MINUTES OF
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, 2 April 2019
(7:00 - 9:23 pm)

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

Also Present: Cllr Syed Ghani and Cllr Maureen Worby

Apologies: Cllr Ingrid Robinson

42. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

43. Minutes (5 March 2019)

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2019 were confirmed as correct.

44. Support for Vulnerable People

The Commissioning Director for Adults' Care and Support presented a report on support for vulnerable people.

At the beginning of the municipal year, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee indicated interest in looking at the support provided to vulnerable adults across the Council and partners more widely. This fitted well with the Council’s new Corporate Plan, which prioritised inclusive growth, participation and engagement, and building the resilience and independence of residents and communities.

Members were advised that the term ‘vulnerable adults’, in the context of the report, referred to older people and those with disabilities and mental health problems, who may or may not be in receipt of formal care and support services.

The paper proposed a scope for an officer-led review, and an outline timescale, which would allow for the work to take account of the developing plans for the next stage of transformation of adults’ care and support services, the Health & Wellbeing Board’s vision around locality development, and the wider work on delivering the ambitions of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

The Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration then addressed the Committee in response to concerns raised around loneliness and social isolation in the community, stating that:

- A recent review of Community Solutions highlighted the need for a stronger process for social prescribing from GP’s, as opposed to a suggestion for an individual to join a group or activity;
- There was a greater emphasis on resilience and support from the Council, ensuring that support was there when needed (floating support) and ensuring
individuals knew how to access such services; and
- Digital tablets provided by the Council were available for residents to use to enable them to contact members of their family who were not local, via email/skype.

The Committee noted that there was a drive to help people live as independently as possible; however, for some older people this could increase social isolation which would need to be addressed.

The Committee challenged how joint working was undertaken in relation to vulnerable adults and a discussion took place on areas that needed to be addressed:

- Hospital Discharge: There was a pathway covering the period from when a resident left the care of the hospital, to their recovery at home; however, Community Solutions were not currently involved in the process;
- Adaptations to Council Properties: The pathway from requesting an adaptation through to having the work undertaken was not clear; and
- Housing Provision: Following a suggestion from the Committee that the Voids Team assess properties to identify if suitable adaptations could be undertaken before new residents moved in, the Commissioning Director advised that Reside, Be First and the Council should be more proactive about void properties; however, the relevant commissioners needed to be clearer about the emerging need of vulnerable residents.

The Committee requested that the issues raised during the meeting be included within the scope of the officer-led review.

The report was noted.

45. Scrutiny Review: Bench-marking of Public Realm Waste collection and Street Cleansing

The Director of My Place presented a report which provided a baseline of comparative collection and fly-tipping data as well as benchmarking of both London and wider authorities.

Waste performance for London boroughs in 2017/18 indicated that Barking and Dagenham’s residual household waste per household, was the second heaviest per kilogram of all London boroughs at 850.08 kg. This had been a recent improvement as Barking and Dagenham for many years previous was in first place, however, this remained close to almost 1 tonne of waste per household.

The Cabinet Member for Public Realm addressed the Committee on the recycling rates for the Borough. The current percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in Barking and Dagenham was 25.0% (ranking the Council at 27 of 33 London Boroughs) against the Mayor for London’s target of 55%. It was noted that the top ranked London borough (Bexley) was currently at 52% and therefore, had also not met the Mayor’s target.

With regard to fly-tipping, the Director advised that total fly-tipping incidents within the borough in comparison to all other London boroughs saw Barking and
Dagenham placed fifth best, with only 2628 reported incidents. However, due to the effectiveness of the Council’s fly-tipping collection service, it had been noted that more fly-tips were taking place as offenders were aware it would be picked up quickly.

The Committee noted that there was a positive correlation between the deprivation index and the levels of waste and fly-tipping in the Borough and asked that officers use the benchmarking figures to improve the current service and meet the Council’s targets, which were outlined within the Borough Manifesto.

The Committee then examined in more detail severe concerns raised by residents regarding the current collection issues for both waste and recycling in the Borough. Various reports had been made to Councillors in their Ward Member capacity that bin collections were being missed on a regular basis.

The Cabinet Member advised that the service had been experiencing extreme difficulties over a period of months. This was due to a variety of issues which were now being addressed by actions which included:

- Additional collection rounds;
- A new vehicle being delivered shortly; and
- Additional funding for the service.

The service was being continuously monitored to ensure collection rates were improving, and it was noted that the Cabinet Member and Director toured the Borough once a week to monitor progress of collections and street cleansing.

The Cabinet Member then took the opportunity to advise the Committee that steps were being taken to ensure the waste collection and street cleansing services would be in place for all new properties being built in the Borough. Developers must now include a waste strategy and street cleaning plan within their planning applications. Missing information would result in a delay to either the building of properties and/or new residents moving in.

The Chair advised that information gleaned from the discussions taken place during the meeting would inform the Committee’s current in-depth scrutiny review into Improving the Public Realm.

The report was noted.

*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.*

46. **Work Programme**

The Chair presented the Committee’s current work programme to members, which was noted.

47. **Budget Monitoring**

The Committee had before them the Budget Monitoring 2018/19 – April to January (Month 10) report, which was presented to Cabinet on 19 March 2019.
In considering the report, the Committee noted there was a projected underspend of £1.79m on Central Expenses and asked if this underspend could be allocated to areas that were currently overspending. The Chair advised that she would ask the Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Core Services to provide a response to the Committee.

The report was noted.