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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 5.9.2018

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 2018

COUNCILLORS: Derek Levy (Chair), Huseyin Akpinar, Christine Hamilton,
PRESENT Gina Needs Vicki Pite, Lee David-Sanders, Edward Smith.

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

OFFICERS: Anne Stoker (Director of Children & Family Services),
Geraldine Gavin (Chair, Enfield Safeguarding Children's
Board), Angela Bent (Head of Service, Practice
Improvement & Partnerships), Linda Hughes (Head of
Service for Looked after Children), Maria Anastasi (Service
Manager Safeguarding & Quality), Kari Manovitch (Acting
Director, Customer Experience and Change), Susan
O'Connell (Scrutiny Officer), Elaine Huckell (Scrutiny
Secretary)

ALSO
ATTENDING: Councillor Guney Dogan (Cabinet Member for
Environment)

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WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Councillor Levy welcomed all attendees to the meeting. Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Tolga Aramaz and Susan Erbil and from independent Co-optee Simon Goulden. Councillor Pite was substituting for Councillor Erbil and Councillor Hamilton was substituting for Councillor Aramaz.

Discussion regarding item 3 – 'Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Guney Dogan' took place at the end of the meeting, but for the interests of clarity the minutes are shown in the agenda order.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

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CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, COUNCILLOR GUNEY DOGAN

The Chair introduced this item and welcomed Councillor Dogan as Cabinet member for Environment. He asked Councillor Dogan to give a brief overview of what he considers to be the key objectives and priorities in respect of the Environment portfolio. Councillor Levy said this could be seen to be the most 'public facing' of all council departments as it includes – Parks, Streets, Waste, Planning, Enforcement, and Street Lighting.

Councillor Dogan said he had been in his position for four months and during this time he had been getting to know how the service operates and meeting officers. He spoke of the difficult political decisions that would have to be made over the forthcoming four years because of government financial savings. (£18m savings for LB Enfield by 2019/20).

He highlighted the following:

- Cabinet members were currently considering areas of potential savings one of which may possibly be the waste collection service.
- The Planning application service – the customer service element is being examined to look at better ways of providing information.
- Stricter penalties were needed to prevent the fly-tipping of waste.
- Inconsiderate parking on roads which is an annoyance for the public is an issue to be pursued.
- It is necessary to ensure that crossovers are built on solid foundations and people apply for them to be built in the correct way.
- Potholes in roads this concern to be considered.

The following issues/ questions were raised:

- In some fly-tipping cases evidence has been gathered by members. It was thought the council's legal team should be pursuing these cases more rigorously.
- Concerns were raised about the provision of crossovers which often lead to less grassed gardens and which is therefore a less environmentally friendly option.
- Fly-tipping in some areas are the result of organised crime activity which needs to be actively pursued with the police.
- Plans for income regeneration to be considered for the department.
- A need to change behaviours regarding fly-tipping, littering. Leafletting and other campaigns to target this should be considered.
- It was noted that an OSC workstream would be looking at 'Parks and Green spaces' this year.
- In view of the impact of government cuts, it was asked how we were going to ensure the delivery of a service to residents. Cllr Dogan said options were being considered, he said we want to ensure there is a minimum effect on residents.
- It was agreed that communication was key in keeping residents informed.

Councillor Levy thanked Councillor Dogan for attending the meeting and for giving an overview of his vision for the Environment portfolio area.

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FOSTERING & ADOPTION SERVICES IN ENFIELD

Linda Hughes (Head of Service for Looked after Children) presented a report which updated OSC on the work of the Fostering and Adoption Services since August 2017. It provided information relating to the work undertaken by the Fostering and Adoption Services and statistics relating to the recruitment of foster carers and adopters, as well as Orders relating to children placed with adopters and special guardians.

The following was highlighted:

- The regionalisation of adoption agencies, which is a government initiative, is progressing. The current consortium which includes Enfield consists of six boroughs and will become the Regional Adoption Agency for North London.
- Fostering allowances for Enfield have been reviewed for second and subsequent children. This now aligns with other local authorities. It is important as a means of encouraging the fostering of sibling groups.

The following issues/ questions were raised:

- In answer to whether we have a sufficient number of foster carers and adopters it was answered that marketing is undertaken to ensure that we have adequate numbers. As there are a lot of houses with bedrooms in the borough this helps in the caring for Enfield children within the area.
- A question was asked about independent agencies and whether there was a reason why we did not let the private sector take on the work of the fostering process. Linda stated that by using our own foster carers our staff are able to carry out assessments, which are undertaken in the same building as the council's Looked After Children(LAC) service. This helps in the continuity of care and the keeping of friendship groups. Our staff then carry out the monitoring process. It should be remembered that this is also the more cost- effective means of providing this service.
- It was noted that an additional 15 plus foster carers are to be recruited and assessed for 2018/19. In the previous year we appointed only 4 adopters, as we already had a number on our list and wished to avoid disappointment for any potential adopters.
- We have a commitment that for children under 10 years of age, we ensure sibling groups are kept together.
- It was asked if the increasing mental health problems experienced by young people was impacting on the service. Linda agreed that there were more instances of this, but that fortunately, we were able to respond as we have specialist support – Child & Adolescent Mental

Health Service (CAMHS) within the LAC service and that there is no waiting list.

- The implementation date of the new Regional Adoption Agency for North London is April 2019. Councillor Levy asked if this has had an impact on recruitment? It was thought the original plan to have a London wide agency was seen to be unrealistic as it was too large an area. A new manager was now taking this scheme forward and listening events have been organised. Linda said the team are pragmatic, and realise that they may not be based in Enfield in the future.
- In answer to a question about the placement of children with adopters of different ethnicity it was stated there was no reason why we would not do this. Our primary objective is to ensure a child's needs are met.

Linda Hughes was thanked for her report.

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ENFIELD SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD (ESCB) ANNUAL REPORT

Geraldine Gavin (Chair, Enfield Safeguarding Children's Board), presented this report which updated the committee on the Draft Enfield Safeguarding Children Board annual report for 2017 -18. It included an overview of the progress being made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people across Enfield during the past year and set out information on the new safeguarding arrangements that will be introduced in 2018/19. It also sets out the priorities ESCB will take forward into 2018/19.

The following was highlighted:

- Children's safeguarding now involves more complex areas than before, such as trafficking, 'County Lines' issues.
- Whereas work previously centred on 0 to 10year olds, we are now looking at young people up to 25 years of age and are focused around their 'vulnerabilities'
- Statutory changes from the Children and Social Work Act 2017 resulting in the abolishing of the LSCBs and introduction of new safeguarding arrangements. An aim of this is to make sure partners are working together and ensure there is no duplication.

The following issues were raised:

- Geraldine was thanked for this clearly set out report.
- Councillor Smith referred to the information provided on young people at risk however he thought there was a lack of data on 'consequences' for example on the number of prosecutions/ cases dealt with. It was stated that the Ofsted report for Enfield in 2015 and for April 2017 - gave an overall good conclusion. Although successful prosecutions can be shown, preventative work is harder to measure. It was asked that consideration be given to include this information in future reports.

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- The Chair spoke of the importance of safeguarding training for Councillors and Councillor Pite praised the 'on line' training which had been provided for councillors which she had completed. Councillor Needs referred to her disappointment in respect of a safeguarding 'check box' for Councillors, details of which she would email to Geraldine Gavin for information.

Geraldine Gavin was thanked for her report.

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ENFIELD ANNUAL INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICERS (IRO'S) REPORT 17/18

Maria Anastasi, Service Manager for the Safeguarding & Quality Service presented the report on the Annual Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO's) report for 2017/18.

The following points were highlighted:

- The report updates OSC on the IROs during the 2017-18 period
- The number of Looked after Children (LAC) have remained consistent during the last few years.
- IRO's represent the interests of looked after children. From 1 October 2018 debriefing interviews for looked after children that run away will be carried out by IRO's.
- At end of March 2018, 63 of the LAC were unaccompanied minors. Since April 2018, the benchmark has changed to 59.

The following issues were raised:

- Processes are being developed to ensure interviews for children are of good quality and to better reflect the participation of children.
- Those who interview run away children already know the children concerned but they are not the social workers involved – which is helpful. The team have the skills to be able to prise out the concerns of the children.

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ENFIELD ANNUAL LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO) REPORT 17/18

Maria Anastasi, Service Manager for the Safeguarding & Quality Service presented the report on the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) report for 2017/18.

The following was highlighted:

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- The role of the LADO is undertaken by Head of Safeguarding and Quality Service (SQS) who has responsibility for overseeing investigations.
- There were 62 allegations in the year of which 22 were substantiated.
- The number of allegations had increased by 25% for the year and the number of substantiated ones had increased.
- The boundaries for investigation had gone further this year re social media issues
- PwC findings showed our system was robust

The following was raised:

- There would be concerns if there were no allegations made – this shows that they have faith in our systems and will report concerns.
- Maria confirmed that she was confident in our systems used.
- Members felt it would be useful to highlight and breakdown the reasons for the 25% increase in allegations for the year to identify any potential issues of concern..

Maria Anastasi was thanked for both reports.

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CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY

Kari Manovitch (Acting Director, Customer Experience and Change) introduced the Customer Experience Strategy – 2018-2022.

She explained that the Strategy aims to deliver a positive customer experience 'Enfield is committed to putting customers at the heart of all Council business' and it is aligned with the new corporate vision of 'creating a lifetime of opportunities in Enfield'.

The Strategy will be presented to Cabinet on Wednesday 12 September 2018. As a subject of pre-decision scrutiny, the views of Overview and Scrutiny Committee were requested.

The following was highlighted:

- This is the first time the council has established a customer experience strategy.
- It sets a framework that will guide the work of the council over the next four years to ensure customers benefit from a positive customer experience and ensuring that this is a key priority for all departments.
- It includes standards/ behaviours for staff to adopt i.e being friendly and helpful, honest and respectful, professional and courteous.
- There is a maturity model in the framework which is an analytical tool to enable us to assess how each service is performing/ improving over the years.

The following issues were raised

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- The recommendations in the strategy report are aligned to those in the Cabinet report.
- Two of the current Overview and Scrutiny Committee members had been involved in the Enfield 2017 Scrutiny Workstream and it was asked if its findings had been absorbed into the strategy with respect to the impact 'Enfield 2017' had on customers. It was confirmed that it had. It was acknowledged that the priorities for 'Enfield 2017' had been about transformation and delivering efficiencies, it had not prioritised the customer experience. It was agreed that we were not delivering a consistently positive experience for customers at present.
- Members supported the principles of the strategy and agreed that everyone wanted to see service improvements and for people to get the support they needed. However, there was concern about the complexity of the strategy such as whether it was necessary to have five stages of improvement in the maturity model instead of three. It was explained that this was the starting point of a journey in which we will evaluate the tools in the strategy and adjust them if they prove too complex in practice. We are also creating new measures, that have not been used before to assess services to see whether a consistent positive customer experience is provided.
- Councillor Levy suggested that it may be helpful to provide scenarios to show how the strategy's principles would work in practice as this may be easier for people to understand.
- It was thought that the standards/ behaviours mentioned should already be a requirement for all people working for LB Enfield.
- It was asked if it was thought the strategy would empower our customers or would it lead to a more 'dependency' creating situation? It was stated that it would not be in the council's interests to create more dependency as it is important that we are able to concentrate our reducing resources on those that most need us, by promoting self-service for those that can.

It was noted that

- OSC had worked only from the Customer Experience Strategy document and not the actual Cabinet report
- All comments made were purely observational rather than critical, to potentially inform and enhance how the report might be better articulated at Cabinet.

AGREED

1. The Committee agreed the recommendations of the report with consideration being given to the inclusion of scenarios to show how the Customer Experience Strategy may work in practice.
2. Quarterly updates to be provided to future meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

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The OSC work Programme would be submitted to the next meetings of Cabinet and Council.

The Chair reiterated that of the three workstream topics previously agreed by OSC, those two already under development would be completed within the municipal year. The third would soon be scoped out in readiness to commence a little later in the year, and would complete as soon as practicable applying the guiding principle of 'task and finish'.

Future OSC meetings including provisional call-in meetings may be used as an opportunity for Cabinet members to attend to give their vision on their portfolio area.

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DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that an OSC meeting for Thursday 11 October 2018 would now be held as a Business Meeting. Future meetings are shown as follows:

Provisional Call-Ins

Thursday 8 November, 2018
Thursday 6 December, 2018
Thursday 20 December, 2018
Thursday 7 February 2019
Tuesday 12 March 2019
Tuesday 26 March, 2019
Thursday 11 April, 2019

Please note, the business meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be held on:

Thursday 11 October, 2018
Wednesday 7 November, 2018
Tuesday 12 February, 2019
Wednesday 3 April, 2019

The Overview & Scrutiny Budget Meeting will be held on:
Tuesday 15 January 2019.

Councillor Levy thanked everyone for attending the meeting.