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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

11 SEPTEMBER 2024

(7.15 pm - 10.00 pm)

PRESENT: Councillor Edward Foley (in the Chair), Councillor Dan Johnston, Councillor Agatha Mary Akyigyina, Councillor Michael Brunt, Councillor Michael Butcher, Councillor Gill Manly, Councillor Aidan Mundy, Councillor John Oliver, Councillor Tony Reiss, Councillor Eleanor Cox and Councillor Robert Page

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors

Hannah Doody (Chief Executive), Dan Jones (Executive Director, Environment, Civic Pride & Climate) and Asad Mushtaq (Executive Director of Finance & Digital)

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from co-opted members, Oona Stannard and Roz Cordner.

Post publication of the agenda, Cllr Robert Page has replaced Cllr Paul Kohler on the Commission.

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

### 3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

Panel members confirmed that these were a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.

Matters arising:

Members requested updates on two previous actions that have not been provided.

- Calculating the value of the nighttime economy.
- Details of CiL unsuccessful bids.

Scrutiny to chase.

### 4 QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE- PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD (Agenda Item 4)

The Leader, Cllr Ross Garrod, highlighted the change of waste services from March 2025, with the launch of a new contracted waste service for bin collections, and bringing street cleansing back in-house.

Priorities for the year ahead include:

- Housing – building to start on site in 2025.
- Effective budget management remains a top priority, as does setting a balanced budget.
- Financial monitoring pressures (homelessness, children’s social care and adult social care)
- Continuing to support those affected by the cost-of-living crisis – including £3m cost of living fund, successfully funded half term HAF programmes, council tax support fund, and citizens advice advisors in libraries have given over 4000 sessions of advice resulting in around £230,000 financial benefit to residents.

In response to questions:

- The ‘Garth Road on the road’ pilot was targeted at wards that are a further distance from the Garth Road site.
- Street sweeping – Dialogue with unions, and further engagement with staff, is planned with regards to TUPE arrangements.
- Supported Workers - A Team. As a Council, we are committed to internships for those with learning difficulties. Leader to come back with update.
- Pre decision scrutiny of the waste contract will be provided to scrutiny.
- Kingdom PSPO pilot – Safer Streets Patrol has been running since the end of August. Targeted support in hotspots. There have been 72 engagements and 45 reports on fix my street. Intelligence is passed to the Safer Neighbourhood team, licensing etc. Once we receive analysis of the pilot, the Council can consider options.

The Chief Executive, Hannah Doody, was invited to outline her priorities for the year ahead.

- Focusing on the workforce and recruitment. Whilst ten new colleagues, across senior roles across the council, will be introduced at the staff conference, recruiting to social care posts remains a challenge.
- Launch of our new corporate values
- LGA Peer Review in the next twelve months
- Preparations for CQC inspection in Adult Social Care

In response to questions, the Chief Executive provided further information as below:

- Diversity rates are high across new senior roles
- Hybrid working is monitored – currently 3 days a week in the office.
- The Council has been kept well informed with regards to the release of prisoners. Robust plans were already in place with regards to probation, substance misuse, and rehabilitation.

- Social Care recruitment – Struggling to recruit to specialised posts, such as child protection and mental health.
- Risks and emergency preparedness plans – We learn from every incident and all detailed investigations by the London Fire Brigade.
- The Resilience Group conduct scenario planning around flooding, tube stations etc. We do know that clarity of roles is so important with one service in control (Police, Fire), as is monitoring and constantly adapting. Strategic risks are held in the strategic risk register and departments have the autonomy to hold their own risks.

## 5 CHANGE TEAM (Agenda Item 5)

Asad Mustaq, Executive Director of Finance and Digital, introduced two members of the Change Team, Ruth Knox and Heather Begg.

In response to questions, Change Team members provided further information.

- Members casework solution – conversations with supplier and IT colleagues are in progress, as well as addressing cyber security.
- The data provided is from a survey taken pre-covid. Action: Change Team to return with updated data following results of new staff survey. Scrutiny to add to work programme.
- Work is also underway with colleagues to ensure our Administration and Business Support staff are optimally deployed to support cross-council working and equipped to provide a resident-centric service, making full use of technological advances.
- Programme boards are held bi-monthly and run by corporate sponsors. They feed into the Oversight Board.

## 6 SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT - TO FOLLOW (Agenda Item 6)

Commission Members approved the Overview & Scrutiny annual report to be presented to Council on 18 September 2024.

## 7 SCRUTINY MEMBER SURVEY (Agenda Item 7)

Members noted that the CfGS review is imminent and will potentially affect the function.

Scrutiny Team noted that some data was hard to read due to colour of graphs.

8 IDENTIFY QUESTIONS FOR THE BOROUGH COMMANDER (Agenda Item 8)

Please can any questions be sent to Scrutiny Team by 25 October at the latest.

9 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 9)

The work programme was agreed.