident Engagement in Housing Developments

This review would consider how the council engages with communities around regeneration and housing development; how this affects relationships between the council and residents, particularly those from often excluded groups; what the council could learn from how other boroughs engage; and the role of partners, Tenants and Residents Associations and councillors in community engagement.

iii. Sustainable Development Select Committee - Parks Management

This review would take into account the proposed income generation proposals made in the last round of cuts and would also consider the future maintenance and ownership of open spaces as well as the new 'greening fund'. It was noted that the Select Committee would be asked for their views because the increase in housing developments has prompted the select committee to consider the quality of green space amenity.

Healthier Communities Select Committee

Panel Members noted that the select committee would be carrying out in-depth work on adult social care which would include a visit to Wigan to hear more about the Wigan Deal for Adult Social Care. Councillor Muldoon informed Panel Members that the visit would take place on 26 November.

Children and Young People Select Committee

The select committee would have a one off meeting on the impact of families being placed in temporary accommodation a long way from their existing social networks and schools; and the committee would also be carrying out specific work in relation to the Early Help Review.

Business Panel was informed that the Chair of Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee would like to make a small amendment to the “Public Health Approach to Violence Strategy” item on her work programme as the committee would now like this item to be considered at meetings in July and January as well as the scheduled October meeting.

Business Panel noted Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee, and Sustainable Development Select Committee were both considering work on NCIL, and suggested that one committee lead on this and invite the members of the other committee to attend their meeting for that item. It was agreed that both Chairs would decide how they could take the work forward, and this would be agreed at the next Business Panel meeting.

Councillor Bernards informed Panel Members that as part of their in-depth review on residents engagement they would be doing a scoping exercise on 4th June with input from the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee.

Councillor Codd said as part of their in-depth review on Parks Management, Sustainable Development Select Committee would be looking at improving the quality of existing green space to support the demands in housing. Councillor Millbank highlighted that as a Labour controlled Council, Lewisham should not only be looking at building new homes, but also building communities plus the infrastructure to support them.

Councillor Codd informed Panel Members that the Local Democracy Review would be looking at a review of the Scrutiny arrangements of the Council. In response to Councillor Millbank’s question, Select Committee Chairs responded that their programme choices were influenced by the Labour Group’s Manifesto.

RESOLVED that the proposed contents of the 5 Select Committees Work Programmes be approved.

204. Exclusion of the Press and Public

This item was not required.

205. Decisions made by Mayor and Cabinet on 24 April 2019

These items were not requested for discussion.

**206. Decision made by an Executive Director Under Delegated Authority:
Extension of contracts for the operation of the CCTV control room and
maintenance of CCTV equipment**

This item was not requested for discussion.

Meeting ended 8.00pm

Chair.....