

**EXECUTIVE AND RESOURCES
POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 8 January 2014

Present:

Councillor Eric Bosshard (Chairman)
Russell Mellor (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Nicholas Bennett J.P., Brian Humphrys,
William Huntington-Thresher, Nick Milner, Tom Papworth,
Ellie Harmer, Peter Fookes, Tony Owen, Ian F. Payne,
Neil Reddin FCCA, Pauline Tunncliffe, Will Harmer and
Kate Lymer

Also Present:

Councillor Graham Arthur, Councillor Stephen Carr,
Councillor Robert Evans and Councillor Peter Morgan

**412 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF
SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no apologies for absence.

413 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Peter Fookes declared an interest as a Trustee of Penge and Anerley Age Concern in relation to the Contracts Register (minute 418.)

**414 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE
PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING**

No questions for the Committee had been received.

**415 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE AND RESOURCES PDS
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13TH NOVEMBER 2013
(EXCLUDING EXEMPT ITEMS)**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2013 (excluding exempt information) be confirmed.

416 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS
Report CSD 14002

The Committee noted matters arising from previous meetings, and the Chairman announced that he had asked for an update on the Bromley Youth Employment Project for the next meeting on 5th February.

417 FORWARD PLAN OF KEY AND PRIVATE EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Committee noted the latest edition of the Forward Plan of Key Decisions, as published on 17th December 2013.

418 CONTRACTS REGISTER

The Committee received extracts from the Contracts Register showing (A) Chief Executive's/Resources contracts over £50k and (B) contracts across all departments above £200k. It was suggested that it was no longer necessary for the Committee to receive these summaries or that a shorter document just highlighting particular issues would suffice, but most Members considered that receiving the quarterly extracts was still useful.

419 QUESTIONS TO THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS ATTENDING THE MEETING

Two questions had been received from Councillor Tom Papworth – these are attached, with answers from the Portfolio Holder, as Appendix 1.

420 SCRUTINY SESSION - THE RESOURCES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

The Resources Portfolio Holder, Councillor Graham Arthur, attended the meeting to update the Committee on his work and answer questions. Councillor Arthur summarised the following work currently taking place –

- World War 1 Commemorations – Officers were coordinating fifteen events, including a reconstruction of a WW1 allotment.
- Registrars Service – Councillor Arthur congratulated the Registrars Service on an outstanding inspection outcome which would result in a light touch inspection regime for the future. The Service had been very successful in generating business and now ran at a surplus.
- Electoral Registration – The annual canvass was being carried out for the last time, and a report was being prepared for General Purposes and Licensing Committee on arrangements for the 2014 local and European elections.
- Civic Centre facilities – The recent Coroner's Inquest held at the Civic Centre included use of Skype to interview a witness in Hong Kong. Further investment in Civic Centre facilities was needed to increase lettings income.
- Finance – The budget was currently in balance, but there was a potential shortfall of £7m still to be addressed for 2015/16 and further savings were needed.
- Benefits – The full effects of the benefits changes had still to be fully felt, but Cllr Arthur had recently visited the Liberata team and had congratulated them on the job they were doing. He reported that the

Government would be withdrawing its £993k funding for the Welfare Fund from 2015/16, resulting in a further burden for the Council.

- IT Manager – Work was being carried out with LB Southwark to recruit a senior IT professional to serve both boroughs, and other authorities had also expressed an interest.
- Economic Development and Investment Fund – property investments were now producing around £1m in income per annum, while disposals of operational property exceeded £30m. The Asset Management group were looking at the use of all assets very rigorously.
- Commissioning – The Customer Service Centre had recently been outsourced and in-depth reviews of all service areas had resulted in 7 bundles of work which would be scrutinised by PDS Committees. The annual report on Commissioning was due to be published in February.
- Partners – Other partners would be forced by budget restrictions to limit themselves to a minimal service in coming years – Cllr Arthur stated that most residents understood this.

The Chairman urged all Members to continue to tell MPs about the pressures on the Council and to urge them to reduce the Council's statutory duties.

Councillor Nicholas Bennett referred to the line on Health Authority Clinics in the list of Council property holdings produced in the answer to Councillor Papworth's question (minute 419), and stated that a clinic in Hawes Lane in his ward had been empty for 8 years. Councillor Arthur responded that there were regular discussions with health services about property matters, but NHS property was not controlled locally.

Councillor Nicholas Bennett asked whether the information he had requested on the cost of new statutory duties imposed since 2010 would be available, as this would be useful in lobbying MPs. Councillor Arthur responded that he would speak to the Director of Finance about this, and added that, with the Leader and Deputy Leader, he had met with the borough's MPs to explain the impact of the Government withdrawing its funding for the Welfare Fund. He confirmed that the Fund was used each year.

Councillor Tony Owen asked about progress with underpinning works at Anerley Town Hall. Councillor Arthur responded that the quotes to carry out the work had been unacceptably high and a re-think of the project was needed. He agreed that in retrospect tenants might have been advised too early to make alternative arrangements while the work was carried out.

Councillor Russell Mellor asked how often the Council valued its property assets, and what the cost of this was. He was informed that there was a five year rolling programme of valuations carried out by consultants. The recent 20% tranche had cost £7,750. The values shown were not necessarily the market value were the property to be sold.

421 RESOURCES PORTFOLIO - PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

**421.1 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - 2ND QUARTER
2013/14**

Report CSD14013

On 20th November 2013 the Executive had received a second quarter capital monitoring report and had agreed a revised Capital Programme for the four year period 2013/14 to 2016/17. This had included scheme re-phrasings within the Resources Capital Programme.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

422 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Report CSD14003

The Committee considered the following reports on the part 1 agenda for the meeting of the Executive on 15th January 2015.

**(5) Draft 2014/14 Budget and Update on Council's Financial Strategy
2015/16 to 2017/18**

Report FSD14001

The report presented the initial draft 2014/15 budget and set out actions to reduce the Council's medium term "budget gap." The views of PDS Committees would be sought before the Executive at its meeting on 12th February made final recommendations to Council on the 2014/15 Council Tax levels and Budget. In education, there had been a welcome increase in the Basic Needs Assessment, but full details were still awaited on elements of the schools budget settlement, and these would be reported to Education PDS Committee later in the month.

Asked about the future of local government, the Director of Finance stated that a recent report said that a tipping point would be reached for most authorities by 2015/16 or 2016/17 and the role of the state would be the fundamental question in the coming years. Ring-fencing of health and education budgets increased the pressure on local government. It was likely that district councils, without critical mass and a full range of services, would be forced to merge, although a Member questioned whether large organisations would necessarily be more efficient than small ones. Bromley was in a better position than many authorities, having taken a medium term approach, being lean and debt free and retaining reserves, but there were substantial challenges to be faced. Further reductions in the government's welfare budgets, such as reducing housing benefit support for young people under 25, were likely to have consequential impacts on other social service budgets. Homelessness was one of the biggest challenges facing the borough in the coming years.

The recent changes announced to council tax freeze grant, whereby the 2014/15 grant would now be included in base funding in future years,

represented a late concession from the Government, following substantial lobbying. Bromley's 2014/15 grant would be £1.38m; compared with a Council Tax rise of 2%, accepting the grant would mean foregoing £1.08m of ongoing income.

The Director of Finance explained that the Collection Fund (paragraph 11.7.1 in the report) related to money collected by the Council on behalf of the GLA. A surplus built up which was released every few years

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(6) Section 106 Agreements: Update

Report DRR14/001

Members received an update on Section 106 Agreements and on progress made to purchase residential properties using the £1m housing payment in lieu (PIL) monies agreed in July 2013. It was proposed that authority to draw down a further £120k of affordable housing PIL money to acquire residential properties be delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Transformation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

The amount of PIL monies was related to viability, and the Chief Planner confirmed that with market conditions improving developers would now be expected to provide larger contributions, whereas in recent years they had used market conditions as a reason to seek to pay reduced contributions. With planning permissions usually taking five years to expire legal agreements usually contained indexation clauses to give some protection to the Council's interests.

The Committee discussed the use of education contributions. The Government usually provided funding for new schools, but if the Council provided a site then it lost any potential receipt and the Council would argue that this could be paid for from education contributions. All types of contributions were set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance. The Council collected Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on behalf of the GLA, and retained 5% administration allowance.

Councillor Nicholas Bennett asked for clarification of the table at appendix 4. Further details of the S.106 agreements had been placed in the Members' Room.

The Chairman called for PIL contributions to be maximised and the calculations to be reviewed. The Chief Planner assured Members that actual contributions were independently assessed at the expense of the applicant and Supplementary Planning Guidance was kept up to date.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(7) Procurement Strategy for Tenancy Support Services for Homeless People

Report CS3051

The report sought agreement for the proposed procurement strategy for tenancy support services for homeless people living in hostel accommodation. This service was currently being provided by Riverside ECHG under a contract expiring on 30th June 2014.

Questioned about the quality of service provided by Riverside ECHG, the Director of Education, Care and Health Services commented that performance had been variable, with staff turnover being a major issue, but outcomes had been exceptional. The aim was to support adults to live independently and maintain their own tenancies. The Director informed the Committee that the latest survey of people living on the streets in the borough had found nine individuals, and there was no evidence of any increase in numbers.

It was noted that there was a minor error in the report at paragraph 3.4 – the gateway review had been considered by the Executive in October 2012.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(8) Better Care Fund (BCF) – Formerly the Integration Transformation Fund

Report CS13054

The former Integration Transformation Fund had recently been rebranded by the Department of Health as the Better Care Fund. A two year local plan had to be approved locally by the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group and then submitted to NHS England by 14th February 2014. It was proposed that the Executive should approve the proposals and delegate confirmation of the detailed work to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 30th January 2014.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(9) PRoMISE Programme: Draw-down of NHS Funds

Report CS13052

The report provided an update on the Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group's PRoMISE programme and sought the release of funds totalling £7.499m for the period 2013/14 to 2014/15.

The Committee discussed the rise in type 2 diabetes, including childhood diabetes, and noted that good work had been done on prevention and diet in the United States and in Scotland. Cllr Pauline Tunnicliffe informed Members that the Care Services PDS Committee would shortly be receiving a report on diabetes.

Members also noted that there was a need to encourage people not to attend A&E when other services or self-treatment were more appropriate. Part of this was closer working between care and health, with staff secondments and a single professional being responsible for each client.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(10) Learning Disability Section 75 Agreement
Report CS13053

It was proposed that the Council would enter into an agreement with Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust for the provision of adult learning disability assessment and care management services. Oxleas would be the lead provider for the Council's learning disability functions through an agreement under section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006, and a pooled budget would be established to deliver the service.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(11) Developing Bromley's Local Plan – Draft Policies and Designations for Consultation

In line with the Local Development Scheme approved by the Executive in October 2013, consultation on the Local Development Scheme was scheduled for early 2014. The report included, at Appendix 1, the Draft Policies and Designations document for the Executive to agree for public consultation, having considered the recommendation of the Development Control Committee on 7th January 2014. It was noted that Oxleas now provided a range of community services and was a very effective provider. The proposals would involve a single management structure for staff and a single point of contact for clients.

Asked whether it would be useful to include a section in the Plan on fracking, the Chief Planner stated that this was possible, but the issue was already covered in some detail in national policy.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(12) Business Improvement District Strategy for Town Centres 2014/15

Following the successful establishment of the Orpington 1st Business Improvement District (BID) the Executive was being asked to consider the feasibility of extending the BID approach to other town centres in the borough, specifically Bromley and Beckenham. It was recommended that the formation of a Bromley BID be supported, but that the BID process should not be started immediately for Beckenham but should be reconsidered before the end of 2014. An addendum to appendix 4 in the report had been circulated setting out the different stages of the project plan and the attendant costs.

Members queried whether the boundaries of the BID area as shown in the report were fixed, as there were a number of locations that should potentially be included. It was noted that the discussions on developing the proposals would include the detailed boundaries, and these would not need to be fixed until the project reached the ballot stage. The boundary would have to be considered very carefully as including areas where businesses might not be in favour could undermine a successful ballot. Councillor Ian Payne informed the Committee that experience in Bexleyheath was that businesses that had been excluded from the BID now wanted to be included.

Consultation and discussion were essential to the development of a successful BID, and although the Council had a facilitating role it was important that the process was business-led. A Bromley stakeholder group was being formed to create an over-arching group for the town centre. It was noted that businesses in the Glades/Intu were already paying a service charge, but there were ways to mitigate this – in Orpington, a discount had been negotiated for Walnuts Centre tenants.

The Committee inquired about the Orpington BID – officers were not aware of any complaints having been received from the businesses that had not supported the BID, and income was on target at about 90%.

Officers confirmed that there was no restriction on establishing a BID covering more than one town centre, and there might be opportunities for sharing back-office costs, but this would also involve considerable challenges.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

423 SHARED PARKING SERVICE - PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report informing them of progress with the shared parking service with LB Bexley and the issues that had arisen during the first six months of operations. The report had also been considered by the Parking Working Group on 9th October 2013 and the Environment PDS Committee on 19th November 2013. It was noted that the creation of the shared parking service had been approved by the Executive in November 2012, not 2013 as stated in paragraph 3.1 of the report.

Councillor Tony Owen queried what real savings had been achieved, and how. Most of the savings had been as a result of combining two teams of staff (from 37fte posts to 27.5fte) – this had been done through keeping vacancies open and some staff choosing not to join the new service. Savings had been achieved from the Parking IT Support contract and there would be additional savings in future when a joint enforcement contract was tendered.

Lessons learned in establishing the shared service were summarised in an appendix to the report. Officers highlighted good support from other Council departments, such as Legal, Finance and HR, maintaining good relations with staff throughout, ensuring that all approvals were in place at each stage and

keeping Members informed from an early stage. The biggest challenge had been to move to a shared IT system.

Members queried how staff worked together with some on Bromley's local terms and conditions and some on Bexley's, still based on the national arrangements. This had not caused any problems and in practice all staff were managed through Bromley HR procedures.

Some costs were apportioned 50:50 to the two boroughs, where there were functions that both needed to run a parking service, but where there were different activity levels, such as in parking appeals and representations, costs were apportioned based on numbers from the previous year. This was considered to be not overcomplicated and broadly fair to both boroughs.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

424 REVENUES SERVICE MONITORING REPORT
Report CSD14009

The Committee received a report on the performance of the Revenues Service contract provided by Liberata for the six months up to 30th September 2013, including a letter from Amanda Inwood-Field, Liberata's contract Director. It was noted that the table in appendix 3 (page 63 of the agenda) should refer to outstanding debt in thousands of pounds, not millions. This report was considered together with the report on the Benefits Service and representatives from Liberata attended the meeting to answer questions on both reports.

The Chairman congratulated Liberata for doing a good job in difficult circumstances and highlighted the reductions in outstanding Thames Water debt.

Councillor Nicholas Bennett asked about progress with reducing the proportion of income collected as cash and "channel shift" towards more efficient means of collection. On-line, direct debit and telephone payment methods were emphasised, but there was a core of people who still preferred to work in cash. Councillor Bennett requested that the next report include some information on the percentage of money received through the various channels.

Councillor Will Harmer suggested that benchmarking data would be useful to compare performance with other boroughs – it was confirmed that there was a London benchmarking group and end of year figures would be available.

Councillor Neil Reddin asked whether the Accounts Payable performance (paragraph 3.12 in the report) had plateaued – Liberata representatives agreed that it would be difficult to achieve a significant improvement in performance. Councillor Tony Owen suggested that debtors should be forced to pay by direct debit when voluntary agreements were secured.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**425 HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT SERVICE
MONITORING REPORT**
Report CSD14010

The Committee received a report detailing performance provided by the Liberata Benefits Service for the six months up to 30th September 2013. This report was considered together with the report on the Revenues Service.

Councillor Tony Owen agreed that performance was good, but queried whether too much store was set on comparing performance with the same period the previous year, when circumstances may have changed considerably, and on allowing a 5% error rate target. It was confirmed that although the contract allowed for 5%, the real target was still 0%.

Councillor Peter Fookes asked whether the case-load of 23,000 was the highest ever, and whether the Council could offer a small discount for e-billing, like many utilities did. It was confirmed that the case-load, although high, had reduced and was not at record levels. Officers were aware that some authorities had begun to offer e-billing.

The Chairman thanked the Liberata representatives for attending the meeting and for their good performance on both services.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

426 UPDATES FROM PDS CHAIRMEN
Report CSD14004

Updates had been circulated from the Environment PDS Committee's meeting on 19th November 2013 and the Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee's meeting on 26th November 2013.

427 WORK PROGRAMME
Report CSD14005

The Committee noted the latest version of its work programme.

Members noted that the report they had requested on project management was still outstanding and requested that it should be brought to one of their next meetings.

Councillor William Huntington-Thresher informed Members that there was a presentation on the future of the Priory on 16th January.

Councillor Tony Owen commented that the skills and abilities of new Members should be captured as part of the Member Induction Programme in 2014, and added that the programme should extend to a fundamental review of what the Council did. The Director of Finance offered to follow up this point

with fellow Directors. Other Members commented that the 2010 Induction had been very effective, and it was confirmed that work was under way for the 2014 programme. Councillor Nicholas Bennett reported that the Constitution Improvement Working Group had considered Induction at its last meeting, but he emphasised that any changes to Portfolios were in the gift of the Leader.

Councillor Nicholas Bennett reported that the Costs and Charges Working Group had met on 12th December, and one further meeting had been arranged for 23rd January. He hoped to report back at the next meeting.

428 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business referred to below as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

**The following summaries
refer to matters
involving exempt information**

429 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13th NOVEMBER 2013

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2013 were confirmed.

430 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT RESOURCES PORTFOLIO HOLDER REPORTS

The Committee scrutinised the following proposed decision of the Resources Portfolio Holder.

430.1 Manorfields, Avalon Road, Orpington

The Committee considered the future of the former Manorfields care home site and recommended that it be retained by the Council.

431 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT EXECUTIVE REPORTS

The Committee scrutinised a report on the Executive's agenda for the meeting on 15th January 2014 concerning the Economic Development and Investment Fund.

The Meeting ended at 9.50 pm

Chairman

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONS TO THE RESOURCES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

From Councillor Tom Papworth for the Portfolio Holder for Resources:

(1) On September 23rd Councillor Nicholas Bennett asked at Full Council for a list by location with the estimated value of each property and land holding owned by the Council and the total sum. In the reply, it was stated that "The Council keeps a register of its property assets... A schedule of the properties and their values is available." Can the Portfolio Holder for Resources confirm where that information is available and whether it is available to the public?

Reply:

The full register of property assets is available to Members of the Council, but this contains confidential valuation information which it would not be in the Council's interest, or the public interest, to disclose more widely. A summary of property assets has been tabled (see overleaf).

(2) In light of George Osborne's announcement in the Autumn Statement that in 2015/6 London councils will be required to transfer £70 million of their New Homes Bonus to the Mayor of London, how much of LBB expects to lose in 2015/6?

Reply:

London Boroughs are expected to lose a third of the New Homes Bonus from 2015/16. For Bromley, based on latest estimates this equates to an income loss of £2.1m.

The actual impact will not be known until January 2015 when the Council receives its revised allocation of New Homes Bonus for 2015/16.

Question 1: Council Property Holdings

Education & Care Services – Adult Services	Value for Accounting Purposes (in accordance with CIPFA and RICS requirements) (£)
Care Services	13,025,000
Health Authority Clinics	0
Equity Share	2,073
TOTAL	14,075,000
Education & Care Services - Education	
Primary Schools	306,326,000
Secondary Schools	0
Special Schools	33,186,000
Youth Centres & Field Studies Centres	5,331,000
Pupil Referral Units	8,744,000
Day Nurseries	1,174,000
Adult Education Centres	32,101,000
TOTAL	392,502,000
Corporate Services	
Investment	50,606,000
Surplus Properties	13,178,000
Green Belt	4,188,000
Sundry Properties	653,000
Residential Declared surplus	327,000
Other Properties	26,811,000
TOTAL	95,763,000
Environmental Services	
Public Conveniences	2,650,000
Depots	7,906,000
Parks buildings	18,332,000
Car Parks	21,459,000
Chapels	1,525,000
Miscellaneous	394,000
Contractors Depots	354,000
TOTAL	52,620,000
Renewal & Recreation	
Libraries	29,565,000
Leisure Centres	62,504,000
Theatres & Public Halls	11,412,000
Golf Courses	2,427,000
TOTAL	106,384,000