



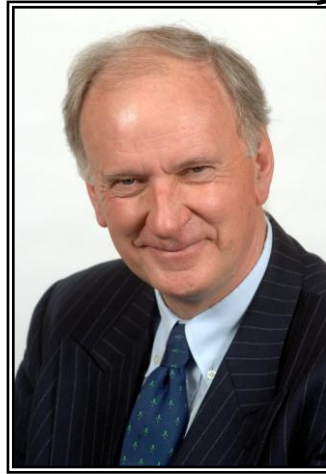
THE LONDON BOROUGH

Policy Development & Scrutiny Annual Report 2009/10

For submission to Full Council on

Monday 29th March 2010

Policy Development and Scrutiny Chairmen 2009/10



Cllr. Peter Morgan
Executive and Resources



Cllr. Robert Evans
Children and Young People



Cllr. Judi Ellis
Adult and Community



Cllr. Tim Stevens JP
Public Protection and Safety

Cllr. William Huntington-Thresher
Environment

Cllr. Pauline Tunnicliffe
Renewal and Recreation



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1. Foreword by the Chairman of Executive & Resources Policy Development & Scrutiny Committee, Cllr. Peter Morgan

- 1.1 On behalf of all my colleagues who sit on Policy Development and Scrutiny Committees in Bromley, I welcome you to our Annual Report for 2009/10. This report summarises for the Council meeting on 29th March 2010 the work that has been carried by our Committees during the Council year.
- 1.2 Since overview and scrutiny was introduced in 2002, each year has seen developments in our capacity to undertake this vital role on behalf of the residents of Bromley. In our last annual report I commented that there had been a growing appreciation of the importance of pre-decision scrutiny: the new executive decision-making arrangements that were introduced in May 2009 cement this in place. As a result, we have given closer scrutiny to the decisions being made by the Executive and by Portfolio Holders, and we have been in a position to ensure that better decisions are made.
- 1.3 As we approach the end of this Council, we have a proven record of developing our overview and scrutiny process. Now is the time to appreciate the improvements we have made, but also to look ahead to a new Council, and consider how we can refine our scrutiny work even further.
- 1.4 This has been the first year of the new arrangements whereby there are usually no Portfolio Holder meetings but the appropriate PDS committee discusses the proposed decisions of the Portfolio Holder (PH) and makes recommendations to the PH. He then states whether he is minded to follow the recommendations and a few days later makes a decision in that way without the need for a separate meeting. Members will recall that if the PH does not agree with the recommendation he will hold a meeting open to the public. This new system seems to have worked well and has certainly cut the number of meetings which would otherwise have been held.

Cllr Peter Morgan

**Chairman, Executive & Resources Policy Development & Scrutiny Committee,
March 2010**

2. Policy Development and Scrutiny in Bromley

- 2.1 Six Policy Development and Scrutiny (PDS) Committees at Bromley discharge the overview and scrutiny functions conferred by sections 21 and 32 of the Local Government Act 2000. The Executive and Resources PDS Committee has an over-arching, co-ordinating role on behalf of the other five PDS Committees and is required by the Council's Constitution to present Full Council with an Annual Report "on the Policy Development and Scrutiny functions and PDS budget, and amended working methods if appropriate" (Article 6, Section 6.03 (d) of the Constitution).
- 2.2 The PDS Committees mirror the Council's executive portfolios:
1. Executive and Resources (covering both the Resources Portfolio and the Executive)
 2. Adult and Community
 3. Children and Young People
 4. Environment
 5. Public Protection and Safety
 6. Renewal and Recreation
- 2.3 Although they have no decision-making powers, PDS Committees have key roles in contributing to policy development and scrutinising the decisions of the Executive and individual Portfolio Holders.

Policy Reviews

- 2.4 PDS Committees advise Portfolio Holders, the Executive and Full Council on policies, budget and service delivery. PDS Committees can commission groups of Councillors to review an issue or policy so assisting a Portfolio Holder or the Executive to improve a service or function affecting local people. This can be linked to a forthcoming decision by a Portfolio Holder or the Executive or to assist in formulating fresh, new policy. In each case detailed, evidence-based assessments are carried out and recommendations made in a report. In the process, Councillors can speak to a broad range of people to help gather information for their evidence-based reports.

One-Off Reviews

- 2.5 In addition to in-depth policy reviews, PDS Committees can also review a topical issue at Committee with comments and recommendations referred on to the Portfolio Holder. These reviews are often based around a presentation or an evidence-giving session with expert witnesses.

Performance and Budget Monitoring

- 2.6 PDS Committees monitor the performance of services and functions within their remit, assessing performance against Key Performance Indicators and policy objectives. Concerns are reported to a Portfolio Holder who can then, if necessary, be called to a PDS Committee meeting to account for the performance of his or her Portfolio.
- 2.7 PDS Committees are also involved in the budget setting process and provide considered comment and recommendations for the Executive to take account of when formulating the Council's annual budget. Similarly, PDS Committees also monitor in-year spend of budgets and raise concerns where there is any possibility of overspend or other issues affecting spending priorities.

Call-in

- 2.8 The call-in process is a key means by which PDS Committees can hold the Executive to account. Any five Councillors can call in a decision and prevent it from taking immediate effect until it has been considered by a PDS Committee. The Committee can then interview the Portfolio Holder and officers and consider whether the decision was appropriate, within the Council's policy framework and whether it should be reconsidered. If the Committee feels that the decision should be reversed or altered, it can make a recommendation to the Executive, which then has to reconsider the matter.
- 2.9 At the time of writing, one call-in has been made during 2009/10, concerning the appointment by the Executive in May 2009 of Executive Assistants. After consideration by this Committee, we decided to take no further action. This continued low level of call-in reflects the emphasis we give to pre-scrutiny, which leads to better and more robust decisions which do not need to be challenged. The fact that there has only been this one call-in is perhaps an indication that the new system of having the PH at PDS meetings ready and willing to debate his decisions at that PDS meeting, is working well.

3. Reports from PDS Committees

Executive & Resources PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Peter Morgan

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Robert Evans

Introduction

- 3.1 2009/10 has been a very busy year for the Executive and Resources PDS Committee, with sixteen meetings scheduled, as well as numerous Working Group meetings. Our meetings are usually tied to the Executive's meetings, so that we can pre-scrutinise their decisions, but five of our meetings have been devoted to our own policy development work.

Pre-decision scrutiny

- 3.2 The pre-decision scrutiny role has been dominant over this last year, and the Committee has worked hard to ensure that every decision made by the Executive and by the Resources Portfolio Holder is properly scrutinised. In tandem with the Council's new Contracts Regulations, we have raised the profile of the Corporate Contracts Register so that Members now have earlier input into decisions about the renewal or re-tendering of Council contracts.
- 3.3 We have also scrutinised the agendas of the Local Strategic Partnership Executive (LSP) and at one meeting had a question and answer session with the Police, the PCT, Community Links and Affinity Sutton. In future this part of our scrutiny work will become increasingly important. Cost pressures will mean that we will be under pressure to work with these partners and share costs. This is a developing part of Local Authority business and, as the only democratically elected body operating in the Borough it is our duty to scrutinise these other parts of the public sector. Certainly the Government is expecting us to do this and will be looking closely to ensure that we are doing it effectively.
- 3.4 As well as looking at proposed decisions, we have invited the Leader of the Council, the Resources Portfolio Holder, the Chief Executive, the Director of Resources and other senior officers to attend our meetings to answer questions on their areas of responsibility. I am grateful that the Leader of the Council and the Resources Portfolio Holder usually attend our meetings and are on hand to be questioned on issues as they arise.

Policy Development and Working Groups

- 3.5 The necessary emphasis on pre-scrutiny of executive decisions has meant that we have had to work hard to ensure that the Committee's policy development role is not neglected. Policy Development issues are on the agendas for all our meetings, but we have held five meetings this year which are not dominated by pre-decision scrutiny so that we can focus on policy development. We have used our policy development meetings to focus on the Council's website, mobile and flexible working, the Council's Foundation Strategy Reviews, the lease for Biggin Hill Airport, the Local Strategic Partnership and considering reports from our Working

Groups. We have also received an update on the Emergency Planning arrangements for the Borough.

- 3.6 Several Working Groups have been in action over the last year looking at important issues for the Council. These Working Groups have all reported in the last few months, and their recommendations are being considered by the Executive – Data, Section 106, Property and Communications. Many recommendations have been made and we have insisted that the appropriate department reports back, after a suitable interval, to tell us how they have implemented the recommendations. This follow-up is vital, if the time and effort of these Working Groups is not to be wasted.

Conclusions

- 3.7 Over the course of the last year the Committee has worked hard to ensure that it has fully scrutinised all the Council's corporate activities. We have looked at a variety of issues, including budgets, the capital programme, value for money, property disposals, the Liberata contracts for housing benefit, revenues and IS support, various human resources issues, flexible working and section 106 agreements. This has been a year when we have continued to work hard on the immediate decisions before the Council, but we have also established a clear vision for the future of PDS work, making a clearer distinction between our scrutiny and policy development roles, and finding structures that can accommodate both.
- 3.8 This has been a very demanding workload, but I believe that our vigilance and our suggestions have resulted in sound decisions being taken on major issues for the borough.
- 3.9 Next year and for the next few years the Council is certainly to be faced with cuts in the grants we receive from the National Taxpayer and pressures to spend more in certain service areas. It is my hope and expectation that the Scrutiny committees, Portfolio Holders and Officers will work together to find ways of delivering all Council Services in a more efficient and cheaper manner. There will not be a choice about this – we have to do it.

Cllr. Peter Morgan
Chairman, Executive & Resources PDS Committee

Adult & Community PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Judi Ellis

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Roger Charsley

Introduction

- 3.10 This PDS Committee has had a challenging year, with changes in both adult care and Learning disabilities engaging us in both scrutiny and long term policy development. There are challenging budget pressures and this has required the Council to look at preventative measures to enable more residents to continue to manage in their own home or supported accommodation. This has been through contracts with partners as well as fresh in-house initiatives.
- 3.11 My thanks go to all Councillor Members and Co-opted Members for their dedication and commitment in the last year. A special thanks to Barbara Langridge who chaired the Mental Health Forum who retired from this position this year. The Committee has benefited from the attendance of the Portfolio Holder at all the meetings and his willingness to share his thoughts on the issues under discussion and listen to the views of the Committee.

Work of the Committee

- 3.12 The Quality of services provided by Partners, private providers and directly by the Council has been closely scrutinised by both the Committee and the Care Quality Commission who have now completed their first year.
- 3.13 We have had presentations from the Age Concern Brokerage scheme, the Mencap Brokerage Scheme, Bromley Community Links, The Link, the PCT including dentistry and The Beckenham Beacon and The South London Healthcare NHS Trust with specific reference to changes following a 'Picture of Health'.
- 3.14 The Committee is particularly concerned to ensure the voice of the user is heard and have scrutinised the collection of information and how it is included in policy development. We also have the responsibility of scrutinising the services provided by the South London Healthcare NHS Trust, the Primary Care Trust and Oxleas. This is both a full Committee responsibility and the particular role of the Health Check Working Group.
- 3.15 This is a Service with increasing demands and highly successful partnership working. We have looked at the following in terms of scrutiny and policy development:
- Security at Bethlam Royal Hospital;
 - Supporting Independence in Bromley – regular updates;
 - Progress Report on Green Parks House;
 - Portfolio Plan;
 - Learning Disability Strategy;
 - Mortgage Rescue Scheme;
 - Settled Homes Initiative;
 - Empty Property Strategy;
 - Freedom Pass Update;
 - Thyme Out Update;

- Regular Updates from Bromley PCT;
- Safeguarding Adults Annual Report;
- Contract Reviews;
- Regular Budget Monitoring Reports.

The Committee has held six scheduled meetings including one special meeting and a joint meeting with Public Protection and Safety PDS on security at the Bethlem Hospital.

- 3.16 The Committee has reviewed the Budget with regular quarterly updates. There has been an increased demand for services and there has been considerable pressure on the budget.
- 3.17 Members of the Committee have visited supported living accommodation , day provision and service partners to both increase their knowledge and monitor standards and quality issues. Members have also participated in a number of working groups and meetings with partnership organisations including The Stroke and Trauma London Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Care Homes Reference Group, the Learning Disability Partnership Board, the Health, Social Care and Housing Partnership Board, Community Links, the LINK, the Health Check Working Group and the Safeguarding Panel. They have also participated in forums and user groups.
- 3.18 We have also held a Working Group on Transport to coincide with an officer lead review.

Public Questions

- 3.19 We have had a large number of questions from the public this year and would like to thank the questioners for their continued interest in and support for the work of the Committee.

Conclusion

- 3.20 The Committee is directly supported by Anne Watts, Assistant Director, Strategic Development and Philippa Stone, Scrutiny Coordinator. This year has seen an improvement in the quality and timeliness of reports and this has been appreciated by the Members of the Committee. Our thanks go to Anne and Philippa and to all the officers who write the reports and attend the meetings.
- 3.21 Adult and Community Services probably affect every family in the Borough. We have recognised the pressures in the Borough and the demand for high quality services. There is a commitment from both Officers and Members to deliver on these expectations and to do so within budget.

Cllr. Judi Ellis
Chairman, Adult & Community PDS Committee

Children and Young People PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Robert Evans

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Stephen Wells

Introduction

- 3.22 The membership of the Children and Young People Policy Development and Scrutiny (CYP PDS) Committee represents wide community interests. In addition to Elected Members, there are co-opted representatives from the Anglican Diocesan Board and the Roman Catholic Archdiocesan Board, Parent Governors, independent schools, teachers and young people. There is also a representative for Looked After Children. This broad representation provides a strong knowledge and experience base on which to influence policy development and undertake the scrutiny functions for the Portfolio.
- 3.23 The Committee will have met formally eleven times during 2009/10 and considered key matters in depth, including the pre-scrutiny of reports for the Portfolio Holder. Members of the Committee take part in the Council's termly visits to education and other establishments. The priorities for the Portfolio are defined in a work programme, which is kept under review by the Committee and the Portfolio Holder.
- 3.24 Under the Children and Young People Trust arrangements established in May 2006, the focus for the Committee includes the development of integrated services for children, young people and families, working in partnership with health authorities and the private, voluntary and independent sectors. Under recent legislation (Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009), the statutory nature of the Trust will be strengthened with effect from April 2010. To enable the Committee to review and provide advice on key policy and strategic issues, formal meetings continue to precede those of the Portfolio Holder. Under revised arrangements for the scrutiny of partnerships, the CYP PDS will be able to comment on Trust Board papers before each meeting.
- 3.25 The CYP PDS established the following two Member Working Parties:
- The School Improvement Working Party received the outcomes from an external review of the LA's school improvement strategy commissioned by the Director CYP. In addition, evidence was provided by officers within CYP Learning and Achievement Services and Primary and Secondary Head Teachers about performance of schools, quality of provision and challenges they faced. Members scrutinised and approved a new policy and strategy for challenge, support and intervention of primary schools which categorises schools based on risk of not sustaining expected performance.
 - The Primary School Development Plan Working Party oversaw a strategic review of school place planning and related school organisation. Recommendations were reported back to the CYP PDS and approved by the CYP Portfolio Holder on 14 October 2010 and recommended that three primary schools Bickley, Unicorn and Churchfields should increase by two forms of entry and Princes Plain by half a form of entry. The proposals are currently out for consultation.

Reviews

The Bromley Strategy for School Improvement

- 3.26 Following an independent review commissioned by the Director CYP of the Borough's Primary School Improvement Strategy, and consideration by the CYP PDS Committee's School Improvement Working Party of this review, a revised policy and strategy was proposed for implementation from September 2009. The Committee acknowledged that, while the overall performance of the Borough's schools was high, in the current cycle of Ofsted inspections (since 2005), four schools had been judged to require special measures and three had received a notice to improve. Whilst the achievements of children and young people remained high overall, the pattern of improvement in standards at some schools was not secure. The revised policy took account of the need for a more tailored approach to individual schools, inversely proportional to the success, and where triggers of concern identified the need for robust intervention before a school failed to meet satisfactory or better quality of provision. The policy also made explicit the action to be taken by the Authority where a school was a serious cause for concern, reflecting the new statutory guidance on schools causing concern (October 2008). With regard to school leadership, the performance management procedures for underperforming Head Teachers were noted.

Review of the Primary Schools Development Plan

- 3.27 This review provided details of the outcomes and recommendations of the Children and Young People Policy Development and Scrutiny Member/Officer Working Party for the strategic planning of primary school provision. Proposals were made in respect of each of the nine planning areas, including increases in capacity where appropriate. It was noted that the proposals for expansion by 3.5 forms of entry in parts of the Borough would need to be delivered within the budget of £9 million held for primary capital funding. Detailed reports were provided to the Portfolio Holder and the Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee demonstrating how the capital grant would meet priorities of the Borough.

Annual Report on Adoption Activity 2008/09

- 3.28 Members considered the annual report on Adoption Activity 2008/09, setting out the key functions of the Bromley Adoption Agency, the previous year's activity and key objectives for 2009/10. The Committee also considered the Agency's updated Statement of Purpose. Members considered the planned amalgamation of the Fostering and Adoption teams and the importance of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service in meeting the therapeutic needs of young people. Members also noted that CAMHS' capacity issues affected fostering services.

Bromley Youth Music Trust

- 3.29 The Principal of the Bromley Youth Music Trust, provided a briefing on the work of the Trust. The Committee noted that the Bromley Youth Music Trust reached approximately 15,000 children and young people of different ages through its various activities. The Trust operated a 100% inclusiveness policy when delivering instrumental and vocal tuition in Borough schools, including those with special units. The Trust was available to provide tuition at special schools, depending on the requirements and the scope to provide a suitable teacher with a viable timetable. The Wider Opportunities scheme was operating in all maintained primary schools,

and was able to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. The Committee congratulated the Trust on the quality of the services which it provided.

Support to Governors at Bromley Schools

- 3.30 Following the outcome of a review in 2008 of Governor Services support to schools, an update was provided to the Committee on progress made with the action plan to address the review's recommendations. The main focus was on re-shaping the framework of training for Governors to support their role in school improvement and raising standards and effective governance, including:
- the purpose and function of Governors in relation to school improvement;
 - strategic leadership for Governors;
 - supporting Governing Bodies to become more effective and efficient and to evaluate their own effectiveness; and
 - strengthening communication between the Local Authority and LA governor representatives on governing bodies.

The Committee noted that, within the new Ofsted Inspection framework from September 2009, there was increased emphasis on the role that Governors play in improving the school and ensuring compliance with statutory duties.

Early Years Foundation Stage: Provision, Quality and Outcomes

- 3.31 An update was provided on the Early Years Foundation Stage, with background to recent changes in statutory duties; a description of Early Years provision in Bromley; the quality of private, voluntary, and independent settings as judged by Ofsted, and outcomes from the recently introduced Foundation stage assessments. A new statutory framework (May 2008) aspired to set the standards for providers, develop equality of opportunity, support partnership working, improve quality and consistency, and secure a foundation for future learning as children progressed into formal education. The Authority was also required to secure the provision of information, advice and training, to meet the needs of local providers and support sufficiency of childcare provision.

Teenage Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Diseases

- 3.32 The Committee commented on the disappointing overall lack of progress towards reducing teenage pregnancy and the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases, although it was noted that under 16 teenage pregnancies have reduced but over 16 teenage pregnancies have increased. Despite the investment in reducing teenage pregnancies, the number in the Borough had not significantly reduced since 2000. In particular, abortion figures continued to be high. The Committee noted also that girls who became pregnant were often in stable, long-term relationships. It was agreed that the Committee should focus on pregnancy in the under-16 age group, as there could be safeguarding issues involved. The Committee discussed the importance of promoting abstinence from sexual activity during teenage years, as well as better strengthening the relationship aspect of sex and relationship education.

Dependency on Government Grant Funding

- 3.33 The Executive and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee had requested that individual Policy Development and Scrutiny Committees look at Government Grants received

and consider the dependency on this funding, what services were funded through the grants, and options for the future, particularly reflecting the likely reductions in Government funding due to the economic climate. The Committee noted that Children and Young People Services were highly reliant on Government funding and received a total of £249 million in grant funding for the current year. Overall, 44% of staff were grant funded and therefore employed on a fixed-term basis. The funding supported 339 full-time equivalent posts, 220 of which were in the Schools' Budget, and 119 of which were in Council Tax funded budget. Within the £14 million of grants which supported the Council Tax funded services; the SureStart grant represented almost half the total. These proportions were due to increase further in 2010/11, as the service expanded. The SureStart grant supports the Government initiatives on childcare, including the start-up and running costs of Children and Family Centres. The report also set out exit strategies in place, or proposed, to deal with the eventual withdrawal or reduction of the grant funding. Two aspects of the exit strategies were particularly important: the potential impact on staff supported by the grant, and contractual obligations to third parties which delivered services on the Council's behalf.

Policy Development

Financial Contributions to Partners

3.34 The Executive and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee had considered reports summarising the financial contributions made by the Council to various partner organisations, and requested that respective Policy Development and Scrutiny Committees use the information to scrutinise contracts and agreements within their own portfolios. Information was provided as follows:

- (i) Voluntary Sector groups providing services without which more people would apply to the Council for services directly;
- (ii) statutory, private and community sector organisations which provided services that had been outsourced by a tendering process, and without which services would have to be provided by another organisation; and
- (iii) voluntary and other organisations that the Council did not fund.

Short Break Services for Disabled Children

3.35 The Committee considered proposals for the Short Breaks Transformation programme during 2009/10, which would increase and enhance the service for disabled children and their carers, in line with "Aiming Higher for Disabled Children". It was noted that the Council had to demonstrate how they met the criteria to access the grant. The Department for Children, Schools and Families had allocated £367,900 revenue and £184,800 capital in 2009/10 to develop short break services for disabled children. In 2010/11, this allocation would increase significantly to £1,188,600 revenue and £431,300 capital, provided that services developed satisfactory. Consultation had been undertaken with disabled children and their carers on how short-term break services could be extended and improved. Claims for spending in 2009/10 included: an increase in holiday schemes; Borough-wide weekend clubs and activities; a buddying scheme; additional homebased support for severely disabled children; small grants to

increase leisure provision for children with Autism and a review of how Hollybank could meet the needs of a wider range of children.

Riverside School Expansion Scheme to Develop Autistic Specific Provision

- 3.36 The Committee supported proposals to create a centre for Autistic pupils at the former Woodbrook Special School site in Beckenham. The proposals were to make provision suitable for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The centre would also make provision beyond the normal school day, at weekends and during holiday periods, to provide the offer of respite care for parents. The Committee supported the view that the development of this high quality autistic specific provision would enable more children to be educated within the Borough and reduce high cost out of borough placements.

Special Educational Needs Transport

- 3.37 Proposals were considered for the future commissioning and contractual arrangements for SEN Transport. This included Phase 1 (the retendering of the SEN Transport contracts) and Phase 2 (the review of Transport Policy). Current contracts expired in March 2010 and it had originally been intended to commence new contracts from April 2010. However, for operational and procurement reasons, beginning the new contract in September 2010 would be less disruptive for children and families who might experience a change in driver, escort or pick-up time. The new contracts would be issued without change to the SEN Transport policy, but would be sufficiently flexible to accommodate policy changes where necessary. The Committee supported the proposals.

Capital Fund for Kitchens and Dining Areas

- 3.38 The Committee supported the allocation of grant funding of £628,514 from the Department for Children, Schools and Families to improve school kitchen and dining facilities. The scheme was intended to address one or more of the following key areas:
- improving food quality;
 - increasing the seating capacity of dining areas;
 - improving the dining environment;
 - decreasing queuing times for meals.

Commissioning: Reporting and Intentions for 2010/11

- 3.39 An operational timeline for Commissioning has been developed, which requires planning for commissioning to commence much earlier than current practice, for example, needs analysis, resource mapping, and the identification of services to be commissioned should be concluded at least 12 months before the beginning of the financial year in which the service is expected to commence. The timeline enables commissioning intentions to be scrutinised, an effective procurement strategy to be developed, and for the procurement process to be concluded at least three months before the contract start. The Committee supported proposals for an annual report on commissioning intentions to be submitted to Members each May, followed by an annual report on contract awards in the period November to January of each year. It was

proposed that the two annual reports covered all contracts with a whole-life value of £50,000 or higher.

Playbuilder Grant

- 3.40 Playbuilder is a specific grant allocated by DCSF to Bromley to develop 22 new or existing play facilities for young people within the Borough. This grant comprises £1,123,274 capital and £44,903 revenue for 2009-11. Implementation has begun and work will be phased over two years with the development of 11 sites in each year. A range of consultees (including Elected Members and Friends of Parks groups) have been involved in consultation on the developments prior to the drafting of plans and the commissioning of suppliers and site workers. Despite a later than anticipated start and unfavourable weather conditions, all 11 schemes in Phase 1 (2009/10) are on target for completion. In some instances, partnership arrangements have generated additional funding to develop individual sites. Phase 2, 2010-2011, is under development and will commence when Phase 2 completes from April 2010. Press media opportunities are being planned around the completion and opening of the schemes; the earliest of which will be the Biggin Hill Recreation Ground in early March 2010.

Early Years Capital Funding: Prioritisation

- 3.41 The Committee reviewed a report setting out proposals for how the Early Years capital funding would be allocated to providers (£4,091,853 in capital for 2008-11). The funding allowed investment for improved facilities for young people with disabilities. It would be utilised for two main priorities: access for young people with mobility problems; and improvement in toilet facilities for young people with disabilities. The Committee endorsed proposals for the priority ranking of schemes and noted the wide consultation that had been undertaken, and the detailed criteria applied in the process of prioritisation.

Children and Family Centres

- 3.42 A report was considered on the implementation of Phases 1 and 2 of the Children and Family Centre programme and Phase 3 feasibility. The need to ensure that resources were reaching vulnerable families was highlighted, as was the importance of evidence to support reported levels of demand. Quantitative and qualitative evidence was required to measure the value-added achieved, and a management information system would be used to support this. It was noted that the total cost for the scheme in the current financial year was £4,842,000 and of this, £1.6 million would be held in the Council's contingency fund. The three year grant would end on 31 March 2011 and the precarious nature of grant funding was noted and consideration given to how this initiative would be sustained where possible.

Performance Monitoring

CYP Portfolio Performance Monitoring Reports

- 3.43 Members were provided with an overview of the performance of the Children and Young People Portfolio against a set of agreed key actions and indicators. The latter included local

indicators selected by Members, as well as a national set. Indicators are monitored on a quarterly basis through the Children and Young People PDS, Portfolio Holder and Trust Board, and contribute to the Council's Performance Management Framework through the Executive and, with partners, through the Local Strategic Partnership. Progress against performance indicators for the Portfolio were considered, including those relating to the Local Area agreement. Members raised questions about a number of matters, including under-18 conceptions, the education attainment of Looked After Children and, the Post-16 average points score.

Final Accounts 2008/09

- 3.44 The final outturn for Children and Young People Services including schools for 2008/09 was considered, including an underspend against the Non-Schools' Budget of £920,000. £500,000 of this had been earmarked as a reserve for potential redundancy costs arising in the event of Government Grant ceasing or reducing. The Committee considered the changes within Children and Young People budgets which might occur in-year, including new service pressure where management action might be necessary to ensure that budget spend can be kept overall within the approved limit. In these cases, savings would need to be achieved elsewhere to fund additional expenditure. Management action to secure improvements in the Youth Offending Service was an example of this.

Budget Monitoring

- 3.45 Members received periodic budget monitoring reports for Children and Young People Services, including, where appropriate, variations in both the Schools' Budget and the Non-Schools' Budget, and the reasons for these. The reports are used to inform future years' budgets and ensure that funding is aligned with the approved policy and strategy. Members also considered information on schools with deficits and the status of their deficit recovery plans. The latest of these reports is elsewhere on this agenda.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services: Strategy Action Plan

- 3.46 The Committee considered a report outlining progress in addressing the recommendations of the CAMHS review of July 2008. It noted the range of actions in place to reduce waiting times for services and increase the efficiency of the service. The position of the Local Authority had been strengthened with regard to influencing decisions taken by the PCT contracted provider organisation. Broader discussions concerning strategic commissioning were taking place within the Local Strategic Partnership arena and this could potentially further influence the role of the Council in commissioning of such services. The proposal to combine Tiers 2 and 3 support and intervention services was endorsed.

Pupil Attendance in Bromley Schools

- 3.47 A report provided an update on the progress made on the development of a Bromley Pupil Attendance Strategy. Members noted particularly that the 'Spike' initiative to promote improved attendance at primary schools was working well and that the young people involved appeared to be very enthusiastic about the scheme. Early indications suggested that attendance was improving, with seven schools showing that an additional 229 pupils achieved 100% attendance over the period concerned.

Youth Provision in Bromley

- 3.48 A report was considered on the implementation of recommendations of the 2006 review of youth provision conducted through a Children and Young People PDS working party. Members noted the good progress made by the Integrated Youth Support Service since it was established in April 2008 and incorporated the work of the youth service in promoting positive activities for young people. Members stressed the importance of partnership with uniformed groups and noted that additional units for the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards scheme had recently been set up in Penge, Mottingham and the Crays. They stressed the importance of the continued engagement of young people in positive activities across the Borough. In this connection, Members should make themselves accessible to young people, as it was important to engage them in the democratic process.

Improvement, Efficiency and Effectiveness Plans

- 3.49 At the request of the Chairman of the Committee, the Director, Children and Young People Services submitted Improvement, Efficiency and Effectiveness plans for scrutiny. A report presented a summary of the plans for 12 performance centres and gave an early indication of how the plans for 2010/11 would address the Council's future financial forecast. Taken together, the plans formed the service's business plan for the delivery of priorities within the

Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2011 and "Building a Better Bromley: 2020 Vision". The total budget for plans detailed in the report was £67.6 million and full details of budgets were contained within the plans themselves.

External Inspections of CYP Services

Ofsted Unannounced Inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment Arrangements

- 3.50 In June 2009, Ofsted introduced a new (annual) two-day unannounced Inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment Arrangements within Local Authority Children Social Care Services. Bromley was in the first cohort of LAs to be inspected on 24 and 25 June 2009. Six areas were recorded where contact, referral and assessment services were being carried out satisfactorily and in accordance with national guidance; four areas of strength and six areas for development. There were no areas identified as being of serious concern for priority action. The inspection endorsed the progress achieved, the effectiveness of practice and the management action taken to further strengthen safeguarding arrangements. An action plan outlined the key tasks to address areas for development, together with progress to date.

Ofsted Unannounced Three Year Inspection of the Bromley Adoption Agency

- 3.51 The Committee was pleased with the excellent inspection outcome and noted the improvement within the service that had been recorded. The outcomes were conveyed from the Ofsted Inspection report and an action plan considered to address areas for development. It was agreed that Adoption Panel members, as well as officers, should undergo training in safeguarding.

Ofsted Annual Performance Assessment Rating of Bromley Children's Services 2009

- 3.52 On 9 December 2009, Ofsted published the outcome of the 2009 APA of the borough's Children and Young People Services. The overall assessment was that the Council "performs well" and is "an organisation that exceeds minimum requirements". The rating contributed significantly to the "Managing Performance" element of the Area Assessment.

Inspection of Youth Offending Team

- 3.53 This matter was considered jointly with the Public Protection and Safety Committee. The initial inspection of Bromley Youth Offending team in 2006/07 had identified a range of weaknesses across the service. The report of a re-inspection in January 2008 was presented to a joint CYP PDS and PPS PDS Committee in June 2008. A progress report to the Joint Committees in 2009 identified areas of focus for the service, as well as noting the impact of changes in legislation for youth justice. Additional funding of £200,000 per annum had been agreed for a two year period from 2008 to meet the additional needs of the service and funding from April 2010 would be considered early in 2010, when indicative cost pressures would be considered by the Executive. It was noted that the Police were making a significant contribution to the service through a full-time equivalent member of staff.

Additional Strategic Reports

3.54 There have also been three key additional reports which have addressed areas of strategic importance for the CYP Portfolio. For reasons of timing and the need for referral to the Council's Executive for a decision, these reports were presented by the Director CYP to the Portfolio Holder at special meetings to which the CYP PDS Chairman and Committee Members were invited to attend. When referred on by the Portfolio Holder CYP to the Council's Executive for decision, these reports were also given full scrutiny by Executive and Resources PDS Committee. The reports in question were:

- (i) Children and Young People Services, Staffing, Business Functions and Funding. A report which detailed to the progress made in service provision since CYP Department was established in May 2006 and focused on: staffing numbers, funding framework, performance management arrangements, Value for Money statistics in the form of Audit Commission comparative data on Local Authority spend, external inspection outcomes.
- (ii) CYP Key Budget Pressures 2010/11. A report which summarised the budget planning assumptions for 2010/11, together with the budget savings targets to be achieved. The report also identified the need for additional resources to address significant service pressures in relation to three areas: recruitment and retention of children's social care staff; children's placements; Youth Offending Team.
- (iii) Recruitment and Retention of Children's Social Work Staff. A detailed report which set out proposed measures to enable Bromley to secure a stable children's care workforce and reduce reliance on agency locum support, together with measures to increase the capacity within the service to manage the significant increase in volumes of referrals and caseloads. This report also highlighted the related service implications for the Council's Legal and Democratic Services in undertaking the legal functions to support these caseloads.

Members of the Children and Young People Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee were invited to attend the Portfolio Holder meetings where these issues were discussed.

Pre-Scrutiny of Reports to the Children and Young People Portfolio Holder

3.55 The Committee undertook pre-scrutiny of a number of other reports to the Children and Young People Portfolio Holder. Topics included:

- the outcome of the annual Comprehensive Performance Assessment;
- the report of the Director of Children and Young People Services on business functions, staffing and funding of the department;
- proposals for recruitment and retention of children's social care staff within the department;
- 14-19 reform and the transfer responsibilities for commissioning Post-16 education and training from the Learning and Skills Council;
- management of the Building Schools for the Future Programme in Bromley;
- the Draft Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2011;
- the strategy for capital investment in secondary schools and the primary capital programme;
- proposals for pocket of deprivation funding in 2009/10;

- Children Social Care Charging Policy;
- the Dedicated Schools' Grant: 2010/11 Consultation;
- Special Educational Needs/Additional Educational Needs Funding Review.

Cllr. Robert Evans
Chairman, Children and Young People PDS Committee

Environment PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. William Huntington-Thresher

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Julian Grainger

Introduction

- 3.56 The services provided within the Environment Portfolio affect every resident of Bromley, as well as those who visit the borough or travel through it. For some years, the regular General Satisfaction Survey – now renamed the Place Survey - has consistently shown how significant these services are to residents. When asked in the survey, “What things would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live”, matters such as clean streets, traffic congestion, the condition of highways and pavements, and parks, are all rated highly. This wide ranging impact means that scrutiny is particularly important.
- 3.57 By their nature many of the issues considered by the Committee are long-term. Measures to increase recycling for example, or to reduce energy consumption, can only take effect over time. However the Committee has continued to build on work carried out in the past and has kept major issues under review.
- 3.58 The Committee has sought to focus its efforts, directly or through Working Groups, on issues of real concern to the public such as parking, waste and recycling, public toilet provision, and road safety.

Scrutiny of the Portfolio Holder and Executive

- 3.59 The Committee seeks to fulfil this role by:
- Early consideration of priorities and action points to be included in the Environment Portfolio Plan, followed by a half yearly review in November each year of progress against the Plan.
 - Monitoring of key performance indicators and budgets.
 - Pre-decision scrutiny of relevant Portfolio Holder and Executive decisions
- 3.60 In March 2009, the Council agreed changes to Executive decision making arrangements which have had a major impact on the agendas of PDS Committee meetings during 2009-10.
- 3.61 The new arrangements have meant that all reports on proposed decisions are presented at PDS meetings for pre-scrutiny, with the Portfolio Holder attending to contribute to discussion, answer questions and receive comments. The Portfolio Holder has then made decisions separately, in the days following the meeting.
- 3.62 This has led to a significant re-emphasis being given by the Committee to pre-decision scrutiny of Portfolio Holder and Executive decisions. This is reflected in the priorities which the Committee addressed during the year, and which are set out below. A particular focus for the Committee this year has been pre-decision scrutiny of a wide range of traffic management and road safety schemes.

Working Groups

- 3.63 Three Working Groups were constituted for at least part of 2009-10:

Parking

Councillors: Samaris Huntington–Thresher (Chairman), William Huntington–Thresher, Sarah Phillips, Brian Toms, and Michael Turner

- 3.64 The Council’s parking service makes an important contribution to the management of highways and traffic, and is a vital component in supporting the borough’s economy. The service faces unique challenges in balancing the interests of residents, motorists and businesses.
- 3.65 The Parking Working Group was established in November 2008 and completed its work in June 2009. The Group considered the future direction of parking strategy, a reform of borough-wide charging policy, and a range of policy challenges for both on- and off-street parking management. The review was conducted against a challenging financial background, posing complex questions on the future of the borough’s parking service and the contribution it could make to the health of the local economy.
- 3.66 At the PDS meeting in June 2009, the Working Group’s Chairman, Councillor Samaris Huntington-Thresher, presented a final report containing eleven recommendations, including the creation of a refreshed Bromley Parking Strategy and revision of borough-wide charging policy.

Waste Minimisation

Councillors: William Huntington–Thresher (Chairman), Nicholas Bennett, Sarah Phillips and Samaris Huntington–Thresher

- 3.67 Waste collection and disposal is one of the major items of expenditure for the Portfolio and the expansion of recycling is important for the well-being of the Borough. This is an issue that affects every household. It is important financially and environmentally.
- 3.68 The Working Group was established by the PDS Committee in the previous year and was reconvened for 2009-10. Following the expansion of the Composting for All trial across a further 22,000 properties, the Working Group has been regularly updated on the public reaction to the scheme, to ensure lessons are learnt with regard to communications and promotional activities.
- 3.69 The Working Group has also enjoyed interactive presentations regarding the impact on tonnages of both waste and recyclables, and the potential impact this would have on future budgets. This work has included the development of a costed model for the potential roll-out of the service borough-wide. With eight months feedback from the trial area now available, this

analysis will be reviewed during the next quarter to form the basis of a report to Members regarding the future of the trial.

- 3.70 The Packaging Recycling Action Group (PRAG) is an industry led body, with membership from packaging manufacturers, packers, retailers and the recycling industry, as well as local authorities. This group is exploring options for reducing packaging and increasing its recyclability. However, it also acts as an opportunity for the industry to explain advances in reduced, light-weight and stronger packaging, which informs the potential for further improvements. Regular feedback on this information to the Working Group ensures Bromley's views and concerns are incorporated at a national level.
- 3.71 The Working Group also considered the potential benefits which would arise through appointing a dedicated schools recycling officer. With an officer now in post, the Working Group will be asked to explore the potential synergies between the range of school educational activities carried out by Environmental Services, with the aim of ensuring a consistent set of messages are promoted.
- 3.72 The Working Group was encouraged by the roll out of a battery collection scheme in advance of the legal requirement to do so, and the involvement of schools in the scheme.
- 3.73 The Waste Review home page on One Bromley, available to Members and officers, ensures that appropriate information, data, statistical information and 'useful' reading enables the Working Group to keep up to date on progress without the need for paper copies of documentation.

Energy Management and Carbon Reduction

Councillors: William Huntington–Thresher, Julian Grainger, and Samaris Huntington– Thresher

- 3.74 It was intended that this Working Group would follow up the work of the former Energy Efficiency and Carbon Management Working Group which was established in the previous year. The priorities established last year were:
- Review performance against the two LAA targets relating to energy efficiency and carbon reduction;
 - Energy saving through changes in street lighting;
 - Visits to demonstration sites to identify good practice;
 - Development of Council “demonstration projects” that can be used as models for other private and public sector organisations in the Borough;
 - Energy use in schools – schools account for over 40% of the Council's carbon footprint and a correspondingly high energy consumption;
 - Domestic energy consumption;
 - Publicity.

Bromley Area Action Plan Park and Ride

Councillors: William Huntington-Thresher and Peter Morgan

- 3.75 A single meeting was held to review the Park and Ride aspects of the Bromley Area Action Plan in advance of submission. The Working Group supported the development of Park and Ride facilities linked to the rail network, to provide car parks distributed across the borough with

less impact on the road network. Whilst supporting the need for an interim Saturday-only Park and Ride scheme, it was considered possible to work with partners to reduce the impact on Norman Park.

Other major topics covered during the year

Road Safety and Traffic Management Schemes

- 3.76 As outlined above, the committee has this year placed significant emphasis on pre-decision scrutiny, and this has been a particular priority in the case of proposed road safety and traffic management schemes. A large number of schemes have been brought forward for decision this year. The Committee has given detailed scrutiny to each of the reports brought forward during the year, and has advised the Environment Portfolio Holder accordingly on whether schemes should be accepted or referred back for further consideration.

Community Toilet Scheme

- 3.77 In June 2009 and again in January 2010, the Committee reviewed the provision of Public Conveniences in the Borough and considered options for the future. The Committee reiterated its support for the Community Toilet scheme, whereby the Council supports local businesses to make toilet facilities on their premises available to the general public. This was already delivering enhanced public toilet provision. The Committee endorsed the progress which had been made in introducing schemes in Hayes, Biggin Hill, Beckenham and Petts Wood.
- 3.78 The Committee was not convinced that sufficient alternative provision was yet available in Beckenham and Petts Wood, and advised against closure of the public conveniences in these two areas. This position was confirmed by the Portfolio Holder. The Committee will give further consideration to the impact of the scheme, and the potential expansion to additional businesses or areas at a meeting early in the new Council year. In the longer term there is potential for further service enhancement at reduced cost to the Council through this method of provision.

Friends of Parks and Street Friends

- 3.79 In February 2010 the Committee received the annual review of the borough's two Friends schemes, for Parks and Streets. The number of Parks Friends groups has increased from 38 to 45, representing almost 25,000 hours of voluntary work contributed to Bromley's parks. The additional funding raised in partnership with Friends Groups has doubled to almost £300,000. Finally there are now over 700 Street Friends helping to improve the borough's street scene. The Friends schemes and additional funding are resulting in significant improvements to the environment in the borough and enhanced community spirit.

Street Lighting and Highway Maintenance

- 3.80 Maintenance of the highway is of major importance to residents and maintenance of good communications is essential for economic well-being of the Borough. Any failure to maintain the infrastructure adequately will have long-term implications for the level of expenditure needed in future years. Reflecting the importance of these issues, detailed consideration was given by the Committee in July 2009 to pre-decision scrutiny of the Highway Maintenance

programme, the Environmental Improvement programme and the Street Lighting Replacement programme. The Committee continues to monitor Highway Maintenance trials following the recommendations of an earlier Working Group.

Winter Maintenance

- 3.81 Following the snow event in February 2009, the Committee received two reports for pre-decision scrutiny on the performance of the Council's winter maintenance services. In June 2009 an overview of the service's performance was taken including an assessment of the impact on highway surfacing of the bad weather, and the likely financial consequences e.g. an increased number of pot holes. A further report was considered in October 2009 focusing on footways clearance. Several refinements to the boroughs operations have been introduced, leading to performance improvements during the snow events of December 2009 and January 2010. The embryonic extension of the Street Friends programme, to include supporting resident self-help schemes during snow events, is an encouraging addition to the salt bins strategically placed around the borough. The PDS committee has congratulated staff and contractors on their efforts keeping Bromley's roads and footways clear this winter.

Contract review

- 3.82 Changes in Standing Orders which came into effect in April 2009 have meant that the Committee now regularly considers work packaging and tendering issues. In addition, at each meeting of the Committee a digest of the Council's Contracts register is presented focusing on contracts within the remit of the Environment Portfolio. This has assisted the Committee in planning its input into the contracts process.
- 3.83 The Committee has continued to carry out detailed reviews of contracts which are approaching the date when they would need to be re-tendered or extended, as well as careful pre-decision scrutiny of contract award recommendations. The contracts examined during the course of the year were:
- Coney Hill Landfill Site Monitoring (Gateway review – July 2009)
 - Parks and Depot security (contract award – November 2009)
 - Vehicle Maintenance (packaging report - June 2009; contract award January 2010)
 - Inspection of Street Works (contract award – January 2010)
 - Street Lighting (contract extension – January 2010)
 - Street Cleansing (contract extension – January 2010)
 - Highways Maintenance (contract award – February 2010)

Public Transport Liaison Forum

- 3.84 Public transport liaison meetings were held in June and November 2009. Meetings are chaired by the Chairman of the Environment PDS Committee and are attended by representatives of TfL and transport operators. Meetings of the Forum are open to all Members. Presentations were received during the year from SELTRANS on workplace travel plans, from the police on Safer Neighbourhoods, on Biggin Hill airport including the air show, and on the new TfL funding arrangements for boroughs. The Forum is currently the main route for dialogue with the Council's key partner in the field of transport, TfL.

Portfolio Plan and Budget Monitoring

- 3.85 Throughout the year, the Committee scrutinised the service and financial performance of the Environmental Services Department against the commitments made in the Portfolio Plan. The Committee remains concerned at the impact of the recession on parking, and is encouraged by the performance improvements in recycling and waste diversion. The Committee scrutinised the proposals for the Environment Fund, as well as the draft Environment Portfolio Plan for 2010/11.

Monitoring progress with the Local Area Agreement

- 3.86 Under the current Local Area Agreement, the PDS Committee is responsible for monitoring progress on those parts of the Agreement which relate to the Environment Portfolio. The stretch targets in the Agreement, if fully met, will entitle the Council to reward grant of the order of £1.35 million, £1 million of which relates to the achievement of recycling targets in 2009/10. Monitoring of progress has therefore been a significant responsibility. The Committee has received progress reports for each quarter, and will be given a further report in June 2010 once end of year monitoring is complete.
- 3.87 In addition, the Committee received a mid-year progress report on the implementation of the 2009/10 Environment Portfolio Plan, including all LAA targets set in the context of the Portfolio's wider commitments. Action was subsequently taken to improve performance on graffiti removal, addressing an LAA reward target.

Looking to the future

- 3.88 The work programme for 2010/11 will be agreed by the Environment PDS Committee following the May election of a new Council. It is intended that the new Committee will continue to follow up long term issues protecting and enhancing the quality of the environment in Bromley. In particular the current PDS Committee has recommended that the new PDS Committee in 2010/11 consider forming a working group to consider policy development activity in respect of street cleansing, prior to the service being re-tendered in 2011.
- 3.89 The current PDS Committee has also recommended that the performance of the Winter Maintenance Service should be reviewed following a second winter with significant snowfall in two years, with self-help schemes being an important element of the review.
- 3.90 New powers for scrutiny of partner bodies were contained in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Developments in this direction are anticipated following consultation on Central Government's Strengthening Local Democracy paper, along with further legislative change. This is likely to impact on the work of the Committee following the election of a new Council in May 2010.

Cllr. William Huntington-Thresher
Chairman, Environment PDS Committee

Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Pauline Tunnicliffe

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. George Taylor

Introduction

- 3.90 The Committee has met five times this year. Each meeting has scrutinised the reports for decision by the Renewal and Recreation Portfolio Holder and considered policy development of key areas of the portfolio. Monitoring performance against the Renewal and Recreation Portfolio Plan and Council key priorities has been central to the committee's work. There have been two working groups which have enabled a thorough investigation of key issues and formed robust recommendations.

Working Groups

- 3.91 The main focus this year has been the Beckenham and West Wickham Working Group and the conclusion of the Recreation Working Group.

Beckenham and West Wickham Working Group

- 3.92 Outcomes of the Member working Group on Beckenham and West Wickham Town Centres were reported to the Committee at its meeting in October 2009. Following this Committee a further meeting was convened of the Working Group to review the recommendations and to allow Ward Members the opportunity to fully participate in the final report. This report was considered by the Committee at its November meeting. Given that a significant number of recommendations affected the work of other Portfolio Holders a further report will be presented to the Committee feeding back on comments received from other Portfolios.

Penge Town Centre Working Group

- 3.93 Outcomes from the PDS Working Group review on 'Measures to Assist the Regeneration of Penge Town Centre' were reported to the Committee at its meeting on 9th July 2008, and to the Portfolio Holder on 15th July 2008. On the 26th January 2009 the Working Group re-convened for a one-off meeting to assess progress in implementing the review recommendations. These recommendations included the possible provision of sites for market stalls, lamp-post banners, footfall monitoring, possible hard landscaping schemes for the town centre and High Street parking. It was reported that the majority of recommendations had now been implemented and that the Town Centre management team would continue to identify relevant opportunities that met the agreed recommendations.

Recreation Working Group

- 3.94 The Recreation Working Group was established in Autumn 2008 to review the recreation services provided across Bromley for young people, with special provision for those considered 'hard to reach'. Evidence has been heard from a range of key partners including services across the Council, Bromley MyTime, Bromley Youth Councillors and the Metropolitan Police Service. Outcomes from this review were reported in July 2009 with a range of recommendations. A further report was considered at the November 2009 meeting where progress was reported on implementing the agreed recommendations. Out of the 7 recommendations, all but one, the

creation of a dedicated Grants post, were reported as being either achieved or in the process of being achieved.

Economic Recession

- 3.95 The year has seen the continued economic decline, nationally and locally. The Committee has actively kept abreast of the impact on the Borough and the support and help that the Council and its partners can provide to its communities, in particular to local businesses.
- 3.96 Regular economic updates have provided evidence to the Committee of the economic position and helped in its scrutiny of policy and projects.
- 3.97 The Committee has supported several measures to support businesses through the recession. The Committee has challenged officers to increase wherever possible the use of local business and welcomed the extension of the 'Boost Your Business' events. The committee received a presentation from the Lewisham Plus Credit Union manager regarding its role in supporting residents' financial independence and its plans for expansion across Bromley. The Committee recommended that the Portfolio Holder support the expansion with the requirement that a Bromley branding was developed.

Performance Monitoring and Budget Monitoring Reports

- 3.98 The Committee has received regular performance monitoring and budget monitoring reports. The delivery of the Local Area Agreement employment target was the subject of a specific report. The Committee received a detailed report and regular updates on 'The People into Employment' project which is delivering this LAA target. The Committee have encouraged the development of legacy plans to ensure good practise and experience is incorporated in the Council and partners work. The debate concerning the need for more robust indicators, specifically for town centres, has continued and the Committee will need to maintain its scrutiny in this area.
- 3.99 Budget monitoring has highlighted the substantial negative effect of the recession on the portfolio.

Bromley and Orpington Town Centres

- 3.100 The Committee has continued its review of the major proposals for Bromley and Orpington Town Centres. In July 2008 the Committee received a presentation and update on plans for Supplementary Planning Guidance and environmental improvements for Orpington Town Centre. Members of the Committee asked questions and made comments and suggestions. These included detailed comments regarding the design of proposed improvements, and the importance of ensuring that the momentum for development continues, with the promotion of sites and helping local businesses and residents to respond positively to the new Tesco development.
- 3.101 The Committee received a number of progress reports on the Area Action Plan for Bromley Town Centre. Members stressed that every opportunity to involve the public in further consultation

leading up to the Examination in Public should be made. The Committee emphasised the need to promote a vibrant and thriving community. Members emphasised their concern for parking and the importance of receiving regular progress reports.

- 3.102 The Committee considered a report at its October meeting to extend the current contract with the Ambassadors Theatre Group for a year until April 2011 in order to allow further investigatory work into the electrical systems in the Theatre.

Recreation

- 3.103 The Committee scrutinised the work of Bromley MyTime with the Chief Executive and Chairman attending the January meeting. The Committee agreed that value for money for the community was a priority and that the Leisure and Culture Division should work more closely with Bromley Mytime in future to ensure optimisation of resources. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Government-led initiative to fund free swimming for over 60's and under 16's provided limited funding for two years, but the initiative was under-funded, which is why it was not available in Bromley.
- 3.104 The Committee supported the designation of two Local Nature Reserves, Darrick and Newstead Woods and Hayes, Keston, Ravensbourne and Padmall Wood as a mechanism to protect and promote the natural environment as well providing excellent facilities for local residents and communities.

Adult Education

- 3.105 As Chairman, I am the Council's representative on the Bromley Adult Education Board of Governors and I have attended several meetings. The Committee has reviewed the progress made by the College. Members of the Committee noted that despite having to increase fees to counteract the reduction in government financial support for some courses, College enrolments have remained more or less steady; and this is a tribute to both the loyalty of our students and the quality of the tuition that they receive. Surveys undertaken during the past year show a high level of student satisfaction indicating 'excellence in the eyes of local people'. A total of 89% of students rated the College 'very good' or 'good' in both quality of teaching and overall facilities provided; only 1% expressed any degree of dissatisfaction in both areas as against 4% last year.

Policy Development

- 3.106 The Committee has contributed to the discussion and development of an Economic Development Framework for the Borough. The Committee has emphasised the importance of ensuring that partners such as Business Link and Job Centre Plus positively meet the needs of businesses in the Borough. Looking to the future the Committee is concerned to ensure that the budgets and resources of these and other business support organisations are fully optimised.
- 3.107 It has been an interesting and exciting year for the Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee and I would like to thank all members of the Committee for their input and support. I would also like to thank all Officers in the Renewal and Recreation Department who I have enjoyed working with.

Cllr. Pauline Tunnicliffe
Chairman, Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee

Public Protection & Safety PDS

Chairman: Cllr. Tim Stevens JP

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. David Hastings

- 3.108 During 2009/10 the Public Protection and Safety (PPS) Committee met seven times and had two joint meetings; one with the Children and Young People Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee to discuss the Youth Offending Team and the other with the Adult and Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee to consider security at the Bethlem Royal hospital.
- 3.109 The PPS Portfolio is truly cross-cutting both in terms of the Council wide input to its objectives and the contribution made by external partners. In line with this the PDS Committee has scrutinised and contributed to a diverse range of activity including plans for Environmental Health and Trading Standards, the Council's anti-social behaviour strategy priorities, the work of the Drug Action and Youth Offending teams, the noise strategy and the use of the substance misuse grant. Many of these areas cross both adults and childrens' services, and cover the key themes of prevention, enforcement and reassurance about public safety.
- 3.110 The fourth key theme for the Committee is engagement and once again this year the PDS co-opted representatives come from a number of local organisations including for the first time the Bromley Community Engagement Forum. I would like thank those concerned for their contributions throughout the year :
- Bromley Neighbourhood Watch;
 - Bromley Victim Support ;
 - Bromley Youth Council;
 - Bromley Federation of Residence Associations;
 - Bromley Community Engagement Forum.
- 3.111 The Committee has always supported the Neighbourhood Watch Organisation and the report of the Working Party which the Committee received resulted in recommendations which have benefited the scheme going forward. I have underlined the commitment of PDS Members by becoming the Council Champion for Neighbourhood Watch.

- 3.112 The PDS Committee has implemented a programme of presentations and “Witness Sessions” where we invite representatives of partner organisations (including those represented on the Committee) to explain how their activities are contributing to the Portfolio objectives and to provide an opportunity for the Committee to raise concerns about issues on behalf of the Borough. During 2009/10 these have included the London Assembly Member (James Cleverly) who briefed the Committee on London wide community safety issues, the London Ambulance Service and Victim Support.
- 3.113 The local police are in regular attendance and the Borough Commander Charles Griggs and his staff provide regular updates to the Committee on policing matters and crime in the borough.
- 3.114 The PDS has regularly scrutinised the decisions of the Public Protection and Safety Portfolio Holder and we have worked together in a spirit of close and productive co-operation.
- 3.115 This year the PDS will have a special meeting in July in conjunction with the Bromley Community Engagement Forum to scrutinise the Safer Bromley Partnership.
- 3.116 I would like to thank my fellow Councillors and Committee Members and Officers for their hard work and commitment over the last year.

Cllr. Tim Stevens JP
Chairman, Public Protection & Safety PDS Committee