



THE LONDON BOROUGH  
www.bromley.gov.uk

BROMLEY CIVIC CENTRE, STOCKWELL CLOSE, BROMLEY BRI 3UH

TELEPHONE: 020 8464 3333

CONTACT: Philippa Gibbs  
*Philippa.Gibbs@bromley.gov.uk*

DIRECT LINE: 020 8461 7638

FAX: 020 8290 0608

DATE: 27 November 2023

## **EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Meeting to be held on Monday 27 November 2023**

**Please see the attached report**

### **8 SCRUTINY OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (Pages 3 - 10)**

*Copies of the documents referred to above can be obtained from*  
<http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/>

This page is left intentionally blank

## EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES & CONTRACTS PDS COMMITTEE

27 NOVEMBER 2023

### ITEM 8 – SCRUTINY OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

#### Update from the Leader:

#### **Key Achievements in 2023 – A review of the Civic year and the challenges ahead**

##### Council-Wide

- ✓ Progressed plans to relocate the Council's Headquarters to Churchill Court, with early movers already on site and plans in development for the colocation of the new Health and Wellbeing Centre, and a Lettings Strategy for Churchill Court in production. The marketing for the sale of the current Civic Centre has also commenced.
- ✓ Launched the Council's Magazine, which will be published three times a year for distribution to all residents.
- ✓ Renewed the Council's Armed Forces Covenant.
- ✓ Received the IESE Gold Award for Data and Performance Innovation.
- ✓ Shown strong early performance against the current Office for Local Government (Oflog) local authority performance data metrics.

##### Children's Services

- ✓ Received positive feedback following the inspection of Children's Services and achieved a 'Good' rating from Ofsted for Community Vision Nursery.
- ✓ Recognised nationally in a number of awards rounds, achieving first prize in the Coram 'Young Persons Voice' award, runner up in the Children and Young People Awards for our Early Help Services, and our Principal Social Worker was awarded first prize in the Front Line 'National Leader Award'.
- ✓ Held a number of celebration events throughout the year to recognise the achievements of our children and young people.
- ✓ Launched our Children and Family Hub in March to replace the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which acts as a single point of entry into Children's Services.
- ✓ Delivered on Transformation activity including the realignment of Education Services, joining the pan-London Commissioning Vehicle to achieve efficiencies through joint commissioning programmes.
- ✓ Ensured that the majority of children and young people received their first choice of primary or secondary school on National Offer Day.

Key priorities and challenges:

- ❖ Re-structure Children's Social Care.
- ❖ Prepare for inspections of Youth Justice, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Adult Education.
- ❖ Progress with the building of a new Special School in Chislehurst, which should be completed by late 2024/ early 2025.

### Adult Services

- ✓ Held our inaugural Bromley Adult Care Awards to shine a light and formally thank the Adult Social Care workforce across Bromley.
- ✓ Came runner up in the European Campaign to End Loneliness' Poster Competition, which highlighted the work the Council and statutory private and voluntary Partners have undertaken throughout Bromley.
- ✓ Launched a number of key strategies including the Adult Social Care Strategy (2023 – 2028), our ten-year Housing with Care Strategy and Bromley Carers Plan (2023 – 2025).
- ✓ Worked with the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) to identify opportunities to better use systems and Assistive Technology to reduce demand.
- ✓ Maintained performance around hospital discharge, bucking the trend of the rest of London.
- ✓ Finalised the Single Point of Access (SPA) arrangements, with hospital Social Workers now co-located with Bromley Healthcare.
- ✓ Led on work during Safeguarding Week for the rest of London.
- ✓ Developed work on improved co-production.

### Key priorities and challenges:

- ❖ Ensure the availability of Care at affordable rates.
- ❖ Maintain performance against increasing demands of winter.
- ❖ Continue the focus on place rather than South East London (SEL).
- ❖ Continue to increase the use of Direct Payments as a model of Service Delivery.
- ❖ Pilot and support the development of new community-based Services/ hubs.
- ❖ Embed strength-based practice further through the implementation of the Learning and Development Strategy.
- ❖ Develop a number of key strategic documents, including a new Mental Health Strategy, Bromley Adult Services Workforce Strategy, and an Adult Services Digital Strategy.
- ❖ Monitor the impact of Right Care, Right Person following its introduction.
- ❖ Continue to progress with Adult Social Care reform priorities.

### Public Health

- ✓ Developed and contributed to a range of key strategic documents that will inform the focus and development of Services for now and future

years, including the ICS Strategy, the One Bromley Partnership Strategy and our Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

- ✓ Our Combatting Drugs Partnership has continued with an extensive Programme of work that has included informative surveillance work the borough has been commended on.
- ✓ Continued work to transform our Services, which has included establishing a Children and Young People (CYP) Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board to oversee improvements in Mental Health Services, and the Reprourement of the Substance Misuse Service to reflect the new and emerging needs of client groups.
- ✓ Delivered a number of health campaigns such as immunisation promotions, NHS Health Checks, and a new Weight Management Service.

Key priorities and challenges:

- ❖ Optimise grant allocations to deliver and expand key Services such as the Council's Weight Management and Specialist Smoking Cessation Services.
- ❖ Produce a Suicide Prevention Plan, JSNA Chapters that reflect on Brain Health, Cancer, and Morbidity and Mortality in Bromley, and the Alcohol and Substance Misuse Needs Assessment and Homeless Needs Assessment will be finalised.

### 3.6 Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration

- ✓ The Local Land Charges Team were runners up for Team of the Year in the Land Data Local Land Charges Awards
- ✓ The Burnt Ash (Zed Pod) Housing Scheme received an Energy Efficiency Award.
- ✓ Homes for Ukraine has supported 864 sponsorship placements and a weekly support hub has continued to run.
- ✓ Prepared for the King's Coronation and delivered a Programme that included a large screening and children's activities, decoration of high streets and best decorated shop competition.
- ✓ Delivered a number of Regeneration projects that has included sports provision in Parks in the Borough that have been enhanced as a result of external investment, restoration works of the Grade II listed Crystal Place Subway, and refurbishment works at St Paul's Cray Library and Community Centre as part of the Operational Property Review programme.
- ✓ Held an array of Night Time Enterprise Zone events, including the BR1 Lates event at Bromley Central Library, which has 3,000 visitors in total, and a Winter Lights Spectacular.
- ✓ Continue negotiations with Trafalgar Group to secure a long-term future for Churchill Theatre
- ✓ Progressed our affordable housing developments, with the Anerley, Chislehurst and Plaistow Mews developments now occupied.

Developments at York Rise and West Wickham are currently in the construction phase and due for completion next year, and Bromley North, Beckenham Triangle and Bellegrove have begun the appraisal process.

- ✓ Phase One of the Council's Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) arrangement with Orchard and Shipman for the acquisition and management of residential properties for use as affordable rented accommodation has secured 255 units, with Phase Two of Meadowship Homes expected to secure an additional 186 properties.
- ✓ Cleared the Planning application backlog and performance now well above Government target.
- ✓ Completed the first phase of the Disposals Programme, delivering £31.5 million so far (Glades and Shopping Parades).
- ✓ The Housing Options Team are bedding in, with the Service more streamlined and offering appointments and triage far more quickly. Assessments are up and a greater proportion of work is being carried out at Prevention and Relief stages. There has also been increased partnership working, particularly through members of the Homeless Forum, which has improved levels of early intervention and cross organisational working.
- ✓ The Housing Options Team are bedding in. The service is more streamlined and is offering appointments and triage far more quickly. Assessments are up and a greater proportion of work is being carried out at Prevention and Relief stages. There has been increased partnership working, particularly via members of the Homeless Forum which has improved levels of early intervention and cross organisational working.
- ✓ Additional grant funding secured totalling £1.6m aimed at bolstering services for those at risk of rough sleeping, rough sleepers, ex-offenders and youth homelessness.

Key priorities and challenges:

- ❖ Progress the next stages of construction at West Wickham and York Rise Housing Schemes.
- ❖ Progress the next stage of the Leisure refurbishment design schemes for West Wickham and Walnuts Leisure Centres.
- ❖ Develop a number of strategies including the new Homelessness Strategy, a first draft of the new Bromley Local Plan, finalisation of the Housing Assistance Policy and Allocations Scheme.
- ❖ Introduce new case management IT System across all Teams in Planning and Building Control.
- ❖ Ensure the Council has properties available to offer those to whom are owed a statutory duty. There is a significant lack of available accommodation and the Council's use of emergency, short term hotel accommodation is rising steadily, and longer-term temporary accommodation placements are increasingly further afield. In response, the Team are reviewing options to block book hotel accommodation and

have already increased the incentives made available with private landlords.

- ❖ Manage SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol), which was activated six times last year and over 900 individuals were placed by Council's across London on an emergency basis.
- ❖ Maximise joint use of all available grants in order to ensure that people's homes are properly adapted and suitable for their needs.
- ❖ Progress detailed design procurement on the Operational Property Review.
- ❖ Continue negotiations with Biggin Hill Airport on future Noise Action Plan/lease requirements.

### Environment and Public Protection

- ✓ The Depot Infrastructure Programme continues at pace with improvement plans for Waldo Road and Churchfields now in the Planning Stages.
- ✓ Bromley performed as the best London Borough for Recycling.
- ✓ Optimised the Platinum Jubilee Parks Fund to make playground improvements, establish community-orchards, community gardens, pond improvement and restoration works, and wetland creations.
- ✓ Procured Artificial Intelligence cameras for use in an urban setting and covert cameras in rural settings through the Member's Fly-Tipping Initiative Fund, which is supporting the Service in responding to the issue.
- ✓ Tendered a new Tree Planting Contract and completed the Year Two Tree Planting Programme.
- ✓ Achieved Green Flag status at seven Bromley Parks.
- ✓ Our Arboricultural Support Office was recognised in the Pro Landscapers 30 under 30.
- ✓ Completed the LED streetlights upgrade, and the benefits of the upgrade can be seen in the 60% reduction in carbon emissions from the baseline year (2018/19).
- ✓ Launched a revised Environmental Health and Licensing Out of Hours Service to address noise and the night time economy.

### Key priorities and challenges:

- ❖ Complete tree planting for Year Three of the Treemendous Programme.
- ❖ Decide whether to extend existing contractual arrangements for Parks Management and Grounds Maintenance Services and agree an approach to the Options Appraisal for future Contracting Strategy.
- ❖ Develop a new Safer Bromley Partnership Community Safety Strategy.

### Corporate Services

- ✓ Provided support for major works, programmes, and key priorities, including our response to the ULEZ expansion, the Accommodation Move and the Ofsted inspection of Children's Services.
- ✓ Reprocured the new IT Services contract, which goes live next month (December 2023).
- ✓ Improved compliance with data protection, cyber security and procurement.
- ✓ Delivered a review of Legal Services and introduced the new Case Management System.
- ✓ Increased transparency of Legal costs for Departments so that cases can be budgeted and funding approved by Members for new projects.
- ✓ Begun a number of key projects such as the Cloud migration, compliance improvements, begun a review of the Constitution and the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) roll out preparations.

Key priorities and challenges:

- ❖ Preparations for new legislation including that related to Procurement and Elections.
- ❖ Cloud migration and continued focus on digitalisation and potential savings.
- ❖ Reviewing strategies to replace Windows 10.
- ❖ Leading on a compliance culture with continued improvement around data protection, cyber security, procurement and contract management, and timely reports to Committee.

## Finance

- ✓ The Pension Fund was confirmed as fully funded (115%).
- ✓ Significant growth/cost pressures were funded without significant cuts in Services for 2023/24.
- ✓ Budget Funding identified for the outcome of the fundamental review of capital spend and new disposals identified, meeting the net financial impact.
- ✓ Completed Meadowship Homes (Phase 2).
- ✓ Implemented Oracle Fusion, including budget monitoring roll out.
- ✓ Overall underspends in the Council's overall budget in 2022/23 without additional drawdown of Reserves.
- ✓ The Fraud Team identified £660k for recovery for Small Business Rate from firms not entitled to receive the monies.
- ✓ The Fraud Team (in partnership with Greenwich) won the Institute of Revenues rating and Valuations Award in category of Protecting the Public Purse for their work across LB Greenwich and LB Bromley.
- ✓ Maximised the benefit of Homes for Ukraine funding to provide flexibility in funding the cost pressures in future years.

Key priorities and challenges:



- ❖ Deliver sufficient quality internal audit work to inform robust annual opinion for 2023/24.
- ❖ Procure insurance cover to manage the Council's risks whilst achieving value for money for the next three years.
- ❖ Review the Council's approach to risk management.
- ❖ Work with Services to assist in achieving savings/ limiting growth and getting better management information in all areas.
- ❖ Complete Fees and Charges Review, which is hoped to generate additional income in excess of £600k per annum.
- ❖ To deliver an overall balanced budget in 2023/24, proactively working to identify options/opportunities to improve the financial sustainability of the Council and delivering a balanced budget for 2024/25.
- ❖ Progress with the ongoing transition to universal credit.

#### Human Resources and Customer Services

- ✓ The Council's Workforce Development Programme, including our Social Care Training was positively recognised by Ofsted in the recent inspection of Children's Services.
- ✓ Moved HR Payroll to Oracle Fusion, the latest cloud-based Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System.
- ✓ Delivered a number of staff learning and development and wellbeing events.
- ✓ Made improvements to the Corporate Website to increase accessibility.
- ✓ Held recruitment fairs that included a focus on apprenticeships, volunteering and entry level roles, with a wide range of local organisations in attendance.

#### Key priorities and challenges:

- ❖ Continue to support Services with recruitment and retention challenges.

This page is left intentionally blank