



THE LONDON BOROUGH

# **Policy Development & Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16**

**For submission to Full Council on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

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# 1. Foreword

- 1.1 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 2015/2016, which summarises the work that has been carried out by the Committees during the Council year.
- 1.2. The continuing Government reductions in funding support for local councils and the ongoing cost pressures faced by Bromley Council leave a funding gap of ~£27 million, before the savings included in the 2016/17 Budget, which has to be closed by 2019/20. The total savings needed by 2019/20 equates to ~£50 million. Thanks to the lobbying of Cllrs Carr and Arthur as well as Mr Turner, an additional £4 Million of one off transitional funding has been secured in recognition of the pressures faced by Councils such as Bromley. The Government will also allow Bromley to retain the business rates it collects (subject to equalisation) to fund council services - the aim is for this to be in place by 2018/19. This will offer an opportunity as well as challenges as new business rates can be retained by Bromley Council. Over the next few years this will mean that the Growth fund will be very important to drive additional revenue.
- 1.3. Against this tough fiscal background 2016/17, cost savings have been achieved which have allowed the Council to formulate a balanced budget, without significantly impairing the delivery of frontline services. However, in light of the looming budget gap, the Council has increased Council Tax this year by a Bromley element of 3.99%, including the 2% increase to fund social care. The net increase is 1.67% including the Mayoral precept.
- 1.4. The Council is undergoing significant change, both in organizational terms and in its ability to continue to provide services expected by residents. The Council has over 1,300 statutory obligations to discharge, which cost several millions of pounds per annum; these take priority over discretionary spending. The funding gap cannot be closed without taking some difficult decisions and halting some services altogether. Due to 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 are retained and where appropriate invested to maintain sustainable finances.
- 1.5. 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 identify new investment opportunities to help protect key services. Scrutiny will remain key to ensure that there is adequate control and stability.
- 1.6. The PDS Committees will have an increasingly important role over the coming years to formulate acceptable solutions for the reduction in service provision, which has to come, whilst continuing to deliver quality services to the residents of Bromley.
- 1.7. 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 balanced budget and is able to continue to provide essential services next year, which are important to our residents.

**Cllr. Simon Fawthrop**  
**Chairman, Executive and Resources PDS Committee**

## 2. Policy Development and Scrutiny Chairmen 2015/16



Cllr Simon Fawthrop  
Executive & Resources



Cllr Judi Ellis  
Care Services



Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP  
Education



Cllr William Huntington-Thresher  
Environment



Cllr Alexa Michael  
Public Protection and Safety



Cllr Ian F. Payne  
Renewal & Recreation

# 3. Policy Development and Scrutiny in Bromley

## Introduction

- 3.1 Six Policy Development and Scrutiny (PDS) Committees at Bromley discharge the overview and scrutiny functions conferred by sections 21 and 32 of the Local Government Act 2000 and successive legislation. The Executive and Resources PDS Committee has an over-arching, co-ordinating role on behalf of the other five PDS Committees and is required by the Council's Constitution to present Full Council with an Annual Report "on the Policy Development and Scrutiny functions and PDS budget, and amended working methods if appropriate" (Article 6, Section 6.03 (d) of the Constitution).
- 3.2 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
- 3.3 In addition to these Committees there are two PDS Sub-Committees:
- Education Budget Sub-Committee
  - Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee
- 3.4 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.

## Policy Reviews

- 3.5 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.

## One-Off Reviews

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

## **Performance and Budget Monitoring**

- 3.7 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.
- 3.8 PDS Committees are also involved in the budget setting process and provide considered comment and recommendations for the Executive to take account of when formulating the Council's annual budget. Similarly, PDS Committees also monitor in-year spend of budgets and raise concerns where there is any possibility of overspend or other issues affecting spending priorities.

### **Call-in**

- 3.9 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.
- 3.10 At the time of writing, only one call-in has been made during 2015/16. 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. Simon Fawthrop  
**Vice-Chairman:** Cllr. Stephen Wells

### Introduction

- 4.1 In 2015/16 the Committee held 9 scheduled meetings and 1 Call in. The regular meetings included the scrutiny of items to be decided at the Executive's meetings, in addition to matters reported to the Committee. The Committee also set up a Contracts Working Group, chaired by Cllr Wells, which has undertaken some very useful work in coordinating the end to end contract scrutiny process and analysing gaps in the processes.

### Scrutiny of the Executive and the Resources Portfolio Holder

- 4.2 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 responsibilities diligently and competently during the year. I would like to thank all the above for their valuable contributions. I would also like to thank the PDS Chairmen for their regular reports and contributions.

### Review of Council Activities

- 4.3 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 costs under control. The Committee has monitored, the provision of contract provision for insurance services, the performance of the revenue, housing and council tax benefit services managed by Liberata, the contracts register and the disposal of various surplus assets. The Committee scrutinized the performance of the Council Tax support scheme and issues concerning homelessness and temporary accommodation. Part of this was the Special Purchase Vehicle (Mears scheme) to invest in reducing homeless costs and bolster the pension scheme assets at the conclusion of the 40 year term. The Committee also scrutinised various invest-to-save projects, as well as details on the growth fund initiatives.

### Outlook

- 4.4 The Government's cost reductions have continued to impact on the Council's finances. The task to find the savings necessary to balance the Council's budget has been the dominant challenge this year. It is pleasing to report that the Council has managed to remain within budget in 2015/2016 with a slight overall underspend and has produced a balanced budget for 2016/2017. However, closing the funding gap of ~£50 million by 2019/20, remains a big challenge.

## **Conclusions**

- 4.5 The Council is at undergoing 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.
- 4.6 The challenges for Bromley Council in the coming years are the need to make the wider public fully aware of the Council’s financial position of balancing on-going service pressures against a backdrop of less Government support year on year and to ensure that planning is in place for dealing with the budget gap in future years.

**Councillor Simon Fawthrop**  
**Chairman, Executive & Resources PDS Committee**



## **5. Report from Care Services PDS Committee**

**Chairman:** Cllr. Judi Ellis  
**Vice-Chairman:** Cllr. Pauline Tunnicliffe

### **Care Services PDS Committee**

- 5.1 Care Services PDS Committee met six times in 2015/16, with one joint meeting with the Education and Public Protection PDS Committees to look at the findings of the Youth Offending Service inspection and the proposed service improvement plan.
- 5.2 There have been a number of contractual issues requiring attention, both to review their value and to realign in order to obtain optimum benefit and realise any financial savings. This is due to the budget pressures faced by the whole Council and the need to prioritise and maintain services for the most vulnerable in our community.
- 5.3 The Committee has looked at adoption and fostering with a high regard for safeguarding across the board, as well as issues affecting the elderly, both at home and in residential care, with special emphasis on dementia sufferers and their carers. The Committee has also looked at extra care housing and mutual carers.
- 5.4 Homelessness and the affordability of housing in Bromley has been regularly monitored with investment made to keep families, where possible, in the Borough whilst resident in temporary housing, and work has been ongoing with social and private landlords to provide adequate accommodation .

### **Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

- 5.5 The Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee has met three times in 2015/16 and has continued to monitor the outstanding financial, operational and quality issues affecting the Princess Royal University Hospital; many improvements have been achieved but there is still a deficit needing a financial recovery plan.
- 5.6 Quality issues focused on included patient discharge, Accident and Emergency and Urgent Care services, and shared information and patient communication issues.
- 5.7 The South East London Boroughs have joined together to form a joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This Committee has met twice and has scrutinised proposed changes in maternity, community based care, planned surgery, Accident and Emergency and urgent care, children and young people's services, and the treatment of cancer. There are two representatives from each Borough on the Committee, with one of the Southwark representatives elected Chairman and myself elected as Vice-Chairman.

### **Conclusions**

- 5.8 The Care Services PDS Committee and Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee are made up of Members and voluntary sector representatives and have scrutinised a wide range of services through written reports, visits and presentations. We have received a number of questions for either the scrutiny committee or the Portfolio Holder from members of the public, which have highlighted areas for scrutiny and we would like to thank them for

their involvement. We would also thank the officers from Bromley, the Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group and the King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust for their speedy delivery of additional information and explanation.

**Councillor Judi Ellis**  
**Chairman, Care Services PDS Committee**

## 6. Report from Education PDS Committee

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

### Introduction

- 6.1 The Committee welcomed Cllr Peter Fortune who has taken over from Cllr Stephen Wells as Portfolio Holder for Education. We thank Cllr Wells for his service and close co-operation with the committee over the past three years and thank Cllr Fortune for his thoughtful and co-operative approach since his appointment.

### Overall Objectives

- 6.2 The Education PDS Committee decided that the overall objectives of their work should remain those established previously.

### Select Committee hearing on key objectives

- 6.3 At the first meeting of the year the Committee held a Select Committee style hearing on a variety of key issues, the most important of which was the pressure on school places as a result of the increase in pupil numbers. Cllr Peter Dean, the Chairman of the Development Control Committee and Cllr Colin Smith, the Deputy Leader of the Council (in the absence of the Leader who was abroad) appeared before the committee. Members generally agreed that the Planning Service should be involved in all discussions around potential new schools and expansions of existing schools to resolve planning issues at an early stage. There was also a need to identify education sites for development in the Local Plan to meet future demand for school places, and the Chairman of Development Control Committee emphasised that this was likely to include Green Belt land.

### *Improving pupil, school and governance performance.*

- 6.4 The Committee's key objective is improving pupil, school and governance performance. 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 Governor Approval Panel consisting of Cllr Peter Fortune, Cllr Nicholas Bennett and Mr Rob Northcott, the former head teacher of Langley Park School for Boys, met throughout the year to interview and approve prospective LA governors. The Committee, as in 2014-5, is to consider reports on *Elective Home Education* and an update on those young people 'Not in Education, Training or Employment' (NEETS) at its March meeting.

### Progress towards all schools becoming academies

- 6.5 Our second key objective is:

### *To encourage all Bromley schools to become academies.*

- 6.6 The Committee's Academies Working Group met on 28th January 2016 and will meet again in March. The Working Group noted that the majority of the remaining schools still

under Local Authority control were now in the process of becoming academies or taking active steps towards that end. One of the central issues which the Portfolio Holder was taking forward with government was the fact that Bromley was now third in the country for the number of schools which had converted and that it was becoming increasingly uneconomic to run a traditional Education Department with so few schools still under LA control and that a 'tipping point' has been met which should lead to all schools converting.

- 6.7 During the coming year it is proposed that the Committee should examine what the education function of the LA would look like once operational control of schools disappears.

### **Extending provision and diversity of choice**

- 6.8 The continued rise in pupil numbers required several meetings of the *School Places Working Group* under the Chairmanship of Councillor Judi Ellis. The Committee continues to be concerned about the ability of the Authority to meet its' statutory responsibilities. A number of applications for school expansions have not received planning permission. The Portfolio Holder, together with Cllr Philpott his Executive Assistant, have commissioned data packs showing the pressures on school places in each ward.

### **Commissioning of services**

- 6.9 Plans to commission education services were discontinued following market testing as the bids did not provide sufficient benefit to the Council. An appraisal is being carried out to establish whether there are other options for the delivery of individual and/or groups of service, for example shared services with other local authorities, social enterprise/ mutual options etc.

### **Education Budget**

- 6.10 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 2016-7.

### **Adult Education**

- 6.11 We reported last year on the deficit in the Adult Education Budget largely as a result of reductions in government grant. Following a full examination of the service and a comprehensive consultation with staff and students, the Portfolio Holder recommended the closure of the Widmore Road centre and the transfer of courses to other centres. The Committee added three recommendations to the report which were subsequently agreed by the Council's Executive.
- 6.12 The Committee will be receiving further reports setting out the criteria to be used in developing the 2016/17 curriculum and the implementation of the Impact Assessment Action Plan,

## **SEN Transport**

- 6.13 The Committee supported changes to the SEN Transport policy to operate from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2015. The new policy includes trialling muster points for some students.

## **Youth Offending Service**

- 6.14 A joint meeting was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2015 with members of the Care Services and Public Protection PDS Committees examining the performance of the Youth Offending Service.
- 6.15 The Committee took evidence from Doug Patterson, Chief Executive, Kay Weiss, the Assistant Director Safeguarding, and the then interim Head of the Service. The meeting was called to consider a report from HM Inspectorate of Probation which found the Service to be poor. Members of the three committees cross-examined the witnesses on how the Council had failed to recognise that the service was seriously underperforming. The meeting received firm assurances that as a result of the inspection an Improvement Plan had been put in place which was being overseen by a newly created Youth Offending Services Management Board chaired by the Chief Executive. Having considered the evidence the meeting agreed that the Education PDS Committee would have a standing item at each of its meetings to monitor progress.
- 6.16 A report has been presented at each of the subsequent Education PDS meetings by the new Interim Head of Service, Mr Brennen. Progress is being made, albeit slowly in some areas, to address the issues raised by the Inspection.

## **Regional Schools' Commissioner**

- 6.17 Dominic Herrington, the Regional Schools' Commissioner for the South East of England attended the Committee's meeting in January 2016 and gave a presentation on his role. Mr Herrington is responsible for the academies and free schools in 22 local authority areas stretching from Bromley to the Isle of Wight and Hampshire. The main responsibilities of the RSC are:
- *To take action when an academy is underperforming;*
  - *Decide on the development of new academies;*
  - *Address underperformance in maintained schools through sponsored academies;*
  - *Make recommendations to ministers about free school applications;*
  - *Encourage organisations to become academy sponsors;*
  - *Approve changes to open academies*

- 6.18 Amongst the issues discussed with Mr Herrington were: the need for a local authority governor on academy governors to maintain the link with the local authority; the importance of Multi-academy Trusts (MATs) and, the role of free schools in the new education landscape.

## **2016-17 Select Committee Structure**

- 6.19 It has been agreed by the *Constitution Improvement Working Group* that the Education PDS should act as a prototype for a new way of working. From May the Education PDS Committee will be transformed into the Education Select Committee. The Portfolio Holder will still face public questions and give an update at each meeting and take

questions from the committee but pre-decision scrutiny of the Portfolio Holder decisions will be restricted to those called in.

6.20 The Select Committee will select issues for in depth examination and a call for evidence will be published. The sessions will follow the pattern already established by the PDS Committee in its examination of safeguarding and the inquiry into the performance of the Youth Offending Service.

### **Thanks**

6.21 This brings to an end my fourth report on the work of the Committee. I should like to pay tribute to all the members of the Committee for their hard work and co-operation. I also thank Councillor Neil Reddin for his support as Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Education Budget Sub-Committee, and to Cllr Judi Ellis who chaired the School Working Group. Tony Wright-Jones, the Secondary School's representative left the committee part way through the year on the reconstitution of St Olave's Governing Body. Tony was a valued member of the PDS and he is much missed. The Committee also places on record, the work of Jane Bailey, Director of Education, and all her staff. During the year Kerry Nicholls our long serving committee clerk transferred to service other committees and her place was taken by Philippa Gibbs who has returned to Bromley after working for Sevenoaks District Council. We are delighted that Philippa has the same hard working and efficient attributes as Kerry and we have enjoyed a seamless transition of regime.

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

## 7. Report from Environment PDS Committee

**Chairman:** Cllr. William Huntington-Thresher  
**Vice-Chairman:** Cllr. Sarah Phillips

### Introduction

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

### Scrutiny of the Portfolio Holder and Executive

- 7.2 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

### Development and Review of the Environment Portfolio Plan

- 7.3 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, ensuring that recommendations from the Committee itself and its working groups are taken forward. During 2015/16 these included:
- 7.4 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.

### Budget Monitoring

- 7.5 During the year the Committee identified/monitored a number of priority budget issues.
- Regulatory changes resulted in significant changes to CCTV enforcement of parking offences. This had knock-on effects to the cost effectiveness of the existing processes for Bus Lane enforcement. This was a topic addressed in the September PDS meeting
  - The cost of disposal of increasing volumes of household waste and clearing fly-tipping continues to offer a challenge to the Council finances. After years of declining general household waste, the past couple of years have seen residents producing increased volumes of waste. This would appear to be linked to the

improving economic circumstances. The previous issues related to recycled paper appear to have stabilised in the latter part of the year and a UK paper mill now takes Bromley paper for recycling. This has addressed the reduction in income experienced earlier in the year. It is clear that waste and recycling will remain an area for scrutiny.

### **Major topics addressed by the Committee during the year**

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

#### **On-Street Enforcement**

- 7.7 The Committee has kept under review the effectiveness and viability of the extended pilot enforcement service serving fixed penalty notices (FPNs) for littering offences. The integration of the FPN service with the Parks Security Contract now delivers a cost neutral service to reduce litter in our borough. The successful pilot was reviewed together with amendments to ensure it remains viable and cost neutral for the remainder of the Park Security contract.

#### **Friends Annual Report**

- 7.8 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.

#### **Highway Maintenance**

- 7.9 The Committee re-reviewed the cost effectiveness of methodologies for carriage way replacement and re-confirmed that the current methodologies remain the best financial choice for the available investment. The prices in the Council contract are very cost-effective compared to the alternative options being explored by other Councils. This could represent a financial risk when the contract is due for renewal. The Committee reviewed the programme for Planned Highway Maintenance for 2015/16.

#### **London Permit Scheme for Road and Street works**

- 7.10 The deregulation of the previous permit scheme for Road and Street Works meant that Bromley as Highway Authority needed to formally adopt a scheme to manage works on the Highways in the Borough. The Committee reviewed the scheme to ensure it resulted in the minimum of disruption when works are necessary.

#### **Spend on Consultants**

- 7.11 The Committee reviewed the Department's historic and expected future spend on consultants.

#### **Road Safety**

#### **Traffic Schemes**

- 7.12 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.

### **LIP Submission**

- 7.13 The Committee reviewed the LIP submission for 2016/17. The submission was the third year of the 3 year LIP delivery plan agreed with TFL in 2013. The expected income remained at roughly the same level as 15/16 and represented a reduction of almost 20% compared to historic levels.

### **Policy Development**

#### **Impact of deregulation act on CCTV enforcement of Parking and Bus Lane Enforcement**

- 7.14 The regulatory changes significantly reduced the number of parking infringements that could be enforced by CCTV. CCTV could only be used to enforce parking outside schools and at bus-stops. This resulted in a significant reduction in the number of offences for which the service could issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs). The service, which also encompassed Bus Lane enforcement, was no-longer cost effective unless it was reformed. The expenditure of income from parking PCNs is regulated by statute and cannot be diverted to the general fund. The committee agreed that a capital investment was required to replace existing cameras and place fixed cameras points outside schools. Cameras would be scheduled to move between schools to limit the financial outlay. The new cameras would feature automatic number plate recognition, so officer involvement would be limited to confirming that an infringement had occurred. The Committee agreed that the revised service offered the best compromise for enforcement in the financial circumstances.

### **Parking Appeals Policy**

- 7.15 The Committee considered amendments to the Parking Appeals Policy to address recently occurring issues which had resulted in adverse comments to an otherwise broadly accepted Parking Enforcement Policy. It was agreed (i) that where a car owner had a credible claim that a PCN was not on the vehicle when they returned, that the offer for a discount for prompt payment would be (re)offered and (ii) that in a CPZ one PCN per-year could be waived for genuine mistakes where a resident parked a car registered to them outside their property forgetting that it was a CPZ. For example this might occur if a resident who normally commutes by car was off work due to illness.

### **Parks and Green Space**

- 7.16 Following the commissioning of the Parks and Greenspace service to The Landscape Group (TLG) in 14/15 a number of strategies required development. TLG were required to develop these strategic plans for review by stakeholders and the PDS. The first two strategies, (i) Parks, Greenspace and Countryside and (ii) Events and Activities were scrutinised by the PDS Committee and various comments/observations were provided to TLG.

### **Bromley Cycling Strategy**

- 7.17 The Committee scrutinised the results of the consultation of the draft strategy with regard to aims and projects. The strategy looked to encourage cycling through various

projects and initiatives rather than through inconveniencing car usage or walking. Projects and initiatives, for example, included the development of quiet ways, cycle hubs, cycle parking and cycle confidence. Increased cycle use should reduce congestion on Bromley's roads as well as having health benefits. Projects would in general be funded externally through bids into TfL programmes and it was suggested through 106 payments from car free developments. At the current time many projects are unfunded.

## **Income Generation**

### **Street Advertising**

7.18 In addition to retendering the contract for managing Bromley's free-standing poster sites, the Committee also agreed that new advertising opportunities should be pursued. Tenders were sought from interested parties to offer proposals for concessions on the Borough's estate for advertising opportunities.

### **Concessions in Parks, Recreation Grounds and Greenspace**

7.19 The Committee reviewed the gateway report prior to the invitation for expressions of interest from third parties for concessions in parks, recreation grounds etc. The committee considered that concessions such as cafes could add vibrancy to the Borough's greenspaces. The committee did not want to see damage occur to the Borough's environment but was keen to explore opportunities to both

## **2016/17 Budget and Budget Consultation**

7.20 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:
  - A reduction in Green Garden Waste Satellite Sites
  - Changes to Street Enforcement to provide a cost neutral FPN service.
- The committee reviewed service changes to the issuing of PCNs following regulatory changes.
- The Committee reviewed income generation opportunities

7.21 Further service changes were included in the 2016/17 budget proposals. The Committee reviewed the proposals and provided comments to the executive. Scrutiny of the detailed implementation of future service changes will be items on future PDS agendas.

## **Partner Scrutiny**

### **Waste**

7.22 The Committee will be scrutinising the Council's waste collection and disposal contractor in the March PDS meeting.

### **Thanks**

7.23 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. Alexa Michael  
**Vice-Chairman:** Cllr. Chris Pierce

- 8.1 The Public Protection & Safety Policy Development and Scrutiny (PDS) Committee has met seven times during the 2015-16 Council year. This included one joint meeting with the General Purposes & Licensing Committee on 14 July 2015 to determine the Council's licencing policy and one meeting held jointly with the Education and Care Services PDS Committees on 22 July 2015 to look at Youth Offending Services.

### Portfolio Priorities and PDS Reports

- 8.2 At the first meeting held on 30 June 2015, the Public Protection & Safety Portfolio Holder, Cllr Kate Lymer, gave a detailed outline of the outcomes for the Public Protection and Safety Draft Portfolio Plan for 2015-16. These were: Keeping Bromley Safe; Protecting Consumers; Regulating Food Safety; and Protecting the Environment. The PDS agreed that the Portfolio Plan be adopted with these outcomes as the policy priorities for the year.
- 8.3 In line with agreed policy priorities, during the course of the year Members received detailed written and / or verbal reports on:
- Anti-Social Behaviour and Operation Crystal (a MOPAC funded anti-social behaviour initiative to tackle crime locally);
  - The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (plus update);
  - CCTV (the CCTV control room is scheduled to be refurbished by the end of March 2016 following a period of delay);
  - Gangs Update;
  - Safer Bromley Partnership Strategic Group Update;
  - The Stray and Abandoned Dog Service;
  - Review of the Food Safety Service which reviewed the role and performance of the Food Safety Service, and set out the Council's legal (statutory) roles and responsibilities under both domestic and European law;
  - Update report on the work on Trading Standards, whose current priorities are: doorstep crime and mass marketing fraud; under-age sales; product safety; and unfair trading.
- 8.4 The Chairman initiated an item on Drug Misuse in Bromley, to which Members from the Social Care PDS were invited to join in. The intention was to provide members with information on drug misuse in Bromley. Members were asked to consider and comment on the issues that this raised.

### Police Scrutiny

- 8.5 All Public Protection & Safety PDS meetings (barring those held with other committees) included a comprehensive Police Update presented by the Bromley Borough Commander or Deputy Commander, allowing Members to scrutinise the work of the

Police and to raise questions. Each Police Update included an analysis of the MOPAC 7 crimes (burglary, violence with injury, robbery, theft from motor vehicles, theft of motor vehicles, theft from the person and criminal damage). The majority of MOPAC 7 crimes are falling.

- 8.6 During the year, Members were informed of the likely changes to the local policing structure from Borough-based to a Basic Command Unit (BCU). Members also questioned the Police on a wide range of issues from Police response times, neighbourhood policing, police numbers and gang activity in the Borough. During the course of the year, both the Police and the Portfolio Holder also provided comprehensive updates on how the different agencies are working together to combat gang activity in the Borough.

### **Funding**

- 8.7 Given that the cross-cutting department had already seen the largest Council reductions in funding in proportion to its budget (for example, the Environmental Protection Team had already been reduced by four staff), it was agreed not to make any further financial savings in this area. However, Council staff would be expected to “work smarter”, for example, by harnessing new technologies to work more efficiently wherever possible.

### **Presentations**

- 8.8 The PDS received several presentations from various groups engaged in public protection and safety (or whose work impinges on them), namely:
- Neighbourhood Watch;
  - Victim Support;
  - South London and Maudsley (SLaM) NHS Trust;
  - Bromley Young Council, who gave a review of their “Youth on the Move” public transport project.

### **Member Visits**

- 8.9 A number of Member visits were arranged during 2015-16, including the newly refurbished Orpington Fire Station in July (plus the official opening in February), and the Community Rehabilitation Company in Orpington in September. Two Members also visited a Women’s Refuge in October. These visits gave Members the opportunity to find out more about the services offered and to ask questions. The Chairman also observed a test purchasing exercise of sales of fireworks to under-age young people in late October. The Chairman and Portfolio Holder also observed proceedings around the Emergency Planning Exercise that took place in Bromley on 21 June.

### **Safer Neighbourhood Board**

- 8.10 Both the Chairman and Vice Chairman took part in meetings of the Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB), which scrutinises the Police and helps to choose various bids to help fight crime. They also attended SNB public meetings, including the annual Crime Summit held on 19 September. On 23 May, the Chairman joined SNB members to canvass the public in Bromley High Street about crime concerns locally. Both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman helped to staff the SNB crime stall at the Big O

Festival on 4 July where they asked people to complete a questionnaire about crime priorities.

**Councillor Alexa Michael**  
**Chairman, Public Protection and Safety PDS Committee**





## 9. Report from Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee

**Chairman:** Councillor Ian F. Payne  
**Vice-Chairman:** Councillor Michael Rutherford

### Introduction

- 9.1 The Committee have met 4 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, Anna Bagley. Through this past year the R&R PDS Committee has considered the contribution to the savings required in the overall council budget of approx. £60m.
- 9.2 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
- 9.3 Areas that the PDS Scrutiny Committee have focused on are:

#### **Bromley Town Centre Housing Zone**

The Expression of Interest bid for Housing Zone status has been approved by the Greater London Council (GLA). The Council's bid sought funding of £27.1m, consisting of a mixture of direct grant and soft developer loans, to facilitate the delivery of development schemes in Bromley Town Centre, including Opportunity Site G West of the High Street and Former Opportunity Site A Bromley North Station.

**Business Support Programme,** A legal grant agreement was currently being drawn up to cover a period of two years for the delivery by the Business Improvement District (Orpington 1st) of the New Homes Bonus scheme. Payment would only be made upon delivery of the agreed milestones.

**Business Growth Corridors** A number of posts had been recruited to develop the business investment and development plans for Biggin Hill and the Cray Business Corridor.

**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL),** The additional income expected from the Bromley CIL was not quantifiable as payment would be driven by applications of size and scale. As with Section 106 Agreements, CIL reports would be submitted for consideration by E&R PDS Members.

**Planning Regulatory Functions** – The pre-application process required applicants to submit information in accordance with a detailed checklist. In some cases, the requested information was omitted or officers required clarification and amendments

which led to delays in determination. Other applications related to the determination of applications such as advertising, prior notifications, Certificates of Law and change of use etc. It was agreed that whilst the report indicated the percentage of applications determined on target, future reports should also include response times for the remaining 40%. It was also agreed that targets and achieved percentage rates for responding to TPO requests, Listed Building Orders and general enquiries be included in the Business Plan report.

**Enhance the Borough's Leisure Facilities**, – A 25 year management contract for the operation and management of the Churchill Theatre had been awarded to Qdos with a saving of £340kPA from previous contract.

- 9.4 Town Centre Management Update Reports were presented at each of the committee meetings giving a full and comprehensive report of the ongoing work and results of the towns in the borough.

### **Library Service**

- 9.5 The Renewal & Recreation Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee and Portfolio Holder agreed that officers should commence a procurement exercise to identify community management arrangements for the borough's six community libraries:

- Burnt Ash Library
- Hayes Library
- Mottingham Library
- Shortlands Library
- Southborough Library
- St Paul's Cray Library

- 9.6 Community management may offer a way of retaining library services in these community locations whilst reducing operating costs to avoid making closures. As community libraries are the smallest in the borough, make the lowest number of issues and have the lowest number of visits, it was agreed that there was an opportunity to try and secure community management arrangements that make these libraries work more effectively for the very communities that they serve

### **Site G: West of the High Street**

- 9.7 Feedback from the soft market testing exercise to assess the market appetite for a revised residential led first phase redevelopment of Opportunity Site G has been positive. Officers are now preparing the necessary marketing documentation required to procure a development partner.

### **Site A: Bromley North Station**

- 9.8 A revised planning policy for Opportunity Site A is currently being consulted on via the Local Plan review. In support of this review the Council is currently undertaking a massing and viability assessment of the development site. It is proposed that this assessment will include a development workshop with stakeholders including site

owners, transport providers. The result of this work will be used to inform the emerging policy review.

### **Site C: The Old Town Hall**

9.9 Planning permission has been granted for the Old Town Hall and adjacent residential scheme.

### **Bromley Central Area High Street Improvements**

9.10 The following design principles have been developed in consultation with stakeholders:

- Introduce a hierarchy of public spaces where people can dwell.
- Green the High Street.
- Create shelter within the High Street for year round enjoyment.
- Create better links to Bromley's greenspace.
- Encourage street activity & enhance pedestrian experience.

9.11 A key feature of the emerging design is the reordering of spaces in the High Street to create a new public square in the southern pedestrianised area. It is also proposed that the existing market is reorganised and relocated along the High Street.

### **Site A: Bromley North**

9.12 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 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**

9.13 This prominent plot of land was a designated residential site for up to 70 units and would be marketed as such. A development brief would be drafted outlining what would be acceptable and appropriate to build. Members agreed that the site was an important gateway into Bromley and in this regard, recommended that the AAP stipulate the requirement for the design to be of good architectural merit.

### **Site C: Town Hall**

9.14 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**

9.15 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**

- 9.16 The development that is well under construction includes a multiscreen cinema, 200 residential units, 130 bedroom hotel, restaurants and cafes, plus associated parking and public realm enhancements.

### **Site L: Former DHSS**

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

### **Economic Development**

- 9.18 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.

### **Orpington Town Centre**

- 9.19 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, which recently opened.

### **The Priory**

- 9.20 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.

### **Beckenham Town Centre**

- 9.21 Transport for London(TfL) had approved the Beckenham Initial Scheme Design bid and funding was allocated to cover Design and Development costs. This funding was to be used to cover the costs of undertaking survey work and producing and consulting on an outline scheme design. This initial funding allocation also included the costs of working up a detailed design to contract stage drawings.

## **Bromley Business Improvement District**

- 9.22 A Business Improvement District (BID) was successful by ballot within Bromley Town Centre and will commence in the spring of 2016.
- 9.23 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 F. Payne**  
**Chairman, Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee**