

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2018 starting at 7.00 pm

Present:

Councillor Colin Smith (Chairman)
Councillors Graham Arthur, Peter Fortune,
William Huntington-Thresher, Kate Lymer, Peter Morgan
and Diane Smith

Also Present:

Councillor Nicholas Bennett J.P., Councillor Simon
Fawthrop and Councillor Angela Wilkins

380 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

381 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Simon Fawthrop declared that he was an employee of British Telecom.

382 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

Five questions had been received for oral reply and three questions for written reply. Copies of the Questions and replies are attached in Appendices A and B to these minutes.

383 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 1ST, 6TH & 15TH DECEMBER 2017 Report CSD18006

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 1st, 6th and 15th December 2017 be confirmed.

384 PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENTS

The Executive Director of Education, Care and Health Services and Deputy Chief Executive gave an update on progress with implementing improvements to Children's Services. The Executive Director emphasised three issues –

(i) The next Ofsted monitoring visit was due in March 2018 and officers were working hard to ensure that this was as positive as previous visits.

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(ii) The Caseload Promise was being met in all but one team. The target was to reach 90% permanent staff, and further recruitment activities were planned to target agency social workers.

(iii) Working with HR, officers were finalising a strategy for social workers. A key focus would be on retention.

The Executive Director also commended a member of staff, Linda Whybrow, who had just retired from his Department after forty-seven years – the Leader added his thanks to her for this remarkable service.

Questioned by Members, the Executive Director explained that there were around 120 frontline staff, with about 30-35 additional permanent staff since May 2017. The Council had been particularly effective at recruiting managers, and very few permanent social workers had left.

In terms of the Adoption Service, an action plan was in place to improve the service and reduce delays, but the Executive Director cautioned against focussing too much on statistics. Bromley would persist in finding the right family for children, even if this appeared as a delay in the statistics.

The Portfolio Holder for Education, Children and Families reported that there would be a celebration of the achievements of looked after children on 15th February – all Members would be invited and he encouraged Members to attend.

The Leader thanked the Portfolio Holder for Education, Children and Families and the Executive Director and his team, and encouraged them to continue their hard work.

**385 DRAFT 2018/19 BUDGET AND UPDATE ON COUNCIL'S
FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2019/20 TO 2021/22**
Report FSD18001

The Executive considered the initial draft 2018/19 Budget including the full year effect of changes agreed as part of the 2017/18 Council Tax report including savings approved during the year with the resultant impact on the Council's medium term budget gap. A key part of the financial strategy was to highlight the budget issues that would need to be addressed by the Council over the coming financial years, by forecasting the level of available resources from all sources and budget pressures relating to revenue spending. Details of the capital programme would be reported to the Executive separately.

The report provided details of the third year of the four year local government finance settlement (2018/19 to 2019/20), the impact of the Chancellor's Autumn budget 2017 and the provisional local Government Financial Settlement 2018/19. There were still outstanding issues and areas of uncertainty remaining. Any further updates would be reported to the Executive's next meeting.

The views of all PDS Committees would be sought prior to the Executive making recommendations to Council on the 2018/19 Council Tax and Adult Social Care precept levels.

The report had been scrutinised by the Executive and Resources PDS Committee on 4th January 2018. The Committee had supported the recommendations with two additional suggestions – that the Council should consider raising the empty homes premium to 100% of Council Tax, and to note that action will need to be taken by Chief Officers to fund increasing costs through alternative savings in the event that inflation exceeds the budget assumptions. It was accepted that raising the empty homes premium could not be implemented for 2018/19 but Members agreed that this should be fully investigated for possible implementation for 2019/20.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources drew attention to the benefits of a four year financial settlement, and emphasised how the Council was now looking for opportunities and innovations, rather than just efficiencies. He confirmed that he was assuming a 2% pay increase for staff in 2018/19 – he would make a full statement on this to Council.

In view of the reservations about the London Business Rates pilot pooling arrangements it was suggested that the Executive should only agree to the proposals “in principle.” However, officers advised that this would not provide sufficient authority, and would require a further meeting of the Executive to provide final approval. Members were reassured that the delegation arrangements provided sufficient protection and the Leader accepted that advice. It was also confirmed that the arrangement committed the Council for one year only.

RESOLVED that

(1) The initial draft 2018/19 Budget as detailed in Appendix 7 of the report be agreed.

(2) The initial draft 2018/19 budget for each portfolio be referred to the relevant PDS Committees for their consideration.

(3) The financial projections for 2019/20 to 2021/22 be noted.

(4) It is noted that there are still areas of financial uncertainty which will impact on the final 2018/19 Budget and future year forecasts.

(5) The setting of the School Budget, mainly met through Dedicated Schools Grant, be delegated to the Education, Children and Families Portfolio Holder, allowing for consultation with head teachers, governors and the Schools Forum (section 12 of the report).

(6) It is noted that the outcome of consultation with PDS Committees will be reported to the next meeting of the Executive.

(7) The outcome of the public consultation meetings detailed in Appendix 10 be noted.

(8) The proposed contribution of £248,033 in 2018/19 to the London Boroughs Grants Committee (as in section 11 of the report) be agreed.

(9) The outcome of the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement 2018/19 as detailed in the report be noted.

(10) The significant budget gap remaining of an estimated £38.7m per annum by 2021/22 be noted, and that any decisions made for the 2018/19 Budget will have an impact on the future year projections.

(11) It is noted that any final decision by the Executive on recommended Council Tax and Social Care Precept levels will normally be undertaken at the next meeting of the Executive.

(12) Authority be delegated to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services, the Leader of the Council and the Resources Portfolio Holder in relation to the operational details of the London Business Rates pilot pooling arrangements with the participating authorities.

(13) It is agreed that the Council enters into a Memorandum of Understanding with the participating authorities as may be necessary to implement and/or regulate the pool and to delegate authority to the Director of Finance in consultation the Resources Portfolio Holder and with the agreement of the Leader of the Council to finalise the arrangement on behalf of the Council.

(14) It is noted that action will need to be taken by Chief Officers to fund increasing costs through alternative savings in the event that inflation exceeds the budget assumptions.

(15) The option of raising the empty homes premium to 100% of Council Tax be investigated for possible implementation in 2019/20.

386 GATEWAY REPORT 1 - MEMBERS REPORT: REVIEW OF CORPORATE CUSTOMER SERVICES IT SYSTEMS
Report CSD17165

(Having declared an interest as an employee of British Telecom, the Chairman of the Executive and Resources PDS Committee left the Chamber for this item and took no part in proceedings.)

On 14th September 2016 the Executive had agreed expenditure of £50k to fund a review of alternative options for the Customer relationship Management (CRM) system both in the short and long terms. The report updated Members on progress and the options considered. British Telecom (BT) had been commissioned, as part of the current IT Support contract, to

develop a new IT strategy, and upgrading the CRM system would not be in conflict with this strategy.

The Environment Portfolio Holder commented that with the re-tendering of the environmental services contracts the new contractor might want to implement a more cost-effective system.

The Renewal and Recreation Portfolio Holder reported that, in relation to the comments in the report about maximising digital uptake, he was investigating what needed to be done to overcome the problems that residents in some areas had with obtaining broadband.

The report had been scrutinised by the Executive and Resources PDS Committee on 4th January 2018 and the Committee had supported the proposals.

RESOLVED that

(1) The need to upgrade the current CRM system is noted as outlined in this report.

(2) BT be commissioned by variation to their existing contract to upgrade to Dynamics Version 2011 to avoid critical service interruption for the reasons set out in section 6 of the report.

(3) BT be commissioned by variation to their existing contract to provide a fully costed options appraisal for the longer term provision of IT services currently delivered by the current CRM system, as set out in section 7 of the report.

(4) The addition of £480k to the capital programme, funded from a £37k reduction to the existing capital scheme for the website upgrade, and £443k from capital receipts, be agreed.

387 CONTINGENCY DRAWDOWN: HOMELESSNESS AND TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PRESSURES
Report CS18116

The report updated Members on homeless pressures during 2017/18 and the range of initiatives undertaken to try and reduce the rising budget pressures wherever possible and forthcoming challenges arising from the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the roll out of universal credit in Bromley.

A drawdown of £844K was requested from the central contingency for homelessness and welfare reform pressures, together with the Homeless Reduction Act New Burdens funding and flexible homelessness support grant introduced in 2017/18 to replace the management fee element for temporary accommodation previously claimed through housing benefit.

The Leader noted the ongoing trend in this difficult area and commented positively in respect of the Administration's forward financial planning, which had ensured sufficient contingency funding had been set in place to meet the additional demand.

The Renewal and Recreation Portfolio Holder reported that he was aware of concern from a landlord about not being able to get his property back at the end of a fixed term lease, and in a suitable state of repair. Officers confirmed that this should not be the case.

It was noted that in paragraph 3.10, bullet point 4 of the report the missing figure relating to the refurbishment of Benedict House was 40 units of temporary accommodation.

The report had been scrutinised by the Care Services PDS Committee on 9th January 2018 and the Committee had supported the proposals.

RESOLVED that

(1) £844K for 2017/18 be released from central contingency set aside to offset the current homelessness and temporary accommodation budget pressures.

(2) Drawdown of the ring fenced grants as set out below be agreed:

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£	£	£
Homeless Reduction Act New Burdens	254,713	233,317	220,697
Homelessness Reduction ACT IT upgrade for new reporting requirements	9,022		
Homelessness flexible support grant	2,106,890	2,359,717	

(3) The forecast pressures going forward in relation to homelessness, welfare reform, temporary accommodation and the new duties arising from the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 be noted.

(4) The release of the additional resources required for implementation and administration of the new statutory duties contained within the Homelessness Reduction Act be approved.

388 FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR BANBURY HOUSE, CHISLEHURST

The Executive considered a report updating them on the feasibility assessment undertaken in respect of Banbury House for refurbishment and use as temporary accommodation to meet statutory housing need. It was concluded that proceeding with a refurbishment scheme would not be economically viable.

The report was scrutinised by the Executive and Resources PDS Committee on 4th January 2018; the Committee supported the recommendations, subject to an additional recommendation that Officers be asked to investigate whether modular homes would be a possibility once the site has been cleared. It was confirmed that all options would be explored.

RESOLVED that

(1) The outcome of the feasibility assessment for use of Banbury House as temporary accommodation and the decision not to proceed with refurbishment as this does not offer an economically viable scheme and demonstrate best use of the site be noted.

(2) The demolition of the existing building to ensure the site is secured and prepared for future use to maximise future development opportunities be approved.

(3) Officers be authorised to complete a final feasibility options appraisal to be reported back in May for decision on future use of the site to meet housing need or for methods for marketing and disposal of the site to secure best value.

(4) The estimated cost of £166k be added to the Council's Capital Programme for demolition and site preparation - this sum will be funded from any future sale proceeds, or added to any future capital scheme for alternative use of the site.

389 UPDATE ON SERVICE PROPOSALS AND PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR MODULAR HOMES

Bromley, along with all London local authorities was experiencing a significant increase in demand for assistance and accommodation. Members had received regular reports detailing the current pressures in the Housing Division including the significant increase in the number of placements and associated costs with night paid temporary accommodation.

The Council spent more than £4.5m (net) procuring temporary accommodation (TA) for homeless households every year and demand for this service was forecast to increase.

The Executive on 24th May 2017 had agreed to the principle of inviting bids from potential suppliers for the development and management of a modular constructed site on York Rise, subject to further market engagement to inform the tender and specification and feasibility study of the site considering both suitability and potential length of use.

The report provided an update on the market engagement undertaken and a feasibility analysis, and requested permission to progress to formal tender to appoint a supplier for modular homes (as set out in paragraphs 3.6-3.10.) The

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final cost, and whether the units were purchased outright or leased, would be determined by the tenders received – Members expected that the scheme would produce savings and a better return than disposing of the site.

Members commented that the quality of modular homes had vastly improved, and suggested that all members be invited to a site visit to view them in situ in a neighbouring borough. Officers confirmed that arrangements were being made.

The report had been scrutinised by the Care Services PDS Committee on 9th January 2018; the Committee supported the recommendations, subject to proposing that support for the proposals should be “subject to appropriate planning permission being agreed.” Comments from ward councillors had been submitted to the PDS Committee and were tabled for the Executive. These are attached as Appendix C to these minutes.

RESOLVED that

(1) The proposals proceed to formal tender for provision of modular build accommodation together with a management contract for a period of 15 years as set out in paragraph 3.6 of the report.

(2) The use of the identified site at York Rise for the use of modular constructed accommodation be approved.

(3) It is agreed in principal that officers look to identify other suitable sites for use of modular homes which will be reported back to the Executive as and when identified.

(4) It is noted that capital funding may be required for the preparation, construction and planning of any modular home site and this will be dealt with in the award report.

390 HEALTH SUPPORT TO SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN
Report CS18114

At its meeting on 30th November 2016, the Council’s Executive agreed to fund a new service to support the health of school age children for 2 years, funded by the Better Care Fund to a total value of £606k. The first £303k was released for the new service in 2017/18. The new service started 1st April 2017. The drawdown of a further £303k for 2018/19 was subject to a further report to the Executive.

Bromley CCG had procured the service from Bromley Healthcare on behalf of the Council under a Section 75 agreement.

An evaluation of the new “Health Support to Schools Service” in October 2017 showed that the small team were only able to offer very limited safeguarding support due to capacity. The Designated Safeguarding leads in Bromley CCG

and Public Health worked together to identify the gaps and risks to safeguarding in the new service.

Five of the proposed six additional posts were for safeguarding. Schools had indicated that they would not be willing to pay for statutory School Nurse functions such as safeguarding. The contribution from schools to the Health Support to Schools Service would be explored in a paper to the Executive in spring/summer 2018.

Officers explained that the new contract was a more modern and responsive service built around the needs of children and schools; the provision of data from schools was much improved. Health partners recognised the need to provide additional resources and their role with the Council in jointly safeguarding children. The Leader drew attention to the recommendation which was to release up to £300k, and commented that if all the money was not needed it should be diverted to other services.

The report had been scrutinised by the Care Services PDS Committee on 9th January 2018 and the Committee had supported the proposals.

RESOLVED that

(1) The drawdown of £303k from the Better Care Fund for continuing the existing service into 2018/19 be agreed.

(2) The drawdown of up to an additional £300k from the Better Care Fund to appoint an additional 6 nurses for the remainder of the existing Health Support to Schools contract, to end March 2019, be agreed (in line with paragraph 1.4 and the issues outlined in Section 3 of the report.)

391 CONTRACT AWARD FOR ADVOCACY SERVICES - PART 1
Report CS18118-1

The Executive considered a request to approve a contract award for a single Advocacy Service for all client groups, replacing seven contracts with four different providers. This would ensure better access to Advocacy Services through a single point of access. This was a three year contract with a 1+1 year extension option to start on 1st April 2018. A part 2 report had also been provided with additional details, including the evaluation of the tenders received.

The report had been scrutinised by the Care Services PDS Committee on 9th January 2018 and the Committee had supported the proposals.

RESOLVED that

(1) The contract award for Advocacy services for a period of 3 years starting 1 April 2018 with the option of two one year extensions (3+1+1) at a whole life contract value of £1,430,635 be approved as recommended.

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(2) Authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Education, Children and Families, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Care Services, the Director of Commissioning, the Director of Finance and the Director of Corporate Services, to extend this contract for the two one year extension options.

**392 CONSIDERATION OF ANY OTHER ISSUES REFERRED FROM
THE EXECUTIVE AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

There were no additional items reported from Executive and Resources PDS Committee.

**393 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**

**394 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 1ST AND
6TH DECEMBER 2017**

RESOLVED that the exempt minutes of the meetings held on 1st and 6th December 2017 be confirmed.

395 CONTRACT AWARD FOR ADVOCACY SERVICES - PART 2

The Executive considered exempt information relating to the proposed award of a contract for Advocacy Services – see minute 391 above.

The Meeting ended at 8.16 pm

Chairman

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QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(A) Questions for oral reply

1. From Jane Ward to the Care Services Portfolio Holder

Will the Council be reflecting on the new legislation on Homeless reduction coming into use in April 2018 when considering changes to their Homeless strategy?

Reply:

The Council already has and will continue to reflect on the new legislation that you refer to.

Supplementary Question:

Ms Ward asked for a more specific response.

Reply:

The draft Homelessness Strategy which is currently published for formal consultation already reflects the key changes and requirements coming into force under the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018.

The outcome of the consultation will directly feed into and closely influence Bromley's overarching and evolving Housing Strategy which is due to come to Members for discussion and approval during Q2 2018.

The early intervention initiative is part of the range of activities being undertaken to prepare for the requirements of the Homeless Reduction Act and to address the current cost pressures in relation to temporary accommodation provision.

2. From Diana Evans to the Care Services Portfolio Holder

How many homeless households have been rehoused outside of the borough in the last four years and why?

Reply:

The total number over the last four years is 2,904.

The reasons include personal choice, safety concerns, access to specialist medical, family or employment support or outright necessity in cases where no suitable local housing exists to meet an individual client's needs.

I would add that the situation is not being helped in any way by better funded neighbouring London Boroughs, who can afford to do so, paying higher private landlord rates than Bromley can afford, forcing rent levels higher whilst at the same time reducing the available housing stock for Bromley residents more locally.

This marks yet another reason for us all, as to why the ongoing discussions for 'Fairer Funding' for Bromley Council must be heard and fully responded to.

Supplementary Question:

Mrs Evans asked whether the Portfolio Holder considered this to be a failure of the system.

Reply:

The Portfolio Holder responded that, like other Councils pan-London, the Council was acting out of necessity at the current time.

3. From Stephen Evans to the Leader of the Council

Will the Leader invite the Secretary of State of the Department for Communities and Local Government (now Housing, Communities and Local Government) to attend a public meeting in the borough to explain how the Government's housing policies will benefit the people of Bromley?

Reply:

Were a genuine wider local interest to do so demonstrate itself by all means, although being somewhat presumptuous, I suspect were he to do so or be here today, he would point to measures and facts as he has recently done elsewhere, which include:

- The number of new homes in England has increased by more than 217,000 last year, the highest level of net additions since the depths of the recession and the first time in almost a decade that the 200,000 milestone has been reached.
- Allowing housing associations to be reclassified as private sector organisations, freeing them from the shackles of public sector bureaucracy, enabling them to concentrate on their core, crucial mission which is building homes and providing them with £2bn to do so.
- A year on year rise in 2017 of 27% in the number of new affordable homes over the year before.
- £9 billion being invested in affordable housing.

- A doubling of the housing budget to deliver a million more homes, including hundreds of thousands of affordable homes.
- Reformed planning rules, leading to record levels of planning permissions being granted.
- The freeing up of unprecedented levels of public sector land to build on.
- The provision of hundreds of millions of pounds of finance for small and innovative builders to accelerate construction speeds.
- Tens of thousands of derelict homes being brought back into use
- The ongoing need to identify more suitable Brownfield sites
- The need to scope new Garden Cities, which is clearly going to be a very serious discussion.

I believe that he would also claim that this has only proved possible because this is a government of deeds, not words. A government that is getting things done, whilst at the same time acknowledging there is still much work still to be done in terms of building more homes.

Supplementary Question:

Mr Evans asked if the Leader would condemn the management of public sector housing?

(Note: Mr Evans subsequently clarified that he had asked the Leader to condemn the management of the private rented sector and the rapacity of private Landlords.)

Reply:

The Leader stated that he would condemn nothing, but that there was a pan-London housing crisis and it was up to all Councils to meet their current housing targets. Bromley achieved its targets, but not all other Councils did. The market was the market – unfortunately Bromley did not have the money to provide housing that other boroughs did, and this was forcing up rents.

4. From Jane Ward to the Resources Portfolio Holder

How do the Council see the proposed cuts to housing benefit for vulnerable tenants in supported housing, and its proposed replacement with ring fenced funding, affecting the support and housing contribution costs that are currently being provided in the borough to vulnerable tenants?

Reply:

The latest consultation on funding for supported housing only recently closed. This included the current proposals which would come into effect in 2020. As we have not yet received the final proposals we are unable to say exactly what impact there may be. However, overall the government has undertaken that the changes should not result in any reduction to funding. The Director of Housing has indicated that the latest consultation proposed that sheltered, extra care housing and long-term supported housing continue to be funded through the welfare system, as such a grant would not replace existing arrangements. The key issue here will be to provide sufficient detail to ensure

that rental levels able to be paid through the welfare system are reflective of the true costs. The government has indicated that they will consult extensively before setting maximum levels payable.

For short term supported housing a ring fenced grant will be introduced. The government has stated that this will be reflective of costs, take into account current and future needs and give greater security to providers. As no detail has as yet been provided on how this will be administered or likely levels of funding it is not possible to assess the overall impact, but we continue to work closely with government to try and develop a funding formula which achieves these goals ensuring there is no reduction to the housing and support contributions.

Supplementary Question:

Ms Ward asked whether the Council would be lobbying the Government for full consultation to protect vulnerable tenants, and what form the consultation would take?

Reply:

The Portfolio Holder responded that the Council regularly lobbied Ministers – leading members had met with two Ministers in the previous month to explain the implications for Bromley people of the Government's policies.

5. From Jane Ward to the Resources Portfolio Holder

What is the expectation of Bromley Council as Universal Credit continues to be rolled out this year of the impact on homelessness in the borough, and will the Council make representations to the government to halt these measures and prevent the escalation of homelessness for families on lower incomes and pressure on local council funding and housing services?

Reply:

The Leader wrote to the Secretary of State about the changes needed to Universal Credit on 20th November 2017 and I am pleased that many positive changes have been made to reduce the impact on homelessness (the response will be circulated with the minutes). The Council will continue to endeavour to seek the best funding settlement possible towards supporting people on universal credit to prevent homelessness. It is not possible to identify the full impact on homelessness of the roll out of Universal Credit but some of the recent changes already made by the Government made have been helpful.

The Council will also continue to use its Discretionary Housing Fund which is available to support people on low incomes who need support with housing costs.



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London Borough of Bromley
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Stockwell Close, Bromley
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Our ref: POS(2)4065/52

18 DEC 2017

 Mr Smith,

Thank you for your letter of 20 November to the Secretary of State about Universal Credit. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this area of the Department's work.

We have listened to recent concerns about Universal Credit and have now announced a number of further improvements to Universal Credit. These will begin to be delivered over the coming months. This package of measures not only addresses concerns raised around the first assessment period and the budgeting issues faced by some claimants at the start of their claim, but also supports the vast majority of claimants transitioning onto Universal Credit.

We are making advances in Universal Credit more generous in three key ways. We are increasing the repayment period to 12 months from the current six months, increasing the maximum amount people can claim up to 100 per cent of their estimated monthly entitlement and making advances available to apply for online. This will make it even easier for claimants to receive the support that they need.

We are also removing the seven-day waiting period that some claimants have at the start of their Universal Credit claim. In addition, for claimants already receiving support towards their housing costs, we are providing an additional payment of two weeks of their Housing Benefit to support them as they transition onto Universal Credit.

From April 2018, we will also change how claimants in temporary accommodation receive support for their housing costs. This will ensure local authorities can recover more costs and can therefore continue to offer

this valuable support to the most vulnerable. In addition, from December 2017, there will be new guidance for our staff to ensure we offer managed payments to landlords for claimants in the Private Rented Sector, who already receive this for their Housing Benefit.

It is also important to mention that the Department's research shows that the majority of people claiming Universal Credit are comfortable managing their budget and Jobcentre work coaches discuss budgeting support with all claimants in their very first work search interview.

Finally, we recognise that there are areas for improvement in the service, but with every release of new software and every new office that goes live with the Universal Credit full digital service, enhancements are made that improve the experience for claimants.

If I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely

Damian Hinds

Damian Hinds MP
Minister for Employment

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10th January 2018

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(B) Questions for Written Reply

(1) From Colin Willetts to the Environment Portfolio Holder

With regard to the Priory, Could you tell us when (i) the broken bridge railings & warning tape will be removed from the pond itself? (ii) does this require additional/better warning precautions for the public to cross in safety? & (iii) when will the bridge be repaired?

Reply:

I can confirm that the broken rails and barrier tape have been removed from the site and that the site is monitored routinely to replace and repair damage to temporary barriers that have been installed. The bridge is currently closed as it is deemed unsafe until it has been surveyed to ensure it is structurally sound. Arrangements have been made to have the structure surveyed next week and the results will inform the subsequent repairs required, including the further use of the bridge and the time it will take to undertake repairs.

(2) From Colin Willetts to the Care Services Portfolio Holder

Having forwarded complaints regarding levels of care given to an Alzheimer's resident (including staff shortages!) by Caremark, the lack of quality here (elsewhere?) is serious indeed, (i) could you investigate our concerns case wise? (ii) given additional ASC Precept funding can the Council source a 'worthy' provider in this case and Borough wide if necessary?

Reply:

The case in question has been raised as a concern and is being followed up by the Care Manager working with the family and the provider to resolve their concerns.

The most recent CQC rating for Caremark is Good; the provider is regularly monitored by the Contracts Compliance Team, including staffing levels, complaints and concerns raised by service users. The Contracts Compliance Team considers the provider to be responsive to all such input and appear committed to continuous improvement.

(3) From Colin Willetts to the Environment Portfolio Holder

With regard to our question 11/12/17, your reply of improvement design of bus stop facility outside 297 Chipperfield Road is welcome news indeed, could you send us asap a hard copy of consultation/diagram for our comments to 2 Longbury Close, Orpington BR5 2LB?

Reply:

Please find attached a pdf of the plan for the proposed bus stop improvements outside property No. 297 Chipperfield Road. We will be consulting with local residents this week.

CHIPPERFIELD ROAD

297

Shorten bus cage by 4m approx at northern end

Proposed extension to bus stop 'S' hardstanding areas. 2m x 1.2m approx. blacktop or similar approved type surfacing. Similarly 2m x 2.5m extension to hardstanding on southern end.

Proposed taper (dropper) type kerbs

Raised kerb to 150mm over whole length of hardstanding

Proposed extension to bus stop cage & clearway marking

Proposed taper (dropper) type kerbs

Relocate bus stop post to 2m from end of new hardstanding area. Also relocate existing waste bin to a suitable nearby location

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Job Title: O/S 297 CHIPPERFIELD ROAD ORPINGTON	Drawing Title: PROPOSED BUS STOP IMPROVEMENTS	Scale @ A4 1:200		Environmental Services Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley, BR1 3UH Tel : 020 8464 - 3333 Fax : 020 8313 - 4555 Email : www.bromley.gov.uk	Rev	Date	Description	By
		Date: 06/11/17			Drawn by: J.J.	Drawing Number 12597-02		
		Checked by: D.B.	Nigel Davies Executive Director of Environment & Community Services					-

N:\Environmental Services\Transportation Planning\AutoCAD\Drawings\Completed\Archive 12500-12599\12597_Chipperfield Rd jct Longbury Drive,Bus stop imps\12597-02.dwg USER: Joyce, John FILE SIZE = 1.52

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EXECUTIVE

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10. UPDATE ON SERVICE PROPOSALS AND PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR MODULAR HOMES – WARD COUNCILLOR COMMENTS TO CARE SERVICES PDS COMMITTEE ON 9TH JANUARY 2018

(a) From Cllr Charles Joel (7th January 2018)

My fellow Ward Councillor Bob Evans passed onto me a copy of the above that you will be considering at the forthcoming meeting. Unfortunately I will not be able to attend to make a presentation to the committee but I would esteem it a favour if a copy of my email could be distributed with your agreement to each member on that committee.

I have the following observations to make on this project.

RECOMMENDATIONS (Page 183 - Executive Agenda; Page 105 - Care Services Agenda)

Item 2.1:

(1) Why only fifteen years?

(iv) Surely Capital funding will be required, not may.

FINANCIAL (Page 185 - Executive Agenda; Page 107 - Care Services Agenda)

Item 4

(4) A breakdown of the budget of £3,783.370 should be given to justify this amount.

CUSTOMER IMPACT (Page 185 - Executive Agenda; Page 107 - Care Services Agenda)

Page 185

Can it be explained and justified the initial assessment of the site where it suggests that between 30 and 36 units could be provided.

WARD COUNCILLORS VIEWS (Page 185 - Executive Agenda; Page 107 - Care Services Agenda)

Item 1: Comments not applicable, why not?

Item 2: I have made a few comments regarding my views at this stage but has any preliminary consultations taken place with the planning, highways and environmental departments at the Council?

COMMENTARY (Page 186 - Executive Agenda; Page 108 - Care Services Agenda)

Item 3.4

It states that in a previous report to the Executive Meeting held on 24th May 2017 that the executive agreed for officers to proceed with a further analysis. I feel that the report that is before you should have contained more detailed information and not just a two line statement as addressed in Item 3.5.

THE PROPOSAL (Page 186 - Executive Agenda; Page 108 - Care Services Agenda)

I have already queried the period of fifteen years but I will reserve my rights to make further comments as I consider the comments made in Items 3.7 and 3.8 to be again a loose statement.

CUSTOMER PROFILE (Page 187 - Executive Agenda; Page 109 - Care Services Agenda)

What about the provisions for disabled persons units?

OUTLINE STRATEGY AND CONTRACTING PROPOSALS (Page 189 - Executive Agenda; Page 111 - Care Services Agenda)

Item 8.2

From the schedule it would seem the earliest an appointed developer could make a start on the project would be early 2019. Then no provision has been made in the period time needed to prepare and submit formal applications under Town & Country Planning Acts and Building Regulation Acts, see item 11.5

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (Page 190 - Executive Agenda; Page 112 - Care Services Agenda)

Item 11.4

I do not like the statement made contained in the second paragraph

CONCLUSION:

1. Has the Council considered selling off the site to a private developer?
2. It has been mentioned in the past that the area of land in question was an underground operational shelter that was built during the early period of WW2.
3. With the proposal that is before the committee has any consideration been given to the following:-
 - i) Will car parking spaces be needed
 - ii) Refuse/cycle storage areas
 - iii) Awkward site access
 - iv) If residential management should be in place
 - v) Problems for children to attend local schools and if local GPs can take on additional patients
 - vi) With the development this would need to comply with the current Building Regulation Acts. In fifteen years time the structure/elements could be out of date hence some of the fabric could not be reused, also wear and tear of the materials
4. I can conclude that in the past I have made representations regarding this site and that it would be ideal as the land is in the ownership of the Council to enter into a joint venture with a developer and mortgage company to build affordable starter homes for first time buyers.

5. I am still of the opinion that local residents mainly living in York Rise should be consulted that the Council are contemplating building homeless family dwellings on this site.

I ask that copies of this email be circulated to members attending the meeting and a copy attached to the minutes for the record purposes.

(b) From Cllr Tim Stevens (9th January 2018)

Sorry this is late please can my comments below be put to the Committee this evening.

Firstly I agree with pretty much everything that Cllr Joel has said
It is extraordinary that ward members have not been consulted to date this is not acceptable.

I also query why we are agreeing a fifteen year contract this makes this a permeant site and not a temporary one it was agreed at the Executive and resources PDS that the York Rise which is in a prime location next to the station could be sold off and I would agree with this and should be for first time buyers like the rest of the estate which was built in 1985 which I bought my first house in, studio flats or one and two bed houses would be a good use for this site.

As a ward member I would like a full breakdown of the financial position for this project.

I am also concerned at the number of Modular units proposed for this site 30-36 seems excessive especially if they are going to be multi level and I would ask for a full consultation with residents from York rise, Yeovil close whose residents over look this site and Crofton Road as well as local residents associations who will all have huge concerns. No mention is made of parking provision for these modular homes or traffic on what I already a very busy road - please can this be considered?

In conclusion I believe this to be the wrong place for such building and think this site should be used for first time buyers instead there are many unanswered questions at this time both financial and if there will be disable provision provided if this scheme goes ahead.

Please can I ask Committee that this matter is deferred tonight to allow proper consultation and discussion?

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