

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 30 JANUARY 2020**

COUNCILLORS

PRESENT

Susan Erbil (Chair), Achilleas Georgiou (Vice-Chair), Tolga Aramaz, Guner Aydin, Sinan Boztas, Bernadette Lappage, Edward Smith and Lee-David Sanders.

**STATUTORY
CO-OPTES:**

1 vacancy (Church of England diocese representative), Mr Tony Murphy (Catholic diocese representative), Alicia Meniru & 1 vacancy (Parent Governor representative) - Italics Denotes absence

OFFICERS:

Joanne Drew (Director of Housing & Regeneration), Garry Knights (Head of Housing Property Services), Bindi Nagra (Director of Health & Adult Social Care), Sharon Burgess (Head of Safeguarding Adults & Principal Social Worker), Fiana Centala (Mental Capacity and DOLS Manager), Claire Johnson (Head of Governance, Scrutiny & Registration Services), Elaine Huckell (Scrutiny Secretary)

Also Attending:

Councillor Nesil Caliskan (Leader of the Council), Councillor Gina Needs (Cabinet Member Social Housing), Councillor Alev Cazimoglu (Cabinet Member Health & Social Care), Councillor Rick Jewell (Cabinet Member Children's Services)

476

WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Councillor Susan Erbil welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Tony Murphy.

477

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

478

LEADER UPDATE ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The Leader set out the priorities for the Council for the future as follows:

1. Crime. Areas of the borough have experienced violent incidents. Of particular concern is the number of serious youth violence incidents. However, the figures for this has shown a slight improvement recently. The Leader attends meetings with the Borough Commander on a monthly basis. She mentioned that the police refer to prostitution as a low- level crime, however she felt this needed to be challenged

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30.1.2020

because this issue is linked to both drugs and gangs. Additional youth workers and a mentoring scheme for the borough is anticipated. It is hoped that we may be successful in our bid for £1m from 'Young Londoners' award.

2. Housing. The Housing Strategy reflects our ambitions for the borough with the building of 3,500 council owned affordable homes and estate renewal programmes including that for Joyce and Snells. It was anticipated that the proposed introduction of licensing for private rented landlords would help to improve the standard of private rented housing. A lot of work has been undertaken which is aimed at reducing homelessness. Policies and strategies are being developed so that there should be more secure tenancies and less need for temporary accommodation
3. Budget – The priority of our budget has been to protect our most vulnerable residents and ensure adequate funding for Adult Social Care and Children's services.
4. In-sourcing of housing repairs service – We have taken on direct responsibility for the day to day repairs service, our housing MOT service is gradually building up capacity for this. It is hoped that we would also in-source the cleaning contract in future.
5. Poverty – The Enfield Poverty and Inequality Commission, with the Smith Institute had published its report (Jan 2020), where evidence was given of increasing poverty and inequality in the borough. Action plans and workstreams would be prepared to deliver on the 27 recommendations put forward by the Commission.
6. Strategic Infrastructure – Discussions/ lobbying takes place regarding major projects from Enfield perspective including Crossrail 2, Meridian Water.
7. Brexit - Risk management undertaken and reminders to EU citizens of process for them to apply for settled status. Working with Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) on this.
8. Climate Change – A carbon strategy is being looked at for the borough including our supply chains (procurement) in order that we can become carbon neutral. This would include our pension funding.

Councillor Erbil thanked the Leader for her informative update and referred to a previous request that the Associate Cabinet Members (ACMs) attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to discuss their work programmes.

Members had previously asked that should the ACMs be unable attend OSC then the Leader was to be asked to come to OSC to speak on their behalf. This was why she had been asked to attend this meeting.

The Leader stated that ACM's report to Cabinet, they do not have a budget and do not make Executive decisions. They are invited to take part in discussions at Cabinet and provide input from a geographical perspective. The Monitoring Officer had previously stated that 'OSC does not have power to demand attendance of ACM's to OSC meetings, this only applies to Cabinet members and officers at Head of Service level and above'.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30.1.2020

Cllr Smith said OSC decides which areas they wish to investigate, we were interested in how the ACM's were performing and there was no intention to undermine them. He was concerned that they had refused to attend this meeting and referred to future changes to the Constitution which may prevent ACM's from attending OSC in future.

The Leader said a constitutional review was being undertaken to ensure it was clear and 'legally sound'. Proposals would go to meetings for discussion.

A Member stated that there would be value in having updates from ACM's on how Council priorities were affecting the spatial area they cover. The Leader stated that Cabinet had oversight of the work of ACMs needed to and Cabinet were satisfied.

The following questions/ issues were raised regarding the key priorities given by the Leader:

- Neighbourhood policing - It was thought more police officers were needed on the ground. It had previously been reported that the police were receiving insufficient intelligence, however a member stated that residents said they have provided information on various issues over the years, but these matters had not been acted upon. The Leader urged everyone to continue to inform the police of any issues including that of prostitution. She mentioned that we were continuing to fund extra police officers. We also have youth officers some are now working at North Middlesex hospital to support young people. She said we were pursuing a preventative agenda by increasing funding for youth services for example at youth centres.
- Brexit / Reminders to EU citizens – In answer to a question about how people would know of the process to apply for settled status, it was stated that mapping was carried out of EU citizens 4 to 5 months ago and direct mailing undertaken to inform them of the process. Adverts were also placed in community- based newspapers.
- Housing - The Leader confirmed that the council's direct delivery new house building programme was based on London Affordable Rents which are set by the GLA and support its grant funding programme.

Councillor Aramaz referred to the London affordable rent level being 60% higher than Enfield council social rent and said paying London affordable rent would put many people into poverty. He mentioned that LB Haringey do not charge the London affordable rent level. The Leader confirmed she and officers would provide more detail and comparability of the changes – Haringey social rent level charges are higher than Enfield SRL charges.

The Leader highlighted that the biggest affordability pressure for residents was in the prs where rents often exceeded LHA levels which are well above London Affordable Rent levels. The priority was therefore to build as many new council homes as possible.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30.1.2020

The panel discussed the Council's 'Enfield Housing test for good growth' which established the principle that people on or below the Enfield median income level of £33,830 should not spend more than a third of their income on housing costs (as mentioned in the report of the Enfield Poverty and Inequality Commission, page11)

- Air Pollution – Councillor Lappage referred to the problem of air pollution and a recent study which showed the level of air pollution for an Enfield School was comparable to an area of high pollution in central London (the Strand). Playground time has sometimes had to be stopped because of the air pollution level. It was agreed that this issue was a high priority, it was thought we should learn from other schemes and adopt plans appropriately. It was necessary to reduce car use and encourage people to cycle and to walk to school.
- Crime – Councillor Lee-Sanders is the chair of the Crime Scrutiny panel and he spoke about various crime issues and the high crime levels that have been seen over recent years. He shared the concerns of the Leader regarding prostitution and its link with other crimes. He said the new Superintendent Chris Jones had been in post for the last couple of months responsible for Neighbourhoods and Schools. He spoke of a recent report on 'cuckoo-ing' where a dwelling is taken over by criminal exploiters, often drug dealers. He also said that burglary levels appear to have increased in the eastern part of the borough more than the western area. He thought it may be useful for a 'spatial' study to be organized involving the ACM's and Safer neighbourhood teams.

The Leader referred to additional funding that had been allocated for 'alleygating'. She said prostitution in the Fore Street area are often of Eastern European background. When the police increased activity in this area the problem improved for a short time. A large- scale operation carried out in one of the eastern London boroughs had been successful in eliminating this. The importance of dealing with this as a safeguarding issue was stressed, with the local authority providing help and support.

The Leader left the meeting at this point

479

MODERN SLAVERY STRATEGY

Councillor Alev Cazimoglu (Cabinet Member Health & Social Care) introduced the report on the Modern Slavery Strategy 2019 -2022. The Strategy had been the subject of an online public consultation which had ended November 2019.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30.1.2020

Bindi Nagra (Director of Health & Adult Social Care), Sharon Burgess (Head of Safeguarding Adults & Principal Social Worker) and Fiana Centala (Mental Capacity and DOLS Manager) answered questions regarding the report.

The Council had not been obliged to issue a modern slavery statement but had chosen to do so in order to demonstrate its commitment to promote transparency in supply chains and the eradication of modern slavery in the borough.

Modern Slavery was defined by the Modern Slavery Act 2015, as a criminal offence of slavery, servitude and compulsory labour; it also includes human trafficking.

The report highlighted the following:

- As a public sector organisation, Enfield Council has a duty to report instances of suspected modern slavery.
- Enfield Council had signed the 'Charter Against Modern Slavery' October 2018.
- There had been an appointment of Modern slavery lead within adult social care and champions within the team.
- Training is being delivered to members of staff and social care providers. A conference on this subject was held on 16 May 2019 and another planned for 13 May 2020
- A Modern Slavery Team to start January 2020.
- If anyone thinks there is a possibility of modern slavery they should call the dedicated modern slavery team on 020 8132 2154 or report it online at modernslavery@enfield.gov.uk

The following issues/ questions were raised

1. It was asked if training on this subject could also be provided for Members?
A factsheet had been prepared for Members for their information. Training on this subject would be included on the Members training programme.
2. It was important that companies and communities are aware of this issue. The team will focus on our suppliers to ensure the supply chain is free from modern slavery.
3. This report is expected to go to Cabinet on 11 March 2020.
4. It was noted that the setting up of the modern slavery team was not being funded by Government. The team consists of two officers and one police officer. It was asked how it was decided that this number would be adequate? Sharon Burgess responded that they would be looking at businesses, passing on cases for criminal investigation. Individual cases would go through the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH team). MASH shares the findings of its investigations at the monthly Modern Slavery Board, where cases are discussed.
5. Many local authorities support victims and make referrals to the Home Office, only. Our central team will enable us to pool very sensitive intelligence. The police are keen to be working with us on this subject. It was noted that modern slavery was usually as a result of organised

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30.1.2020

crime, there is therefore a need for great care to be taken because of links with gang masters/ drugs.

6. Sharon Burgess is the Chair of the London Modern Slavery Group.
7. There is a need to ensure we support the victims of this crime ensuring a 'wrap around service' is provided. If we identify individuals there is a national referral system – where people are collected and taken to a place of safety. A package of care is provided for people, but they must voluntarily agree to this, unless children are involved in which case child protection measures would be followed.
8. Monitoring of the effectiveness of new arrangements would be done. Sharon Burgess stated that we were looking to increase the number of referrals we would be making to the Home Office and working with our partners in the Police and Health & Safety to look at an increase in the number of prosecutions. The team will update Overview & Scrutiny Committee next year, on progress.
9. It was thought there were probably far more people who are victims of modern slavery than is thought. For example, at car washes, nail bars and fast food outlets. Victims are also people who are born in this country. This issue is also closely linked with 'County Lines'.
10. Other local authorities - Haringey and Waltham Forest were replicating our model.

AGREED

1. Training, on the subject of, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking would be included on the Members training programme.
(Action: Claire Johnson)
2. An update on the work of the Modern Slavery Team would be reported to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in January 2021.
(Action: Sharon Burgess)

Officers were thanked for their report.

480

ENFIELD REPAIRS DIRECT

Councillor Gina Needs (Cabinet Member Social Housing), introduced the report which was presented by Joanne Drew (Director of Housing & Regeneration) and Garry Knights (Head of Housing Property Services).

It was noted that the in-sourcing of the Housing repairs service was approved by Cabinet in June 2019.

The report includes details of the Repairs Service model and the Housing Repairs Maintenance and Planned works Policy. It set out the progress made with the MOT service which is gradually building up capacity for in-sourcing the repairs service. The report would be considered at Cabinet on 12 February 2020

The following questions/ issues were raised:

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30.1.2020

- Reference was made in the report to the implementation of the Housing Resolution Centre by the end of February 2020. It was confirmed that this would be located with the repairs centre based at Edmonton, rather than the contact centre. It should enable jobs/repairs to be diagnosed easier. A visit will be arranged for Councillor Smith and Councillor Aramaz to view the centre.
- There had been problems in the past in dealing with Void properties and it was asked how this would improve under the new model. Joanne Drew said we would continue to outsource this work until we were confident that this was performing well.
- It was suggested that a comparison chart would be useful to show a timeline of how we would meet demand. It was noted that the model is based around delivering 40,000 repairs per year, this represents 3.8 repairs per property per year. However, this should reduce over time with improvements from the MOT service and investment programmes.
- There would be a rechargeable service where we could recover costs from people where damage has occurred – in answer to a question about overheads charged, it was pointed out that we would not be making a profit, but it would be necessary for us to cover our overheads.
- We would be looking to continue to bring various services in-house in the future and would be looking at the skill sets needed.
- 25% of the stock condition survey has been completed and the service would continue to survey all properties over the next few years. It was asked that the Director of Housing & Regeneration report back to OSC giving a timeline for the survey.
- An Asset Management Strategy for Council Housing would be submitted by June 2020.
- The Repairs Service Model (p41 of the agenda) sets out how the repairs service would be delivered.
- The 40k repairs quoted is based on actual jobs for the year – 3.8 per property. However, by tackling long term infrastructure problems this should gradually drive down numbers of repairs needed each year.
- IT systems change. We shall continue to have a stand- alone system repairs but there will be appropriate interfaces.
- Cabinet had approved £1.2m for the implementation of the in-sourced service. It was asked what the savings were on current costs and what would be the estimated expenditure in four years' time? It was answered that the current costs are £4.8m which would have risen to approx. £5.3m in four years' time however by bringing the service in-house this would allow us to build in efficiencies to reduce costs.

AGREED

1. A visit will be arranged for Councillor Smith and Councillor Aramaz to view the Housing Resolution centre (Action: Joanne Drew)
2. That the Director of Housing & Regeneration report back to OSC, giving timelines for the completion of the stock condition survey.
(Action: Joanne Drew)

Officers were thanked for their reports.

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee remained, all other officers and members had left at this point.

481

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings were noted:

Business meetings of OSC

- Thursday 13 February 2020
- Thursday 2 April 2020

Provisional Call-In dates

- Wednesday 4 March 2020
- Thursday 26 March 2020
- Tuesday 28 April 2020

482

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members were surprised that as part of the CfPS Scrutiny Review, the Reviewers had not attended this meeting.

Concerns were expressed that the Leader had apparently not received a request for her to prepare any information regarding the work of the Associate Cabinet Members (ACM's). Claire Johnson stated that a copy of previous correspondence relating to this could be provided.

It was suggested that an enquiry be set up to evaluate the work of the ACM's

Members expressed disquiet about changes to the constitution as part of the Constitution Review and what this may mean for the Overview and Scrutiny function. Concerns were raised over the status and role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Claire Johnson said proposed changes to the constitution were being put forward for consultation to all councillors, she said we were not looking to restrict the scrutiny function and this matter would be discussed at Members and Democratic Services Group in future.

Reference was made to the statutory co-optees. It was suggested we should be looking to give an opportunity to other people in the community to participate in this role.

It was requested that an Enquiry be set up to consider the following

- a) To evaluate the work of the ACM's.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30.1.2020

- b) To provide a formal contribution to the on-going review of the Overview and Scrutiny function by the CfPS (Centre for Public Scrutiny).
- c) To prepare recommendations in the Overview & Scrutiny Committee annual report on how to improve the Overview and Scrutiny function.

It was thought a number of Members would like to have an input into the current scrutiny review.

Claire Johnson would speak to the Monitoring officer regarding the Constitution and clarity over the role of ACM's

It was agreed that Cllr Aramaz and Cllr Erbil would meet with Claire Johnson to discuss the terms of reference and scope for a possible Enquiry. This would be discussed at the next meeting of OSC on 13 February 2020.