

**MINUTES OF THE FORWARD PLAN SELECT COMMITTEE**  
**Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007 at 7.30 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor Coughlin (Chair) and Leaman (Vice-Chair) Councillors Kansagra, J Long, Malik, Powney and Shah.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jackson.

Also present were Councillors Allie, V Brown, Colwill, Dunwell, Thomas and Van Colle.

**1. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

None.

**2. Deputations**

Member of the public requested to address the committee on item 5(b).

**3. Minutes of Last Meeting – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2007**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2007 be received and approved as an accurate record.

**4. Matters Arising**

Members requested a progress report on the One Stop Shop and Tricycle Theatre.

**5. Call-in of Executive Decisions from the meeting of the Executive on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2007**

**(a) Future provision and Reassurance and Town Centre Wardens Services in Brent.**

Following a request from the Committee the Executive decision on the joint report from the Director of Environment and Culture and the Director of Policy and Regeneration was called-in for questioning. Members wished to address the lead officer and lead member on several matters concerning the future of Town Centre Wardens. Councillor V Brown (Lead Member for Crime Prevention and Public Safety), Phil Newby (Director of Policy and Regeneration) and Valerie Jones (Head of Community Safety) attended to answer any queries.

Councillor V Brown stated that Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) improved the general feeling of safety in the area and had a positive impact upon the financial implications for the council.

Irfan Malik and Valerie Jones introduced the report and answered the call-in questions listed in item 5(b). It was noted that the report presented two options. Option one was to end the Town Centre Wardens provision and make

a growth bid to fund the equivalent number of PCSOs under a agreement with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), which would create an £85, 000 saving in the first year. This was because the MPS had made an offer to all London Councils to purchase additional PCSOs at the rate of £20,000 per PCSO per annum for the next 2 years. The full economic cost of a PCSO is in the region of £36,000. Option two was to continue the Town Centre Warden Service as they were currently configured and funded, however this would not create any changes or savings to the council.

With regard to the impact on the enviro-crime, it was noted the change would create a greater opportunity for StreetCare Ward officers to spend more time dealing with local environment issues and enviro-crime. The lead member emphasised that there was not a great difference between the role of a Town Centre Warden and a PCSO, however, PCSOs would have a better back up system connected to them and an additional increase in powers. Paragraph 3.9 of the report outlined the duties and effectiveness of the PCSOs. With regard to the effect on staff morale, some members commented that staff morale would be adversely affected. Other members commented however, that the PCSOs would still work closely with the control room team which would aid staff morale. It was noted that the Corporate Strategy focused on reducing crime and the fear of crime. The lead member advised that PCSOs would contribute to that reassurance more than Town Centre Wardens, and this would benefit the council as it would create a seamless service where PCSOs would work directly with the MPS.

Members enquired how the new PCSOs would operate and the effect they would have on the overall service. Members also questioned whether the PCSOs were contracted by the council or the MPS. In reply, it was noted that PCSOs would be organised under the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and would be deployed by the Chief Superintendent, however they would report back to the council regarding enviro-crime issues. This would allow the service to become robust as PCSOs would have the scope to react immediately to law enforcement issues without waiting for police support. Members were informed that the PCSOs would be deployed in high crime areas such as Willesden, Wembley, and Harlesden.

Members expressed concern about some aspects of the PCSO deployment, and cited the example that in 2005 PCSOs were deployed outside the borough for the Notting Hill Carnival. In reply the lead member stated that PCSOs would be based in the borough. Irfan Malik emphasised that PCSOs would be beneficial to the borough because of the increase of their powers. The terrorist attacks of 7<sup>th</sup> July 2005 were given as an example, when PCSOs were able to aid in police matters and enter stations. Town Centre Wardens who had spent convictions were not however permitted access, which lowered the number of personnel available to assist on the day.

Some members noted that PCSOs would work closely with the MPS, thus providing a more efficient and effective service to the public. The Chair stated that both Town Centre Wardens and PCSOs had many similarities and questioned why the Town Centre Wardens service could not be maintained. He then emphasised that the service would diminish if Town Centre Wardens were removed and that the PCSO decision had not been in line with the Corporate Strategy, which stated that the Warden Services' role would be

widened. The Chair also pointed out that PCSOs in the past had difficulty in dealing with enviro-crime, and asked whether time be allocated for enviro-crimes. In response, it was noted that PCSOs would provide greater reassurance as they would be working under the MPS umbrella, working a 35 hour rotational week to shift patterns in accordance to the MPS. It was confirmed that it would not be financially beneficial for the Council to maintain both Town Centre Wardens and PCSOs. It was emphasised by officers and the lead member that residents were in favour of increased PCSOs within their borough, as this would provide reassurance, which was a key goal in the corporate strategy.

RESOLVED:

that upon considering the report from the Director of Environment and Culture and the Director of Policy and Regeneration, the decisions made by the Executive be noted.

**(b) Carlyon Print Royal London Society Blind (RLSB) Options**

Following a request from the Committee the Executive decision on the report from the Director of Housing and Community Care was called-in for questioning. Members wished to address the lead officer and lead member on several matters concerning the Carlyon Print. Councillor Colwill (Lead Member for Adults, Health and Social Care), Duncan McLeod (Director of Finance and Corporate Resources) and Christabel Shawcross (Assistant Director of Community Care) attended to answer any queries.

The Chair gave permission for a member of the public, Mr Joe Mann to express his views and concerns regarding Carlyon Print.

Mr Mann stated that in his view the decisions made by the Executive with regard to Carlyon Print were incorrect as the material in the report was misleading, inaccurate and mischievous concerning the workstep review which was not in the public domain and the policy on worksteps. He stated that the council should be working towards aiding disabled people in employment and that if needed he would offer his expert experience and knowledge in assisting the council to reevaluate it's decisions.

In reply, Christabel Shawcross acknowledged that the Carlyon Print was a sensitive issue. Concerns for Carlyon had emerged in 2001, when central government had changed the amount of funding made available to councils. There also had been longstanding concerns about the subsidy by the Council. In 2001 it looked at trying to develop Carlyon Print by creating a partnership with Shaw Trust, who unfortunately after 3 years in 2005 was unable to achieve the objectives set and concluded that it was not viable to develop or maintain Carlyon Print. New technology had produced a better and faster way of obtaining printed products, which resulted in the lack of demand for printing and hand finished products. The council commissioned a consultant to address the issues and look at options for the future of Carlyon Print. Investigations had taken place and the results showed that Carlyon Print was not a viable business without more investment and risk. The lead member added that Carlyon Print issues had been looked at extensively. All possible routes had been thoroughly researched before presenting the report to the

Executive. Duncan McLeod confirmed that Carlyon could not operate without significant financial subsidies, furthermore, to remain at this level there would need to be an increase in subsidies. Christabel Shawcross also stated that in relation to workstep policy, that Carlyon Print had failed 2 inspections. Only 1 person had moved on and the type of work was seen as undemanding. Most staff did handfinishing work not printing. In terms of the workstep review the Executive report stated that the future funding was uncertain. The implication that contracts would go to fewer providers was based on the consultants discussions, and views expressed.

Some members noted that the value of the site had increased and that the council could have the opportunity of capital investment when the site was closed. It was emphasised that if the site remained open there would be an issue of on-going revenue costs.

Some members of the Committee asked what would happen to staff once Carlyon Print was closed and questioned the number of disabled people in employment by the council. It was noted that staff at Carlyon Print would be offered redeployment or be given a redundancy/pension payment and opportunities to have learning and development training to apply elsewhere. Fifteen staff members were being assessed to see if they had care needs and officers would work with Job Centre Plus to aid staff in finding alternative employment. Duncan McLeod estimated that approximately 127 out of 3179 council staff had disabilities, this was dependant upon whether school staff were included and Christabel Shawcross reported that this was approximately 4% of council staff. The latest figure would be in the Vital Signs report.

With consent of the Chair Councillor Dunwell expressed his views and concerns regarding Carlyon Print. He stressed that he was not pleased with the decision the Executive had taken on Carlyon Print and stated that in his view the information provided was inaccurate and incorrect. He questioned the commitment of Shaw Trust and asked whether other solutions had been sought. In response, Christabel Shawcross referred Councillor Dunwell to the report and explained that this comprehensively listed other alternatives sought by the council. Councillor Dunwell asked about Race Equality impact assessments and was advised that screening had been undertaken and was ongoing. He stated that the Commission for Racial Equality were looking into this matter. Christabel Shawcross said she had no knowledge of this.

Members enquired whether staff could be employed by the Royal London Society for the Blind (RLSB) as two members of staff were due to retire this year. In reply, it was noted that RLSB had not advertised vacancies, but that Carlyon Print staff could apply for any such vacancies. Members questioned the number of reviews that had taken place and when the Carlyon account had last not made a loss. In reply, members were advised that many reviews had taken place since 1995. It was noted that tendering the service was difficult as the council had already subsidised £1 million to Carlyon Print; the highest level of subsidy given by the council.

The Chair summed up the arguments put forward and stated that there were inherent dangers in rushed assessments. The Committee requested that they be kept informed of the outcomes for staff at Carlyon Print and that the

Committee be given the opportunity to monitor the progress made by former Carlyon Print staff.

RESOLVED:

that upon considering the report from the Director of Community Care, the decisions made by the Executive be noted.

**6. The Executive List of Decisions for the meeting that took place on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2007**

RESOLVED:-

that the Executive List of Decisions for the meeting that took place on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2007 be noted.

**7. Briefing notes/information updates requested by the Select Committee following consideration of Version 9 (2006/07) of the Forward Plan**

**(i) *Local Development Framework – Joint Waste Development Plan Document***

Councillor Van Colle (Lead member for Environment, Planning and Culture) and Irfan Malik (Assistant Director of Environment and Culture) attended to update and answer any queries members had on the report.

Councillor Van Colle explained to members that Brent was a Waste Collection Authority, a member of the West London Waste Authority (WLWA) and Waste Planning Authority, which had the responsibility to prepare a Development Plan Document (DPD) as part of the Local Development Framework (LDF). The Local Development Framework, Joint Waste Development Plan report presented the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which requested that the Council committed itself to working with the other West London Boroughs when producing the DPD for waste.

Members noted that at present, rubbish was disposed of in land-fills. All six boroughs were required to find sites in their own boroughs to dispose of rubbish. The Executive had agreed the draft MOU and the report would be presented to a meeting of the full council in due course. Members felt that it would be in the Council's financial and practical interest to conduct a full consultation.

Irfan Malik added that land fill tax had increased from £2 to £8 per 100,000 tonnes of rubbish and he stated that the MOU was required in response to the rise in tax.

Some members questioned why the council did not increase and encourage recycling rates rather than disposal of rubbish, such as cardboard, into landfills. In response, members were advised that the new contract would be designed to increase recycling to a 30% area cover. This would include recycling at housing estates as well as plastic

and cardboard collections. Over time the council would want to achieve 100% coverage.

Members enquired about the sites that had been considered and whether it was possible to seek sites outside the borough. In reply, it was noted that if the Judicial Review against the London Mayor succeeded the Council would be able to tender outside the borough, however, if the Judicial Review did not succeed the council would need to vacate one of its own sites. It was stated that Park Royal, Eastcote and Neasden sites had been considered, however, other sites would be looked into. Irfan Malik informed members that Park Royal would be the most suitable site as there was opportunity to develop the site from behind the current building.

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted.

**(ii) *The Single Equality Schemes***

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted.

**(iii) *Feedback on the Current Tree Policy***

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted.

**(iv) *Brent Council's Travel Plan***

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted.

**(v) *Wembley Security Proposals***

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted.

**(vi) *South Kilburn – Granville New Homes***

Councillor Allie (Lead Member for Housing and Customer Service) and Maggie Rafalowicz (Housing and Community Care) attended to update members and answer any queries they had on the report.

The lead member informed committee members that the council had received funding of 19 million pounds to build new homes. Funds were due to run out in May 2007, therefore further funding of the development programme would need to be considered. Maggie Rafalowicz added

that if Granville was to be retained then additional borrowing would be required. From all the options listed in the briefing note the best option would be to dispose of the development to Hyde. It was noted that a full consultation would be taking place. It was explained that the full report was not available because of the sensitive commercial nature of some of the decisions and the on-going financial negotiations that were taking place.

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted.

**(vii) Cultural Safety Update**

RESOLVED:

that the briefing note be noted.

**8. The Forward Plan (Issue 10 05/03/2007 – 06/07/2007)**

Issue 11 of the Forward Plan (11/04/2007 – 10/08/2007) was now before members of the Select Committee. Following consideration of Issue 11 of the Forward Plan, the Select Committee made the following requests:-

***Wembley Security Proposals***

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

***Admission Arrangement for the Brent Community School 2008 update.***

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

***Home to School Travel***

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

***Bulky Household Waste Charging System***

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this

meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

***South Kilburn- Health Living Centre.***

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007. The relevant lead member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

RESOLVED:-

that the above requests be noted.

**9. Items considered by the Executive that were not included in the Forward Plan**

None.

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Forward Plan Select Committee is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007.

**11. Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

The meeting ended at 10.35pm.

Councillor David Coughlin  
**Chair**