

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 14 AUGUST 2024**

COUNCILLORS

PRESENT (Chair) Nicki Adeleke, Lee Chamberlain, James Hockney, Michael Rye OBE, Nelly Gyosheva, Julian Sampson, Chris James, George Savva MBE and Doris Jiagge

ABSENT Mahmut Aksanoglu, Maria Alexandrou, Kate Anolue, Hivran Dalkaya and Eylem Yuruk

STATUTORY CO-OPTES: *1 vacancy (Church of England diocese representative), vacancy (other faiths/denominations representative), vacancy (Catholic diocese representative), Alicia Meniru & 1 vacancy (Parent Governor representative) - Italics Denotes absence*

OFFICERS: Perry Scott (Executive Director – Environment and Communities, Lee Shelsher (Head of Customer Solutions) Lucy Nasby (Policy and Performance Manager – Environment and Communities), Terry Osborne (Director Law & Governance) and Nicola Lowther (Governance Manager)

Also Attending: Cllr Edward Smith (Call-In Lead Member), Cllr Chinelo Anyanwu (Cabinet Member for Environment, Culture and Public Spaces)

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WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mahmut Aksanoglu who was substituted by Cllr Nelly Gyosheva, Cllr Kate Anolue who was substituted by Cllr Doris Jiagge, Cllr Hivran Dalkaya who was substituted by Cllr Chris James, Cllr Eylem Yuruk who was substituted by Cllr George Savva MBE and Cllr Maria Alexandrou who was substituted by Cllr Julian Sampson.

The Chair detailed the procedure of the meeting and outlined how the Overview & Scrutiny Committee would consider the reasons for call in.

The Committee noted that Councillor Edward Smith would present the reasons for the call-in as the Lead Call-in Member.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following councillors declared a personal interest in:

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Cllr Chinelo Anyanwu as she is a member of the Enfield Town Library
Cllr Edward Smith as he is a member and regular user of Enfield Town, Palmers Green and Winchmore Hill Libraries
Cllr Michael Rye OBE as he is a member of the Enfield Town Library
Cllr Chris James as she is a member of the Enfield Town Library
Cllr James Hockney as he is a member of the Ridge Avenue Library

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DECISION CALLED-IN - KD5760 - PHASE TWO CONSULTATION EXERCISE ON A NEW ENFIELD COUNCIL LIBRARY STRATEGY

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee were to consider and review KD5760 – Phase two consultation exercise on a new Enfield Council Library Strategy - taken on 22 July 2024 and included on the Publication of Decision List No. 13/24-25.

The decision had been called in for review by 7 members of the Council, namely Councillors: Edward Smith (Lead), Peter Fallart, Chris Joannides, Andrew Thorp, Elisa Morreale, Andy Milne and Chris Dey.

The report sets out the officer response to the reasons for call-in.

Reasons for the call-in were presented by Councillor Edward Smith, Lead Call-in Member for the decision.

Councillor Smith summarised the reasons for the call-in of the decision.

Councillor Smith asked that Members refer the decision back to the decision taker for reconsideration.

Councillor Anyanwu and Officers spoke in response to the reasons for call-in, and questions posed by Members of the Committee stating that; the proposed closure is based on analysis, data and feedback from the first phase of the consultation from over 1000 respondents via various channels i.e. questionnaires, emails and feedback sessions.

The proposed strategy of closing 8 libraries will avoid £5.3m in future upkeep and maintenance costs and with reduction in libraries means that the council can use the savings to reinvest into the remaining libraries, ensuring they will remain accessible, vibrant and sustainable hubs for all and to enhance to current offering to library users and residents. Libraries will continue to be a place to learn and support each other in Enfield, with a range of services to deliver in a way that suits the evolving needs of the community.

The extended opening hours at libraries will be well communicated with residents through the update of the website and writing out to organisations that support library users such as Enfield Voluntary Action and Age UK. The strategy proposes to adopt a similar scheme that is running at Fore Street Library where partners are keyholders and are able to access the libraries out

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of hours to continue to run services that will help and benefit residents of the borough.

There has been an increase in other resources available to residents e.g. eBooks and free home library delivery service which will be helpful to those whose local library may be affected by the proposal and may find it difficult to attend a different library.

The Cabinet Member reiterated that no decision had been made on the proposed library closures and it is just a consultation at this stage. They also encouraged members and residents to provide any concerns or ideas they may have with regard to the proposed library strategy during the consultation period which will run for 12 weeks with the view of finalising the new library strategy and implement any changes in early 2025.

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ORIGINAL DECISION OF CALL-IN - KD5760

Cllr Smith summarised the points made during the discussion and reiterated his view that Members should refer the decision back to the decision taker.

The Chair summarised the key points made throughout the discussion and took Members of the committee through the options available to them, namely: refer the decision back to the decision-making person/body for reconsideration; refer the matter to full Council; or confirm the original decision.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the reasons provided for the Call-In and responses set out in the Officer's report. Having considered the verbal responses and the information presented by the Cabinet Member for Environment, Culture and Public Spaces, Cllr Chinelo Anyanwu and relevant Officers; the Committee **AGREED** to confirm the original decision made by the Cabinet Member.

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DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members **NOTED** the date of the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as Monday 9 September 2024.

The Chair thanked everyone for their time and contributions.