

*DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION BY
E& R PDS COMMITTEE ON 15TH MARCH 2017*



THE LONDON BOROUGH

Policy Development & Scrutiny Annual Report 2016/17

For submission to Full Council on 10th April 2017

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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 2016/2017, which summarises the work that has been carried out by the Committees during the Council year.

2. The continuing Government reductions in funding support for local councils and the ongoing cost pressures faced by Bromley Council leave a funding gap, before the savings included in the 2017/18 Budget, which has to be closed by 2019/20. The total savings needed by 2019/20 equates to £12.8 million (£23.6m per annum by 2020/21, net after savings). 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 2019/20. 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 business revenue.

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. In addition the GLA has also increased its precept by 1.46%, making the net overall increase of 3.47% for Bromley residents. Current forecasts indicate a similar 3.99% increase in Council Tax in 18/19.

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 1300 statutory obligations to discharge, which cost several millions of pounds per annum, these take priority over discretionary spending. The funding gap can't be closed without taking some difficult decisions and halting some services all together. 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.

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. This might need a new look with an investment and revenue generation sub-committee, to help grow revenue outside the usual call on tax payer funds. Scrutiny will remain key to ensure that there is adequate control and stability.

6. The PDS Committees will have an increasingly important role task 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.

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 2016/17



Cllr Simon Fawthrop
Executive & Resources



Cllr Judi Ellis
Care Services



Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP
Education Select Committee



Cllr William Huntington-Thresher
Environment



Cllr Alexa Michael
Public Protection and Safety



Cllr Michael Rutherford
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 (functioning as a pilot Select Committee for 2016/17)
 - 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 is 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, no call-in has been made during 2016/17. The 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. Keith Onslow

1. Introduction

In 2016/17 the Committee held 9 scheduled 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. The Committee also has Contracts Sub-Committee, chaired by Cllr Wells with support from Cllr Chris Pierce as Vice-Chairman, which has undertaken some very useful work in coordinating the end to end contract scrutiny process and analysing gaps in the processes.

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 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, as well as Committee members for bringing their insight and wisdom to the meetings.

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 costs under control. The Committee has monitored, contract provision for insurance services, the performance of the revenue, housing and council tax benefit services managed by Liberata, IT Services contract provided by BT, updates on the financial progress with regard to the additional provisions for the poor OFSTED rating. The contracts register and the disposal of various surplus assets, the performance of the Council Tax support scheme and issues concerning homelessness and temporary accommodation, the progress of the Special Purchase Vehicle (Mears scheme), the treasury performance, the various invest-to-save projects, as well as details on the growth fund and investment fund initiatives and the risk register were also considered.

4. Outlook

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 a major factor across this year. It is disappointing that the Council has failed to remain within budget in 2016/2017. The structural overspend in Children's Care Services has been accommodated though use of contingency funds but remains a challenge for future years. At the time of publishing a balanced budget for 2017/2018 is in place. However, closing the funding gap of £12.8 million by 2019/20 (£23.6m per annum by 2020/21, net after savings) remains a big challenge.

5. Conclusions

The Council is 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.

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 tax support year on year and to ensure that planning is in place for dealing with the budget gap in future years. This will include both cost reductions and revenue generation within the confines of the Building a Better Bromley, Clean and Green approach adopted by the current administration.

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 met seven times in 2016/17.

The year has been dominated by the Ofsted report on Children's Services and the development of the Children's Services Improvement Plan (this is available on the Council's website). This plan shows the Council's commitment to take the opportunity to ensure the improvements are embedded in Bromley's culture, are sustainable and an important part of Building a Better Bromley.

The meeting held on the 6th December (minutes also available on the website) was the first opportunity for the new Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Education, Care and Health Services, Mr Ade Adetosoye OBE, to address the Committee on his vision and priorities for the service. He updated the Committee on the improvement plan and the results of the first 'deep dive' audit on casework.

The Committee ensured that this serious issue did not overshadow the need to scrutinise Adult Services and received reports on domiciliary care, assisted living and the provision of advocacy and advice services, both online and through our commissioned providers. We also completed a programme of visits to care homes, supported living accommodation and day care providers.

There has been a strong emphasis on partnership working. This has always been strong in Bromley but has become more important as resources and budgets have shrunk, and by working closely with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and other key organisations in Bromley we have, through joint commissioning, created joint posts, better communication and a sharing of information.

Homelessness, specialist housing provision and the affordability of private sector housing have been the subject of a number of reports and the Council has this year seen the fruition of a number of new initiatives which have given more families the opportunity to access temporary accommodation in or near Bromley enabling them to access work and keep their children in school. This area continues to see a rise in demand which is part of an overall London/South East housing shortage and therefore continues to be a regular item on our agenda.

Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee

The Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee has met three times in 2016/17 and has continued to monitor the financial, operational and quality issues affecting the Princess Royal University Hospital. Performance against cancer waiting targets has improved, exceeding national target times. The long awaited launch of the new cross-site electronic patient record system is due this Spring and this should improve the appointment process and the availability of patient records.

The CCG have commissioned some step down beds at Orpington Hospital as part of the transition from hospital to home, this together with Bromley's Reablement Team should reduce people needing to return to hospital by offering intensive support and a targeted assessment of their individual needs.

The South East London Boroughs Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has continued to meet. This Committee 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. It has been involved in the drafting of the consultation document on planned surgery, which is the major change in the region. I have attended all the meetings and have continued to serve as the Vice-Chairman.

Conclusions

The Care Services PDS Committee and Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee is made up of Members and voluntary sector representatives and we have all participated in the visits, scrutiny and policy development. The Ofsted judgement on the Children's Service has made us all look more deeply at all the services we scrutinise and reinforced the need to ensure we are putting the service user at the centre of our discussions and that we listen to service users and their families and our service providers.

My thanks go to all the Members for their hard work and commitment and to the officers from Bromley, the CCG, Oxleas and the King's Foundation Hospital Trust for their attendance and contributions, also their willingness to offer additional information and explanation when requested.

Councillor Judi Ellis
Chairman, Care Services PDS Committee

6. Report from Education Select Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Nicholas Bennett JP

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Neil Reddin

1. The Select Committee replaced the Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee in May 2016.

2. The main changes have been as follows:

2.1 Policy is now the remit of the Portfolio Holder. The only substantial change has been that he now organises the School Places Working Party and appoints the Chairman – this year he asked his Executive Assistant, Cllr Philpott to so do.

2.2 The committee no longer receives written reports as part of its agenda on decisions which the Portfolio Holder is minded take. Instead these are circulated by email and the Chairman or any other may call them in. No ‘call ins’ have been made.

2.3 The Committee still receives an update from the Portfolio Holder at each meeting and questions him on his work.

2.4 Information items may still be placed on the agenda and may be discussed provided 24 hours notice is given or at the discretion of the chairman.

2.5 The main work of the committee is to scrutinise a matter of importance in depth. The agenda for the year is decided at an informal meeting of members at the start of the municipal year. The number of meetings has been reduced by one to four full meetings a year. The Chairman and Vice Chairman then meet officers for agenda planning meetings approximately 10-12 weeks before the meeting to decide which witnesses should be called and to enable them to provide written evidence. A pre-meeting at 6.30pm immediately before the Select Committee is held with all members to decide the format of the questioning.

2.6 The draft report is written by the Chairman and circulated to the committee for their comments and amendments. In order to evaluate the best way to approve the final report, one extra meeting was arranged in January 2017, at which the committee was asked to decide the recommendations. Members of the committee have been circulated with a survey on the way the new system has operated and it includes a question on which procedure they prefer for approving committee reports..

2.7 The final reports of the Select Committee have been included in the full Council agenda for consideration and also provided to the relevant executive committees so they can respond on recommendations within their responsibility. The Select Committee has subsequently published these with their observations.

3. During the year the Committee has held four full inquiries and four mini sessions.

3.1 The topics covered were:

- i. The Education Landscape in Bromley (May 2016)
- ii. Alternative Education (September 2016)
- iii. Helping Under-performing pupils (Jan 2017)
- iv. Children Missing Education (March 2017)

3.2 The four mini sessions;

- i. Portfolio Plan (September 2016 and Jan 2017)
- ii. Youth Offending Service update (March 2017)
- iii. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) up-date (March 2017).

4. The Education Budget sub-committee which was established in May 2012 deals in detail with all financial matters. It is chaired by the Select Committee Deputy Chairman, Cllr Neil Reddin and met three times in 2016-7.

5. A report evaluating the success or otherwise of the Select Committee experiment will be published in April 2017.

6. I would like to thank my Deputy Chairman Cllr Reddin FCA for his support and chairmanship of the Education Budget Sub-Committee, all members of the Select Committee for their work in examining witnesses and their contributions to the final reports and to the staff of the department led by Jane Bailey, the Director. We thank Cllr Peter Fortune for his courteous response to our examination of his work as Portfolio Holder and his Executive Assistant Cllr Tom Philpott. Last but not least we thank our indefatigable clerk Philippa Gibbs for excellent minutes produced in good time so that the draft reports can be written.

Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP
Chairman Education Select Committee

7. Report from Environment PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. William Huntington-Thresher
Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Angela Page

Introduction

The services provided within the Environment Portfolio affect every resident of Bromley. Clean streets, traffic congestion, the condition of highways and pavements, parking facilities, and Parks & green space provision, are all considered important by residents.

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

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, ensuring that recommendations from the Committee itself and its working groups are taken forward. During 2016/17 the Portfolio Plan priorities included:

- Improving the Street Scene
- Minimising Waste & Increasing Recycling
- Enhancing Bromley's Parks & Green Spaces
- Managing our Transport Infrastructure & Public Realm
- Improving Travel, Transport & Parking

A notable element of the Portfolio Plan was the development of a new approach to Neighbourhood Management. Caring for our street scene and green spaces is delivered by Neighbourhood Management; the new approach aims to improve working with Friends groups and resident satisfaction.

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

One of the key aspects of the scrutiny function of the PDS is budget monitoring. This financial year the current projections are that the department's income will exceed budget and a surplus will be generated. This is a testimony to the management of officers & executive function of the department, but also stems from PDS policy development activity which has worked over a number of years to prepare for changes in the way services are delivered. For example the continuing success of the Green Garden Waste (GGW)

subscription service allowed the Council to deliver savings by reducing GGW satellite sites without generating excessive queues at the main waste & recycling sites.

Major topics addressed by the Committee during the year

The PDS Committee devotes significant time to pre-decision scrutiny of major decisions, highlights were:

Fly-tipping Fixed Penalties

Fly-tipping is both a blight on the green nature of our borough and an expense to Council Tax Payers. Following legislation last spring, the committee supported the proposal to introduce fixed penalty notices (FPN) for fly-tipping and the decision to set them at the maximum level of £400. These FPNs provide an additional method to try and reduce fly-tipping and should hopefully also act as a deterrent.

Parking & Enforcement Service

The committee reviewed the updated strategy for procuring the parking & enforcement service contract and the resulting tenders. The new contract will deliver savings - a significant element of which arose from service changes resulting in a joint tender with LB Bexley. The prior development, supported by the PDS, of a shared parking service with LB Bexley over a number of years was key to this outcome.

Highway Maintenance

The decision to commence an investment programme in the LBB's Highway Infrastructure was scrutinised and supported by the committee. A programme of investment will take place over the next two financial years taking advantage of the very cost-effective rates available in the current contract. The investment should lead to a reduced reactive maintenance requirement. The choices relating to the implementation of the investment programme led to a policy development activity considering the balance of footway vs. carriageway works and the cost effectiveness of methodologies for carriage way replacement. The initial tranche of the Highway Maintenance Investment programme was reviewed.

Road Safety

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.

LBB LIP Submission to TFL

The committee reviewed the LIP (Local Improvement Plan) submission for 2017/18. The change of London Mayor has not yet led to a significant change in the priorities in the LIP programme. The expected income remained at roughly the same level as 2016/17 but still represented a reduction of almost 20% compared to historic levels.

Policy Development

In addition to policy development activity already mentioned relating to Highway maintenance; Environment PDS policy development included a number of other topics such as the Littering Enforcement Service and the Environmental Services Contracts (and Monitoring Summaries). Policy development is starting in preparation for the new multi-year LBB LIP strategy which needs to be submitted to TFL in October 2017.

Environmental Services Contracts

In 2019 the majority of the Environmental Services Contracts will be renewed. It is expected that offering a wide range of environment services to be delivered concurrently will deliver budgetary savings. The contract renewal strategy and the service specifications are key decisions that will impact the look and feel of the Borough for many years to come. The Committee started that policy development activity this year will continue during 2017/18 as the tender process progresses.

Partner Scrutiny

Parks and Green Space Service

The committee scrutinised the Council's Parks and Green Space service and the prime contractor, idverde. The thin client & full commissioning of the Council's Parks and Green Space service in 2014/15 represented a significant change in the way Councils deliver key services. It was good to see that the service has continued to deliver an excellent service to residents and friends groups. The friends groups continue to provide a significant volunteer input to our Parks and Green Spaces and the contract supports them to do so and to raise funds for projects. I would also like to pay tribute to all Bromley's friends; Street Friends; Snow Friends and especially Friends of Parks and Greenspaces.

Public Transport Liaison

Residents and commuters to the borough make extensive use of public transport. The PDS chairman holds Public Transport Liaison meetings twice-yearly, one in public, to improve service co-ordination and standards. The public meeting provides an arena for residents to raise service issues. The meeting also allows scrutiny of TfL and public transport providers; it also receives reports on the progress of service developments, for example the progress of changes at London Bridge.

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

The Public Protection & Safety Policy Development and Scrutiny (PP&S PDS) Committee will have met five times during the 2016-17 Council year. (The final meeting of the year is scheduled for Wednesday 29 March 2017).

Portfolio Priorities and PDS Reports

At the first PP&S PDS meeting held on 29 June 2016, 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 to:

- Target night-time anti-social behaviour through targeted interventions;
- Take action against rogue traders, particularly those who target the vulnerable, through preventative and enforcement activity with banks and adult safeguarding partners.
- Tackle the sale of age-restricted products, particularly alcohol and tobacco, through test purchase operations.
- Inspect 100% of high-risk food businesses (Risk Category A and B hygiene) to ensure food safety standards are met.
- Provide the CCTV monitoring service for town centres and other key areas.

The PDS agreed that the Portfolio Plan be adopted with these outcomes as the policy priorities for the year.

Cllr Lymer also gave a report on the Portfolio Plan Review 2015-2016. The PDS noted the intended outcomes for 2015-2016, namely: Keeping Bromley Safe; Protecting Consumers; to Support and Regulate Business; and Protecting the Environment. She then explained how each of these had been achieved in line with Council budgets.

In line with agreed policy priorities, during the course of the year Members received detailed written and / or verbal reports on:

- Food Safety Service Plan 2016-2017
- MOPAC Update
- Stray and Abandoned Dogs and Pest Control Services Contracts
- Animal Welfare – Licence Fees for Home Boarders
- CCTV Contract Extension and CCTV Options
- Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women and Girls Services
- Review of the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Service
- Environmental Protection Update
- Trading Standards Update
- Gangs Update

The Chairman initiated an item on Alcohol Abuse in Bromley, to which members from the Social Care PDS were invited to join in. The intention was to provide members with information on alcohol abuse in Bromley. Members were asked to consider and comment on the issues that this raised.

Police Scrutiny

All Public Protection & Safety PDS meetings 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 although Violence with Injury has increased during the period. (Note: the MOPAC 7 crimes will be replaced with a different set of crime priorities following Sadiq Khan's election as Mayor of London).

Proposals for the new Basic Command Units (BCU) were gathering pace in an effort to save £400m. Twelve BCUs were planned, but no specific information was currently available to clarify which borough Bromley would be linked to. It was likely that the boroughs of Camden and Islington would be the first to amalgamate and it was anticipated that the Boroughs of Redbridge, Havering and Barking/Dagenham would follow in February 2017. If so, they would be the first tri-borough BCU.

BCUs would consist of four divisions:

- Neighbourhood Policing
- Emergency Response
- Local Investigation
- Protecting Vulnerable People

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

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. It was also acknowledged that Emergency Planning and Business Continuity was under-resourced, with just one Resilience Officer employed.

Presentations

The PDS received several presentations from various groups engaged in public protection and safety (or whose work impinges on them), namely:

- London Fire Brigade
- Bromley Women's Aid
- Bromley Town Centre Security (INTU)
- Street Pastors
- Challenger Troop (Youth Engagement)
- South London and Maudsley (SLaM) NHS Trust
- Bromley Youth Council

Member Visits

A number of Member visits were arranged during 2016-17. The Chairman and several other PDS Members attended the LIFE Passing out Parade at Lee Green Fire Station on 13 October 2016. Participants were put through their paces in a mock emergency house fire rescue and then each one was presented with their achievement portfolio. The Chairman also observed a test purchasing exercise of sales of fireworks and alcohol to under-age young people on 29 October 2016. Visits to the Civic Centre CCTV control room are currently being arranged.

Safer Neighbourhood Board

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 17 September.

Cllr Alexa Michael
Chairman, Public Protection and Safety PDS Committee

9. Report from Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Michael Rutherford
Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Julian Benington

1.1 The committee met six times this municipal year. Each meeting has scrutinised the reports for decision by the Renewal and Recreation Portfolio Holder and considered policy development for key areas across 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, Mr. Andrew Wolckenhaar. Through this past year, the R&R PDS Committee has scrutinised a range of proposals and performance metrics and added further scrutiny to the planning service.

1.2 The committee have monitored performance against the Renewal and Recreation strategic outcomes for the municipal year, which it agreed to support in the July 2016 meeting:

- Economic development
- Protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment
- Enhanced opportunities for leisure, cultural activities and community led services.

1.3 Topics the PDS Committee have focused on include:

Town Centres

1.4 *Beckenham:* The committee scrutinised proposals for public realm improvements in Beckenham Town Centre; particularly around timelines, funding from Transport for London and learning lessons from the Bromley North Village works (both its successes and challenges). These were approved by Executive in October 2016. It also worked with the Beckenham Town Centre Working Group to develop proposals for the David Bowie Memorial and options for funding it.

1.5 *Orpington:* Proposals for public realm improvements to Walnut Square were supported by the committee and have since commenced. Particular focus was given to the usability of the square and improving the face of the library and leisure centre. The committee also scrutinised the disposal of The Priory, ensuring that the winning proposal was viable and provided community benefit and a capital receipt.

1.6 *Penge:* Support was given to Penge Town Centre improvements, namely Penge High Street (which have now commenced) and Empire and Arpley Square (which are now undergoing detailed design). The proposals will declutter the area and provide more attractive streets and shop signs.

1.7 *Bromley:* The R&R PDS Committee input to the procurement process for a development partner for Site G; ensuring that the proposals will deliver new homes (including substantial numbers of affordable homes) to meet the local plan, while making a positive impact to the town centre. The committee also input to policy development for the Bromley High Street public realm improvements and the relocation of the market.

Leisure and Culture

1.8 *Library Service:* In the April 2017 meeting, the committee is due to consider proposals for the management of libraries. Earlier in the year, it heard that the proposed community management of the borough's smaller libraries would not be taken forward.

1.9 *Enhanced Leisure Opportunities:* The committee supported schemes that provided leisure opportunities for residents of the borough. It advised Executive to support development proposals on Chipperfield Road in St Paul's Cray for a new gymnastics facility, linear park and library and community resource centre. It also gave strong support to proposals for Blackheath and Bromley Harriers Athletics Club to upgrade Norman Park Athletics Track.

1.10 *Cultural Activities:* Continued support was given to the Biggin Hill Memorial Museum, and progress on the scheme was tracked throughout the year.

Planning

1.11 The performance of the planning service was assessed, with a particular focus on the performance of planning enforcement. The committee also scrutinised planning appeals, considering those appeals received and decided and the costs incurred by the council. This will become an annual agenda item for the committee.

Scrutiny of the Portfolio Holder

1.12 The committee scrutinised consultant spend and the portfolio's contracts, challenging when contract end dates are close and where regular extensions are applied. It also challenged the Portfolio Holder on recovering fees involved in the Biggin Hill Airport proposal.

Members Visits

1.13 The Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee has performed two member visits throughout the year. It visited the Biggin Hill Memorial Chapel to discuss the museum proposals, and went on a tour of the airport and West Camp. It also visited the Churchill Theatre to meet the new operators, HQ Theatres, and discuss their plans.

Presentations

1.14 The committee is grateful to MyTime, Ms. Sharon Baldwin from Orpington BID and Ms. Frances Forrest from Bromley BID for visiting and presenting to it.

Thanks

I would like to thank all the members of the committee for their diligence and hard work throughout the year. A lot of work has been carried out, which has covered a very broad range of subjects. I would also like to thank the officers in the R&R department and Mrs. Lisa Thornley for their tireless work at the committee meetings and the ongoing day to day running of the department.

Councillor Michael Rutherford
Chairman, Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee