

**EXECUTIVE AND RESOURCES PDS COMMITTEE  
4<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2015**

**UPDATES FROM PDS CHAIRMEN**

**Environment PDS Committee  
20<sup>th</sup> January 2015**

Budget Monitoring

The environment budget (at November 2014) was predicted to be underspent for the year; however higher than predicted spend on the winter service (salt, snow clearance, flooding etc.) would change the predicted outcome.

Parking Charges

Parking charges last increased in March 2012. The increase in March 2012 was considered with regard to the weak national economic circumstances at the time. The Council's Parking Strategy sets out a series of objectives to cover issues such as: safety; turnover of spaces; reduced congestion; sufficient available spaces to support the local economy; etc. The committee supported the proposed increase in parking charges. The committee considered the charges in the context of the Parking Strategy, the current low rate of inflation and the current, considerably stronger economic growth rate predictions. It was suggested that the new charges should apply for the next 4 years.

Public Toilets

Subject to no new issues arising through the ongoing consultation (to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2015); the committee supported the proposal to close the remaining public toilets in the borough (Beckenham, West Wickham, Bromley) and move those locations on to the community toilet and open London schemes operating in the rest of the borough. At the date of the PDS consultation had resulted in a considerable number of (net) objections, the majority regarding the Beckenham toilets but a few objections regarding West Wickham and Bromley. The background to the recommendation was the proposed 2015/16 budget.

Metropolitan Police Road Traffic

As part of the committee's partner scrutiny, the PDS had a presentation from the Met Police Safer Transport Command followed by a question and answer session. The committee was advised that the safer transport and road traffic commands had merged. The session covered a range of road safety related issues. There is coordination between the Council's Road Safety duty and the Police's role.

Draft Budget

The committee considered the proposed Environment budget for 2015/16. The savings measured proposed in the budget were not without concerns. The savings measured were considered in the overall financial context facing the Council. A

number of the items had been considered by the committee earlier in the Council year. The summary of the discussions are contained in a separate report to the Executive.

**Cllr William Huntington-Thresher**  
**Chairman, Environment PDS Committee**

## **Care Services PDS Committee**

### **21<sup>st</sup> January 2015**

The Committee discussed the draft budget for 2015/2016 and the difficult decisions that were having to be considered. Comments were made regarding the possible impact of cuts to some vulnerable groups which will be reported to the next Executive meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February.

It was acknowledged that there are still outstanding issues and areas of uncertainty remain due partly to new responsibilities placed on the Authority by Central Government.

Progress has been made in the last quarter reducing the projected overspend in Care Services to £1,270,000 (full year effect £3,022,000) from £4.182,000

The committee noted changes to the Capital Programme.

The Contract for Healthwatch Bromley was discussed. It is now operating independently from Community Links and the value of the contract is reducing over 3 years. It is hoped that these savings can be brought forward to year two.

Changes to the Non Residential Charging Policy and Deferred Payments Scheme due to the impact of the Care Act 2014 were considered.

The proposal to award the Citizens Advice Bureau Contract for one year from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 was noted.

The Annual Quality Monitoring Report was presented. This covers domiciliary, care homes, extra care and supported living schemes and children's services. A new programme of visits for 2015/16 was scheduled.

Our Children's Social Care Recruitment & Retention Strategy was debated. This has been very successful. It was recommended that the current scheme be extended for 2015/16 and 2016/17. There is £597k remaining from the original budget to cover this. Further enhancements on the current packages are also proposed.

The Gateway Report on Tenancy Sustainment Services for Young People was reported on. This offers two services one for Floating Support, the outcomes of this service were questioned and the other for accommodation provision.

An update was given on Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (Dols).

The Committee's Information Briefings were:

Bromley Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report 2013/14  
Extra Care Housing Contract Activity Update 2014/15

## PART 2

The Contract for Supported Living Learning Disability Arrangements at 26 Devonshire Road was debated.

A Gateway Review on Procurement Strategy for Supported Living Learning Disability Schemes was debated. This presents an opportunity for tendering which should result in lower bids more efficient use of Council resource and tenders that are more attractive to providers.

The Committee were presented with an update on Direct Care

**Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe**  
**Chairman, Care Services PDS Committee**

## **Education PDS Committee**

### **27<sup>th</sup> January 2015**

#### **1. Portfolio Holder update**

1.1 The rising demand for primary-level pupil places means that a significant increase in secondary provision, equal to four new schools, will be required across the Borough in future years. A second planning application for Harris Primary Academy Beckenham was considered at Plans Sub-Committee No.4 on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2015, and had been deferred. The initial planning application for Harris Primary Academy Beckenham was the subject of an appeal and would be considered by the Planning Inspector in February 2015. (*\*The appeal has been allowed*).

1.2 The Portfolio Holder for Education reported that he would be meeting the Secretary of State for Education to discuss the potential for more flexible use of the Dedicated Schools Grant in certain areas such as funding for early years provision and Education Psychology.

1.3 A significant issue has been identified with the Adult Education service which is currently showing a predicted overspend of £264k for 2014/15 as a result in reduced

grant levels from the Skills Funding Agency and, despite work taken to reduce this, was unlikely to drop below an overspend of £220k. Because of the overspend a report proposing one of two options to bring the budget back on target had been tabled. Option One proposed a radical restructure and reduction of the Adult Education service under which the Local Authority would cease delivery of all provision funded under the Adult Skills grant at the end of the 2014/15 academic year and Option Two proposed the withdrawal of the Local Authority from all involvement in the delivery of adult education, with the Skills Funding Agency responsible for reallocating grants to an alternate provider under both options.

With the agreement of the Committee, I and Vice Chairman had withdrawn the report as Members were concerned at the lack of consultation with the Bromley Adult Education College Governing Body and staff and students on the proposals. We were also concerned about major changes to the Adult Education service whilst the market testing process is taking place and there were also concerns about the future of provision in Orpington and the northern part of the Borough.

The process under the European rules for 'market testing' a service was outlined by officers. During the first stage, providers have been invited to submit *Expressions of Interest* and a pre-qualification questionnaire, which is a confidential process for reasons of commercial sensitivity and to avoid collaboration between providers. The evaluation against the criteria will be completed early in February. Those providers which met the set criteria will progress to the second stage of the market testing process where they will be invited to participate in a competitive dialogue process to develop bids which is expected to be completed in autumn 2015. It was established that in order for this second stage to take place there had to be three providers. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that it was possible for Bromley Adult Education service staff to submit their own proposals to deliver services but the Assistant Director: Education advised Members that they had not done so.

## **2. Draft Portfolio Plan**

The Plan which includes the Council's 17 education commitments was supported.

## **3. Education Budget 2015-16**

The budget, which had been scrutinised by the Education Budget Sub-Committee, recommended approximately £1.1m savings in; essential car users' allowances, the redesign or reorganisation the Youth Service and Schools and Early Years Commissioning and Quality Assurance Service, the reorganisation of contracts related to some services, and a reduction of 10% in the budget of Children and Family Centres.

## **4. School Performance**

Since October 2014, there have been Ofsted Inspections of Blenheim Primary School, The Glebe School and Riverside School. Blenheim Primary has been rated as 'Good' and The Glebe School has been rated as 'Outstanding'. The result of the Ofsted Inspection of Riverside School has not yet been published.

## **5. Primary and Secondary School Development Plan**

For the 2014/15 academic year, applicants for reception class places exceed previous forecasts and it has been necessary to supplement the agreed changes by 225 places to ensure that every on-time applicant received a valid offer. The total number of places originally available for 2014/15 had been 4023. This has subsequently increased to 4204 places by the addition of eight bulge classes, with 76% of on-time applicants securing their first preference of school in Bromley, which is unchanged from the previous year.

Increased demand for primary places is expected to continue in the long term, with the Greater London Authority forecast projecting a rise of the total number of places in the Borough to 4041 by 2018, and remaining at that level to 2031. This is due to a higher level of birth rate than expected, as well as migration to the Borough and increased occupancy levels of existing homes. In response to this, it was recommended that a margin of 5% be agreed above the Greater London Authority projection for primary place planning to provide for local variations in need and to meet parental preferences. To support the expected increase in demand for pupil places, the overall strategy is to meet forecast growth through a combination of existing surplus capacity, permanent expansion of existing provision, new schools and bulge classes. Work is also being undertaken around secondary place planning to ensure that there are sufficient secondary places across the Borough as the increasing number of pupils at Bromley primary schools reaches 11.

Legal advice to clarify the position with regard to conditions being placed on the number of classes or pupils at a school for any future school planning applications has been requested.

## **6. Basic Need Programme**

The Committee supported a recommendation for the allocation of money under the Basic Need Programme to help schools with increases in pupil numbers.

## **7. SEN Transport**

The committee supported a recommendation that a trial scheme whereby pupils at two SEN schools be picked up from a street 'muster' point rather than from their home address. Apart from the financial saving it would give suitable older SEN pupils the chance to prepare for adult life by being more independent.

## **8. Beacon House**

The committee received an update on the feasibility work undertaken at Beacon House to identify the range of works required to deliver the proposed Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 alternative provision, and outlining the timetable for refurbishment. It was reported that the Schools' Forum has agreed, subject to the approval of the

DfE, that a proportion of unspent Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) should be used for the purchase and refurbishment of Beacon House.

## **9. Children Missing Education**

The Committee had commissioned a report on children who have gone 'missing' from the education system as it felt that this was a serious safeguarding matter.

Children missing education is defined as all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise, and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time. When undertaking inspection of local authorities, Ofsted has broadened this definition to include those young people who are attending alternative provision, been permanently excluded, in receipt of home tuition due to medical needs, receiving elective home education or are looked after by the Local Authority. In Bromley there are currently 74 children and young people accessing alternative provision, 40 permanently excluded, 59 receiving home tuition, 111 receiving elective home education, and 197 looked after children.

Families and children who cannot be traced are placed on a national database which is used by other local authorities to confirm if children reported missing have been identified within their authority.

Anonymised details of all pupils who have 'disappeared' and the steps taken to ascertain their whereabouts was given in the report. An updated report giving details of those who are reported as having left the country is to be included in the evidence to the joint Education and Care Services PDS 'Select Committee' hearing on Child Safeguarding on February 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP**  
**Chairman Education PDS Committee**

**Care Services PDS Committee**  
**29<sup>th</sup> January 2015**  
**(Special joint meeting with Health & Wellbeing Board)**

The Community Services Integration report was debated by both bodies. Three options were debated before being presented to the Executive to explore the various options with the borough's existing community health service provider, Bromley Health Care and their commissioners Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group.

**Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe**  
**Chairman, Care Services PDS Committee**