MINUTES OF
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 4 September 2018
(7:00 - 9:20 pm)

Present: Cllr Jane Jones (Chair), Cllr Andrew Achilleos (Deputy Chair), Cllr Dorothy Akwaboah, Cllr Princess Bright, Cllr Rocky Gill, Cllr Olawale Martins, Cllr Ingrid Robinson, Cllr Paul Robinson and Cllr Phil Waker

Also Present: Cllr Dominic Twomey

Apologies: Cllr Toni Bankole

1. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Lessons Learnt from the Elevate Joint Venture and the Way Forward to Core

The Chief Operating Officer gave a detailed presentation to the Committee regarding the lessons learnt from the Elevate Joint Venture and the way forward to Core.

The Committee were reminded of the decision made to enter the contract in 2010, which included the proposed delivery of:

- £67m savings over the duration of the contract net of running costs & investments – approximately £10m a year;
- Guaranteed improvements to transferring services;
- Commitment to create jobs in the Borough;
- Shared services with other London Borough’s;
- Additional expertise to the Council’s existing transformation team;
- Acceleration of benefits realisation to deliver savings earlier; and
- Consultancy rates at half the market price.

The Chief Operating Officer then provided a comparison of ‘then and now’ on each of the listed above and explained the lessons learnt from the Elevate Joint Venture Contract.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Core Services spoke on the original contract, advising that lessons had also been learnt for Councillors. For example, the inability to sell services to other councils was a huge disappointment.

Following the Committee discussed the presentation in detail and various questions were asked. In response, the Committee were advised that:

- There were no break clauses in the original contract, however in 2016 an extension was agreed which re set the terms and agreed further savings. - The monitoring of contracts was historically often one of the biggest failures across local government in general, however the Council now had expertise in place to ensure future contracts were monitored effectively;
- The Joint Venture struggled to sell services to other local authorities due to procurement rules i.e. most councils would need to see three years’ worth of accounts before signing a contract;
- The sheer volume of contact made by residents on council-based issues is huge, however although more calls are now being answered less calls are coming in due to changes to the services, such as contact through the website;
- Looking forward, meetings had been held with neighbouring boroughs however due to the different timings of contacts ending the discussions had not been fruitful;
- Shared services were not a viable option currently due to the inability to get other boroughs to agree strategic views; and
- Business cases to determine what would happen to each of the services currently delivered by Elevate are currently being developed for once the Elevate Joint Venture Contract ended in 2020.

The Committee thanked the Chief Operating Officer, Commercial Lead and the Cabinet Member for attending the meeting and answering questions. The Committee requested that pre-decision scrutiny be undertaken on the proposed full business case which was due to be considered by Cabinet in November 2018.

Standing Order 7.1 (Part 2, Chapter 3, of the Council Constitution) was suspended at this juncture to enable the meeting to continue beyond the 9pm threshold.

3. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Draft Work Programme 2018/19

The Committee noted a report on its proposed Work Programme for 2018-2019.

A request was made for Budget Monitoring to be added as a standard item at the end of each agenda. It was suggested that 10 minutes be put aside during each meeting for a brief discussion on budget issues.

A request was also made to add an item regarding Adult Social Care and how the raised precept was impacting on services.

The Committee agreed that both items would be added to the work programme.

The Committee noted that an item was scheduled for 2 April 2018 titled ‘Refuse Collection Service: How have the changes made improved the service for our residents’. Concerns were raised that this was quite late in the municipal year for an update and the Chair agreed to look into providing an update sooner.