

Decision Maker: GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday 30 March 2023

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: REPORTS FROM EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS

Contact Officer: Graham Walton, Democratic Services Manager
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Chief Officer: Tasnim Shawkat, Director of Corporate Services and Governance

Ward: All

1. Reason for decision/report and options

- 1.1 As part of this Committee's decisions in relation to the Members' Allowances Scheme 2008/09, it was agreed that this Committee should receive an annual report from each of the Executive Assistants outlining the work they have undertaken over the past year in justification of the receipt of their allowance (currently £3,746pa in 2022/23). This decision was reaffirmed by the Committee at subsequent meetings, and is referred to in the "Guidance Note: Executive Assistants" at Appendix 7 to the Council's Constitution. Appendix A to this report includes reports from the two current Executive Assistants -

Adult Care & Health - Cllr Mike Botting
Sustainability, Green Services and Open Spaces – Cllr Thomas Turrell

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

That reports from Executive Assistants summarising their work during 2022/23 be noted

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: Not Applicable

Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority (delete as appropriate):
(5) To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated Cost: £18,730
2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost: 2022/23 budget is £18,730
3. Budget head/performance centre: Democratic Representation
4. Total current budget for this head: £1,137k
5. Source of funding: Revenue Budget

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): Not Applicable
2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None:
2. Call-in: Not Applicable: This report does not involve an executive decision

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable

Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: Not Applicable

Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: Not Applicable

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected): The Members Allowances Scheme allows for up to five Executive Assistants to be appointed.

Impact on the Local Economy:

1. Summary of local economy implications: Not Applicable

Impact on Health and Wellbeing

1. Summary of Health and Wellbeing Implications: Not Applicable

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

Non-Applicable Headings:	Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children, Policy, Financial, Personnel, Legal, Procurement, Property, Carbon Reduction/Local Economy/Health and Wellbeing/ Customers/Ward Councillors
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Previous reports to GP&L Committee

Cllr. Mike Botting
Executive Assistant to the Adult Care & Health Portfolio Holder

I have now been in post in the role of Executive Assistant for the Portfolio Holder for Adult Care and Health Services since May 2021. I maintain regular contact with the Portfolio holder discussing several times a week matters within the portfolio that require action or clarification. I meet officers both virtually and in person as necessary to discuss matters appertaining to my specific areas of responsibility or the portfolio in general. I still maintain a specific remit to concentrate on Care Home monitoring, liaison with Health Watch Bromley, Complaints management and the Learning Disability Partnership board. I have during the past year taken over the post of Loneliness Champion for the borough which has provided a challenging but extremely interesting area of responsibility.

I regularly attend the bi-weekly Portfolio Holders Briefing and update meetings with the Director of Adult Care Services and other senior officers where all topics relating to the business of the portfolio and the wider matters relating to the integration with health partners are discussed.

I meet with the Safeguarding, Practice and Quality improvement team leader to discuss the monitoring of care homes. As a result, the method of recording the monitoring visits themselves has changed to make the report more simplistic, removing some of the more technical analytical data. I have only been able to visit two care homes during this reporting period with the LBB monitoring officer for inspections. These visits have better equipped me to understand the process for what happens as a result of the inspection, how it is recorded and what subsequently occurs.

In addition, I attend the care home forum which better equips me to understand the problems encountered by the care home staff, their solutions to the issues whilst everyone present has the opportunity to learn from others.

I have been able to accompany a Healthwatch inspection team and participate in the inspection of a care home which was an interesting experience as the inspection concentrated more on the experience of the staff. This particular inspection highlighted the dedication and on occasions sacrifice that the staff make for the care of their residents.

I maintain contact with the Bromley Healthwatch Coordinator, commenting on reports and offering advice. I hope to accompany the Healthwatch Team on another Care Home 'Enter and View' visit in the near future.

As the joint Chairman of the Learning Disability (LD) Board where all matters appertaining to improving services for users with LD are openly discussed, I get the opportunity to engage with partners, schools, people with learning disabilities and their carers. This remains a really rewarding board to Co-Chair with presentations and discussions on a multitude of issues. My challenge during the last year was to get the Board back to an in person meeting which we actually achieved. This board was very received and appreciated by the attendees, however despite my attempts to maintain in person meetings as a result of advice from public health colleagues the last board took place on line. My ambition this year is to get these meetings back to face to face events which I believe are really appreciated by attendees.

I retain responsibility for the monitoring of complaints within the portfolio. I scrutinise the weekly lists of any current or outstanding complaints including those relating to financial issues. Any that concern me are discussed with the portfolio holder and on occasions the director. My intervention on several complaints has resulted in a speedier resolution. It is imperative that any complaints are not only dealt with within the timescales set out in the Corporate Complaints Policy but are also dealt with

appropriately including any those which are referred to the Local Government Ombudsman which fortunately are very few.

I have retained the post of LBB Armed Forces Champion and am working towards identifying our veterans through signposting of suitable services in an attempt to ensure that they receive appropriate assistance in respect of health and care issues ensuring that they are aware of and benefitting from the council's loneliness strategy. The first tranche of information released recently as a result of the 2021 Census has provided us with better data in respect of veterans but we still have a long way to go. The Borough's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant will hopefully be reaffirmed later this year with high level officer meetings taking place shortly.

I have also taken over as the Loneliness champion and am very excited by the progress that LBB are making in many areas. Our appointment of a member of staff to lead on this strategy has resulted in a very fast development of the aims of the strategy being innovative in new areas, being a trailblazer and a place that others come to seek advice. I maintain regular contact with my loneliness officer discussing matters as they occur and having an in person meeting once a month. As stated above there will in time be opportunities to integrate my two roles of Armed Forces Champion and Loneliness Champion for the mutual benefit of both groups.

Councillor Thomas Turrell
Executive Assistant to the Sustainability, Green Services and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder

Summary:

Since taking on the Assistant role in May 2022 I have focused on three projects, with the main one being the repairs to Kelsey Park Bridge. I also support Councillor Cuthbert through a number of ad-hoc responsibilities, such as noting actions for the Portfolio Holder at Council and PDS meetings, action enquiries raised by members at meetings, creating videos with the Portfolio Holder on items such as the tree-watering during the heat wave, the jubilee parks fund application opening and the works at Churchfield Waste and Recycling centre. I also regularly meet with the Portfolio Holder and with Officers in the department.

Summary of Projects:

- Kelsey Park Bridge Repairs
- Fix My Street Improvements
- Snow Friends Champion

Project Details

Kelsey Park Bridge Repairs: This project has been my priority in the role. I meet monthly with Officers to discuss progress. I have also met with members of the Friends of the Park Committee, organised meetings with the Friends and Officers, and attended the Friends of the Park AGM to take questions and provide an update. I am in regular contact with Officers about improving communications about the project and have arranged several briefing sessions with the Ward Councillors.

Fix My Street: I have been tasked with seeking improvements and identifying ways in which the user experience can be enhanced for Fix My Street. I met regularly with the responsible Officers where we are putting together a pipeline of improvements which I hope to be able to share with Councillors shortly. I have also met with the Liberal Democrat Group to hear their feedback on the service and am happy to do the same with all groups on the Council.

Snow Friends Champion: as part of the Executive Assistant role I am also the Council's Snow Friends Champion. In January we held a conference for the Snow Friend Co-ordinators to thank them for their work and share updates on the scheme. I have since met with the lead Officer on the scheme to discuss some of the challenges around re-registration and discuss a recruitment project ahead of the next season.