

COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 7 March 2018

Minutes of the meeting of the Community & Children's Services Committee held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall on Wednesday, 7 March 2018 at 8.30 am

Present

Members:

Randall Anderson (Deputy Chairman)
Tom Anderson
Matthew Bell
Peter Bennett
James de Sausmarez
John Fletcher
Marianne Fredericks
Alderman Robert Howard

Alderman The Lord Mountevans
Deputy Joyce Nash
Dhruv Patel (Chairman)
Susan Pearson
William Pimlott
Jason Pritchard
Deputy Elizabeth Rogula
Ruby Sayed
George Abrahams
Laura Jorgensen

Officers:

Andrew Carter	-	Community & Children's Services Department
Paul Murtagh	-	Community & Children's Services Department
Jacquie Campbell	-	Community & Children's Services Department
Will Norman	-	Community & Children's Services Department
Sukhjot Gill	-	Community & Children's Services Department
Carol Boswarthack	-	Community & Children's Services Department
Natasha Dogra	-	Town Clerk's Department
Chris Pelham	-	Community & Children's Services Department
Simon Cribbens	-	Community & Children's Services Department
Gerald Mehrtens	-	Community & Children's Services Department
Mike Saunders	-	Community & Children's Services Department
Mark Jarvis	-	Chamberlain's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Deputy Henry Jones, Barbara Newman, Deputy Catherine McGuinness, Mary Durcan, Deputy Philip Woodhouse, Deputy John Tomlinson, Matt Piper, Mark Bostock, Adrian Bastow, Mark Wheatley and Alderman David Graves.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

Resolved – that the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

4. PRESENTATION: THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES

Member received information about services provided by Barbican and Community Libraries available to City residents, City workers, students and regular visitors to the City of London.

Officers worked closely with public health on a new campaign called the “Release the pressure”. This is a pilot project testing out a new way of working with City workers to create a “mental wellbeing sanctuary” in the City, for which we have obtained a £15,000 grant from the Carnegie Enterprising Libraries Fund, one of only 14 successful applications from a field of 120. Following on from the creation of “Sanctuary Spaces” at Shoe Lane Library, loans of health and wellbeing related stock increased by 7%.

Members noted that in the latest general customer user survey, 34% of respondents stated that the libraries had helped with their general wellbeing and sense of community.

Members noted that the Officers monitored the use of community space via consultation with users. Officers said they were attempting to break down the stereotypes around libraries. Members agreed that there was a social inclusion and community aspect involved with libraries which must be publicised via newsletters and shared publications.

In response to a query regarding publicising the libraries to City workers, Officers said they were advertising through social media, visits to City firms and it could be possible to include an advertisement in the ward newsletters.

Members asked about safeguarding on internet connections in libraries. Officers said the City of London security network was utilised on all City library computers to ensure a secure connection was available to all users.

Resolved – that the Committee receive the update.

5. DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN 2018-19

Members noted that the high-level plan was presented in draft to the Committee on 9 February 2018 for comment. Following Member feedback, the plan now included specific reference to delivery of mental health services and accessibility to housing and open space. Acronyms have been either removed or set out in full.

In addition, the plan set out in more detail the measures contained in the plan to monitor delivery of projects and programmes.

The renewed plan aligns more clearly to the draft Corporate Plan, particularly to its strategic objective to “contribute to a flourishing society” and the four corporate objectives that sit below it.

Members thanked Officers for a clear and concise plan which addressed the comments made by Members at previous Committee meetings.

Resolved – that Members approved the business plan.

6. BUSINESS PLAN: QUARTER 3 UPDATE

The Committee noted that overall performance in Q3 showed that of the departmental performance indicators:

- 17 (57%) achieved or exceeded the target set (rated GREEN)
- 5 (17%) were performing within 10% of the target set (rated AMBER)
- 8 (27%) are more than 10% outside of their target (rated RED)
- 11 are PIs are not reported in Q3 (annual or bi-annual measures).

Members noted that in Q3, 49 long term rough sleepers were reported against a target of 43 or fewer. Although above target, the total remains constant in the City, despite a 2% increase on the last quarter London wide. Only two of the 37 new rough sleepers in the City during the quarter remained rough sleeping long enough (three weeks) to be counted as “living on the streets”. Officers said a multi-disciplinary Challenge Group focuses on this issue. It was noted that additional specialist accommodation has been secured and supported 16 rough sleepers to leave the street, including five of the City’s thirteen most entrenched rough sleepers. A plan to improve co-ordination and secure movement through our pathway of specialist accommodation has been put in place to maximise its effectiveness.

Resolved – that the Committee receive the report.

7. WAIVER REPORT - INTERIM GAS APPLIANCE TESTING AND MAINTENANCE

Members noted that the Housing Property Services was providing notification for the award of an Interim Gas Appliance Testing and Maintenance Service contract to TSG Building Services plc, from the 1st July 2017 - 30th September 2017. The City of London Corporation has a statutory obligation to deliver this service and therefore needs to ensure that the appropriate provision is in place to prevent any health and safety risks and potential litigation.

The scope of the service included:

- Annual servicing, safety check and maintenance of landlord’s domestic gas supply and appliances.
- Subsequent repairs required.

Resolved – that the Committee receive the report.

8. ROUGH-SLEEPERS UPDATE

The Committee noted the work with rough sleepers to fulfil the City’s local authority function in accordance with the policy commitments of central government and the Mayor of London. The City continued to be part of a pan-London approach to addressing rough sleeping and is represented at the Greater London Authority’s (GLA’s) operational leads meeting.

The national street count took place in November 2017 and 36 rough sleepers were recorded, a 28% reduction on the 2016 figure. Numbers of new and intermittent rough sleepers continue to rise, along with most London local authorities, but quarter 2 saw no individuals migrate into the ‘living on the

streets' cohort. In quarter 3 the proportion of rough sleepers who did not spend a second night on the street was 81%.

In response to a query Members noted that the accommodation pathway is fully operational with 16 individuals helped since the last committee report. Service level agreements are now in place with Westminster, Hackney and Tower Hamlets, while extra provision has been negotiated to complement the existing agreement with Southwark. The outreach team are carrying out weekly anti-begging patrols with newly commissioned service provider, Parkguard.

Members noted that this winter has seen the introduction of a new pilot initiative to protect the welfare of rough sleepers during adverse weather. The Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) uses four supported beds across two settings as well as access to B&B accommodation. This creates a stronger local offer for hard-to-reach individuals and builds on partnership work already underway with voluntary sector agencies. The new SWEP provision has been running alongside the Winter Awareness Campaign seen on billboards, in stations and on phone boxes across the City. Officers thanked Members for their assistance and support during the extreme cold weather over the past week. Members said they appreciated the interim update emails from Officers regarding the situation and thanked the Outreach team for their hard work.

Members said the many churches and livery companies in the City should be engaged in an attempt to implement a long term solution to the problem of rough sleeping in the City.

In response to a query regarding the movement of rough sleepers between boroughs, it was noted that the Chain system operated across London which tracked the movement of rough sleepers across borough boundaries. Information sharing across London borough authorities was very good and an open communication network was encouraged.

Resolved – that the Committee receive the report.

9. **MENTAL HEALTH CENTRE**

Members noted the piloting of a mental health centre in the Square Mile to provide range of clinical treatments to tackle mental ill health. The centre's provision will include low cost interventions for workers and residents on low incomes. This will be enabled by provision of one rent-free shop unit from which to operate. To ensure the rent loss does not impact on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the department will seek funding through the Priorities Pot funding process.

A Member queried rent and service change payments. Officers said that service change and rent payment would be paid by the service provider. The Committee agreed that affordable rents should be achieved on the unit. Appropriate services for tackling drug and alcohol issues were necessary in the City of London. Members said the demand for the service may require two units to deliver the service. Members welcomed a pilot scheme which could result in

several units being made available in the future depending on the take up of the provision.

Discussions ensued regarding the provision of services that could be available at the unit. Members agreed that a model would be required, and Officers must provide a detailed plan to the Committee. Members agreed that availability of space was critical to the delivery of the service.

Resolved – that Members support the piloting of the proposed mental health centre for a three-year period over two units.

10. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

A Member raised a query regarding the window replacement work taking place on the Golden Lane Estate. The Member asked for these window replacements to take place as quickly as possible and to immediately try and halt slippage and queried why the window replacements have taken so long to implement. Officers said that the current programme remains accurate. Committee approval had been obtained to separate the windows on the Golden Lane Estate from the rest of our housing estates. The Member said that this will mean that the complexities of the Golden Lane Estate can be managed and dealt with without impacting on delivery of other similar projects.

Officers are currently tendering for a Design Team to work on the window replacement on all our estates. However, Officers realise that Golden Lane is likely to be much more complex, and take longer than the other estates, due to its listed status and the likely conditions placed on us by Planning and English Heritage. Members were assured that the project would be completed by 2020/21. The Committee noted that the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee were aware of the slippage and received update reports at their bi-monthly meeting to monitor the progress of projects.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no urgent business.

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

13. PROJECT PROPOSAL - SUMNER BUILDINGS

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

14. FLOOD AT ARTIZAN STREET LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

15. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions,

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There was no urgent business

The meeting ended at 10:10am.

Chairman

**Contact Officer: Natasha Dogra tel. no.: 020 7332 1434
Natasha.Dogra@cityoflondon.gov.uk**