



THE LONDON BOROUGH

Policy Development & Scrutiny Annual Report 2014/15

For submission to Full Council on 29th June 2015

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1. Foreword

1. On behalf of all my colleagues who are engaged in Policy Development and Scrutiny Committees in the London Borough of Bromley, I have pleasure in presenting our Annual Report for 2014/2015, which summarises the work that has been carried out by the Committees during the Council year.
2. The continuing austerity programme of the Government is reducing funding support for local councils and the ongoing cost pressures faced by Bromley Council have opened a significant funding gap of ~£60 million, before the savings included in the 2015/16 Budget, which has to be closed by 2018/19. The Council's funding situation cannot be expected to improve in the short to medium term, rather the opposite. The Institute for Fiscal Studies advises that the worst of UK spending cuts is still to come (with 60% of cuts still to be made and public spending, as a percentage of GDP, set to fall to its lowest level by the end of the decade). Notwithstanding the general recovery in economic activity and the UK economy growing at its fastest rate since 2007, austerity will continue till 2020, whatever the outcome of the General Election.
3. Against this tough fiscal background it is pleasing to note that for 2015/16 cost savings have been achieved, which have allowed the Council to formulate a broadly neutral budget, without significantly impairing the delivery of frontline services. However, in light of the ongoing severe financial squeeze, and the looming budget deficit, the Council has decided to increase Council Tax this year by a Bromley element of 1.99%, which reduces to a net increase of 1.23% including the Mayoral precept.
4. The Council is at the threshold of significant change, both in organizational terms and in its ability to continue to provide services expected by residents. The era of streamlining, re-organizing and cost cutting, which has enabled the Council to save some £60million since 2010 whilst continuing to provide services "as usual", is coming to an end. The Council has over 1300 statutory obligations to discharge, which have been increased by new burdens costing several millions of pounds per annum, which have to take precedence over providing discretionary support to other causes. It will not be possible to close the funding gap of ~£60 million without taking some difficult decisions in the next 4 years about reducing the provision of certain services. Because of its prudent financial management, Bromley Council is able to deal with these challenges but needs to ensure that early decisions are taken and adequate reserves retained to maintain sustainable finances in this increasingly difficult financial landscape.
5. The challenge for Bromley Council is to make the wider public fully aware of the Council's difficult position of having to manage on-going service pressures whilst receiving less Government support year on year. On the one hand we will need to continue to lobby the Government for a fairer grant settlement, being effectively penalized for having run an efficient Council, whilst on the other hand we will need to manage the Public's expectations and persuading it to reduce demand, in line with the Council's shrinking ability to fund the provision of essential services. The time has come for people to re-discover the virtues of self-reliance and personal responsibility.
6. In addition to the financial challenges ahead and the need to become a different organisation with fewer resources, the Council should grasp opportunities for wider integration across public services including health and local government. The Council will need to implement universal credit as part of the changes around welfare reform and identify new investment opportunities to help protect key services. Scrutiny will

remain key to ensure that there is adequate control and stability in an unprecedented period of change.

7. The PDS Committees will have an increasingly difficult task over the coming years to formulate acceptable solutions for the inevitable reduction in service provision, which has to come, whilst endeavouring to deliver quality services to the residents of Bromley.
8. Finally, I would like to thank all Committee Chairmen, members, and the Council's officers for their diligence and hard work during last year in finding practical solutions, which have ensured that Bromley Council could formulate a neutral budget and is able to continue to provide essential services next year, which are important to our community.

Cllr. Eric Bosshard
Chairman, Executive and Resources PDS Committee

2. Policy Development and Scrutiny Chairmen 2014/15



Cllr Eric Bosshard
Executive & Resources



Cllr Pauline Tunnicliffe
Care Services



Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP
Education



Cllr William Huntington-Thresher
Environment



Cllr Kate Lymer
Public Protection and Safety



Cllr Ian Payne
Renewal & Recreation

3. Policy Development and Scrutiny in Bromley

1. Introduction

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 and successive legislation. The Executive and Resources PDS Committee has an overarching, 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).

The PDS Committees mirror the Council's executive portfolios:

- Executive and Resources
(covering both the Resources Portfolio and the Executive)
- Care Services
- Education
- Environment
- Public Protection and Safety
- Renewal and Recreation

In addition to these Committees there are two PDS Sub-Committees:

- Education Budget Sub-Committee
- Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Although they have no decision-making powers, PDS Committees and Sub-Committees have key roles in contributing to policy development and scrutinising the decisions of the Executive and individual Portfolio Holders.

2. Policy Reviews

PDS Committees advise Portfolio Holders, the Executive and full Council on policies, budgets 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.

3. One-Off Reviews

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.

4. Performance and Budget Monitoring

PDS Committees monitor the performance of services, functions and contracts 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.

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.

5. Call-in

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 re-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.

At the time of writing, no call-ins have been made during 2014/15. This continued low level of call-in reflects an emphasis given to pre-decision scrutiny leading to better and more robust decisions which are less likely to be challenged.

4. Report from Executive & Resources PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Eric Bosshard
Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Will Harmer (to January 2015)

1. Introduction

In 2014/15 the Committee held 8 scheduled meetings and additional work group meetings. The regular meetings included the scrutiny of items to be decided at the Executive's meetings, in addition to matters reported to the Committee. As in previous years, one policy development meeting was dedicated to a Financial Seminar by the Chief Financial Officer to keep members informed of the general financial situation affecting the Council. Another meeting was held at which the Chief Financial Officer presented the Council pension scheme.

2. Scrutiny of the Executive and the Resources Portfolio Holder

The Committee's principal role is to scrutinize the decisions of the Executive and to hold the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive Officer and the Resources Portfolio Holder to account. This Committee has discharged its obligations diligently and competently and the workload of several meetings has been heavy.

During the year the Leader of the Council, the Resources Portfolio Holder and the Chief Executive reported twice on their activities and answered questions. I would like to thank the incumbents for their valuable contributions.

The Leader of the Council, the Resources Portfolio Holder and other Portfolio Holders have attended our meetings and officers have been in attendance to answer questions on matters in their areas of responsibility. I would like to thank them all for their assistance and diligence.

All PDS Committees have reported to this Committee on a regular basis on their activities and I would like to thank the Chairmen for their contributions.

3. Review of Council Activities

The Committee has been very conscious of the need to reduce costs and has diligently scrutinized budget and capital programme reports and measures to bring cost overruns under control.

The Committee has monitored, the provision of insurance services, the performance of the revenue, housing and council tax benefit services managed by Liberata, the contracts register, the disposal of various surplus assets, care services contracts and gateway reviews and the administration of public health contracts, service delivery and health & safety at Bromley schools and the operation of section 106 agreements.

It reviewed the provision of environmental and building services, the future of Anerley Town Hall, the Museum at Orpington Priory, the Glades Shopping Centre upgrade and the Churchill Theatre management contract.

The Committee scrutinized the performance of the Council Tax support scheme, issues concerning homelessness, temporary accommodation, tenancy support services, welfare reform and developments in Public Health and Community Services. It received a report on

comparative unit costs, updates on various invest-to-save projects, a gateway report on housing IT systems and a progress report on the Winter Health project.

4. Policy Development and Working Groups

The Committee revised the Bromley Youth Employment programme, which had been set up in June 2012 but had been unable to deliver promised results and had been closed down in March 2014. A Task and Finish group was set up in June 2014, to be led by the Bromley Education Business Partnership and a Member Working Party, to revive the programme. It is pleasing to report that results to date are in line with expectations to end January 2015, that 23 young people have been placed into contracted employment and that notified vacancies exceed the target by 30%. The programme is on track to deliver the target 50 apprenticeships over 2 years.

A Finance Seminar was again held this year to update members and new members on the issues, which have an impact on the Council's finances and its ability to continue to fund essential activities and services. This seminar was presented by the Chief Financial Officer and was very successful.

A seminar on the Council's pension scheme was held in July in order to inform members about the issues and challenges faced by the scheme.

The Committee proposed to the Executive to ensure that tenderers for contracts should confirm that they paid UK corporation tax.

5. Outlook

The Government's austerity drive has continued unabated and has impacted on the Council's finances. The task to find the significant savings necessary to balance the Council's budget has again been the dominant challenge this year. It is pleasing to report that the Council has managed to stay pretty much within budget in 2014/2015 and has succeeded in formulating a broadly neutral budget for 2015/2016, without significantly impairing the delivery of frontline services.

However, closing the funding gap of ~£60 million by 2018-19, before the savings included in the 2015/16 budget, highlighted in last year's report, remains a big challenge. The streamlining and re-organization efforts over the past 4 years, which have enabled the Council to reduce costs by some £60 million, have begun to show diminishing returns. The Council has 1335 statutory obligations to discharge with reducing financial support from the Government, and has received additional burdens during the year costing several million pounds per annum. It will not be possible to close the remaining funding gap of £60 million without taking some difficult decisions in the next 4 years about reducing the provision of certain services.

In light of this severe financial squeeze, the Council has decided to increase Council Tax this year by a Bromley element of 1.99%, which becomes net an increase of 1.23% after including the Mayor's precept.

6. Conclusions

The Council is at the threshold of significant change, both in organizational terms and in its ability to continue to provide services expected by residents. The era of streamlining, re-organizing and cost cutting whilst continuing to provide services "as usual" is coming to an end and difficult decisions will now have to be taken about reducing certain service provision. Statutory obligations will have to take precedence over providing discretionary support.

The challenges for Bromley Council in the coming years are the need to make the wider public fully aware of the Council's difficult position of having to balance on-going service pressures whilst receiving less Government support year on year and to manage the Public's expectations and persuading it to reduce demand in line with the Council's shrinking financial support.

Councillor Eric Bosshard
Chairman, Executive & Resources PDS Committee

5. Report from Care Services PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Pauline Tunnicliffe
Vice-Chairman: Cllr. David Jefferys

1. Introduction

The PDS has met 5 times this year and the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee once with a further meeting due in April. We have also held joint meetings with The Health and Wellbeing Board and Education PDS Committee.

A review of Education, Care and Health Services (ECHS) partnership arrangements in 2012/2013 has ensured that the Co-opted membership of the committee represents as many groups as possible.

The Committee's principal role is to pre-scrutinise the decisions of the Executive and the Portfolio Holder. The Portfolio Holder, Director and Senior Officers have attended all meetings to answer questions in their areas of responsibility and I would like to thank them for their valuable contributions.

The Challenges for the Care Services PDS continue this year with particular pressures in Adult Social Care, Housing and Children's Social Care. We are further challenged by a Supreme Court decision last year regarding Deprivation of Liberty (DoLS) the cost of which remains unclear and other services whose costs were previously met by central government, now having to be paid for by the Council.

The implications of the Care Act and Welfare Reform also remain uncertain, making sound budget forecasts difficult. Officers continue to review contracts to ensure that they deliver in the most cost effective way to generate savings whilst protecting key services. However, one of the main objectives of the Committee going forward has to be ensuring that cost pressures are mitigated or alternative savings found for the first budget monitoring report in June, given the further savings the council has to make currently in the region of £50m.

2. Budget 2014/15

Care Services have continued to face significant budget pressures throughout the year. Actions have been taken which have resulted in the current overspend reducing to £932k (£2,897k full year effect.)

Older people's services are a particular challenge with 50 placements over budget at this time, despite a robust Panel process which Members have attended.

The current pressures faced in relation to homelessness and the use of temporary accommodation has been regularly reported to the committee. There are currently 3,074 priority households on the housing register and there are 350 new applications each month. Every effort is made to prevent homelessness and Bromley's current allocations scheme is being reviewed.

3. Development of the Portfolio Plan Priorities 2014/15

This is a key document allowing Members of the committee to contribute towards Policy Development and to ensure that both the Portfolio Holder and the Executive are aware of the committee's recommendations.

4. Key areas this year

- Corporate Parent Strategy
- Aspects of the Foster Care Service (It should be noted that the Vice- Chairman chaired any Agenda item with regard to fostering)
- Adoption Service
- Children in Care Pledge
- Supporting Looked After Children in Universities and Higher Education
- Day Nursery Provision
- Impact of Changes to Youth on Remand Framework
- Increase in Families presenting with No Recourse to Public Funds
- Impact of the Care Act
- Market Position Statement following the last Adult Stakeholder Conference
- Adult Social Gateway Report
- Substance Misuse Service
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)
- Community Support for People with Mental Ill Health
- Feedback from Adult Stakeholder Conference
- Disability Strategy
- Transport Gateway Review
- Adult Transport Policy
- Integrated Community Equipment Services
- Older People's Day Opportunity Services Investment
- Gateway Report on Specialist Advocacy and Advocacy Services for Adults
- Procurement strategy for Supported Living Learning Disability Schemes
- Homelessness Welfare Reform Drawdown from Central Contingency
- Temporary Accommodation Update
- Bromley Welfare Fund / Essential Household Goods Service
- Allocations Scheme Review (relates to housing)

5. Scrutiny of the following Annual reports and contribution to Policy Development with regard to Information Briefings

- Housing Services 2014/15 – Priority Update
- Independent Reviewing Officer
- Annual update on Youth Offending Team
- Bromley Safeguarding Adults
- Corporate Parenting
- Adult Social Care Local Account
- Education Outcomes for Looked After Children

6. Contracts and Contract Extensions

Increasingly contracts have been awarded on a short term basis, typically with a three month break clause. The committee have recently questioned this given the amount of Officer and Member time taken in preparing and reading reports, especially when a very good service is being provided. However, this is regarded as diligent given that the effect of The Care Act and Welfare Reform remain unclear.

The Committee considered the following contracts this year:

- Group based short breaks for disabled children and young people
- A Community Well-Being Service for Children and Young People
- Learning Disabilities Living Contract Award
- Provision of Day Opportunities for Adults with a Learning Disability
- Supported Living Learning Disability – Contract Arrangements for service for people with Learning Disabilities at 26 Devonshire Road
- Bromley Mencap Core Funding – Contract extension
- Respite at Home and Sitting Service – Contract extension
- Kent Association for the Blind – Overview of contract and commissioning intentions
- Special Educational Needs & Adults Transport Contract

7. Health Scrutiny Sub Committee

The Health Scrutiny Sub Committee's role is to review and scrutinise matters relating to the health service in the Borough.

In October representatives from King's College Hospital attended the meeting to provide the regular update to Members on the Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH). Issues addressed:

- Staffing- recruitment and retention
- Improving patient pathway
- Patient discharge from hospital
- 4 hour emergency wait
- Maternity Services
- Purpose built Clinical Decision Unit
- New improved cardiologist schedule
- Improving medical record management
- Improved stroke outcomes
- Referral to treatment

Although, major progress has been made to date and a considerable amount of effort and resource has been committed since King's acquired the site, significant challenges remain.

The Sub-Committee was updated on two projects supported by monies moved to LBB under Section 256 Agreement. The first was the undertaking of an evaluation of the NHS Health Check against the Pan London Standards. The second, to improve the Diabetes element of the NHS Health Checks by conducting diabetes prevention audit. A further update will be made to the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee were provided with an update on the Procurement of an Urgent Care Service at Beckenham Beacon following the discussions held at the April 2014 Health Scrutiny Sub Committee.

The Sub-Committee has one further meeting on 15th April 2015 when we will re-examine the concerns around King's and the PRUH and question the Acting Chief Executive of King's and the Regional Director of Monitor.

8. Care Services held a concurrent meeting with the Health and Wellbeing Board

The purpose of holding the two meetings was to provide members with an opportunity to explore the options available to progress integration of adult social care assessment and care management with community health services commissioned by Bromley CCG.

9. Care Services held a joint meeting with Education in February

The purpose of the meeting was to scrutinise the arrangements, organisational structures and procedures and processes of the Council and partner organisations with regard to child safeguarding to ensure there is clear cooperation, no necessary duplication and effective management and supervision of frontline staff.

Presentations were heard from:

- Chairman of Safeguarding Children's Board
- Executive Director of ECHS
- Bromley Police
- Bromley Children's Services

These were followed by an informative question & answer session, members welcomed the opportunity to have their questions discussed and answered.

10. Conclusions

Finally, I would like to thank all Members of the PDS for their commitment to Bromley Care Services, particularly my Vice-Chairman who has been extremely supportive. His knowledge of the Health Service has proved invaluable to the work of this Committee. I would also like to acknowledge the difficulties faced by some new Members of this committee in understanding very complex, reports and contracts. It has seemed on occasion an onerous task and I thank them for their perseverance, input and comments.

I would also like to personally thank Angela Buchanan for her expertise and contribution to Care Services this year, along with all supporting officers/NHS staff and visitors to the meetings held this year.

Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe
Chairman, Care Services PDS Committee

6. Report from Education PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Nicholas Bennett JP
Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Neil Reddin

1. Overall Objectives

During 2014/15, the overall objective of the Education PDS Committee remained, as in previous years;

Improving pupil, school and governance performance.

To this end the Committee considered, at each of its five meetings, a report on *Ofsted* inspections and where necessary the steps being taken by schools to respond to matters highlighted in the inspections. The Committee appointed an *Improving Schools Panel*, under Councillor Mary Cooke, to meet if the Assistant Director: Education felt a reference was required - to date, it had not been necessary to call a meeting.

In 2014 the overall percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development across all seven areas of learning at the Early Years Foundation Stage was 68% across all Bromley schools against a national average of 60%, with girls outperforming boys both locally and nationally. At the Early Years Foundation Stage, 51% of pupils in receipt of free school meals reached a good level of development, against 68% of pupils who did not receive free school meals, which was a gap of 19% against a national gap of 19% and an improvement of 5% on the previous year.

At Key Stage 1 and 2 attainment results were consistently above the national average at all levels.

At Key Stage 4, the percentage of pupils gaining 5+ A*-C grades including English and mathematics was above the national average, but had decreased 8% from the previous year against a national decrease of 4%. There had been a corresponding decrease in the percentage of pupils gaining 5+ A*-C grades including English and mathematics who were eligible for free school meals in Bromley which had decreased to 37%, which showed a gap of 31% compared to 28% for the previous year and 26% nationally.

At the request of Members, further information on the performance of Bromley Schools, including a breakdown of GCSE results by ethnic group and the gap in performance at Key Stage 1, will be provided to the next meeting of the Education PDS Committee in the new municipal year.

1.1 Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training

The Committee received a report providing an update on the provision of support for young people who were identified as not participating or, at risk of not participating in education, employment or training (NEET) and the strategies in place to increase the participation. All young people aged 16 and 17 years are required to participate in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they are 18 years.

The monthly adjusted NEET performance for Bromley for December 2014 was 4.5% of the cohort). This was very close to the average statistical neighbour performance of 4.1% for December 2014, and a significant improvement on the previous year where the monthly adjusted NEET performance for Bromley was 5.8%.

A number of strategies are in place to increase the participation of young people in education, employment and training in Bromley. An action plan has been developed for

2014/15 to deliver additional activities to reduce still further the number of young people whose participation status was 'not known' or who were not engaged in one of the three areas and to increase the number of young people participating in full-time learning or employment with training.

Members are concerned that the Local Authority has no powers to require young people to engage with activities to support them into education, employment and training.

1.2 School Governance

The Committee received a report providing an update on progress in implementing the recommendations of the *School Governance Working Group* which included proposals on recruitment, selection and training process for Local Authority Governors, the development of best practice and work to promote the benefits of Local Authority Governors to academy schools.

An interview panel had met twice, as a result of these recommendations, to interview potential LA governors.

2. Progress towards all schools becoming academies

Our second major objective was:

To encourage all Bromley schools to become academies.

The Committee had established a *Progress to Academy Status Member Panel* under the chairmanship of Councillor Keith Onslow, to meet if schools were identified as not making progress towards academy status. There are now only nineteen primary schools, the four special schools and one secondary school still under Local Authority control.

3. Extending provision and diversity of choice

The continued rise in pupil numbers required a meeting of the *School Places Working Group* under the Chairmanship of Councillor Judi Ellis. For the 2014/15 academic year, applicants for reception class places exceed previous forecasts and it was 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 was 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 was 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 was to meet forecast growth through a combination of existing surplus capacity, permanent expansion of existing provision, new schools and bulge classes. Work was 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.

Permanent sites for two free schools (Harris Beckenham and Harris Shortlands) had been approved in the current year. The relocation of La Fontaine free school, currently at the former Education Development Centre remains to be decided.

Progress on the establishment of a new Catholic Secondary School had been slow but it remains one of the Council's objectives to create a new school.

4. Commissioning of services

As noted in our previous annual report, as the Council moves to a position where it no longer has operational control of schools, it will still have 256 or so statutory responsibilities for education, which has led to an examination of the way the education department is organised.

The Committee supported proposals to market test a bundle of education services. These included:

- Strategic management functions;
- The residual functions of the Behaviour Service;
- The Special Educational Needs Service (including the Specialist Support & Disability Service);

5. Education Budget

The Committee's work had been greatly assisted by Councillor Neil Reddin's chairmanship of the *Education Budget Sub-committee* which has undertaken an in-depth examination of the savings required to meet the Council's balanced budget for 2015-6. The most controversial decision was the end of the grant to Bromley Youth Music Trust. This had been achieved. The reduced and final grant for the coming year will be from underspends in the Council budget with the expenditure no longer falling on the Education budget. Another area reviewed, in a short, one-off working group meeting under my chairmanship, was the future of the Children and Families Centres.

It was agreed to maintain the current four centres, as the cost of claw back from the Department for Education would outweigh any savings. The Children's Centres were, however, required to find savings of 10% in coming year and a further 10% the following year.

6. Adult Education

The Committee was presented with a report at its January 2015 meeting on the future provision of the Adult Education service. The service had a predicted overspend of £264k for 2014/15 as a result in reduced grant levels from the Skills Funding Agency, which led to the development of two options to bring the budget back on target. 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, the report was withdrawn as Members were concerned at the lack of consultation with the Bromley Adult Education College Governing Body and staff and students on the proposals. The Committee was also concerned about major changes to the Adult Education service whilst the market testing process was taking place, as well as the future delivery of adult education provision in Orpington and the

northern part of the Borough. The market testing process had now been completed and a further report would be considered at the June meeting. No change will not be an option.

7. SEN Transport

The Committee supported a recommendation that a trial scheme whereby pupils at two Special schools be picked up from a street 'muster' point rather from their home address. Apart from the financial saving, it was expected that such a scheme would give suitable older pupils the opportunity to prepare for adult life by becoming more independent.

8. Looked After Children, Truancy and Missing Children and Home Education.

The Committee commissioned reports on *Looked After Children, Truancy and Missing Children and Home Education*.

8.1 Looked After Children

The Committee considered a report outlining the education outcomes for Bromley children in care for the 2013/14 academic year. The number of Bromley children in care had fluctuated over the year, showing a steady increase across all age ranges, but most significantly affecting the Bromley Virtual School across Early Years and Key Stage 1. The inclusion of the Year 12 and Year 13 cohorts with over 60 additional young people had brought the total number of pupils in the Bromley Virtual School to over 230. The academic progress of all Bromley children in care was closely monitored by the Local Authority; however the reporting cohort for education outcomes for Bromley children in care was limited to those who had been looked after continuously for a period of one year between 1st April 2013 and 31st March 2014.

8.2 Truancy and Missing Children

The Committee considered a report outlining the legal framework and the Local Authority's processes regarding truancy and children missing education. Truancy figures for Bromley compared favourably to a number of our statistical neighbours and surrounding boroughs. Illness continued to be the main reason for absence and Bromley Education Welfare Service had requested schools be more challenging when looking at illness.

Children missing education was defined as all children of compulsory school age who were not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise, and who had 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 were 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. A report on Home Education would be considered at our March 2015 meeting.

Families and children who could not be traced were placed on a national database which was used by other local authorities to confirm if children reported missing had been identified within their authority.

There had recently been an increase in both secondary and primary schools requesting the Local Authority to issue Education Fixed Penalty Notices in response to unauthorised leave, which were charged at £60 per parent per pupil missing education.

Anonymised details of all pupils who had 'disappeared' and the steps taken to ascertain their whereabouts was given in the report. An updated report giving anonymised details of those who were reported as having left the country was included in the evidence to the joint Care Services and Education PDS Committee meeting on child safeguarding on 25th February 2015.

8.3 Elective Home Education

It is compulsory for every child of school age to receive a full time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs they might have. Over the past three years, there had been a consistent nationwide increase in the number of families choosing elective home education for all or part of their child's education. In the 2013/14 academic year, 171 pupils had been identified as receiving elective home education in Bromley. This was for a range of reasons including an elective home education ethos, lack of progress at existing provision, bullying or health issues. Having considered the issue the committee expressed its concern at the lack of information around elective home education and recommended that further research be undertaken to ensure the safeguarding of children and that elective home education is effective and in conformity with the Local Authority's duty as the safeguarding authority. It has commissioned a further report in the 2015/16 municipal year.

9. Joint meeting with Care Services PDS on Child Safeguarding

A joint meeting of the Care Services and Education PDS Committees exploring child safeguarding was held on 25th February 2015, following a similar meeting held on May 7th 2013.

Evidence was heard from the Independent Chairman of the Bromley Safeguarding Children Board, the Metropolitan Police, the Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group and representatives of the Education, Care and Health Services Department. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Carr, as Lead Member on Child Safeguarding, joined the representatives for a Panel question session. Amongst the issues explored was the grooming of young people for terrorism both at home and aboard. The Committee was able to give a qualified assurance to the Chief Executive on Safeguarding, the qualification was that the Committee was concerned that some partners did not send a representative to every meeting of the Bromley Safeguarding Children Board and that these representatives did not always have sufficient seniority.

10. Thanks

This brings to an end the third report of the Committee. I should like to pay tribute to all the members of the Committee for their dedication and harmonious co-operation. I also thank Councillor Neil Reddin for his support as Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Education Budget Sub-Committee, and my colleagues who agreed to chair various panels and working groups. The Committee also places on record, the work of Jane Bailey, Assistant Director: Education, Terry Parkin, Executive Director of Education, Care and Health Services and all his staff. Finally none of our work would have been possible without Kerry Nicholls our ever cheerful and efficient committee clerk.

Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP
Chairman Education PDS Committee

7. Report from Environment PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. William Huntington-Thresher
Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Lydia Buttinger

1. Introduction

The services provided within the Environment Portfolio affect every resident of Bromley. Clean streets, traffic flow, road safety, the condition of highways and pavements, parking facilities, parks provision, and waste services are all considered important by residents.

1.1 Scrutiny of the Portfolio Holder and Executive

The Committee seeks to fulfil this role through:

- Scrutiny of the draft Environment Portfolio Plan, followed by a mid-year review of progress.
- Regular monitoring of service performance.
- Pre-decision scrutiny of relevant Portfolio Holder and Executive decisions.
- Budget monitoring and scrutiny of budget proposals.
- Policy Development

1.2 Development and Review of the Environment Portfolio Plan

The Committee considers the Portfolio Plan to be an important document, highlighting to residents the importance of environmental services and showing how value for money is delivered. The Committee contributes to the Plan as part of its policy development role, it also allows the committee to monitor the progress of the committee's and the working groups' recommendations.

The Committee combines scrutiny of the Portfolio Holder and the Portfolio Plan at the mid-year and end-of year review points, focusing on progress in implementing the Plan. Specific issues were discussed with the Environment Portfolio Holder.

1.3 Budget Monitoring

During the year the Committee identified a number of priority budget issues.

- Residents are recycling smaller quantities of paper than previously, reducing the Council's income. The cause is likely to be increased use of the internet for communication and media.
- After years of declining general household waste, residents are producing increased volumes of waste. The increased volumes result in increased disposal costs for the Council. The increased volumes could be linked to the improving economic conditions.

2. Major topics addressed by the Committee during the year

The PDS Committee devotes significant time to pre-decision scrutiny of major decisions.

2.1 On-Street Enforcement

The Committee has kept under review the effectiveness and viability of the pilot enforcement service serving fixed penalty notices (FPNs) for littering offences. It supported a budget neutral service, and a proposal to review the service to integrate it with the Parks Security Contract.

2.2 Friends Annual Report

The Committee was updated on work carried out by the Council in partnership with Friends Groups. The Committee recorded its thanks to Friends Groups for their contribution; and acknowledged the significant difference that their work makes to the borough. The Committee confirmed its support for friends groups and would recommend friends groups expanding both in the Environmental areas and in other areas of the Council's operations.

2.3. Street Enforcement

The Committee considered the financial implications of the non-statutory provision of disabled parking bays. An annual charge was proposed subject to consultation. The service was then expected to be budget neutral.

The Committee considered a review of white bar markings. The white bar markings are advisory and are only normally applied across dropped kerbs providing access to multiple properties. The department receives a considerable number of requests for white bars. The committee supported the introduction of an application and review process for white bars and associated charges.

2.4 Community Toilets

The Committee considered a proposal to extend the community toilet scheme to Penge, Beckenham, West Wickham and Bromley Town Centres. The Committee supported the proposal and encouraged more businesses to join the Open London scheme for their economic benefit in addition to providing more toilets available to public across the Borough.

2.5 Highway Maintenance

Recent severe and wet winters have resulted in increased damage to the borough's Highway Assets. The Executive had provided one-off funding to address some of this deterioration. TfL had also provided one-off funding to address winter damage subject to their approval. The committee reviewed the priority assessment for the borough's adopted roads and pavements to best target the available investment.

The Committee proposed that: the executive funding would be split 80:20 between planned and reactive/emergency maintenance; and that TFL funds should be directed at bus routes. The committee also reviewed the programme for Planned Highway Maintenance for 2015/16.

2.6 Street Lighting replacement Invest to Save scheme

Following detailed structural assessment of street lighting columns it found that less columns needed to be replaced than originally estimated. The reallocation of the invest to save funds to lantern replacement would allow an extra 2,475 lanterns to be replaced. This would be expected to result in a further £46K of energy savings as the most inefficient lanterns would be selected. The invest-to-save remains on track to repay the investment; the precise timing

will depend on energy prices. The total number of lanterns replaced with efficient LED units under the invest-to-save scheme would increase to 14,377. The committee supported the redirection of the invest-to-save scheme. Further power savings will be achieved when the strategy for street lighting brightness is developed. The Central Management System for the street lights means that the LED lights are managed remotely and the agreed strategy can be easily implemented.

3. Road Safety

3.1 Traffic Schemes

The Committee regularly reviews traffic schemes before implementation. Some schemes address local safety or parking issues; others contribute to the Council's priority of reducing traffic congestion in the borough. Review by the PDS Committee ensures that a consistent approach to these issues is taken across the borough.

3.2 LIP Submission

The Committee reviewed the LIP submission for 2015/16. The submission was the second year of the 3 year LIP delivery plan agreed with TFL in 2013. The expected income remained at roughly the same level as 14/15 and represented a reduction of almost 20% compared to historic levels.

4. Policy Development

4.1 Future DLR and Rail Links to Bromley:

The Committee received an update on the investment cases for DLR, Tram, Bakerloo and London Overground extensions into Bromley Borough.

The Committee expressed their views of the investment cases; their continued support for DLR into Bromley Town Centre; and their lack of support to the Bakerloo extension to Hayes. The committee considered that a possible London Overground extension to Bromley North was an interesting option, not least the fact that it could be delivered in 6 or 7 years. However neither the London Overground or the Bakerloo extension would provide the same economic benefit to Bromley that DLR offered.

4.2 Parking Working Group

The Committee reviewed current practice on the introduction of parking controls in residential areas and proposed the establishment of a policy to the Portfolio Holder. The policy covered: When and when not to introduce parking controls; Driveways; Flank boundary parking; Footway parking; and the effect of road width on those parking policies.

The Committee considered the initial proposals and the issues for decision for the definition of the next parking services contract. The Committee set-up a Working Group to examine the issues in more detail and consider the implications of announcements on parking and PCNs from the DCLG. The implications are very likely to affect the income and therefore the economic viability of aspects of parking enforcement, with the consequent impact on resident amenity, business supply and congestion that reduced enforcement implies..

Working Group membership: Councillors William Huntington-Thresher; Melanie Stevens; Angela Page; & Catherine Rideout

The Working Group met to examine, review and propose recommendations to the Portfolio Holder on the definition of the next parking services contract.

The Working Group reviewed the continuing announcements from DCLG on parking & PCNs. It is awaiting the decision of Parliament on the DCLG proposals.

The Working Group met to review options and propose recommendations to Portfolio Holder for increases in off-street parking fees. On street parking fees are set with regard to the Council's Parking Policy. The Working Group considered the charges in adjacent (competitor) boroughs, the charges in non-council car parks, the economic environment and parking space provision to support the local economy in arriving at its decision.

4.3 Waste Working Group

Membership: Councillors Lydia Buttinger; William Huntington-Thresher; Kevin Brooks; and Samaris Huntington-Thresher

The Working Group was instigated following the reduction in income from recycled paper. The reduction appeared consistent with National and International trends which has been linked to the increased use of Tablets.

The Working Group met to consider options and propose recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for Green Garden Waste Satellite Sites; waste collections; and options to continue to promote recycling and diversion from Landfill.

Kerbside collection of textiles for recycling continues to be investigated to find a viable economic method. Bring-banks were being successfully used and provided the Council with an income.

5. 2015/16 Budget and Budget Consultation

The budget pressures on the Council were a continuing issue for the PDS throughout the Council year. During the year the committee proposed a number of recommendations to reduce costs, increase income and modify service provision to cover costs.

- The Committee reviewed the waste service and recommended:
 - Changes to Black Box collections
 - Reduction in Green Garden Waste Satellite Sites opening hours
 - A future increase in Green Garden Waste Collection fees to cover increases in collection costs
- The committee recommended an extension of the Community Toilet Scheme thus completing its cross-borough rollout.
- The committee recommended an increase in parking fees.
- The committee recommended changes to Street and Littering Enforcement.
- The committee established a working group to consider and look to mitigate the potential impact of Government proposals to prevent camera enforcement of parking infringements.

Further service changes were included in the 2015/16 budget proposals. The Committee reviewed the proposals and provided comments to the executive. Scrutiny of the detailed implementation of future service changes were items on the PDS Committee's March agenda and will continue at subsequent meetings in the next financial year.

6. Partner Scrutiny

6.1 Metropolitan Police Road Traffic

As part of the Committee's partner scrutiny, the PDS had a presentation from Detective Inspector Osborne of the Met Police's Roads and Transport Policing Command followed by a scrutiny session. The session covered a range of road safety related issues. There is good coordination between the Council's Road Safety duty and the Police's role.

6.2 Street Cleaning

The Committee scrutinised the Council's street cleaning contractor in the March PDS meeting. The committee noted the innovations trialled and planned for the autumn leaf clearance and the results of the resident satisfaction survey. Street cleaning is a high profile service for residents.

6.3 Thanks

I would like to thank members of the committee for their diligence and commitment to the committee and its working groups in delivering policy development and scrutiny of Environmental Services in Bromley`. I would also like to acknowledge the enthusiastic support of the Portfolio Holder, officers, partners and contractors who have all helped the committee deliver its work programme over the past year.

Councillor William Huntington-Thresher
Chairman, Environment PDS Committee

8. Report from Public Protection and Safety PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Kate Lymer
Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Chris Pierce

1. Introduction

The Committee have met 5 times this municipal year. Alongside the elected members on the Committee we also have co-opted members representing the Safer Neighbourhood Board, Bromley Neighbourhood Watch, Bromley Federation of Residents Associations, Victim Support and two representatives from Bromley Youth Council.

2. Policy Development & Scrutiny

During the year the Committee reviewed various services and initiatives as well as decisions by the Executive and the Public Protection & Safety Portfolio Holder.

Key areas scrutinised by the Committee this year were:

- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014
- Targeted Neighbourhood Activity Project
- Approved Trader Scheme Partnership
- Portfolio Plan
- Quarterly Enforcement Activity
- Summer Diversionary Activities 2014
- Budget Monitoring
- Capital Programme Monitoring
- Draft Budget 2014/15
- Contracts Register
- Dog Kennelling Contract
- Dog Warden Services Contract

Updates were received on the following:

- A Police update was received at every meeting by either the Borough Commander or Deputy Borough Commander
- Bromley Youth Council Manifesto 2013/14, Campaign Update and 2014/15 Campaign Priorities
- Mentoring End of Year Report
- Annual submission to MOPAC on Bromley's performance against targets set
- Annual Update Report on Bromley Youth Offending Team
- Bromley Safeguarding Adults Annual Report
- Following each Safer Bromley Partnership Strategic Group Meeting
- 6 month review of Anti-Social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014

Presentations were given to the Committee by:

- South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (twice)

And for the benefit of the 5 newly elected Councillors on the Committee by:

- Head of Trading Standards & Community Safety
- Head of Environmental Protection & CCTV
- Head of Food Safety, Occupational Safety & Licensing

3. Budget Savings

There is a projected £37k underspend for the Portfolio for 2014/15 due to reduced employee costs, stray dogs kennelling and medical costs less than expected, and minor projected variations on supplies and services.

For the year 2015/16 savings of £392k have been identified and scrutinised by the Committee. These include a review of staffing to reduce services to the statutory baseline, which included the deletion of 10 posts within Trading Standards, Food Safety, Licensing, Public Health & Nuisance, Community Safety and Housing, plus the halving of the Portfolio Holder grant budget.

The total net budget for 2015/16 is estimated at £2,312,380.

4. Capital Programme and Section 106 Expenditure on CCTV

The Committee and Executive approved a Capital Scheme to refurbish the CCTV room that requires updating totalling £340k. Nine bids were received to undertake the work and a tenderer has been chosen. Within a year of completion a post-completion report will be submitted to the Committee.

Additionally a Section 106 agreement secured the additional funds of £5k for use in the improvement of the Orpington Town Centre CCTV system.

5. Portfolio Holder Initiative Fund Grants

The Committee approved £91,946 of Community Safety expenditure, plus a bid totalling £8,234 for further Height Barriers in Parks that has been submitted. These grants include the Summer Youth Activities, Junior Citizen Scheme, Coney Hall Skateboard Facility, Trading Standards covert camera equipment, the Purple Flag Scheme promoting responsible alcohol licensing, Barriers for Mottingham Recreation Ground, and Height Barriers in various Parks across the borough.

6. Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

This Act received Royal Assent in March 2014, and came into force in October 2014. The Committee evaluated a report on the Act and deduced that the Act would mean an increase in work for Officers.

The Act is in two parts: Putting Victims First, and More Effective Powers. The Act introduces two new measures that are designed to give victims and communities a say in the way anti-social behaviour is dealt with. These are the 'Community Trigger' which provides a gateway for victims to demand action, starting with a review of their case if the local threshold is met, and the 'Community Remedy' which gives victims a say in the out-of-court punishment of perpetrators for low level crime and anti-social behaviour.

The act places a statutory duty to Police, MOPAC and local authorities with regards to the Community Trigger. Local Police must prepare a Community Remedy document for its area. To date no community trigger enquires in Bromley have met the threshold, and Community Remedy document is yet to be agreed with MOPAC.

7. Home Office Inspection

The Council was part of a HM Inspectorate of Constabulary Gang Peer Review that was undertaken before Christmas. A report with their findings and an action plan will be presented to the next PDS meeting once formulated by Bromley Police.

8. Targeted Neighbourhood Project

£115k of earmarked reserves have been agreed and allocated by the Committee to a plethora of schemes across the borough to tackle a variety of crime related concerns. These are within hotspot areas with long term issues that have a big impact on the area and represent a continual cost to the Council.

These include: funding a CCTV column to tackle fly tipping; working with shops and Affinity Sutton to improve recycling and bin storage areas; facilitating gating orders; cutting back overgrown land, removing waste from sites, levelling the land and providing fencing; targeted dog patrols issuing FPNs; and undertaking numerous proactive surveillance operations to gather evidence and tackle fly tipping in various locations.

These improvements aim to decrease anti-social behaviour, and reduce incidents of fly tipping, burglary, fires, litter, on-going clearance costs, threats to ground operatives and criminal damage.

9. Approved Trader Scheme Partnership

The Committee gave their approval for the Trading Standards and Community Safety teams to engage with a national approved trader scheme to replace the existing Safer Bromley Trade Register that has been operating in the borough since 2009.

Following a reduction of resources within the Community Safety Team the Trade Register was reviewed and a decision was made that the scheme was not being administered to its full potential. The Council was also charged £1,250 per annum for the maintenance of the website. Checkatrade is a free service to the Council and consumers and they will provide an enhanced level of protection for consumers and a network of reliable traders in the borough. The Committee also agreed that Checkatrade could use the Bromley logo in their advertising material.

10. Police

The Borough Commander Chris Hafford who has now been in post a year, or Deputy Commander Parm Sandu presented a Police Update at each PDS meeting.

The main focus of the Met is meeting the MOPAC 7 Crime targets that have a high impact on victims. They are burglary, criminal damage, robbery, theft from a motor vehicle, theft from a person, theft of a motor vehicle and violence with injury. Crime across the borough is going down with the exception of violence with injury and criminal damage which are Met wide issues.

Operation Equinox was launched before Christmas specifically to deal with violent assaults. This is focused primarily in Beckenham Town Centre which has the busiest nightlife in the borough. Every Friday and Saturday night extra Police Officers are deployed in Beckenham Town Centre - meeting and greeting people arriving at the beginning of the evening to make their presence known, work with the Council to undertake licensing visits, and being visible at 2/3am at turfing out time to discourage troublesome behaviour.

Before Christmas the Borough Commander also reconstituted the Bromley Town Centre

High Street Team, due to an expected increase over the Christmas period in dipping and violence. Putting these extra Officers in had helped keep these crimes down.

The Borough Commander has also reconstituted the High Street Team in Orpington as well as a team dedicated to Bethlem Royal Hospital.

Police numbers in the borough are currently above the target of 446 at 484. This has allowed Bromley to give Officers additional training as well as insert extra officers into the CID team to tackle the increase in violent crime. It has also enabled a new 'Fugitive Team' to be set up to seek wanted people and bring them to justice.

11. Member Visits

Visits have been made by Committee members and other Councillors to the CCTV suite in the Civic Centre, River House Medium Secure Unit at Bethlem Royal Hospital, MPS Dog Training Establishment in Keston, and the Emergency Planning Centre in Merton. A visit to the new Fire Station in Orpington is being planned.

12. Thank you

Lastly I would like to thank all members of the Committee for their hard work and excellent input this municipal year to our meetings, which has included making many very difficult and painful decisions.

Councillor Kate Lymer
Chairman, Public Protection and Safety PDS Committee

9. Report from Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee

Chairman: Councillor Ian F Payne
Vice-Chairman: Councillor Peter Dean

1. Introduction

The Committee will have met 5 times this municipal 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. Alongside the elected Members on the PDS Committee we were also pleased to welcome a co-opted member from the Bromley Youth Council, Precious Adewunmi.

The committee have monitored performance against the Renewal and Recreation Department's Building a Better Bromley priorities, namely

- Vibrant, thriving town centres
- Protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment
- Enhanced opportunities for leisure, recreation and the arts, and employment and skills

Areas that the PDS Scrutiny Committee have focused on are:

2. A new approach for Bromley Museum

As part of the £60 million savings required to be made within the next four years, the Executive Committee at its meeting on 14 January 2015, had identified the museum service as a budget cut for 2015/16. In this respect, R&R PDS Members considered a new approach to providing an improved quality heritage offer for residents, without an ongoing revenue requirement. Accommodating the Museum at Central Library which was situated in a good central location and provided disabled access, would attract more footfall to Bromley town centre.

After rationalisation, it was important to ensure that as many items as possible were accessible to view. One possible solution was to display some artefacts and paintings in houses and buildings open to the public, as well as in schools and other libraries.

The Chairman confirmed that the Lubbock Gallery would display more artefacts from the Lubbock collection than are currently on display in the Avebury Gallery at the Priory.

Members were informed that some of the 20,000 objects and paintings should not have been acquired as they were irrelevant to the local history of the Borough and in this respect, a rationalisation process would be undertaken.

A working group comprising the Council and volunteers from local history organisations is being formalised, to liaise on setting up mini displays for the new Museum.

The proposals considered by Members were the start of a brand new and exciting chapter for Bromley Museum.

3. The Future of Anerley Town Hall

Members considered a report which outlined the current position at Anerley Town Hall and identified options for its future. The business aspect at the centre was not currently vibrant with occupancy in late November 2014 being recorded at 64%. Two rooms were unrentable due to underpinning issues and there were problems in resolving the subsidence issues. No wi-fi was installed (a must for modern-day business). There had been no rent increase since 2008. If funding could be obtained, there was huge potential to build a bigger and better business centre. With so many young people in the Borough, it made sense for the Council to consider this matter further.

In considering the options put forward, it was noted that if a 40 year lease was granted it would be the responsibility of the Crystal Palace Park Trust to market and develop the Centre and would give it time and opportunity to expand and grow. This was the preferred option chosen.

4. Library Service Strategy

A library review had resulted in the closure of the Mobile Library and the merger of Penge and Anerley Libraries. Bromley Libraries opening hours were also reduced from 605 to 527.5 per week.

Due to the continued financial constraints faced by the Council, it was necessary for consideration to be given to the most cost-effective and efficient way of managing the borough's library service going forward. The report considered by Members outlined the strategy for taking the Library Service forward post completion of the baseline opening hours work stream. It also set out the detail behind the strategy which was underpinned by the development of community managed libraries and the exposure of the core library offer to the market for market testing.

5. Review of Bromley Town Centre Markets

As requested by PDS Members in September 2014, a review of the current operation of the Bromley town centre market had been undertaken and proposals concerning its future development were submitted for consideration.

The report also requested the drawdown of some initial seed funding to assist with development, planning and design costs.

It was resolved that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to authorise the drawdown of funds from a Section 106 Agreement earmarked for Town Centre improvements to assist with development, planning and design costs in support of proposed changes.

6. Town Centre Developing and Planning

Site A: Bromley North

Ongoing working with the Council to prepare, publish, consult upon and promote a new policy for the OSA site. It is proposed that this be dealt with in the forthcoming Local Plan, as it is at an appropriate stage of development. Work had now been completed on the planned public realm improvements to Bromley North Village.

Site B: Tweedy Rd

The site remains being used as a (temporary) compound for storing materials and plant relating to Bromley North Village for a two year period.

Site C: Town Hall

Site allocated for a development comprising Hotel. Planning has now been submitted with the Council based on their proposal to convert the Town Hall to a hotel, conference centre and associated restaurants. They aim to open the hotel and conference centre in the Spring of 2016.

Site G: West of High Street

Major site in the AAP, officers are continuing to work with Developments on agreeing a viable scheme proposal and partnering arrangements that will deliver the Council's objectives.

Site K: Westmoreland Road car park

The proposal that Cathedral Group, as the developer, are working with includes a multi-screen cinema, 200 residential units, 130 bedroom hotel, restaurants and cafes, plus associated parking and public realm enhancements. Work is progressing in accordance with the programme plan and is due for completion by Autumn 2015.

Site L: Former DHSS

Telereal Trillium, the owners of the Crown Buildings have sold the site to the Education Funding Agency.

The EFA are proposing to use the site to house a 3 form entry bi-lingual (French) primary school commencing in September 2014 as part of the Harris Academy Group.

7. Economic Development

With the Government financial incentives impacting on the way Local Government will be funded in the future. It has introduced reforms to the collection and spending of business rates, with a focus on local retention (30%) to incentivise local authorities to financially bolster their economy and business rates base. In response to this and wider Planning issues the council has aimed both at creating employment and economic growth in three growth areas are Bromley Town Centre, Biggin Hill and the Cray Business Corridor. The Homes Bonus for 2014/15 would total £1.74m for the Borough and would be used to fund projects for Penge Town Centre/Crystal Palace, place making at the Walnuts Centre and Orpington business enabling and support, Biggin Hill Aviation Technology and Enterprise Centre, and Lagoon Road Industrial Estate redevelopment.

8. Orpington Town Centre

The owners of the Walnuts are on track to implement a comprehensive improvement programme for the Walnuts Shopping Centre which will see Crown Buildings redeveloped for additional retail floorspace and a cinema. At the ballot of Business Rate payers to establish a Business Improvement District (BID) for Orpington town centre had been successful.

9. The Priory

After a number of development work undertaken, which included a number of surveys and investigations (including a full condition survey) revealed that there were a number of backlog maintenance issues affecting the total project cost of the work. As a result, project work has been delayed to enable a full range of options for the future of the Priory site to be

considered and the business case for each of these to be reviewed so that a fully informed decision may be given full and proper consideration.

10. Beckenham

Officers have been working on implementation of short term improvements to Beckenham Town Centre following the recommendations agreed by the Beckenham & West Wickham PDS Working Group. Funding has been successful to now commence a plan of improvements.

An update on the proposed Beckenham Town Centre Conservation Area Summary was considered. The Group heard that a consultation had been undertaken, regarding proposals for a conservation area in Beckenham. The response to this was generally positive. A report will go for decision to the Council's Development Control in early 2015.

11. Business Improvement District

A Business Improvement District (BID) is now underway within Bromley Town Centre and looking to hold a vote in the Autumn of 2015.

Finally I wish to thank all the members of the Committee for an excellent year, a lot of work has been carried out, including lot of conversation and passion within this area of the Council. Also I would like to thank all the officers in the R&R Department, for not just their tireless work at the committee meetings, but the ongoing day to day work being carried out at a time of great pressure and economic challenge - you are all to be congratulated.

Councillor Ian Payne
Chairman, Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee