

**DECISIONS OF THE BUDGET & PERFORMANCE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

21 June 2011

Present:

*Councillor Dean Cohen (Chairman)
*Councillor Joan Scannell (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

* Brian Gordon	* Brian Schama
* John Marshall	* Alan Schneiderman
* Alison Moore	* Andrew Strongolou
* Hugh Rayner	* Barry Rawlings (substituting for Alex Brodkin)

*denotes Member present

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4th April 2011 be approved.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Alex Brodkin who was substituted for by Councillor Barry Rawlings.

Apologies for absence were also received from Cabinet Members who had been invited to attend for items on the agenda that related to their portfolio.

3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS (INCLUDING WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS)

None.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

None.

5. MEMBER'S ITEMS

None.

6. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE RESULTS FOR QUARTER FOUR AND YEAR END 2010/11

The Committee received the quarter four and year end corporate performance for 2010/11.

The Committee expressed concern that targets relating to the following Corporate Performance Indicators (CPIs) had been missed:

- 10a (% of contracts held by the Council which have been reviewed) and 10b (% of contracts deemed to require renegotiation have commenced renegotiation) as failure to address these would have an adverse financial impact on the Council;
- 4d (% of children in care achieving 5 A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths);
- 8 (% of children in care, aged under 16, who are in LBB foster placement) as in-house foster care placements were perceived to result in better outcomes for placed children;
- 19b (% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting) as the Council were one of the worst performing London boroughs and as the increase in EU landfill taxes will have a significant financial impact on the Council in future years; and
- 18a (% demand met by telephone within corporate ring time (5 rings) by all council call centres) and 18e (% satisfaction with contact centre telephone service by corporate customer services).

In relation to CPIs 10a and 10b, Officers reported that a Contract Management and Monitoring Action Plan had been introduced and was currently being implemented to respond to the issues raised by Internal Audit in relation to contract monitoring and management. The Committee suggested that the targets for both CPIs 10a and 10b indicators should be revised to 100%.

In relation to CPI 8, the Chairman reported the Committee that a Task and Finish Group had recently undertaken a review of fostering recruitment and would be reporting their findings to a future meeting of Cabinet.

Officers reported that performance in relation to CPI 4d was an issue across London and nationally. The Committee were advised that an achievable stretch target had been set for this CPI which would be revised upwards for 2011/12. It was acknowledged that the gap between children with special educational needs and average attainment was still too wide. Members were informed that this was a priority for the Children's Trust Board.

In relation to the Planning, Housing and Regeneration top improvement initiative of 'complete a business and enterprise scoping study for each priority town centre', the Committee questioned why North Finchley had been overtaken by Childs Hill as a Priority Town Centre.

In relation to the Corporate Governance top improvement initiative, the Committee questioned what relevance the Publication Scheme had to the strategic objective of 'improve Council policy and decision making through greater involvement by non-executive Members.'

Officers advised the Committee that poor performance in relation to CPIs 18a and 18e were due to intractable problems that required major transformational change to

fully address.

In relation to CPI 27 (number of households being re-housed in the private sector via the Housing Service), the Committee sought clarification regarding whether re-housing in private sector was more expensive than other types of social housing.

RESOLVED that –

- 1. the Committee recommend that the targets for CPIs 10a (% of contracts held by the Council which have been reviewed) and 10b (% of contracts deemed to require renegotiation have commenced renegotiation) should be revised to 100%.**
- 2. the Committee receive in depth reports on the following topics when considering Quarter 1 Corporate Performance Information on 22 September 2011:**
 - The impact of change in local housing allowances on homelessness and the use of emergency temporary accommodation; and**
 - Percentage of children subject to a child protection case for the second or subsequent time**

7. ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE FOR OLDER PEOPLE THROUGH REHABILITATION / INTERMEDIATE CARE

The Committee received a report outlining the context and partnership work undertaken between NHS Barnet and Barnet Council in 2010/11 for the corporate performance indicator NI125. The report also provided an update on financial resources and work streams in progress to further increase integration between health and social care, improve outcomes and deliver efficiencies against shared agendas.

Responding to a question on reducing hospital admissions, Officers reported that initiatives were in place in hospitals to prevent the unnecessary welfare admissions of older people. For example, there had been an increase in the number of senior doctors in accident and emergency who were empowered to take decisions regarding the admission of older people.

RESOLVED that –

- 1. Adult Social Services and Health be requested to provide the Committee with information on continuity arrangements for home carers for older people, with particularly reference to the frequency of changes to care staff.**
- 2. Councillor Brian Gordon be requested to provide the Joint Associate Director (Joint Commissioning) with details regarding the care of a constituent in order for the framework assessment (used to determine a care plan for the individual) to be shared (subject to the provisions of**

the Data Protection Act 1998 being adhered to).

8. WASTE AND RECYCLING PERFORMANCE

The Committee noted:

- the significant financial implications for the authority (EU landfill taxes) of failure to improve performance in waste reduction and recycling; and
- the need to review options for future waste collection arrangements, taking into account cost and performance implications.

RESOLVED that-

1. the following representations be made to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Interim Director of Environment and Operations:

- (i) the Committee recommend that the Waste Management Strategy be reviewed;**
- (ii) the Committee recommend that the current recycling boxes are not of a suitable size to encourage people to maximise the volume of waste sent for recycling and should be reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate for the material being collected;**
- (iii) the Committee recommend that a cost/benefit analysis be undertaken regarding information stickers on bins and recycling containers, and potential increases in recycling rates;**
- (iv) the Committee recommend that a cost/benefit analysis be undertaken into the potential increased income that might be received by the Council from the sale of recyclable material for every 1% increase in the recycling rate;**
- (v) the Committee endorses the retention of weekly refuse and recycling collections; and**
- (vi) the Committee recommend that Environment and Operations introduce a compulsory recycling scheme for the remaining 186 non-participating flat developments in the Borough.**

10. CASHLESS PARKING OPERATIONS

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the implementation of a scheme which enables motorists to pay for parking by phone, and options for extending the scheme.

RESOLVED that –

1. the following recommendations be made to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Interim Director of Environment and Operations:

- (i) consideration be given to the cost/benefit of all cashless payment options for parking (including debit card/credit card,**

pay by phone, Pay Point and pre-payment, or a combination of these) before any decision is taken to implement an entirely pay by phone system for parking operations across the borough;

- (ii) that consideration be given to the feasibility of introducing the Easy Park pre-payment parking system which is in operation in a number of European countries.**

10. FUTURE OF THE PARKING SERVICE BUSINESS CASE

The Committee considered the One Barnet Business Case on the Future of the Parking Service.

The Committee expressed concern that parking meters, which had been a significant factor in the fall in revenue for the Special Parking Account, were outside of the scope of the Parking Service Business Case. Officers advised the Committee that they were confident of achieving a cost reduction of 25% over seven years, in line with the experience of other boroughs that had outsourced their parking service to an external contractor.

Officers noted the concerns of the Committee relating to weaknesses in contract management and monitoring arrangements (as highlighted by recent Internal Audit reports) and the potential for this to impact on an outsourced parking service, and the accuracy of financial projections for One Barnet projects.

RESOLVED that –

- 1. the Committee request that the decision to award a contract to an external supplier for the provision of parking services in the borough be subject to a Cabinet or Cabinet Resources Committee decision.**

11. NEW SUPPORT AND CUSTOMER SERVICES ORGANISATION BUSINESS CASE

The Committee considered a Cabinet Resources Committee report which detailed the Business Case for outsourcing of support services and customer services.

The Committee identified that an overarching aim of the One Barnet was to create 'one public sector' and questioned the extent to which other public sector agencies in Barnet had participated in the programme to date. Members also suggested that options for joint working with neighbouring boroughs should be explored as an option for reducing overheads and costs. Officers reported that approaches had been made to other boroughs to consider joint working for some services (such as Pensions, Internal Audit and ICT). The Committee noted that none of the authorities that had been approached had been sufficiently prepared to participate in joint working arrangements at that time.

Members emphasised that effective procurement, contract design (including contract variations and penalty clauses) and contract monitoring would be critical in delivering projected savings and service improvements for the New Support and Customer Services Organisation project.

The Committee noted that the contract would not be prescriptive on the physical location of the service provider, with the overarching considerations being cost and quality.

RESOLVED that –

- 1. the Cabinet Resources Committee take into account the comments made by the Committee, as set out above, in relation to the New Support and Customer Services Organisation Business Case.**

12. ONE BARNET PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHT REPORT

The Committee noted that the One Barnet Operational Board had acknowledged a lack of progress with the Customer Services Transformation project, resulting in the project being allocated a red RAG status.

RESOLVED that –

- 1. the Committee note the progress of the One Barnet work streams, as set out in the One Barnet Programme Highlight Report, attached at Appendix 1 to the report**
- 2. Officers be requested to provide the Committee with detailed information on:**
 - (i) the pension implications of transferring services to an external provider; and**
 - (ii) progress made in delivering a ‘channel shift’ from face-to face to web interactions.**

13. CABINET FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that –

- 1. the Cabinet Forward Plan of Key Decisions be noted.**

14. BUDGET & PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED that –

- 1. the Committee note the Committee Forward Work Programme**
- 2. the Director of Corporate Governance be requested to note Members concerns regarding the size of the Committee’s work programme following the changes in the structure of the overview and scrutiny committees introduced in May 2011**

15. ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were no such items.

The meeting concluded at 10.00pm.