

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

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

Present:

Councillor Eric Bosshard (Chairman)
Will Harmer (Vice-Chairman),
Councillors William Huntington-Thresher, Ellie Harmer,
Peter Fookes, Tony Owen, Ian F. Payne,
Pauline Tunnicliffe, Samaris Huntington-Thresher,
David Livett, Keith Onslow, Angela Wilkins, Chris Pierce
and Neil Reddin FCCA

Also Present:

Councillor Graham Arthur and Councillor Stephen Carr

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

At the start of the meeting the chairman asked officers to ensure that in future they were not presented with such long agendas.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nicholas Bennett (replaced by Councillor Neil Reddin) and Councillor Kate Lymer (replaced by Councillor Chris Pierce). Councillors Samaris and William Huntington-Thresher sent apologies for late arrival.

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Peter Fookes declared an interest as a trustee of Penge and Anerley Age Concern.

Councillor Ellie Harmer declared an interest as a Council representative on Community Links Bromley.

Councillor Will Harmer declared an interest a trustee of Bromley Y.

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

No questions had been received.

18 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE AND RESOURCES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5TH JUNE 2014 (EXCLUDING EXEMPT ITEMS)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 5th June 2014 (excluding exempt information) be confirmed.

19 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS
Report CSD14096

The Committee received an update on matters arising from previous meetings. It was noted that the update on the Winter Health Project was now scheduled for the 8th October 2014 meeting. Councillor David Livett emphasised that the issues around treasury management that he had raised were not closed.

20 FORWARD PLAN OF KEY AND PRIVATE EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Committee noted the Forward Plan of Key and Private executive decisions as published on 17th June 2014.

21 CONTRACTS REGISTER

The Committee received the Contracts Register for (a) Chief Executive's Department/Resources Portfolio contracts over £50k and (b) contracts across all departments with a value in excess of £200k. The Chairman urged all PDS Chairmen to monitor contracts in their areas and in particular to encourage officers to start work on contract renewals earlier.

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

No questions had been received.

23 RESOURCES PORTFOLIO - PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

The Committee considered the following reports for pre-decision scrutiny where the Resources Portfolio Holder was minded to take a decision.

23.1 Bromley Youth Employment Project (Phase 2)
Report ED15075

At its previous meeting the Committee had asked for project performance monitoring arrangements to be strengthened to ensure effective delivery against measurable project outcomes. A Member raised some concerns about the risks involved in the project, but the Committee was satisfied with the governance arrangements. It was noted that employers had been very

supportive of the scheme when it had been presented at the Bromley Economic Partnership.

An amended version of appendix 2 together with further information requested by the Chairman about the groups of young people to be targeted had been circulated.

RESOLVED that the recommendation that the Bromley Education Business Partnership should commence delivery of the Bromley Youth Employment Project (Phase 2) be supported.

23.2 BROMLEY WELFARE FUND Report FSD14046

The report set out options for the future of the Bromley Welfare Fund following the removal of government funding from 2015/16. The Leader had already lobbied the Minister for Work and Pensions about the withdrawal of funding via local M.P.s and he reported that he would be meeting M.P.s again on the matter.

Three options were under consideration – removing the provision altogether, continuing the current scheme (incurring considerable costs for the authority) or setting up a scheme restricted to meeting the basic accommodation related requirements of those moving back into the community by providing furniture and white goods. This would initially be funded from underspends in 2013/14 (and any accruing from 2014/15.)

RESOLVED that the recommendations to approve the adoption of a “white goods and furniture” welfare scheme from 2015/16 be supported.

23.3 MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK LIGHTING UPGRADE PROPOSAL Report ES14054

It was proposed to use £250k from the Council’s Carbon Management Fund to reduce operating costs in the Council’s three multi-storey car parks by upgrading to more efficient LED lighting. Some Members commented that the report could have included more information on the costs of the project, possibly presented in graphs or tables.

RESOLVED that the proposal to replace the lighting in the Council’s multi-storey car parks and proceed with the tendering process be supported.

24 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE REPORTS Report CSD14097

The Committee considered the following reports on the part 1 agenda for the meeting of the Executive on 16th July 2014.

(5) Budget Monitoring
Report FSD14047

The Committee considered the first budget monitoring report for 2014/15, based on expenditure and activity levels up to May 2014. The report sought authorisation for the release of various sums from Central Contingency.

The Chairman expressed concern that significant overspends were already being identified, and urged PDS Committees to scrutinise budgets in their areas. The Care Services PDS Committee Chairman reported that her Committee was setting up a Budget Sub-Committee to look at expenditure in their Portfolio. The Environment PDS Chairman added that although the Environment Portfolio was not overspent there was a significant risk of not reaching targets for parking income – this would be examined by the Parking Working Group. The Committee also noted the projected shortfall of £1.476k in investment income as it had not been possible to purchase investment properties quickly enough.

It was suggested that the Council should look more closely at best practice in other authorities and take advantage of CIPFA benchmarking statistics, especially for contract monitoring.

The Leader assured the Committee that the Council had not been overspent for several years and that he held a monthly finance steering group meeting to hold Portfolio Holders and Chief Officers to account for budgets to ensure that this continued. Officers confirmed that work was on-going to ensure that costs were contained.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(6) Capital Programme Monitoring – 1st Quarter 2014/15
Report FSD14049

The report summarised the current position on capital expenditure and receipts following the first quarter of 2014/15 and sought the Executive's approval for a revised capital programme.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(7) One Section 75 Agreement with Bromley CCG
Report CS14048

It was proposed that all existing and future joint commissioning and joint service delivery be streamlined into one overarching agreement under Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(8) Public Health Contract Framework
Report CS14067

The report provided an update on the administration of Public Health contracts following the transition from the now abolished Bromley PCT in April 2013.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(9) Section 106 Funding for Health Provision
Report CS14067

The report reviewed arrangements for processing Section 106 funding secured for health provision to secure best value and quality health provision for residents. The Committee considered that the money secured through Section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was still too low, and the Government should be continuously lobbied on this point. The Chairman suggested a report to the Committee on these issues.

The Chairman commented that where the report referred to delivery of the agreed schemes against the agreed spending plan being “monitored” it would be more appropriate to say “managed.”

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(10) Proposal to extend the Contracts for Delivery of Substance Misuse Services
Report CS14063

The Executive was asked to agree the extension of three existing contracts with Crime Reduction Initiatives (CRI) to provide an integrated drug and alcohol service for one year (January to December 2015.) The Care Services PDS Committee had some reservations about the proposals, but had nevertheless supported them.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(11) Outsourcing of Financial Assessment Teams and Appointeeship and Deputyship Team
Report FSD14050

It was proposed to transfer the Financial Assessment and Appointee and Guardianship teams to Liberata, generating full-year savings of £121k. The proposals would also free up management time to focus on strategy and contract delivery.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(12) Transport Gateway Review

Report ES14062

Following soft market testing, the Executive was recommended to approve the tendering of contracts for the provision of transport services for adults and children.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(13) Invest to Save – Training Statemented Pupils to Travel Independently

Report ED15060

The report provided an update on the invest to save travel training programme and recommended investing £60k per annum to continue to provide the travel training programme through a three year contract with Bexley Accessible Transport Services. The Committee considered that more pupils should be trained

RESOLVED that the Executive be recommended to increase the funding available to £120k to allow up to 40 pupils to be trained per annum.

(14) Update on the Process for Market Testing Education Services

Report ED15073

The report proposed expanding the scope of the market testing of Education Services to encompass additional services including Special Educational Needs provision, Adult Education provision and strategic management functions relating to sufficiency, access and quality of education provision in Bromley.

Members questioned how contracts for these services could be monitored when the outcomes from these services were difficult to quantify. Officers reassured the Committee that performance measures were already in place and detailed specifications would be drawn up. Quality would be carefully evaluated throughout the tendering process and method statements would become part of the final contract. The Resources Portfolio Holder added that much preparation work had already been undertaken and that it was important not to rush the process.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(15) Corporate Parenting Strategy

Report CS14066

A new multi-agency corporate parenting strategy was presented which aimed to build services around the needs of children and young people in the care of the Council in order to maximise opportunities and improve outcomes.

Subject to approval by the Executive, the Strategy would be recommended for endorsement by full Council.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(16) Supporting Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to prepare for Adult Life – Funding Proposal
Report ED15058

(This report was withdrawn from the Executive's agenda.)

(17) Lead Local Flood Authority (Flooding and Water Management Act 2010)
Report ES14042

The report considered the impact of recent groundwater flooding and sought agreement from the Executive to release Central Contingency funding to ensure that the Council met its statutory duties as the Lead Local Flood Authority under the Flooding and Water Management Act 2010. The report had been considered by the Environment PDS Committee, which had supported the concept that the Council's role was to encourage and facilitate rather than to attempt to do everything. It was also important that the planning framework supported measures to ensure that there was less water run-off from development.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(18) Bromley Library Service – Outcome of Consultation
Report DRR14/054

Following extensive consultation with library users and staff a number of changes were proposed in order to meet budget savings for 2014/15, including changes to opening hours and extension of Radio Frequency Identification Data (RFID) equipment from four libraries to the remainder of the service. The proposals had been scrutinised by Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee prior to decisions by the Portfolio Holder, but the Executive was asked to approve the deletion of the mobile library service.

Members commented that more publicity was needed for the home library service.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

25 Customer Services Monitoring Report
Report CSD14092

The Committee received a report on performance of the Customer Service Contract provided by Liberata for the period 1st November 2013 to 31st May 2014. A letter from Amanda Inwood-Field, the Contract Director for Liberata,

was attached to the report and representatives from Liberata attended the meeting to answer questions from Members.

One Member urged officers and Liberata to use control charts for monitoring services over time rather than rear on year comparisons, and commented that customers had not been asked how the service was doing. Another Member pointed out, in the context of channel shift and reducing unnecessary contact, that there were circumstances where the Council would be increasing income through additional contact. A Member commented that planning applications were an opportunity for engagement with members of the public who might not otherwise contact the Council, and added that he hoped that officers did not print off paper copies of planning applications that had been submitted on-line. Members had been invited to spend an hour or so observing staff in the main reception/contact centre – a Member who had done this stated that calls had been answered very well, and that most of the problems that had occurred appeared to be due to other services.

Officers reported that work was progressing on the new web portal and the website had already been upgraded with responsive design.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

26 BENEFITS SERVICE MONITORING REPORT
Report FSD14045

The Committee received a report on the performance of the benefit services provided by Liberata during the period 1st October 2013 to 6th April 2014. This was the period when the majority of the Government's welfare reforms were introduced, including the adoption of a local Council Tax Support Scheme, the removal of the under-occupancy subsidy, implementation on the Benefit Cap and the introduction of the Bromley Welfare Fund. Corrected versions of appendices 2 and 4 to the report had been circulated. The report included a letter from Amanda Inwood-Field, Liberata's Contract Director, giving their perspective on performance and an update on initiatives being introduced, and representatives from Liberata attended the meeting to answer questions from the Committee.

Members queried why the error rate had increased after August 2013. It was explained that a number of trainees had been released to work on cases before they had been sufficiently prepared for some of the harder cases. Further training had been carried out and a recovery plan put in place and performance had now recovered.

A Member stated that her constituents were claiming that there was a standard delay of 8-9 weeks in processing claims. It was acknowledged that there had been delays in some claims being processed; however, claims should not be taking that long to be assessed.

A Member asked why the average time to process a claim fell in March 2014 to 5.285. It was explained that the average fell in March due to the requirement that every claim should be re-assessed each year.

A Member queried the use of the term “justified” complaint. It was noted that there was a difference between a complaint and an appeal, and the complaints measured in appendix 5 of the report were only those that reached stage 2 of the complaints procedure.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

27 REVENUES SERVICE MONITORING REPORT
Report FSD14044

The Committee received a report on the performance of the Revenues Service provided by Liberata for the six months up to 31st March 2014. The report included a letter from Amanda Inwood-Field, Liberata’s Contract Director, and representatives from Liberata attended the meeting to answer questions.

The Committee noted that Bromley’s performance was good, but there were other London authorities doing even better, and asked what was being done to increase collection, reduce costs and drive performance up. It was confirmed that benchmarking against other London authorities was in place, there was a London Revenues Group which provided a forum for discussion on best practice and ideas to improve services were taken from other Councils. There were incentives built in to the contract for Liberata to drive performance up.

A Member asked whether there had been complaints following the decision to charge council tax on empty homes and it was accepted that there had been some complaints on this issue. He also mentioned that there had been problems with the payment kiosk not working and with lack of confidentiality in the reception area.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

28 SUNDRY DEBTORS AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE SERVICE MONITORING REPORT
Report FSD14048

The Committee considered a report on the performance of the Sundry Debtors and Accounts Payable Services provided by Liberata. The report included a letter from Amanda Inwood-Field, Liberata’s Contract Director, and representatives from Liberata attended the meeting to answer questions.

Members queried whether public utilities were required to pay the undisputed portions of their bills when other aspects were in dispute; it was confirmed that payment of the undisputed elements was always sought. The Chairman

suggested including a clause in contracts to ensure that all payments were made promptly.

RESOLVED that the information in the report be noted.

29 SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS: UPDATE
Report DRR14/061

The Committee received an update on Section 106 agreements, including details of unspent balances.

RESOLVED that the content of the report and its appendices be noted.

30 UPDATES FROM PDS CHAIRMEN
Report CSD14098

Updates had been circulated regarding the Public Protection and Safety PDS Committee on 17th June 2014, the Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee on 23rd June 2014, the Environment PDS Committee on 1st July 2014 and the Education PDS Committee on 2nd July 2014. These are attached as Appendix A to these minutes.

31 WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15
Report CSD14099

The Committee noted its updated work programme.

**32 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**

**33 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5TH JUNE
2014**

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 5th June 2014 were confirmed.

34 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT EXECUTIVE REPORTS

The Committee scrutinised nine reports on the part 2 agenda for the Executive's meeting on 16th July 2014 concerning – Direct Care Update, Support for the Voluntary Sector – Community Links Bromley, Affordable Housing Payment in Lieu Fund: Annual Report (2013/14) and Expenditure Options, Award of Contract for a Community Well-Being Service for Children and Young People, Future Use of Education Property, Funding for Condition Surveys: Operational Property Portfolio, Local Land Charges Litigation, Capital Receipts and Section 106 funding for Health Provision.

35 SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS - UPDATE (APPENDIX 5)

An appendix containing exempt information relating to the report at minute 29 was received.

The Meeting ended at 9.28 pm

Chairman