

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON MONDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2024**

**COUNCILLORS**

**PRESENT** Nicki Adeleke (Chair), Mahmut Aksanoglu (Vice-Chair), Maria Alexandrou, Kate Anolue, Lee Chamberlain, James Hockney, Eylem Yuruk, Reece Fox and Gunes Akbulut

**ABSENT** Hivran Dalkaya and Michael Rye OBE

**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:** Fay Hammond (Executive Director Resources) Adrian Gorst (Chief Technology Officer) and Stacey Gilmour (Governance & Scrutiny Secretary)

**1**

**WELCOME & APOLOGIES**

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

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Hivran Dalkaya who was substituted by Cllr Gunes Akbulut and Cllr Michael Rye who was substituted by Cllr Reece Fox. Apologies were also received from Cllr Tim Leaver, Cabinet Member, Finance & Procurement and Claire Johnson, Head of Governance, Scrutiny & Registration Services.

The Chair raised concerns regarding the lack of security at the Civic Centre reception this evening, and wanted it noted that this was an issue when a public meeting was being held as there was no one available to direct members of the public to the meeting room venue. Members agreed that this was not acceptable and requested that their concerns be raised with the appropriate department.

**2**

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received regarding any item on the agenda.

**3**

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**AGREED** the minutes of the meetings held on 15 April, 30 April and 14 August 2024.

4

**SCRUTINY ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMMES 2024/25**

In the absence of Claire Johnson (Head of Governance, Scrutiny and Registration Services), Stacey Gilmour (Governance & Scrutiny Officer) introduced the report which included the draft work programmes for Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the four standing Scrutiny Panels for 2024/25.

No areas of duplication in the work programmes were identified.

**AGREED** that the proposed work programmes for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Panels for 2024/25 be recommended to Council for adoption.

5

**DIGITAL SERVICES**

Adrian Gorst, Chief Technology Officer introduced the report which provided an overview of the work he had undertaken since joining Enfield Council in January 2024, considerations on streamlining the Council's software applications and the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Council over the next twelve months. Further information was provided on the Chief Technology Officer's approach to fixing technical and service issues, modernising the Council's infrastructure, and promoting digital transformation. A fix-modernise-innovate approach had been adopted to improve services, reduce costs, and align Digital Services with the wider needs of the Council. These activities often run sequentially, fixing existing problems then modernising the environment before moving into innovation. However, in Enfield these are running in parallel to ensure Digital Services meets the ambitions of the Council.

Reducing the Digital Services overspend is vital and the current forecast indicates an overspend of £1.2m in 2024/25 compared with an overrun of £4.2m overspend in 2023/24. Digital Services is forecast to come in on target for staffing, with £6m of spend against a £6m budget following a restructure of the Digital Services leadership team, reducing the number of heads of service from five to two and a reduction in the use of agency workers.

The Digital Services portfolio for the remainder of 2024/25 will be presented to Cabinet in September. The report seeks £2m of funding for the remainder of 2024/25 to maintain and enhance the Council's cyber-security, to deliver a new design for modern infrastructure, to migrate to modern applications and to develop transformational business cases and project plans to deliver savings, avoid increasing costs and improve services. While the Chief technology Officer and Digital Services are making progress in all areas, there are significant challenges to still consider.

Questions were invited from Members.

## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 9.9.2024

Members requested some further detail on how services had been transformed to date and were advised that the focus had been on practical action which included ensuring the essential housekeeping activities are completed on time, all colleagues working on the most important work they can, securing best value from suppliers when new contracts are signed and supporting innovation.

The Chief Technology Officer has also brought together colleagues from across the teams within Digital Services to collaboratively deliver what were previously project activities completed by consultants and contractors, including migrating 3500 mobile phone contracts from EE to Gamma and preparing for the rollout of Windows 11.

In response to a further question regarding the Local Digital Declaration and what this entails, Members were advised that this is a shared ambition for the future of public services and was written in 2018 by a collective of 45 local councils, sector bodies and government departments. It is a declaration which Enfield Council has signed up to and involves working together collectively with other Councils to balance the power of suppliers whilst thinking about the needs of residents and staff. Work has been undertaken with other councils looking at how to invigorate the intent behind this declaration.

In response to a question regarding the current number of agency staff within Digital Services it was advised that no more than 10% of the team are made up of agency staff. When permanent jobs arise agency staff are encouraged to apply through the usual HR processes.

Further discussions took place regarding the migration of mobile phone contracts from EE to Gamma and it was hoped that this process would be completed by the end of March 2025, however this was very much dependent on staff co-operation. This amalgamation had so far resulted in a saving of £60,000 and it was hoped that there would be a further saving of £60,000 bringing the total saving to £120,000 for this financial year.

In response to a concern regarding the reliability of the network, particularly on a Wednesday officers acknowledged this issue and explained that a Wednesday is the most popular day for staff to work from the office which in turn affects the network. A proposal is going to Cabinet on 11 September to look at how this can be resolved with a possible need for additional funding to address this issue.

Further details were provided on the CTO's approach to fixing technical and service issues, modernising the Councils infrastructure, and promoting digital transformation. A small budget had been provided to buy new laptops, which had taken the pressure off Digital Services in having to continuously fix existing laptops. This had freed up staff resource enabling them to concentrate on other matters.

## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 9.9.2024

Officers provided Members with a flavour of some of the innovative technology planned with seven initiatives having been identified by the Council as candidates for further exploration, for example: HMO fraud detection, cloud printing in libraries and video-based contact. If Cabinet approve the funding for the digital investment portfolio for 2024/25 via flexible use of capital receipts, capital, and revenue (report to Cabinet on 11 September 2024), this will enable the development of detailed business cases and project plans for each opportunity building on the experience of other local authorities. The detailed business cases will then support further invest-to-save proposals to implement each project.

In response to a question regarding the number of devices recovered when staff leave, Officers advised that nearly all laptops and mobile phones are recovered although getting monitors back has proved to be a bit trickier, but this is being worked through still. When equipment comes back it goes through a triage process and, if fit to be re-used, it is.

Further discussions took place regarding the possibility of channel shifts and the use of mobile devices and how this could be made as easy as possible. An example given was with regards to fly-tipping whereby a photo could be taken on a phone App and reported immediately. Adrian said that there are big opportunities around people using the technology they have in their pocket as opposed to on their desks. However, any channel shift to the use of mobile devices would need to be carefully considered as reporting issues would invariably increase which would impact on work loads and this would need to be managed.

The Panel noted the report.

## 6 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members **NOTED** the dates of future meetings as follows:

OSC Provisional Call-In dates (if required)

Tuesday 24 September 2024

Tuesday 22 October 2024

OSC Business Meeting

Wednesday 20 November 2024

## 7 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

**RESOLVED** in accordance with the principles of Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 7 of the Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

**8**

**DIGITAL SERVICES**

Adrian Gorst, Chief Technology Officer introduced the confidential Digital Services report which had been included in the part 2 section of the agenda. An overview was provided on the current and planned cyber-security measures and the investment required to ensure security. The Council has a wide range of cyber-security measures in place to combat potential threats and has a Public Services Network (PSN) certificate indicating compliance with the cyber-security standards appropriate for a local authority.

Cyber-security threats continue to evolve and escalate and public sector organisations including local authorities are targets however, Digital Services continues to address emerging vulnerabilities and threats.

Further information was provided, and discussions took place regarding the existing measures, work in progress and future plans to enhance the Council's cyber-security.

The Panel noted the report and welcomed the proposals.

The Chair thanked everyone for their time and contributions.

The meeting finished at 8:35pm