

# London Borough of Bromley

## PART ONE - PUBLIC

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**Decision Maker:** **EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS POLICY  
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date:** **18 September 2023**

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

**Title:** **SCRUTINY OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**Contact Officer:** Ade Adetosoye CBE, Chief Executive  
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**Chief Officer:** Ade Adetosoye CBE, Chief Executive

**Ward:** All Wards

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1. Reason for report

This report provides a written update to inform the scrutiny of the Chief Executive at Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**Members are requested to note the report.**

### **3. COMMENTARY**

#### **Introduction**

3.1 Since my previous scrutiny session in March 2023, I can provide the following updates:

- Updates on key organisational priorities for 2023/24.
- Priorities for the next six months.

#### **Updates on Key Organisational Priorities for 2023/24**

##### **Financial Management**

- 3.2 The 2023/24 Council Tax Report to Executive on 8 February 2023 identified a balanced budget in 2023/24 and a budget gap of £1.7 million in 2024/25, rising to £10.1 million in 2025/26 and £29.6 million per annum by 2026/27.
- 3.3 There also remains risks in meeting the budget gap arising from budget savings, mitigation options to address cost pressures, as well as ongoing cost pressures arising from new burdens, the ongoing high inflation, and the impact of Government policy changes and other burdens such as, no recourse to public funds, automatic enrolment, various changes from the Social Work Act and Adult Social Care Reforms, extended support to care leavers to the age of 25 years old, the previous lifting of the public sector pay cap, indexation and equalisation of guaranteed minimum pensions, deprivation of liberty, national living wage, the Homelessness Reduction Act, and other examples where such burdens have not been adequately funded.
- 3.4 In response to these challenges, we continue with the One Council Transformation approach, delivering planned mitigation and Transformation savings, as well as minimising any further cost/ growth pressures by identifying options from 2024/25 to address the medium-term budget gap and ensure the Council can continue to 'live within its means'.
- 3.5 The Senior Leadership Team and I keep a close focus on the monitoring of the Council's budget at meetings of Chief Officer's Executive (COE) and budget challenges sessions. Equally, fortnightly meetings of Transformation Board continue to monitor delivery against agreed savings, alongside identifying other opportunities to generate savings and cost efficiencies.

##### **Delivery of Transforming Bromley Programme and Transforming Bromley Roadmap for 2024 – 2028**

- 3.6 The 2019 – 2023 Transforming Bromley Programme covered a whole Council approach, and this has been a helpful and inclusive approach for all staff to contribute and take responsibility for 'Transforming Bromley'.
- 3.7 Collectively the Council has delivered a balanced budget over the last four years, and the Council has met its financial obligations to ensure value for money for residents through efficient and effective use of monies.

- 3.8 In terms of future transformation, the 2023/24 Budget includes the full year effect of the Phase Two Transformation Savings combined with new changes, totalling £2.9 million in 2023/24 increasing to £4.5 million per annum from 2026/27.
- 3.9 The Council is in the process of a refresh of the Transforming Bromley Roadmap for 2024 – 2028, and a Strategic Transformation Development Board (STDB) has been meeting on a fortnightly basis to help identify key issues in the following six areas over the next four years to help inform the direction of the Programme going forward:
1. Integrated Commissioning Board/ Health.
  2. Economic Development.
  3. Assisted Technology/ Adult Social Care.
  4. Environment.
  5. Workforce of the future – fit to succeed.
  6. Customer experience – digitalisation of services.

## **Inspection Readiness**

### Children's Services

- 3.10 Both Children's and Adults Services have made significant preparations in readiness for inspection this year.
- 3.11 Children's Services in anticipation of the upcoming inspection held its Annual Engagement meeting with Ofsted in March, which is an opportunity to set out the positive work that has been undertaken to support our young people. The discussion covered the wide range of ways the Council works with its schools to ensure sufficient school places, support educational attainment and attendance, as well as focusing on safeguarding issues and the level of care provided to our Children in Care.
- 3.12 Feedback following the meeting highlighted a number of achievements that have been worked on over the past year, including initiatives such as the launch of 'Our House', and how the Service has managed to reduce the numbers of children between 0 – 5 years coming into care. The Service was also recognised for its strong early years provision available for pre-school children, as well as how it prepares children to start school ready to learn. In addition, work to support emotional health and wellness in schools to reduce escalation of mental health concerns was recognised positively.
- 3.13 Overall, Ofsted representatives were complimentary about the initiatives they heard about, which is hoped will assist in setting a positive tone in readiness for the anticipated inspection.

### Youth Justice Service

- 3.14 The work of the Youth Justice Service (YJS) is overseen by an Improvement Board and a Challenge Board as it continues on a journey of preparing for external inspection from His Majesty Inspectorate of Probation.

- 3.15 In readiness for inspection, regular audit cycles of practice have been carried out, with the Quality Assurance Framework aligned with Children's Social Care and joint work carried out as part of the audit of Youth Justice cases and in turn Youth Justice Managers audit Social Work cases, which has provided an invaluable insight and understanding of the work of both Service areas. On a monthly basis six cases from the YJS are audited, and feedback and development work are provided, and any remedial work completed where required.
- 3.16 The feedback from this work over the last six months has been positive with strong practice and management oversight and direction being evidenced in practice.

#### Adult Services

- 3.17 In Adult Services, a great deal of preparatory work has been undertaken, including carrying out self-assessments, updating policies and practice guidance, working with staff to prepare them for the reintroduction of an Assurance Process and gathering evidence that could be shared with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) as part of the process when they visit Bromley.
- 3.18 Draft guidance has been received from the CQC regarding the Assurance process, with six authorities trialling the process.
- 3.19 The Department aims to be graded as highly as possible and based on all the work being undertaken around Transformation and reform, the Department stands in good stead. Going forward, the Assurance visit will remain one of the major focuses for the Service.
- 3.20 Alongside CQC Assurance preparedness, the Adults Directorate has also continued its preparations for inspection of its Adult Education and Shared Lives Services, which are both expected imminently.

#### **Ukraine Response**

- 3.21 The Homes for Ukraine Scheme launched on 14 March 2022 by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. 791 guests (409 families) have arrived in the borough under the scheme to date, and it is assumed that many, in addition have also arrived to live with existing family members. 243 children have also arrived under Homes for Ukraine, with significant numbers also seen arriving under the family placement scheme.
- 3.22 The Council has been receiving £10,500 quarterly in arrears for every guest, and an additional £2.1 million Education Grant, which has been used to assist families with community integration, education, and employment opportunities.
- 3.23 A weekly Ukraine Support Hub was established that has provided support from a range of internal and external organisations, including Housing, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Education, Social Care, Public Health, Bromley Y, HR Recruitment etc., which has proved helpful for guests and sponsors alike, with each Hub attended by at least 50 people. Fortnightly meet up sessions have also been held at Bromley Central Library to provide guests and sponsors a space to meet other people from their local community and make connections.
- 3.24 The Council also held, for a consecutive year, a celebration to mark Ukraine

Independence Day on Thursday 24 August 2023, which was well attended.

- 3.25 The work provided by the Council is important as a preventative measure to support both sponsors and guests to avoid potential problems and relationship breakdown leading to homelessness, and the Team will optimise the resources available to continue to support our Ukrainian guests.

### **Health and Care Integration**

- 3.26 The new South East London Integrated Care System (SELICS) arrangements came into effect in July last year and built on existing relationships and ways of working that were already in place. Since, the SELICS 'Integrated Care Strategic Priorities for 2023-28' Strategy has been developed and launched, which identifies the cross-system priorities for improving health and care.
- 3.27 Some of the key projects and innovations the Council and ICB have led on in the last few months include:
- The recommissioning of Mental Health Recovery and Rehab Support and Accommodation, to support rehabilitative accommodation schemes for residents being discharged from hospital.
  - Created a joint Team to administer Personal Health Budgets, which has created cost efficiencies.
  - Jointly commissioned the hospital Discharge and Single Point of Access (SPA) as a permanent service.
  - Refreshed and republished the Integrated Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, focusing on the impact of the Pandemic on children's and adult emotional wellbeing.
  - Implemented a new therapies response to falls and developed pathways with King's College Hospital NHS Trust.
  - Developed a new Adult Mental Health Hub, that has provided a single point of access for community mental health services.
  - Took a joint approach to an all-age Autism Strategy that aims to ensure equality of access to universal services and produced an Action Plan.
  - Made Primary Care improvements including the expansion of Primary Care Teams with Pharmacists, Physio, Mental Health and Paramedics.
- 3.28 Moreover, in response to guidance on Health and Wellbeing Boards issued by the Government in November last year, Angela Bhan, the Bromley Place Executive Director was confirmed as an ICB representative on the Health and Wellbeing Board, so as to further support more joined up planning and working.
- 3.29 A key area of joint strategic planning in recent months has been the development of a joint Health and Wellbeing Board, which will have the following three priority areas:
1. Improving Health and Wellbeing of young people (to include obesity, youth

- violence, adolescent mental health).
  - 2. Improving Health and Wellbeing of Adults (to include obesity, diabetes, dementia, mental health, substance misuse).
  - 3. Disease prevention and helping people to stay well (linking in with the ICB prevention priority and achieving this through the Vital Five work).
- 3.30 The priority areas identified are in alignment with other strategies including the SELICS Strategy, and those currently in development such as the One Bromley Five Year Strategy.

### **Adult Social Care Reforms**

- 3.31 The Department has delivered on a number of key pieces as part of preparations for the introduction of the Adult Social Care Reforms, which have continued despite the Government's announcement that implementation would be delayed.
- 3.32 The required return to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) in October 2022 was submitted with detailed returns from providers completed from a large section of the provider market, which aided the completion of the Market Sustainability Plan. This exercise also confirmed the expected challenges created by having a large private market accessed by 50% of those seeking and paying for care themselves.
- 3.33 As part of mitigation work, a piece of work looking at how the Department can complete assessments using IT and providing the opportunity for people to self-assess is in progress, which is hoped to minimise the need for additional staff. Alongside this, and in response to evidence around those going into care homes due to unawareness of other opportunities, has inspired a piece of work to provide advice to service users to check that all options have been explored, and reminding residents of the alternative support available, which is hoped to reduce numbers into the Service and support more people at home.
- 3.34 Moreover, preparations for the planned re-introduction of an assurance process with Care Quality Commission (CQC) have progressed, which has included ensuring policies and practice are aligned, good application of financial and performance data and that the impact of the work could be evidenced. The department has also continued to work with the voluntary sector, as well as Providers and those that use Services to develop practice.

### **Housing Supply and Affordable Housing**

- 3.35 Schemes to support residents through the provision of cost-effective housing supply include our More Homes Bromley SPV, Meadowship Homes Scheme and self-delivery programmes.
- 3.36 The More Homes Bromley SPV joint partnership between the Council and Mears Group to acquire up to 400 properties currently holds 360 properties located within and outside of the borough.
- 3.37 The Scheme initially operated as temporary accommodation for homeless

households who, after a period of time moved on to alternative accommodation. However, approximately 213 tenancies have been converted from temporary to settled accommodation. Meaning that those housed there can remain in those properties indefinitely and will not have to face the disruption of further move on. It is expected that approximately 300 units of accommodation within the Scheme will be utilised as settled accommodation with the remainder continuing as temporary accommodation in order to give officers flexibility in terms of nominations.

- 3.38 In terms of Phase One of the Council's Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) arrangement with Orchard and Shipman for the acquisition, refurbishment, and management of approximately 242 residential properties for use as affordable rented accommodation, predicted targets are expected to be exceeded, with 255 units to be completed and tenanted by next month (October 2023).
- 3.39 Due to the success of Phase One, additional funding for a second phase to purchase approximately 186 additional units of accommodation commenced in April.
- 3.40 All homes purchased are compliant with required standards and are rented at an affordable level in line with Local Housing Allowance levels. This ensures that tenants are able to maintain their tenancies and not fall into debt.
- 3.41 Together, these key pieces of work are assisting in meeting the Council's statutory rehousing duties and reducing the current reliance on and associated costs of nightly paid accommodation.
- 3.42 As for our Housing Delivery Programme, three affordable housing sites (Bushell, Anerley and Burnt Ash) have now completed, with another (York Rise) under construction.
- 3.43 Additional sites in the pipeline include the West Wickham Library and housing site, which is a mixed-use scheme comprising of housing (26 homes consisting of 14 affordable and 12 private sale homes to generate a capital receipt to provide funding towards community elements) and a library refurbishment scheme, including outdoor activity space. Both the housing and library construction contracts have now commenced and are on track.
- 3.44 Also, an appraisal of the Bromley North site, which is expected to deliver 38 affordable and 37 private units is in progress, and a planning application has been submitted. The viability of the Beckenham Triangle housing site scheme is currently being assessed.

### **Homelessness**

- 3.45 The Council is currently in the process of refreshing its Homelessness Strategy for publishing next April. The new five-year Strategy will provide an overview of existing Services and initiatives in place to prevent homelessness and outline the priorities and objectives that will inform the development of our Homelessness Services in future years.
- 3.46 Homelessness approaches to the Council remain consistently high for reasons

including people being asked to leave their current accommodation, people becoming homeless and having nowhere to go, and also those fleeing domestic abuse.

- 3.47 A triage system is working well to ensure customers are seen quickly, but to further improve our response, the Team are exploring ways to increase the range of housing options available through delivery of new build schemes and Meadowship properties, preventing and relieving homelessness in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, and reducing the number requiring a full main duty assessment.

### **Operational Property Review**

- 3.48 The Council's Operational Property Review sought to identify the optimal operational estate and understand the liability of it over a ten-year period, together with the potential to undertake minor refurbishments where appropriate to minimise future liability.
- 3.49 The findings of this Review and the adoption of the Operational Estate Strategy were reported and agreed at the Executive in November 2022.
- 3.50 A number of workstreams have now been taken forward as part of this key programme for the Council, which includes:

#### Workstream One: Future of HQ Accommodation

To progress the Council's relocation from its existing site to Churchill Court, which saves the need to refurbish the Civic Centre and the need to clear the maintenance liability. The purchase price of the new building will be offset by the disposal of the existing Civic Centre site.

#### Workstream Two: Churchill Theatre and Central Library

To open negotiations with the Trafalgar Theatre Group to see if agreement can be reached on a more sustainable future for the theatre, which, in return for an initial investment, would see the Council relinquishing its liability for ongoing maintenance of the theatre.

#### Workstream Three: Dispose of Properties not Required to Deliver Services

To divest assets which are either surplus to requirements, produce poor returns or are likely to do so, and those where long lease interests could be released by disposal through calculation of marriage value. Disposals are estimated to generate circa £65.8 million by the end of 2023/24.

#### Workstream Four: Refurbishment

To carry out further investigative works of Children and Family Centres, SEN Services, Adult Day Centres and Care Homes, Libraries, Parks Buildings, GM Depots, Youth Centres etc. to confirm the costs of refurbishments and report back to the Executive as a series of costed packages for consideration to award works.

#### Workstream Five: Sites to be Developed for Council Housing Schemes



To take forward feasibility studies and business cases for sites including Station road (Bromley North), Spa Leisure Centre Car Park/ Lewis House (Beckenham Triangle), Manofields, Cornwall Drive, which are believed to have potential for housing delivery, delivering up to 200 additional affordable units with associated Temporary Accommodation savings.

- 3.51 A report seeking the procurement and award of expert advice to inform appraisal work, scoping and contractor procurement to implement the refurbishment work, and the procurement of building contractors to deliver the Operational Property Refurbishment Programme was approved at Executive in March.
- 3.52 As soon as work packages are scoped and costed, these will be reported to the Executive for consideration to proceed and award works packages.

### **Digital Strategy**

- 3.53 A number of pieces have been progressed as part of the Council's digitalisation journey. In particular, those directly focused on 'enabling infrastructure' and supporting a better 'digital experience'.
- 3.54 The Adults Services have continued to exploit the benefits of digitalisation in service delivery through a new Digital Strategy, integrating systems and processes where it is feasible and practical.
- 3.55 Liquidlogic has been implemented for Adult Social Care and priorities for the coming months are online portals that allow self-assessments, professional referrals, and financial calculations to be made and fed directly into the Liquidlogic Adults' Social Care System Software (LAS).
- 3.56 Additionally, the use of Assistive Technology to enable residents to remain in their homes has developed. This has included a pilot for wearable GPS tracking devices that alerts next of kin when a resident leaves a designated area around their property to ensure their safety and providing carer reassurance.
- 3.57 The Service continues to assess residents when discharged from hospital with enhanced packages of care incorporating activity monitoring systems as part of the assessment process aimed at reviewing high level of care including 24-hour care. This includes monitoring safety and possibility of falls at night. Also, work is underway with London Ambulance Service and Occupational Therapy to design new referral pathways and procedures for identifying appropriate residents for assistive technology and CareLink.
- 3.58 Other projects include a pilot of ten activity monitoring systems that are supporting early assessment and identification of need for clients to return to previous levels of function and decrease reliance on long-term domiciliary care. Also, access to the referral process for assistive technology by health professionals and provider services went live in October last year, which is reducing time needed to process referrals.
- 3.59 Plans are now underway to implement and review assistive technology models for Reablement, Autism and Learning Disabilities, self-care for residents with long-term Covid, Hospital discharge step down flats and the Community Falls

Service.

- 3.60 Children's Services have also benefited from greater digitalisation, with new Microsoft Power BI Dashboards developed to enable greater management oversight. A SEND Transport route optimisation solution is now in place and supporting effective planning of routes. Also, Virtual Reality (VR) headsets are being used across Children's Services, with 38 practitioners now trained as VR Practitioners across Children's Social Care as of April 2022 to date, and virtual reality training extended to Bromley Foster Carers in the last year.
- 3.61 In Customer Services, as part of improving 'customer journeys', a proof of concept (POC) VoiceBot has been trialled, which has provided assistance and information to customers of the Service over the phone, and signposting to online content and services where appropriate. Plans for the future development of services are expected to cover the current Corporate Services that are delivered in the Corporate Contact Centre along with the Revenues and Benefits Services.
- 3.62 Moreover, following full membership to the Local London Sub-Regional Partnership (SRP), the Council has unlocked the opportunity to apply to the GLA for Strategic Investment Fund. If successful, plans are to use funding to connect sites in the borough that currently do not have access to full fibre, by deploying new dark fibre infrastructure to enable the upgrade of Council-owned sites and buildings, including extra capacity for additional commercial investment in the Borough.

## **Environment and Public Protection**

- 3.63 The Directorate has delivered on a number of its key priorities over the last few months. These have included:
- Street Lighting LED Upgrade has continued to reap significant energy and carbon savings, as evidenced by a 21% annual reduction.
  - Four new active air quality monitors have been installed across the borough, and nitrogen dioxide levels have seen a reported decrease in line with national guidelines.
  - Three sites have been identified with potential for woodland establishment, with grant funding secured from the Forestry Commission to do detailed design work and consultation as part of the next stage of feasibility.
  - Launched a new Veolia and Street Friends anti-littering campaign.
  - Developed the Council's 'Reduction and Recycling Plan 2023 – 2025', which seeks to minimise waste and maximise recycling and reduce the Council's impact on the environment over the next two years.
  - Begun collaborative work as part of the development of the new 'Community Safety Strategy 2024 – 2027'.
  - Maintaining and investing in the Council's two Waste Transfer Stations

through a Depot Infrastructure Programme, tendering contracts for the delivery of major capital works programme involving improvements to the surface water drainage, hard standing areas and building infrastructure at the Waste Transfer Stations for works to commence in early 2024.

## **Public Health**

3.64 Public Health have continued to work on the delivery of a number of key pieces of work for the Department, this includes:

- Launched the Staff Health Checks for those aged 50+ to support the delivery of the national programme.
- Refreshing the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Increasing the uptake of health improvement programmes such as the Cardio-Vascular Programme, Diabetes Programme and Cancer Screening Programme.
- Supporting Partners with the delivery of other local health initiatives, such as weight management.
- Updating disease management work in preparation of the potential emergence of new diseases.
- Supporting prevention work with colleagues in the Criminal Justice System.
- Continuing important health interventions around substance misuse and hidden harm.
- Recommissioning the Substance Misuse Service and implementing the Combatting Drugs Action Plan.
- Continuing with Transformation work on sexual health.
- Delivering JSNA chapters on a number of identified health trends.

## **Regeneration**

3.65 The Regeneration Department continues to deliver against the borough's 'Regeneration Strategy 2020 to 2030', and key projects include:

### Regeneration Capital Projects

- Bromley High Street Improvement Works (capital works including electrics, planting, paving and lighting) – progress has been made and lighting tests have been taken, with expected date for completion this October.
- Penge High Street and Beckenham High Street Works (capital works including electrics, planting, paving and lighting) – main works are now complete in both areas and are in the final snagging period.

- Crystal Palace Park Regeneration:  
Phase One – Regeneration of the historic 200-acre park – planning permission has been secured and subway restoration is now complete.  
Phase Two – an additional grant has been secured from Historic England and Subway works are on track for completion.  
Restoration of the dinosaurs and the Italian terraces – National Lottery Heritage Fund Grant secured, and multi-disciplinary tender process has been completed with award reported to Executive in May.
- Orpington Town Centre Developing (including a refurbished or new leisure centre) – a contract with Alliance is now in place.
- Beckenham Public Hall – disposal of the site has been agreed as part of the OPR.
- Review for potential commercial and community use of disused park buildings – a tender process has started to inform this work.

#### OPR and Strategy

- Options Appraisal Community Resource Centres – a building review has been undertaken and the libraries at Mottingham and St Paul's Cray were identified as the most suitable for relocation. Castlecombe is being considered for Mottingham longer term, so works have only commenced on the St Paul's Cray site.
- Leisure Strategy and Review – the Strategy has been produced and is at the review stage.

#### Culture and Events

- Redevelopment of West Wickham Leisure Centre – contract with Alliance has commenced and work is on track.
- Armed Forces Covenant Refresh – new Covenant has been signed and an Action Plan is in delivery.

#### Economic Development

- Night Time Enterprise Zone (GLA funded improvements to Town Centre to encourage evening activity) – programme continues with first claim submitted in March 2023.
- West Wickham library enhancements and business support – submitted Interim Borough Return to GLA in April 2023 for UKSPF SLB and Community and Place Programmes.
- Digital Infrastructure Works – works continue to better connect the borough.

### **Priorities for the Next Six Months**

- 4.1 The key organisational priorities for the next six months are:
1. Delivery of Transforming Bromley Programme.
  2. Maintain our Long-Term Budget Management and Financial Strategy to manage demand and growth.
  3. Move the Council's Hub to the new Civic office.
  4. Delivery of our Operational Property Programme.
  5. Meet our statutory and regulatory requirements and inspection readiness.
  6. Supporting our workforce
  7. Support organisational compliance against all standards and regulations.
  8. Respond to legislative changes and macro issues from Central Government.
  9. Inspection and regulatory readiness
  10. Partnerships and improved interface with elected members on ward related issues.