

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE			
Report Title	Update for Overview & Scrutiny Committee		
Key Decision	No		Item No. 4
Ward	All		
Contributors	The Mayor		
Class	Open	Date: 11 June 2019	

Purpose

This report provides an update to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on my first year in office and outlines some of the Council's key achievements over the past year.

Recommendation

Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note this report.

Further information

I am pleased to update Overview and Scrutiny Committee on my first year in office and to outline some of the Council's key achievements over the past year.

Since my previous report to the Committee on 30 October 2018, the Council's Corporate Strategy has been agreed and adopted, setting out this administration's bold vision for a Lewisham that works for all our residents. The commitments of our Corporate Strategy now feed into every Council department, so that all staff understand the role they have to play in delivering that vision.

The manifesto on which we all stood during the local elections last May offered a bold, radical and socialist alternative that set out what we wanted to do to make life better for everyone in Lewisham. With almost a decade of austerity hitting our borough and residents hard, we acknowledged that this would certainly not be easy but was more important than ever. We are in a fight to protect services for vulnerable residents on a scale we have never seen before. We promised to be open and honest with residents, which is why we are not using terms like 'savings' and 'efficiencies' when talking about cuts and job losses that the government is forcing us to make.

That is why I have repeatedly voiced my opposition to government austerity and the effect it is having on our communities. I also ensured that in my Council Tax letter to all residents, I made clear that austerity is hitting Lewisham hard and included information about the 63% cut in our central government funding. It is vital that we communicate the impact of austerity to our residents in the years ahead.

I will continue to work with the communications team and Cllr Bonavia to ensure we are more proactively sharing good news and getting the Council's message across to the community. This includes by bolstering our communications team with two new senior appointments who can lead the strategic culture change we need. I will also continue to raise the Council's profile by writing for and speaking to media outlets to communicate our positive vision for Lewisham.

I want to thank all councillors for their hard work ensuring we focus on delivering for Lewisham. As the committee knows, it is a priority for me that we work collectively and collaboratively to deliver the priorities we all share.

Open Lewisham

We have made significant progress on welcoming an additional 100 refugee families and becoming a Borough of Sanctuary. We will have the first three of our families arriving in June and we are challenging the government's hostile environment to show that Lewisham is a place that welcomes people fleeing persecution. We have removed the Home Office official in the No Recourse to Public Funds service and have set up the Lewisham Migration Forum to ensure our refugee community is listened to.

In response to the growing uncertainty that Brexit has caused our EU staff and residents, the Council has set up three walk in services for EU Settled Status applications. We have also set up a new [web page](#) on the Council website providing guidance to EU Citizens on their rights.

As part of our commitment to an Open Lewisham, we are working hard to strengthen our interfaith events. We held our first Chanukah event last year, which was very well attended, and will be holding a celebration of Islam in the Autumn.

Working hand in hand with scrutiny Councillors, we have completed the first stage of our Local Democracy Review and have recognised the areas that need change and how we have to further engage with hard to reach groups in Lewisham. At the Council AGM we agreed to continue the work of the democracy review working group to oversee the implementation of the 57 recommendations.

Tackling the housing crisis

We are making progress on our commitment to deliver 1,000 new social homes. In the past year we have increased the number of new social homes from 91 to 175 and following the success of PLACE/Ladywell, we have confirmed four more innovative pop-up housing developments, including in Deptford, Sydenham and Lee. These schemes will help 112 families who would otherwise be in emergency accommodation but could provide more homes in the future.

We have received £37.7 million from the GLA to help build the next generation of Council homes in Lewisham and have also received £500,000 to build up our staffing so that we have the in-house capacity to deliver them. We have identified 28 sites where we can build Council homes and will be releasing more information shortly.

There has been a focus in the first year of this administration to achieve more social and genuinely affordable homes in private developments through the planning system. We are already seeing progress, with an 11% increase in the number of social homes coming through planning applications, compared to last year. There is however a long way to go to achieve our target of 50% genuinely affordable homes in developer-led projects. I am clear that developers should be challenged at every stage of the planning process and beyond and have spoken publically recently about this.

We have launched the consultation that will form part of our application for a boroughwide landlord license to crackdown on rogue landlords and improve standards in the private rented sector, and we are improving the offer housing associations make to social housing tenants by asking them to deliver lifetime tenancies in Lewisham.

Giving children and young people the best start in life

We want to ensure that every child has access to an outstanding education and the work that that we have done so far through the Lewisham Learning Partnership has been encouraging.

We have seen continued improvement in attainment for 11-year-olds, faster than the national average. Our recon diary schools are showing good improvements with GCSEs improving faster than the national average on every indicator, as illustrated by the below tables:

GCSE and EBAC attainment:

Attainment	2017	2018	Latest change
Lewisham	44.2	44.9	+0.7
National	46.4	46.6	+0.2

Progress between primary and secondary school:

Progress	2017	2018	Latest change
Lewisham	-0.28	-0.2	+0.06
National	-0.03	-0.02	+0.01

I am particularly pleased that Prendergast Ladywell received a Good rating from Ofsted. This is welcome news for the school, which was listed two years ago as one of the 130 'stuck' intractable schools in England that had not been rated 'Good' at any point over the previous decade. New Woodlands School also achieved an Ofsted Good rating, and we recently approved the second stage of the remodelling works of the school which will increase provision for children with special educational needs by meeting a wider range of learning difficulties that children experience.

Our children's social care service has been an area of significant focus as we work to improve the level of care we provide to our most vulnerable children and to stabilise our budget. Our improvement plan aims to improve outcomes for children so they are less likely to need to go into care. Like 91% of councils, we are overspent in children's social care, with the biggest pressures in residential placements and SEND transport. Work is ongoing through the CYP Improvement Board to address service and financial challenges but this is not a quick fix and we are determined to adequately support our vulnerable young people in the meantime.

Making Lewisham Greener

We have just launched our new Greening Fund, a significant manifesto commitment which will allow community groups to bid for up to £40,000 each to improve local green spaces. Beckenham Place Park will be officially opened later this summer and will host its first public festival.

Our work to clean up the air we breathe continues, as air pollution is a growing health crisis facing Lewisham and the whole of London. Councillors declared a climate emergency at February's Full Council, redoubling our efforts to work towards a carbon neutral borough and minimise our environmental impact. We are also tackling pollutants from car engines, which contribute significantly to our air quality. We campaigned successfully for the Ultra Low Emission Zone to be extended to Lewisham and are building up our anti-idling programme to protect our most polluted playgrounds and installing more electric vehicle charging points. We are also consulting on changes to our parking policy that would see it cost more to park vehicles that produce higher emissions.

Our Liveable Neighbourhood programme will change our streets to encourage more people to walk and cycle rather than drive. Subject to securing funding from the GLA, there will be a range of measures such as traffic management and road closures that will help to make our communities greener and healthier. I'm pleased that the first Liveable Neighbourhood recently launched in Lee and Lewisham town centre.

Our consultation on barriers to recycling recently closed and its findings will inform the development of a new recycling strategy, which will improve our recycling rates even further. We have also successfully lobbied Transport for London to introduce over 3,000 clean buses as part of the Mayor of London's Low Emissions Bus Zones.

Building an inclusive local economy

We have insourced our first council service, bringing council maintenance services in-house from Kier, and we have taken 50 staff off agency contracts and into Council employment.

We are working with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) to expand our community wealth building model, and we have increased the number of living wage employers from 47 to 77 in the last year. This means we are on target to more than double the number of living wage employers in Lewisham.

Our Mayor's Apprenticeship Scheme is expanding so we can support more residents into high quality apprenticeships. Since April 2018, 36 new apprentices have been enrolled on the scheme.

With new funding of £500,000 from the GLA we have launched a new Creative Enterprise Zone in Deptford that will support our artistic and cultural sector.

Delivering and defending health, social care and support

Under this government, the NHS has seen the longest funding squeeze in its history and more people are struggling to access the support services they need. Our local elections manifesto pledged to protect our NHS and social care by investing in the life chances for all our community.

As we struggle with continued budget cuts to our adult social care budget I am proud that we have signed UNISON's Ethical Care Charter. The charter improves workers' rights for care workers in Lewisham so that they can deliver the care our residents deserve.

We are bringing forward our new 'Care at Home' model, which will create a new publicly-owned community based care service to provide compassionate care.

We continue to expand our whole systems approach to obesity by having over 10,000 children taking part in the Daily Mile and by becoming the first council to ban junk food advertising from Council billboards.

Lewisham is one of the most diverse places in the world and that is one of our greatest strengths. However, we know that Lewisham residents experience stark inequalities and we must do more to break down the barriers that mean not all our residents currently have access to the same opportunities and support. The Health and Wellbeing Board, which I chair, has prioritised Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) health inequalities to deepen our understanding of the barriers residents from our BAME communities face.

I also appointed two new advisers at the Council AGM in April. Barbara Gray is our Mayor and Council Adviser on BAME health inequalities, and Royston John is our Mayor and Council Adviser on BAME career progression. Both Barbara and Royston are experts in their fields and will support and challenge us, and have already been meeting with council officers to see how we can better support our diverse communities. As I said in my AGM speech, Barbara and Royston should be seen as resources for all of us.

Building safer communities

We have launched the framework for our public health approach to tackle the root causes of youth violence and knife crime. We have held several community events to share this framework, and will continue to work with residents to implement and deliver our crime reduction strategy.

We secured £282,000 from the Mayor of London for four local youth projects that are doing vital work in the community to support young people to make the best choices and deter them from crime.

We have committed to the Co-operative Party's Modern Slavery Charter and published our first annual Modern Slavery Transparency Statement, and will continue to work hard to ensure we eliminate exploitation in our supply chains.

Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Equalities implications

Equalities implications are contained within the body of this report.

Environmental implications

Environmental implications are contained within the body of this report.

Crime and disorder implications

Crime and disorder implications are contained within the body of this report.