

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD  
Havering Town Hall, Main Road, Romford  
9 November 2016 (7.00 - 9.30 pm)**

**Present:**

**COUNCILLORS**

**Conservative Group** John Crowder, Steven Kelly, Robby Misir, Dilip Patel, Viddy Persaud (Vice-Chair) and Linda Trew

**Residents' Group** Barbara Matthews, Ray Morgon and Barry Mugglestone

**East Havering Residents' Group'** Gillian Ford (Chairman) and Linda Hawthorn

**UKIP Group** Ian de Wulverton and Lawrence Webb

**Independent Residents' Group** Graham Williamson

**Labour Group**

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors Michael White.

All decisions were taken with no votes against.

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

**10 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings held on 26 July and 3 August 2016 were agreed as correct records, subject to the amendment below, and were signed by the Chairman.

Minute number 2 of the meeting held on 26 July 2016 should be amended to show that Councillor Linda Hawthorn had not voted for the dismissal of the call-in, Councillor Hawthorn had left the meeting prior to the vote being taken to attend another council meeting.

**11 WAIVER OF CALL-INS - EXPLANATION**

At the request of the Chairman, two officers had been invited to the meeting to explain the reasons as to why two recent waiver of call-ins had been requested.

The Council's Property Services Manager gave an explanation on the waiver of the call-in relating to the Morrison Facilities Services dispute resolution.

The Council's Head of Economic Development gave an explanation on the waiver of the Call-ins relating to the establishment of a Council led Housing Company and the agreement to a loan being given to the Housing Company.

Members were advised that the reason to waive the call-in of the Morrison dispute resolution had been time bound and commercially sensitive and if had not been acted upon very quickly then there had been the possible threat of court action and the Council having to pay costs.

Members were also advised the Housing Company, Mercury Land Holdings (MLH), had been established to generate a financial return to the Council by operating a business and to contribute to dealing with the housing supply. MLH would seek to avoid large tracts of buy-to-let housing characterised by fragmented ownership who could place unsustainable pressures on local services MLH would ensure a mix of housing, in terms of type, size and tenure, best matched to the needs of Havering and support the Council's regeneration and growth aims, bringing forward high quality development on regeneration.

MLH has agreed the pre-purchase of a freehold unbroken block of 65 flats from Swan Housing arranged on the ground and four upper levels of a block on the former Oldchurch Hospital site.

The reasons for the waiver of the call-in had been that the commercial party MLH had been negotiating with had sought to bring forward the transaction quickly and the deal structure and implications for the Council had been open to changes, MLH had not been in a position to finalise the report until it was sent to the Chairman – at the same time it was presented in this form to the Leader of the Council. MLH would not have been in a position at that point to have given the full details of the proposed transaction and the implications to the Council

Members also received a general update on the progress of MLH and possible housing developments that were being investigated.

During the debate Members commented that there was a general feeling that too many call-ins were being waived and that officers were not carrying out the correct procedures on re-negotiating contracts and procurement opportunities and were then approaching the Chairman at the last possible opportunity to seek a waiver of the call-in of the Non-Executive Executive Decision.

It was agreed that the Chairman would arrange a meeting with the Chief Executive and other officers to discuss ways in which call-ins were handled in the future.

## 12 **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - QUARTER 2 2016/17**

The report before Members set out the Quarter 2 Performance Report 2016/17 that had previously been considered by Cabinet.

Also appended to the report was the Quarter 2 2016/17 Demand Pressure Dashboard which illustrated the growing demands on the Council's services and the context that the performance levels set out in the report had been achieved within.

Members noted, that following the addition of late additions to the report, 70% of the performance indicators (PIs) had a RAG status of Green and 30% had a RAG status of Red or Amber.

Whilst the PIs currently included in the Corporate Performance Report provided both Members and officers with vital performance information that could be used to improve services, they were currently not 'outcomes focused'. They provided information about activities and actions, but not what impact these had on local residents and local communities.

During 2016/17 the approach to Corporate Performance Indicators and what was measured was being reviewed so that the indicators that were included for 2017/18 were more outcomes focused and therefore were more meaningful to both the organisation and Members.

This approach would also ensure that performance outturns contributed towards determining the Council's direction of travel and key policies and strategies.

The report also detailed the highlights and improvements required in each of the PIs that related to the Council's Clean, Safe and Proud objectives.

The Board **Reviewed** the performance set out in Appendix 1 and the corrective action that was being taken, and **Noted** the content of the Demand Pressures Dashboard attached as Appendix 2.

## 13 **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE/TOPIC GROUP UPDATES**

### Health O&S Sub-Committee

The Vice-Chairman advised that approximately 93,000 appointments had been delayed which it was hoped would be rectified by July 2017.

Members were advised that single handed GP surgeries could be lost in the future as there was more funding available for multi-practice surgeries.

Members had expressed concerns at the last meeting that the out of hours HUB surgery was not advertised very well.

Members noted that the immunisation in schools programme was progressing well but the smoking cessation clinics were not performing well.

Concerns had also been raised regarding as to why Queens Hospital had some of the longest stay rates and longest discharge times in the country. Members noted that part of the problem was around patients who were being discharged having to wait a long time for prescriptions to be made up.

Members noted that as part of the Accountable Care Organisation three Clinical Commissioning Groups were merging together, these included Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge.

### **Environment O&S Sub-Committee**

The Chairman advised that the Waste Minimisation topic group was continuing its work.

A representative from London Green Points had presented to the group a campaign that London Green Points were looking to run, which focussed mainly on the food waste stream.

The Sub-Committee had also looked at Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) – due to the number of parking complaints occurring in various locations around schools that had highlighted dangerous driving activities and it had subsequently been decided to pursue the introduction of a PSPO to help increase the safety of children.

Four schools were part of the PSPO pilot, these were:

- Wykenham
- James Oglethorpe
- Parsonage Farm
- Engayne (January 2017)

The infrastructure was in place in preparation with the first school having gone live on 7 November 2016.

Discussions had also taken place regarding parking at Queens Hospital Officers informed the Sub-Committee that conversations had taken place with the Chief Executive at Queens Hospital.

It had been noted that this was a high priority for the hospital and they were liaising with Transport for London.

### **Individuals O&S Sub-Committee**

The Chairman advised that the topic group looking at Dial-a-Ride had now finished and that the Council's Chief Executive was now taking this forward and would report back to the Sub-Committee accordingly.

The Chairman had recently visited Queens Hospital to look at how discharges were dealt with and how the elderly were able to be sent home with an adequate care package.

A visit to Avelon House had also been undertaken to see how people with special needs were treated.

The Social Inclusion Topic Group would have a concluding meeting and visit to the Improved Access to Psychological Therapies Team in order to conclude and produce a report that could feed into an action plan for the service.

Members noted that the Sub-Committee also wished to look at the support given to carers in the borough both young and old.

### **Towns & Communities O&S Sub-Committee**

The Sub-Committee currently had the following two topic groups running:

- Anti-Social Behaviour in Council Properties

The group considered a draft report at its last meeting and would be looking to finalise the report shortly.

- Green Belt Topic Group

At its meeting in September the group was taken through a draft methodology that would be used to undertake the Local Plan review of the Green Belt. Members had noted that the methodology had been put together jointly by officers and a critical friend. The group would be looking to conclude the review in the near future.

The Sub-Committee had also considered topic groups to undertake forensic looks at housing repairs and the role of Friends of Parks.

A Member expressed concerns regarding apparent delays in progressing the Green Belt elements of the Local Plan. As the Member understood it, a report containing a list of parcels of land and their designation - the extent to which they were protected – had been due to go to Cabinet recently but had been delayed.

The Chairman of the Sub-Committee undertook to find out the reasons as to why the report had been delayed.

### **Crime & Disorder O&S Sub-Committee**

The Chairman advised that the Sub-Committee was due to receive a presentation on care pathways for prisoners recently released.

The Sub-Committee had also received a presentation from the London Fire Brigade who was concerned with the increasing numbers of deliberate fires in the borough.

The Illegal Incursions topic group had met twice. The second meeting had been provided with details of the legal powers available to the Council to deal with illegal incursions. The police would be invited to the next meeting to discuss their strategic role and their response to illegal incursions.

Members also noted that three police boroughs were due to merge, these boroughs were Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge.

Members raised the issue of the Broxhill traveller incursion over the summer, and indicated that the Parks Protection Team had been unable to respond as the ownership of the land had never been transferred from Education to Parks and Open Spaces. Members asked that it be confirmed whether this was the case or not and, if so, what the Council was doing to rectify the problem.

### **Children & Learning O&S Sub-Committee**

The Chairman advised that Healthwatch had attended the last meeting of the Sub-Committee and Members had asked that the next presentation from Healthwatch be more focused on the Children's remit.

The presentation highlighted parent's concerns in accessing therapists for children with learning difficulties due to a shortfall of qualified therapists. This concern would be taken to the Health & Wellbeing Board.

A meeting with the Children in Care Council (CICC) had taken place who had presented on MOMO (Mind of My Own) which was the online system for children to report back and comment on the service to the Council. It had also been noted that there was no dedicated website for CICC.

The Sub-Committee received the Learning and Achievement Complaint and Compliments Annual Report. It had been noted that the increase in complaints had doubled, with the majority resulting from school expansions and the new Children and Families Act.

The Sub-Committee had received a report with an update on the SEND Transport provision within the borough. The demand was still increasing as

was the budget for this provision. The service was exploring alternative ways to help deliver the SEND Transport provision, to children that needed it. It had been agreed that the policy was not being used robustly and different options were being discussed to encourage independent travel of high functioning children.

The Sub-Committee had also held discussions with officers regarding the Pupil Referral Units and how they were being taken forward.

The Sub-Committee's performance indicators had highlighted a shortage of foster carers. Work would be done on recruiting foster carers and enhanced training for some existing carers, to support children and young people with more complex needs.

Members were updated on the recent Ofsted inspection. It was noted that this had involved 12 inspectors over a 4 week period, where they had looked at over 200 cases and met with staff and external partners and parents to gain a complete overview of the service. The overall rating was "requiring improvement" which was what the service had expected. An action plan was being produced to deal with the areas that needed improvements. It was felt by the Sub-Committee that the new management team in place were well equipped to take the service forward.

### **Debt Recovery Topic Group**

Councillor Williamson updated Members as to the current work of the Debt Recovery topic group.

Members noted that the group was keen to meet with the newly appointed task force that had been put into place to deal with the collection of aged debts.

The group had been given a list of outstanding debts and had made suggestions relating to the refining of the details shown on the list.

Officers had advised that existing debts were subject to an interest rate of 8% and that charging orders could be placed on debtors properties which had proved successful previously when collecting social services debts.

It was agreed that if a debtor owed a small amount like ten or twenty pounds then it should be removed from the list of debtors as the small debts were clouding the bigger debts owed.

Talks had also been ongoing about changing the Council Tax collection rate KPI from 97% to 100%.

**Procurement Topic Group**

Members were advised that the group had met with the Head of Procurement and had requested some documents so that they could see the current situation regarding to procurement within the Council.

Various officers would be invited to attend to meet with the topic group going forward.

Discussions needed to take place with officers relating to penalty clauses being included within future procurement.

Discussions also needed to be had to ensure future timely re-negotiations of contracts.

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**Chairman**