

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES

22 OCTOBER 2013

Chairman:	* Councillor Chris Mote	
Councillors:	* Sue Anderson * Marilyn Ashton * Mano Dharmarajah * Jerry Miles	* Bill Phillips * Anthony Seymour * Victoria Silver (1) * Yogesh Teli
Voting Co-opted:	(Voluntary Aided) † Mrs J Rammelt Reverend P Reece	(Parent Governors) * Mrs A Khan
Non-voting Co-opted:	* Harrow Youth Parliament Representative	
In attendance (Councillors)	Kam Chana Janet Mote	Minute 451 Minute 450

- * Denotes Member present
- (1) Denotes category of Reserve Member
- † Denotes apologies received

441. Appointment of Members

RESOLVED: To note the appointment of

- (1) Councillors Chris Mote, Anthony Seymour, Marilyn Ashton and Yogesh Teli as Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillors Kam Chana, Tony Ferrari, Paul Osborn and Stephen

Wright in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 1.5, and following notification from the Conservative Group;

- (2) Councillors Lynda Seymour, Ramji Chauhan and Jean Lammiman as Reserve Members in place of Councillors Chris Mote, Christine Bednell and Marilyn Ashton, and in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 1.5, and following notification from the Conservative Group;
- (3) Councillors Phil O'Dell and Bill Phillips as Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillors Graham Henson and Ann Gate and of Councillor Ben Wealthy as Reserve Member in place of Councillor David Perry, and in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 1.5, and following notification from the Labour Group;
- (4) Councillor Zarina Khalid as Reserve Member in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 1.5, and following notification from the Independent Labour Group.

442. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Phillip O'Dell

Councillor Victoria Silver

443. Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED: That Councillor Chris Mote be appointed as Chair for the meeting.

444. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

Agenda Item 11 – Joint Working Around long Term Unemployed

Councillor Sue Anderson, during the course of the meeting, declared a non-pecuniary interest in that she was a member of the National Autistic Society and that her son was jobless but not in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance. She would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Councillor Chris Mote declared, during the course of the meeting, a non-pecuniary interest in that his wife was enrolled with Job Centre Plus. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Councillor Janet Mote, who was not a member of the Committee, declared a non-pecuniary interest in that she was enrolled with Job Centre Plus. She would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Councillor Anthony Seymour declared a non-pecuniary interest in that his sister had previously claimed Job Seekers Allowance and other benefits. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

445. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2013, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

446. Public Questions

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were received.

447. Petitions

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions had been received.

448. References from Council/Cabinet

RESOLVED: To note that no references had been received.

RESOLVED ITEMS

449. Appointments to Sub-Committees and of Scrutiny Lead Members

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Councillor Sue Anderson be appointed Chair of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee;
- (2) the changes to the Scrutiny Lead Members and their areas of responsibility be agreed, as detailed in Appendix I to these minutes;
- (3) the changes to the memberships of the Scrutiny Sub-Committees notified by the political groups in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 1.5 and detailed in Appendix II to these minutes, be noted;
- (4) Councillor Sachin Shah replace Councillor Graham Henson as main member on Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee and Councillor Bill Phillips replace Councillor Ann Gate as reserve on the Call-In Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

450. Families First - Troubled Families

Members received a report of the Divisional Director of Early Intervention Services which outlined progress on the government's Troubled Families initiative which was designed to turn around families who had a range of complex difficulties.

The Chair welcomed the Portfolio Holder for Children and Families, the Divisional Director and lead officer. The officer outlined the content of the

report, including the progress of 41 families identified by the initiative, and advised that it was expected a further claim for Payment by Results would be completed at the end of October 2013. Harrow was broadly at the national average level. He advised that it was important to note that the view taken at the start of the project was that it should be consent based.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- a Member stated that Sir Merrick Cockell, Chair of the Local Government Association had described the government's Troubled Families initiative as doomed to fail and stated that there were some concerns about this project. She sought clarification as to the upfront costs of the project and stated that resolution of troubled families concerns straddled many departments of the Council and other agencies and questioned how officers were working with other teams. The officer advised that the only figure available was that the approximate cost of a family coming into social services was £10,000 and that, in terms of working with other departments, there was joint working with the early intervention team and that whilst he, the lead officer for the project, was from Children and Families but that he did have links with other teams;
- in response to a Member's query in relation to anti social behaviour, the officer advised that this did not assist in the identification of troubled families and that the cohort was small. He had met with the Anti Social Behaviour team and added that the Wilderness Project was aimed at the youth offending cohort but that it was too early to know the effect;
- a Member sought clarification as to the involvement of the voluntary sector in the initiative and was advised that the Council had a contract with Action for Families in order to support families in the project. There was also an early intervention partnership board which included voluntary sector representatives;
- referring to page 25 and the paragraph on intensive family support, the officer advised that Homestart was one organisation that had provided support in the past;
- in response to a Member's question as to how anti social behavior was measured, the officer advised that in terms of the broad criteria used to identify troubled families anti social behaviour was not significant and was not an element of the 41 families eligible for payment by results;
- clarification was sought as to the ethnicity of the 125 families identified in the first phase of the initiative. The officer advised that the criteria provided by the government had to be used but that 25% were white British, 11% Asian and 10% African. In terms of religion, the highest percentages were 27% Catholic and 11% Islam;
- the representative of Parent Governors advised that she was aware of a number of community organisations that would like to work with the

Council on this project and the officer advised that consideration was being given to commissioning community volunteers;

- a Member questioned whether a trigger for a family's involvement in the project could be, for example, home schooling which removed a child from benchmarks and monitoring. Whilst this was not a criteria of the project, officers advised that staff worked with children that were home educated or those who had come to the attention for other reasons;
- in response to a Member's question as to whether identification of families was an on going process, the officer advised that whilst the expectation had been that lots of families would be identified this had not been the case. Families did, however, come in to Children's Services all the time;
- the officer advised Members that there were currently 30 key workers. In response a further question from the Member, the officer advised that families could not be supported through the Troubled Families initiative twice;
- the representative of Harrow Youth Parliament questioned the position if a family met only one of the criteria and was advised that families needed to be eligible to receive support but that it was an interesting point;
- in terms of sustainability and the fact that families could not go through the project twice, a Member questioned whether, in terms of the 41 families, savings and outcomes were achieved and specific trends identified. The officer responded that the priority was to sustain an early intervention model and that the government's criteria had to be used in terms of the initiative. Referring to the Member's comments about the valuable role played by the community service volunteers, the officer advised that connectivity with the community was key to early intervention.

The Chair thanked the Portfolio Holder and officers for their attendance and responses.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and that a further report be submitted to the Committee in 6 months.

451. Joint Working around Long Term Unemployment

Members received a report of the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise which outlined the Council's work to reduce long term unemployment, in the context of the Harrow economy, national and regional policy, and joint work with partners. It complemented the report submitted to the Committee in September 2013 on Regeneration.

The Chair welcomed the Portfolio Holder for Business and Enterprise and officers to the meeting. The Portfolio Holder outlined the content of the report and advised that there appeared to be signs of recovery. Officers advised that in addition to supporting residents into work, there was a deficit of jobs in Harrow (relative to jobseekers) and therefore work was also taking place to create jobs, and that Xcite worked with all unemployed Harrow residents and took referrals from Families First. A key barrier to work was lack of experience and low self esteem and officers emphasised that no one was coerced into taking part in the Xcite project.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- there appeared to be a lack of information from some of the Council's partners in terms of unemployment. An officer advised that in some cases national providers did not supply data;
- there was a proliferation of agencies providing employment programmes. An officer advised that many agencies were needed to support people that had complex barriers to employment which could include substance abuse, homelessness and debt issues which no single agency would deal with;
- a Member sought an update in terms of the Honeypot Lane development and the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital (RNOH). The officer advised that the Section 106 agreement had secured £250,000 over 5 years and this had been spent and the employment and training targets had all been delivered. In terms of the Honeypot Lane development, the Incubation Centre had been set up and approximately a dozen companies were located on the site. The officer advised that, in relation to RNOH, he had attended a meeting the previous week with Balfour Beatty and before that with Bougues to discuss local labour and local supply chains, with the intention that local residents and businesses would benefit from opportunities generated by the development. The construction could last up to 10 years, providing an opportunity to teach skills to young people. Clauses could be included in constructors' contracts to encourage employment of local people;
- in response to a Member's query as to how unemployed residents could get involved in the Xcite programme, the officer advised that individuals should sign on with the job centre and should separately contact the Council and ask for Xcite. The officer advised that Jobcentre plus offered free courses and Xcite ran 4 workshops per month. The officer undertook to provide Members with the timetabling of the workshops;
- a Member questioned whether officers liaised with the National Autistic Society in order to assist autistic adults in gaining employment and also whether there was link with Youth Stop. In accordance with the Autism Act 2009, local authorities were expected to provide opportunities to autistic adults to enable them to secure employment and she was

interested to see how the Council would manage its responsibilities in this area. The officer advised that up to the age of 25, young people were advised to contact Youth Services for assistance. Xcite could work with everyone but there were often more resources, that is, free courses for young people with other services. Provision for those with additional needs was not currently adequate and more work was required in this area;

- a Member commented that not all jobseekers for jobs in Harrow would live in the borough and expressed the view that the type of employers at job fairs needed to be widened. Officers responded that employer engagement could be difficult and that it took three months to organise a fair and quite often employers dropped out at the last minute.

The Chair thanked the Portfolio Holder and officers for their attendance and responses.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and to support the continuation of the activities to stimulate the economy, in order to promote job growth and reduce worklessness.

452. Report of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee Chair

Members received a report which provided a summary of issues considered by the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee during the meeting held on 30 September 2013 and issues taken forward by the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee Chair appointed for the purposes of the meeting held on 30 September be noted.

453. Scrutiny Lead Members Report

RESOLVED: That the reports from the Scrutiny Lead Members be noted and the actions proposed therein be agreed.

454. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED: That in accordance with Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item for the reasons set out below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Reason</u>
15.	Families First – Troubled Families – Annex	Information under paragraph 1 (contains information relating to any individual).

455. Families First - Troubled Families

RESOLVED: That the Annex to the report be noted.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.09 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR CHRIS MOTE
Chairman

SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBERS

Policy Lead Member	Councillor 13/14
Health	Councillor Ben Wealthy
Children and Families	Councillor Lynda Seymour
Corporate Resources	Councillor Jerry Miles
Community, Health and Wellbeing	Councillor Chris Mote
Environment and Enterprise	Councillor Yogesh Teli

Performance Lead Member	Councillor 13/14
Health	Councillor Sachin Shah
Children and Families	Councillor Victoria Silver
Corporate Resources	Councillor Amir Moshenson
Community, Health and Wellbeing	Councillor Nana Asante
Environment and Enterprise	Councillor Phillip O'Dell

APPENDIX II

SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEES

(Membership in order of political group nominations)

Conservative	Labour	Independent Labour	Ungrouped
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(1) PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE (5)

(2)	(2)	(1)	(0)
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I. Members	Chris Mote Anthony Seymour *	Sue Anderson * (CH) Sachin Shah	Mano Dharmarajah
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II. Reserve Members	1. Amir Moshenson 2. Marilyn Ashton	1. Jerry Miles 2. Phillip O'Dell	1. Zarina Khalid
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(2) HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE (5)

(2)	(2)	(1)	(0)
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I. Members	Mrs Vina Mithani (CH) Lynda Seymour	Victoria Silver (VC) * Ben Wealthy	Mano Dharmarajah
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II. Reserve Members	1. Mrs Lurline Champagnie OBE 2. Jean Lammiman	1. Mrinal Choudhury 2. Kairul Kareema Marikar	1. Krishna James
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(3) CALL-IN SUB-COMMITTEE (5)

(2)	(2)	(1)	(0)
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I. Members	Chris Mote Anthony Seymour	Sue Anderson Jerry Miles (VC) *	Mano Dharmarajah
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II. Reserve Members	1. Yogesh Teli 2. Amir Moshenson 3. Ramji Chauhan	1. Phillip O'Dell 2. Bill Phillips	1. Asad Omar
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CH

= Chair

* = Denotes Group Members for consultation on Administrative Matters

(4) CALL-IN SUB-COMMITTEE (Education) (9)

	(4)	(4)	(1)	(0)
I. Members	Marilyn Ashton Mrs Camilla Bath Jean Lammiman Lynda Seymour	Sue Anderson * Jerry Miles Christine Robson Sachin Shah	Mano Dharmarajah	
II. Reserve Members	1. Chris Mote † 2. Ramji Chauhan † 3. Vacant	1. Ajay Maru 2. Sasi Suresh 3. Mitzi Green 4. Bill Phillips	1. Zarina Khalid	

Voting Co-opted Members:

- (1) Two representatives of Voluntary Aided Sector
 - Mrs J Rammelt/Reverend P Reece
- (2) Two representatives of Parent Governors
 - Mrs A Khan (Primary)/Vacancy (Secondary)

CH

= Chair

* = Denotes Group Members for consultation on Administrative Matters

† **[Note:** The appointed number of Reserves for each Group is in excess of the Committee Procedure Rule 3.2 provision, by virtue of Resolution 17: Overview and Scrutiny Committee (18.7.06).]