

*DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION BY
E&R PDS COMMITTEE ON 21ST MARCH 2018*



THE LONDON BOROUGH

Policy Development & Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18

For submission to Full Council on 9th April 2019

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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 2017/2018, 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 leaves a long term funding gap. The gap remains at £5.2M for 2019/20, £30.7M for 2020/21 and £38.7M for 2021/22 which totals around £75M over the next 4 years. The Council has a legal obligation to set a balanced budget, so effort is needed to generate income and find additional savings over this period. The Government will also allow Bromley as part of Greater London Boroughs to retain the business rates it collects (subject to equalisation) to fund council services. This will offer an opportunity as well as challenges as new business rates can be retained by Bromley Council, currently only a one year deal has been agreed. Over the next few years this will mean that the Growth fund will be very important to drive additional business rate revenue.

3. Against this tough fiscal background 2017/18 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 Labour London Mayor and GLA also increased its precept by 5.1%, making the net overall increase of 4.21% for Bromley residents. Current forecasts indicate a similar 3.99% increase in Bromley's Council Tax share in 2019/20. Bromley Council continues to be debt free, meaning our residents Council Tax is spent on services and not on interest payments.

4. The Council continues to promote significant change, both in organisational 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 and look at cooperation with Other Local Authorities to drive efficiencies. 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. The Council should consider a dedicated Commissioning PDS to ensure that scrutiny can drill down to an appropriate level when looking at opportunities for value for money.

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.

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 Mary Cooke
Care Services



Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP
Education, Children & Families Select
Committee



Cllr Samaris 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, Children and Families (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, Children and Families Budget and Performance Monitoring 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 comments 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 2017/18. 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 2017/18 the Committee held 9 scheduled meetings, and 3 additional 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 Neil Reddin 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, there is a case for promoting this committee to become a full Contracts and Commissioning PDS Committee.

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, including overspends across some budget headings. The Committee has monitored the performance of the revenue, housing and council tax benefit services managed by Liberata, IT Services contract provided by BT (my particular thanks to Cllr Onslow), 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 including a modular homes pilot, the progress of the Special Purchase Vehicle (Mears scheme), treasury performance which continues in the top 10% of Local authority performances, 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. The structural overspend in Children's Care Services has been accommodated though use of contingency funds which having been built into the budget should be controllable in future years. The main challenge is closing the funding gap of £38.7 million by 2021/22, a lot of hard work remains to ensure the Council continues to set legal budgets over the coming years.

5. Conclusions

The Council is undergoing significant change, both in organisational terms and in its ability to continue to provide services expected by residents. The era of streamlining, re-organising and cost cutting, whilst continuing to provide services “as usual” is becoming harder 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 central Tax payer 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 Conservative administration.

Councillor Simon Fawthrop
Chairman, Executive & Resources PDS Committee

5. Report from Care Services PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Mary Cooke
Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Pauline Tunncliffe

The Care Services PDS Committee held five scheduled meetings and two special meetings during 2017/18.

It has been a taxing year for the Committee with the need to balance the requirements of a growing ageing population, many with complex conditions, with the need to work within a decreasing budget. We have been fortunate in that two previous Chairmen of Care Services PDS Committee, a previous Portfolio Holder for Care Services (including Public Health) and the Chairs of the Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board, Healthwatch Bromley and Bromley and Lewisham Mind all sit on the Committee. I would like to thank these Councillors and Co-opted Members for sharing their expertise so generously. I would also like to thank Kerry Nicholls, the Clerk to the committee for her good humour, efficiency and guidance on process. The strong emphasis on partnership working outlined in last year's report continues.

Hospital Discharge

The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that it is not contributing to an unnecessary delay in patients being discharged from hospital. The Committee has therefore recommended that additional beds be commissioned from an existing provider for a period of nine months in time to support winter pressure demands as well as additional nursing home beds. The Committee recognises the benefits of improving joined-up working between Health and Social Care services so that discharge from hospital is facilitated and readmission rates are minimised, and has striven to work closely with both the Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group and the Princess Royal University Hospital to achieve this aim.

Budget

The Committee has worked diligently to scrutinise the budget position of the Care Services Portfolio at each meeting, resulting in a significant reduction in the budget overspend predicted at the start of 2017/18. The budget for 2018/19 is balanced.

Homelessness

Bromley has an excellent track record in preventing homelessness and in increasing the supply of temporary accommodation. The Committee recognises that homelessness in the Borough is increasing, due in part to the actions of private landlords. In order to increase the available housing stock, the Committee made recommendations concerning the Empty Homes Property Grant and agreed principles to proactively engage with the housing market. It recommended the use of a site in Orpington for the provision of modular homes, subject to the granting of planning permission. The Committee also reviewed progress towards the adoption of a new homelessness strategy in 2018 that places a greater emphasis on early intervention to prevent homelessness, and recommended it be published for public consultation. The Committee received a presentation from the Mears Group on the progress of the 'More Homes in Bromley' scheme to acquire 400 properties to be used as temporary accommodation within the Borough and sub-region.

Public Health

The Committee noted the Commissioning Intentions of the Public Health service and recommended the continuation of Bromley's participation in pan-London commissioning arrangements for Sexual Health Services. It has also reviewed and supported the activity and

performance of the Public Health's provision of support for schools which is funded by the Better Care Fund.

Briefings received and commented on included

- Delayed Transfer of Care
- Healthwatch
- Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board
- Discharge to Access Pilot
- Occupational Therapy Services
- Domiciliary Care Services Monitoring
- Learning Disabilities

There has been a full programme of visits to Care Homes, Day Care providers and Supported Living Accommodation to give Members an insight into service provision.

Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee

The Committee met three times during the year and provided a forum for reporting by and scrutiny of King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (including Princess Royal University Hospital), the Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group and other health providers by invitation. During the year there was a high level of satisfaction for inpatient care at the PRUH but issues were identified in outpatient services in respect of appointment booking and clinic waiting times. An electronic record system was rolled out in November 2017 which it was hoped would streamline discharge processes. Demand for urgent and emergency services continued to rise with particular influences due to winter pressures.

Cllrs Judi Ellis and Ian Dunn represented the London Borough of Bromley at the South East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Chief Officer, Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group provided the following:

- An Evaluation of Winter Schemes
- Report on Reablement Services
- Update on Cancer Care
- Primary Ophthalmology and Pharmacy Services

Conclusion

The scrutiny of both services and contracts has been intense this year and again I thank all Members of the Committees and of partner organisations for their active participation. I also thank Officers of the Local Authority for the detailed work they have presented to me personally and to the Committees. The CQC inspection of the PRUH has sharply focussed our minds on our responsibility to all Bromley residents, and with this in mind I have asked that an additional Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting be added to the 2018/19 programme. Furthermore, Paul Feven, Director: Programmes (LBB) and Graham Mackenzie, Director: Transformation and Integration (CCG) have joined the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee as Strategic Lead Officers.

Councillor Mary Cooke
Chairman, Care Services PDS Committee

6. Report from Education, Children & Families Select Committee

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

1. The Select Committee replaced the Policy Development and Scrutiny (PDS) Committee in May 2016.
 - 1.1 We outlined the main changes in our 2016-17 report in the way which the Select Committee works as opposed to the former PDS Committee
 - 1.2 2017-18 saw the remit of the Select Committee widened to include Children and Families social care in line with expansion of the responsibilities of the Portfolio.
 - 1.3 A further innovation in 2017-18 was the expansion of the responsibilities of the Education Budget Sub-Committee under the chairmanship of the Vice Chairman of the Select Committee, Cllr Neil Reddin. The Sub-Committee was renamed in line with main committee change and now also has responsibility for Performance Monitoring. The membership was also widened to include co-opted members.
 - 1.4 Once again the final reports and recommendations of the Select Committee have been referred to Full Council for consideration and also provided to the relevant Executive committees so they can respond on recommendations within their remit. The Select Committee has subsequently published all responses along with its observations.
2. During the year the Committee has held four full inquiries and four mini sessions.
 - 2.1 The topic covered were:
 - i. Children's Services Landscape (June 2017)
 - ii. Child Mental Health Services (October 2017)
 - iii. Early Intervention and Troubled Families (January 2018)
 - iv. Early Years, Child Minding and the 30 Hours Challenge (February 2018)
 - 2.2 The four mini sessions;
 - i. Progress on implementing the Children's Services Improvement Plan (June 2017)
 - ii. Adult Education Reforms (June 2017)
 - iii. Youth Offending Service update (January 2018)
 - iv. Preventing Permanent Exclusion from School (February 2018)

- 2.3 In addition the Portfolio Holder has attended each meeting and has been questioned extensively on his regular updates to the Select Committee.
- 2.4 The Committee also held scrutiny sessions with the interim Director of Education Mrs Gillian Palmer and the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Education, Care and Health, Mr Ade Adetosoye.
- 2.5 The Select Committee was delighted to receive a presentation from members of the Living in Care Council at its October 2017 meeting.
- 2.6 Under the new 'Call in' procedure for the Committee there was one request by the Chairman with regard to the Child Sexual Exploitation Support Services Contract. This was 'called in' prior to decision by the Portfolio Holder because it had not been subject to pre-scrutiny because of the timescale involved. At its meeting in September 2017 the Education, Children and Families Budget and Performance Monitoring Sub-Committee examined the contract and recommended that it be approved.
3. The Education, Children and Families Budget and Performance Monitoring Sub-committee met four times during the year.
4. A report evaluating the success or otherwise of the Select Committee experiment was published in April 2017. The conclusion was that the members of the Select Committee found the new way of working much more effective and interesting and enabled Members to delve into greater detail and scrutiny than under the previous system.
5. We were delighted that our report on Alternative Education was supplied to Lord Soley as part of his preparation for his private members' bill on reforming Home Education.
6. I would like to thank my Deputy Chairman Cllr Reddin for his support and chairmanship of 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 Ade Adetosoye, Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director (ECHS), Janet Baily, Director of Children's Social Care, former Director of Education Jane Bailey and Gillian Bailey, interim Director of Education. 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 hard working and ever cheerful clerk Philippa Gibbs for excellent minutes produced in good time and for drafting the Select Committee's reports.

Cllr Nicholas Bennett, MA, JP
Chairman
Education, Children and Families Select Committee

7. Report from Environment PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Samaris Huntington-Thresher
Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Catherine Rideout

Introduction

The services provided within the Environment Portfolio affect every resident of Bromley, from residential services such as the collection of waste through to the condition and congestion of our roads and the ability to enjoy our parks and open spaces. In addition residents are wanting to interact with the service in much greater numbers than ever before in order to report concerns, make suggestions or to increasingly access services through online channels.

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 Scrutiny of the Environment Portfolio Plan

The Committee values the Portfolio Plan as a clear record of priorities and how implementation, improvement and innovation are to be achieved but also as an ongoing assessment of progress and performance against agreed targets that can be tracked to ensure our high standards are being maintained and to reassure residents of their importance. The Committee contributes to the Plan as part of its policy development role and through scrutiny of the Portfolio Holder and Portfolio Plan twice a year, ensuring that progress is analysed and recommendations from the Committee are taken forward.

During 2017/18 the Portfolio Plan priorities included:

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

The Committee scrutinises progress of these priorities during the year in several ways, such as through ongoing reviews of agreed work programmes and pre-decision scrutiny of Portfolio Holder and Executive decisions.

These include programmes such as: the Highway Maintenance Investment Strategy where progress and decisions relating to this programme have been regularly reviewed, feedback and recommendations made to the Portfolio Holder; review of LIP works and road improvement schemes that have been developed to relieve traffic congestion, improve safety for road users, or address parking concerns. Review of these traffic schemes ensures consistency of approach and a framework for feedback prior to implementation. This year has also seen an increased number of cycling and walking schemes where review by the Committee has provided valuable input. Support and review of strategies for the regeneration of Crystal Palace Park and investment in the enhancement of Scadbury Park Moated Manor are additional areas that have been investigated by the Committee.

A further major area that the Committee has been involved in is the Commissioning Programme for Environmental Services where the new contracts will have significant impact in future years and updates of proposals, strategy and progress are under continuing consideration and review.

Monitoring

A key role of the Committee is in undertaking regular monitoring of the budget and review of the capital programme to ensure transparency, understanding and challenge for changes. In addition the committee has received updates on the contract register and database and the risk register to enable proper scrutiny and management.

Service Reviews

Partner reviews within the department are an important aspect of the Committee scrutiny role to ensure that our partners are delivering on their remit and providing a responsive quality service in line with their contract. The Committee invited APCOA, the new parking service contractor to address the Committee in order to scrutinise their performance and to highlight to them the importance that the committee attaches to provision of this service. The change of contractor led to greater teething problems than anticipated and these issues were being resolved with considerable support from officers. However, the Committee felt that it was important to understand the reasons behind these issues and through the review to have confidence in the commitment and ability of the contractor to continue to improve. A second partner review was undertaken with Kier who manage the Street Services contract. This is a major contract with significant resident interaction and risk to reputation for the Council and the Committee has an important role in reviewing performance, understanding concerns and discussing future opportunities.

Policy development

Policy development is integral to many areas of the Committee's work. This year has included work in areas such as: ensuring our continuing reduction of waste going to landfill; the enhancement of measures to improve recycling including improved take-up of the green garden waste service and online resources to promote this; initial groundwork in the development of a policy and trials for Electric Vehicle charging points in response to changing needs.

Plus, an in-depth review of our customer service function and interaction with residents was undertaken in light of the increasing expectation of residents to have a more fluid relationship with the way the Council provides services and reacts to reports and suggestions through different channels such as Fix My Street. This also covered the development of Neighbourhood Managers to be the local face of the Council within the community. The Committee recognised the need for the Council to be pro-active and have up-to-the-minute information readily accessible in order to react in a timely manner in a rapidly changing online environment and the limitations of current practices, with a working party developing these ideas further.

Conclusion

My thanks go to all members of the Committee for their enthusiasm and commitment to ensuring that we provide effective scrutiny of the service and for their contribution to policy development. I would also like to thank the Portfolio Holder and officers for their unwavering support and our partners and contractors for their positive contributions to help the committee to deliver a challenging work programme in the past year.

**Councillor Samaris Huntington-Thresher
Chairman, Environment PDS Committee**

8. Report from Public Protection and Safety PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Alexa Michael

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Christopher Pierce

The Public Protection & Safety Policy Development and Scrutiny (PP&S PDS) Committee will have met five times during the 2017-18 Council year. (The final meeting of the year is scheduled for Tuesday 6 March 2018).

Portfolio Priorities and PDS Reports

At the first PP&S PDS meeting held on 29 June 2017, the Public Protection & Safety Portfolio Holder, Cllr Kate Lymer, outlined the Public Protection and Safety Draft Portfolio Plan priorities for 2017-18. These were to:

- Support the Safer Bromley Partnership and co-ordinate the Council's response to its statutory duty under PREVENT.
- Tackle the sale of age-restricted products, particularly knives, alcohol and tobacco through test purchase operations.
- Take action against rogue traders, particularly those who target the vulnerable, through preventative and enforcement activity with banks and adult safeguarding partners.
- Inspect 100% of high-risk food businesses (Risk Category A and B hygiene) to ensure food safety standards are met.
- Contribute to maintaining a safe environment by providing 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.

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

- Gate Zero Report Animal Health and Welfare Service
- Food Standards Agency Audit of Food Hygiene Service Delivery
- Food Safety Service Plan 2017 to 2018
- Trading Standards Service Plan
- Dogs and Pest Control Contracts
- CCTV Procurement Strategy
- Gate Review for Mortuary Service
- Counter Terrorism/Prevent Updates
- Domestic Violence and VAWG Report
- Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Service Update Reports
- Crime and Disorder in the Night Time Economy
- MOPAC Updates
- Asset Recovery Incentivisation Scheme (ARIS)

The Chairman invited a report on *Adults who misuse drugs: the findings of a health needs assessment in Bromley*. The report provided a summary of the findings of a health needs assessment of the population of adults with problematic drug use in Bromley Borough.

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. The main focus of the Police Update at the June 2017 meeting was knife crime although other Police Updates tended to be more general. Members were very concerned about the spate of moped-enabled crime in London and the fact that the Police are not allowed to give chase. It was agreed that the Chairman would draft a letter to the Mayor of London on behalf of the PDS urging that the Police be permitted to pursue mopeds when a crime had been committed. A letter was duly sent and a non-committal response received from the Mayor.

Members showed grave concern at proposals to link Bromley with Croydon and Sutton Boroughs in a new tri-borough Basic Command Unit (BCU). The sheer size of the three Boroughs meant that Police would be likely to experience difficulty in meeting crime response times. In addition, Police resources would be likely to be diverted to Croydon at the expense of Bromley (and Sutton). Strong representations were made to Sophie Linden, the Deputy Mayor for Policing. In addition, a tri-Borough trial between Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge found that Police response times to crimes in these Boroughs dropped sharply and that the new set-up had “no positives”. Despite further lobbying of the Deputy Mayor from both the Portfolio Holder and her counterpart in Sutton, Bromley is set to be partnered with Croydon and Sutton in the new BCU.

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

A visit by the Food Standards Agency in April 2017 found that the existing system of food hygiene inspections was excellent but more people were needed to reduce the backlog of visits to food premises. To this end, a total of two full-time permanent and three full-time temporary food safety offices (up to 18 months) were recruited in 2017. In addition, a full-time temporary Business Continuity Officer was recruited in October 2017 for two years to strengthen this very important area of the Portfolio’s work.

Presentations

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

- British Transport Police
- Sarah Armstrong (Say No 2 Knives) on knife crime
- The Borough Police Gangs’ Team
- London Fire Brigade
- London Probation Service
- London Ambulance Service
- South London and Maudsley (SLaM) NHS Trust
- Bromley Youth Council

Member Visits

Two Member visits were arranged during 2016-17. A visit to the refurbished CCTV control room at the Civic Centre took place in the summer. On 22 January 2018, a number of Members visited the Victim Support (VS) HQ at Elephant and Castle where they met the VS staff and learned about the various aspects of VS's work in supporting victims of all kinds of crime. Members also have an open invitation to attend Community Impact Days and test purchasing exercises of age-restricted goods as observers.

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 30 September. The Chairman attended a workshop at City Hall in September which looked at public access to Police services and the make-up of SNBs in the different London Boroughs.

Cllr Alexa Michael
Chairman, Public Protection and Safety PDS Committee
March 2018

9. Report from Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee

Chairman: Cllr. Michael Rutherford

Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Julian Benington

1.1 The Committee met four 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. Nicolas Weaks. 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 2017 meeting.

1.3 Topics the PDS Committee have focused on include:

Town Centres

1.4 *Bromley:* The R&R PDS Committee scrutinised proposed Bromley High Street public realm improvements and the relocation of the market. It expressed concerns about the consultation being performed on the proposals and asked for further engagement with market. The portfolio holder took these comments and additional consultation led to changes to market layout, an increase in the number of stalls and an additional focus on stall branding and advertising the market. The Committee also scrutinised proposals for Site G. Following its scrutiny a proposed land swap in Library Gardens was withdrawn.

1.5 *Beckenham:* Through its Sub-Committee, the Beckenham Town Centre Working Group, it supported an architectural student competition to design the Beckenham Green Canopy. The Working Group was also crucial in enabling Beckenham to get its Purple Flag status for a safe night-time economy. The PDS Committee strongly supported the proposed Beckenham Business Improvement District and is pleased that traders voted in favour of it.

1.6 *Orpington:* At the Committee's final meeting of the civic year, it will review development opportunities for Orpington town centre. It will hear and challenge the potential opportunity sites in the town for sustaining and improving the local economy and for new homes. Earlier in the civic year it gave its input to the second Orpington BID term and its comments were taken into account in the Executive meeting.

1.7 *Penge:* The Committee discussed updates throughout the year on the scheme to improve Penge town centre. The PDS Committee strongly supported the proposed Penge Business Improvement District and is pleased that traders voted in favour of it.

Leisure and Culture

1.8 *Library Service:* In the July 2017 meeting, the Committee gave its support for Greenwich Leisure Limited being awarded a contract to run the library service for 10

years. It was assured that the number of libraries and opening times would not reduce and that savings would be achieved for the Bromley taxpayer in every year of the contract.

1.9 *Cultural Activities*: Continued support was given to the Biggin Hill Memorial Museum, and progress on the scheme was tracked throughout the year. It thanked officers for their excellent work on the museum for their work on the proposals and fundraising support.

1.10 *Crystal Palace Park*: The Committee was pleased to support plans for the regeneration of Crystal Palace Park. It considered both the proposals and the business case and considered that the proposals would both improve the park and deliver an appropriate number of new homes.

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.

1.12. The Committee succeeded in bringing about a change of approach to ensuring tall buildings in the borough are safe. Following the Grenfell Tower disaster the committee wanted reassurance that Bromley did not have tall buildings that contained similarly flammable cladding. It was satisfied with the Council's proactive approach with public sector providers and housing associations, but wanted a similarly rigorous approach with private sector tall buildings. As a result of the committee's scrutiny, the Council has confirmation from landlords that there is no such cladding in Bromley's tall buildings.

Scrutiny of the Portfolio Holder

1.13 The Committee scrutinised the portfolio budget, requesting that officers and the portfolio holder explained areas where spending was increasing. Particular attention was given to ensure that where third parties run council services, the quality remains unchanged or better and that cost reduces throughout the contract.

1.14 The Committee also analysed the contract register twice throughout the year, challenging on specific contracts to ensure that contracts avoid being managed effectively and there is suitable foresight of where new contracts are required.

Presentations

1.15 The Committee is grateful to MyTime and GLL 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