

(12) UPDATES FROM PDS CHAIRMEN

(a) ENVIRONMENT PDS COMMITTEE – 15th January 2013 (to follow)

(b) CARE SERVICES PDS COMMITTEE – 16th January 2013

The discussion at the PDS was concentrated on the budget and the changes to day care and respite provision.

All the proposed commissioning savings have been subject to scrutiny by the committee, concern was expressed about the realisation of savings through outsourcing/shared services/service redesign and the committee have asked for further information on all these headings, it may be necessary to identify other saving areas to meet the shortfall.

Concern has been expressed at the impact of the Housing benefit and work related benefits changes on our advice and information services, especially for vulnerable groups. It is important that the DWP fully support the vulnerable members of our community through the changes and work closely with our third sector partners who are funded to assist and advise.

A considerable amount of work has been undertaken by the Housing operations and strategy teams to meet the ever increasing housing pressures from both the homeless and those living in overcrowded properties. This has been exacerbated by the Housing benefit changes, meaning that people who under occupy their home may wish to downsize. This has put increased pressure on the highly sought 2 bed provision.

Day care provision changes will bring savings, the committee have though recognised the need for an extended timetable for change, and agreed the portfolio holder's recommendation. This will enable the service to continue to meet the current service users' choice of daytime activity.

Cllr Judi Ellis, Chairman

(c) RENEWAL & RECREATION PDS COMMITTEE – 17th January 2013

The Renewal and Recreation PDS met on Thursday 17th January 2013. In addition to standard items such as business plan, capital and budgets, it considered the following:

- Annual presentation from Mytime outlining plans for the future, however more detailed aspects of the investment fund were considered in Part 2. Members emphasised the need for partnership working to continue given that both organisations have external pressures affecting funding. The Chairman was particularly keen to ensure that both organisations work together so that both can jointly and individually achieve requirements within budget.

- Town Centre Development Programme – including detailed design of Bromley North Village public realm improvements following the exhibition for members on Fri 4th Jan (official sign off of funding from TfL due 18th Feb), Montagu Evans delivery timetable for Churchill Place, Westmoreland Road update. For these, and all other active sites, regular updates for ward members requested.
- Presentation of draft strategy by acting Chief Planner to improve enforcement and general turnaround of planning applications.
- Town Centre Management – programme of events at major TCs involving many local organisations demonstrating residents enthusiasm to commit to local TCs.

Conservative members also met on Tuesday 15th January to further integrate budget 2013/14. As well as endorsing savings presented to the PDS they reviewed progress on all potential R&R projects in and beyond 2013/14. Noted the careful approach which will be adopted for services considered for delivery through commissioning/shared service models etc. All on case by case basis once they are properly developed.

Other items of note -

- Start date of Westmoreland Road development
- Orpington BID programme

Cllr Sarah Phillips, Chairman

(d) PUBLIC PROTECTION & SAFETY PDS – 22nd January 2013

The Public Protection & Safety PDS met on the 22nd January. The Chairman reminded members of the visits of the Deputy Mayor for Policing and the Metropolitan Police Commissioner on the 28th and 30th January respectively. He also stated that a Working Group will be set up to consider all issues relating to income generation, invest to save schemes, working practices and good schemes and policies which have been adopted by other councils.

Chief Superintendent Roberts attended and gave a briefing relating to recent police activities. Of particular note had been the recent arrest of two teams of burglars caught while actually committing burglaries.

The latest budget monitoring report for the year 2012/2013 was noted. This showed a balanced budget at the 30th November.

Jim McGowan, Head of Environmental Services, gave a presentation on the Mortuary & Coroners Services. Three points emerged:-

1. The SLA to use the mortuary at the PRUH is due to finish in March 2013 and the committee agreed to a limited tender list of up to four mortuaries to tender for a new SLA.
2. The Coroners & Justice Act 2009 came into being in late 2012. Of concern is that under this Act it is now the responsibility of the local authorities to provide coroners officers. Up until now they have been provided and paid for by the police. Bromley

has four and the financial cost is estimated to be in the region of £200k per year. Transition arrangements have still to be established.

3. Further under the same Act local authorities are expected to fully fund the new post of Medical Examiner and his/her staff. These costs are to be recovered by a system of fees. This system awaits clarification.

The Committee considered at length the provisions of the Government's Draft Anti-Social Behaviour Bill (100 pages of legislation). Some strong anti social behaviour measures are introduced but there could be financial costs to the Council especially in respect of legal representation at courts.

Our GLA member James Cleverly and the Fire Brigade Commander Andrew Holcombe attended and gave the current position as regards reorganisation of the Fire Brigade. A number of options are being considered, however following a meeting at the GLA on the 21st, the Mayor has stated that there will be a public consultation in the next two/three months.

The Committee heard presentations regarding a) the excellent work being done by the Bromley Youth Council through its Campaign Against Bullying in schools and b) an update on the latest Community Payback Scheme.

The annual update on Substance Misuse was noted.

The Committee considered the Public Protection & Safety Draft 2013/14 Budget and agreed with the provisions therein. In doing so the Committee took note of the financial forecast for 2013/14 to 2015/16 and in recognising that there was little if any room for manoeuvre accepted that further savings would have to be identified.

Cllr Douglas Auld, Chairman

(e) EDUCATION PDS – 23rd January 2013

1. Catholic Secondary School

The Committee received and considered a report from the Portfolio Holder, Cllr Wells, on his discussions with the Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark regarding the establishment of a new Catholic Secondary School in the Borough. Bromley is the only London borough without one.

2. School Performance

As part of the Committee's principle scrutiny and policy development objective of improving school, pupil and governor's performance we received a report which categorised schools by a range of data, including Ofsted judgements, so as to identify those which need intervention and support. Unlike previous practice which anonymised schools, it is now policy to name all schools in an open and transparent process. The recent HCMI Annual Report ranked Bromley 67th out of 152 authorities for primary provision. 30% of pupils attend a primary school which is considered satisfactory or worse. As the report indicated this is unacceptable. The Committee endorsed the report and asked that it be sent to every governing body.

3. School Governance

The Committee also received a report on school governance. It was agreed to set up a working party to report back at the next meeting with proposals for improving the effectiveness of LA representatives on school governing bodies.

4. Budget savings

The Committee endorsed the recommendations of the Education Budget Sub-committee on the draft Budget for 2013-4 to effect savings of £1.7m in 2013-4.

5. Education Commitments and Future role of LA in Education

As colleagues will know the full council on January 21st passed a motion setting out the Council's Education Commitments. At the next meeting of the PDS a report on the future role of the LA once the remaining primary schools have converted to academies will be discussed together with a draft education compact between the Council and schools, parents, pupils, residents and local business.

6. Child Protection

A joint meeting of Education and Care Service PDS committees has been arranged for mid March to scrutinise the child protection policies, processes and organisational structure of the Council and its partners the police and NHS.

Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP, Chairman