



Public Accounts Select Committee

Report title: Sustainable Development Select Committee comments on the budget cuts

Date: 2 February 2021.

Key decision: No.

Class: Part 1.

Ward(s) affected: All.

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.

1. Summary

- 1.1. On Thursday 14 January 2021, the Sustainable Development Select Committee considered a report from officers on budget cuts proposals ([link to the agenda for the Sustainable Development Select Committee meeting on 14 January 2021](#)). The Committee received a presentation from the Executive Director for Regeneration, Housing and Public Realm. Following questions to the Executive Director, the Committee agreed to refer its views to 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. Better contract management is key to a number of the cuts proposals. The Committee believes that Mayor and Cabinet should assure itself that through good organisational development and training for senior, mid and junior managers, the Council is able to effectively manage contracts at every stage of the cycle and attain the cost savings as proposed.
- 3.2. The Committee recommends that Mayor and Cabinet asks officers to carry out a review of the Council's online services (particularly those provided by third parties, such as online parking facilities) ensuring a good user experience and quality integration with existing systems.
- 3.3. In relation to proposal F22 (Motorcycle parking charges) – the Committee recommends that, if Mayor and Cabinet is minded to agree the proposal to introduce charging for motorcycles, the Council should work with other enforcement partners to ensure those who are illegally parking on the pavement also have enforcement action taken upon them.
- 3.4. In relation to proposal F20 (Emission based charging for short stay parking) - the Committee recommends that the Council should move to a cashless parking system as soon as possible. Members of the Committee believe that £400K is too much to spend on upgrading pay and display machines. The Committee also believes that any reference in the budget cuts report to re-investment of parking charges in transport improvements should be removed – because the reality is that the Council will be using the money to support transport costs already contained within the general fund.
- 3.5. The Committee understands that a large cut needs to be made in waste management and street cleaning and that a comprehensive review will be done to enable this to happen in the most efficient way possible. However, it regrets that this will mean redundancies amongst the Council's lowest paid workers and it highlights that this has been imposed upon us due to Government austerity. The Committee believes that any cuts to staffing must be done with sensitivity and care. The Committee welcomes Mayor and Cabinet's response to its previous referral on staffing cuts, flexible working and redeployment and it reiterates the importance of supporting and redeploying staff wherever possible.

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 them implementation of the Committee's recommendations. These will need to be considered as part of the response.

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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. The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) introduced a public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty). It covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 6.2. In summary, 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 the implementation of the committees' recommendations – these will need to be considered in the response.

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 will be climate change and environmental implications arising from the implementation of the committees' recommendations – these will need to be considered in the 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 committees' 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 committees' 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: Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager) 020 8314 7916 – timothy.andrew@lewisham.gov.uk

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