

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 9 MARCH 2023**

COUNCILLORS

PRESENT (Chair) Margaret Greer, Bektas Ozer, Gunes Akbulut, Maria Alexandrou, Nawshad Ali, Mohammad Islam, Paul Pratt and Julian Sampson

ABSENT Nesil Caliskan (Leader of the Council), Elif Erbil, James Hockney 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: Peter George (Director of Development), Penny Halliday (Commercial Programme Director), Doug Ashworth (Head of Development, Strategic Property) James Wheeler (Head of Construction, Maintenance and Facilities Management), Amena Matin (Head of Regeneration and Growth), Marie Lowe (Secretary) and Harry Blake-Herbert (Secretary)

Also Attending: Councillor Lee Chamberlain (Call-In Lead)

**1
WELCOME & APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The following apologies for absence were received:

Cllr Mike Rye who was substituted by Cllr Julian Sampson
Cllr James Hockney who was substituted by Cllr Paul Pratt
Cllr Elif Erbil who was substituted by Cllr Gunes Akbulut

Apologies from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Nesil Caliskan and the Executive Director, Resources, Fay Hammond.

The Chair advised that, following consultation by Officers, she had agreed that items 7 and 12 Review of Leisure Provision in the Borough had been withdrawn from the agenda. This item would be considered at the next business meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee scheduled to take place on the 20 April 2023.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 9.3.2023

A revised work programme, to reflect the change had been published on the Council's website and circulated to Members. Printed copies had been tabled for Members.

Members noted that with the presentation in relation to Item 8 – Meridian Water Update has been circulated separately to the agenda prior to the meeting.

Following the proposal of the Chair, it was **AGREED** that subject to the continued absence of members of the press and public from the meeting, the meeting would not move into private session under Item 9 of the Agenda - Part Two.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made or received.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

AGREED the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 31 January 2023 and 9 February 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

4 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

AGREED that:

1. The Review of Leisure Provision in the Borough item be deferred to the next business meeting scheduled on Thursday, 20 April 2023, and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme be updated accordingly;
2. The Update on Enfield Borough Partnership Integrated Care Board/ Systems, Following Merger of Five NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) item be considered at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, subject to the agreement of Members at the Work Planning meeting in the new Municipal Year; and
3. The revised work programme be noted.

5 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

NOTED that the date of the next business meeting was at 7pm on Thursday, 20 April 2023.

6

DECISION CALLED-IN - KD 3432 - DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS OR UNDER PERFORMING ASSETS - 1 GROVELANDS COTTAGE, 273 THE RIDGEWAY AND 31 CECIL ROAD CALL-IN REPORT

Details of the decision taken on 17 February 2023 and listed on the Publication of Decision List Number 42/22-23 published on 9 February 2023. The report also set out the officer responses to the reasons for call-in.

The decision had been called-in for review by seven members of the Council: Councillors Lee Chamberlain (Lead), Adrian Grumi, Hannah Dyson, Reece Fox, Emma Supple, Chris Dey and Elisa Morreale.

The reasons for the call-in were presented by Councillor Lee Chamberlain as the Lead Member.

RESPONS TO REASONS FOR CALL-IN - KD 3432 - Disposal of Surplus or Under Performing Assets - 1 Grovelands Cottage, 273 The Ridgeway and 31 Cecil Road

The Director of Development explained that the properties had either been declared surplus to operational requirements by former occupying service departments, are otherwise not considered “fit for purpose” by other service departments requiring accommodation or otherwise underperforming when judged against the principles set out in the core principles of the Council’s Strategic Management Plan.

In response to questions from Members, the Head of Regeneration and Growth confirmed that the properties would not be suitable under the Housing Revenue Account, for social housing. Following financial assessment, the rental income the properties would generate in the long term were not sustainable. The capital receipts from the disposal of these properties were not ring fenced to the provision of social housing but would be added to the General Fund.

The Head of Development, Strategic Property clarified the reasons why the properties would be sold under auction rather than a private treaty. The former gave the Council far more flexibility with regard to negotiations and price. Considerable research had gone into the best options available to the Council to realise the best price for these properties. Due to their previous use the cost of modernising the any or all of the properties were prohibitive, and the Council would not obtain a return on its investment.

In response to the Chair’s comment that insufficient information had been provided, Officers undertook to supply details of the occupancy and use of the properties prior to the decision being made to dispose of them, together with the costings of refurbishment. In future, to enable the Committee to obtain a better understanding of the matter called-in, that as much detail as possible be provided in the original report and response to the Call-In.

ACTION: Executive Director Place/Head of Development, Strategic Property

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 9.3.2023

Following a suggestion from a Member of the Committee, regarding the potential to use other such properties in conjunction with the construction skills academy in the future for learning practical skills and the aims of the Council to be carbon neutral, Officers undertook to discuss the possibilities with the relevant stakeholders.

ACTION: Head of Construction, Maintenance and Facilities Management

The Call-In Lead, Councillor Lee Chamberlain summarised the points made during the discussion.

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 information presented by Officers, the Committee **AGREED** to confirm the original decision made by the Director of Development.

With the agreement of the Committee, at 20:28 the meeting was adjourned for seven minutes.

7

REVIEW OF LEISURE PROVISION IN THE BOROUGH - ITEM DEFERRED TO 20 APRIL 2023

8

MERIDIAN WATER UPDATE

The Committee received a detailed presentation from the Commercial Programme Director who, with effect from Monday, 13 March 2023, had been appointed Acting Director of Development (Meridian Water).

The Commercial Programme Director, responding to questions from Members regarding the 300 council houses referred to in the presentation pack, confirmed that, following a review with the programme contractor, would be ready in the middle of the year and would be added to the Council's housing stock. The aim of the Meridian Water regeneration project, in addition to an increase of social housing, would be to the social value to the community, including work for local people and sub- contractors. Members asked that details of the types of new jobs to be created (target 6,000) on the site, including sub-contractors, be provided.

ACTION: Commercial Programme Director

AGREED that:

1. The presentation on the Meridian Water Update received from Officers be noted;
2. Subject to the agreement of Members at the Work Planning meeting in the New Municipal Year, a further update, including the social value in future procurements, be brought to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 9.3.2023

3. Penny Halliwell, Meridian Water Commercial Programme Director had been appointed Acting Director of Development (Meridian Water), effective from Monday, 13 March 2023 be noted.

Peter George, Director of Development, after a number of years, would be leaving the Council's employ at the end of March 2023 to take up a position at the London Borough of Ealing. The Committee thanked Peter George for his dedication and commitment to the Council, and, in particular, that undertaken with regards to the regeneration of Meridian Water, a hugely significant development for the Council and its residents.

As there were no members of the press or public present at the meeting and there was no confidential discussion the meeting did not move into Part Two.