

**MINUTES OF THE FORWARD PLAN SELECT COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> December 2007 at 7.30 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor Coughlin (Chair) and Councillors V Brown, Castle, Detre and J Long.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Colwill, Leaman and Malik.

Also present was Councillor Van Colle.

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

Councillors Castle and J Long declared personal interests with regard to items 7 (ix) as members of the Brent Housing Partnership board, however they did not consider the interests prejudicial and remained present and took part in discussion on this item.

**2. Deputations**

None.

**3. Minutes of Last Meeting – 28<sup>th</sup> November 2007**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2007 be received and approved as an accurate record, subject to the following amendment:-

Page 2, 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph, 2<sup>nd</sup> line, last word, delete 'also'.

**4. Matters Arising**

None.

**5. Call-in of Executive Decisions from the meeting of the Executive on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007**

There were none.

**6. The Executive List of Decisions for the meeting that took place on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007**

RESOLVED:-

that the Executive List of Decisions for the meeting that took place on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007 be noted.

**7. Briefing notes/information updates requested by the Select Committee following consideration of Version 7 of the Forward Plan (2007/08)**

***(i) Waste Policy and Compulsory Recycling***

Chris Whyte (Head of Environmental Management, StreetCare, Environment and Culture) introduced the briefing note and confirmed that the report originally proposed for the December 2007 meeting of the Executive had been deferred. This was to allow negotiations with the waste management contractor, Veolia, to continue as the Council sought to obtain potential savings on the current contract price in order to offset the costs involved in introducing compulsory recycling. Members noted that the report would be confirmed to go before a subsequent meeting of the Executive subject to satisfactory negotiations.

During discussion, Councillor J Long sought clarification that compulsory recycling would produce savings and that these savings would be apparent as soon as the scheme was introduced. She queried whether compulsory recycling would be introduced initially to the north of the borough and suggested that areas where properties lacked front gardens, such as Willesden Green, or houses converted to flats, would be more difficult to introduce recycling facilities. Councillor J Long sought details of educational and promotional programmes to support compulsory recycling, what the current organic waste limit was and was the Council at risk of exceeding it.

Councillor Detre, in noting that compulsory recycling would be introduced in 2 phases, suggested that there be a short gap prior to introducing Phase 2 in view of the scheme being new and untried and to allow opportunity for feedback before progressing with Phase 2. Councillor Castle also thought a pilot scheme was necessary, adding that if this was not undertaken, did Veolia have experience of operating compulsory recycling schemes in other boroughs. He also enquired if there would be any cost implications if time was allowed for consultation prior to introducing Phase 2 of the compulsory recycling scheme. Councillor V Brown enquired how many languages would be used to promote compulsory recycling.

The Chair sought details as to reasons why the introduction of compulsory recycling had been delayed. Noting that a large section of Brent's population was transient in nature, the Chair enquired whether a long term communications programme would be in place to inform residents of the need to participate in the compulsory recycling scheme.

In response to the issues raised, Councillor Van Colle stated that a trial compulsory recycling scheme would add to costs and that introducing the scheme to the whole borough at the earliest opportunity was essential in order to avoid costs that would otherwise be incurred by taking waste to landfill. He stressed that the consultation had shown strong support for compulsory recycling and all efforts were focused on negotiating with Veolia so the scheme could be introduced as soon as possible. He reaffirmed the Council's commitment to increasing recycling and stated that there would be ongoing communication with residents who had green boxes who were not

participating in compulsory recycling to ascertain what course of action should be taken in such cases. Councillor Van Colle advised Members that Veolia would need to introduce a different type of vehicle in addition to the existing vehicles to ensure there was the capacity to manage the extra recycling waste and this would mean additional costs. Members noted that the negotiations over these additional costs were the main reason for the delay to introducing compulsory recycling.

Chris Whyte advised that an increasing number of authorities were introducing compulsory recycling schemes, and whilst Veolia's experience of such schemes was limited to areas in the London Borough of Bromley, they had a sound understanding of the principles, methods and objectives involved. Chris Whyte emphasised the need for a strong communication message to residents explaining what was required of them to participate in the scheme to ensure its' success. He confirmed that the scheme would be introduced to the whole borough in 2 phases and advised Members that any delay to introducing Phase 2 would result in additional costs, as there would be less recycling and therefore more refuse being sent to landfill. Chris Whyte confirmed that the compulsory recycling scheme would only apply to those properties supplied with green boxes and therefore would not involve properties such as flats or estates at this stage. However, the Select Committee noted that collection of recycling from other storage areas did take place and separate arrangements could be made for properties that fell under this category.

Chris Whyte confirmed that the organic waste limit was 12,000 tonnes per year and that additional costs would be incurred for exceeding this limit, however there was a possibility of increasing the limit if required. Members heard that 10,500 tonnes of organic waste had been deposited the previous year. Chris Whyte stated that the costs of introducing compulsory recycling were likely to be offset by the savings made through increased recycling and it was hoped that some of the costs could be passed on to Veolia. He acknowledged that a long term communication programme was necessary in light of the large proportion of transient population, stating that there would be a constant and direct message to residents to participate in compulsory recycling. Chris Whyte confirmed that the Council had been advised to communicate this message in English. In addition, the scheme would be monitored to identify those who were not using their green boxes and engage with them to encourage participation.

Members then agreed to Councillor Detre's suggestion that the Executive allow for 1 month's consultation to consider if any changes are required prior to implementing Phase 2 of the compulsory recycling scheme.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the briefing note be noted; and
- (ii) that the Executive consider implementing compulsory recycling by introducing the 1st phase for 3 months, to be followed by 1 month's

consultation to consider if any changes are required, prior to the implementation of the 2nd phase.

**(ii) Melrose Re-provision of Residential and Respite Care Authority to Tender**

Christabel Shawcross (Assistant Director, Community Care, Housing and Community Care) introduced the briefing note, stating that it was proposed that Tudor Gardens re-provide the service currently provided at Melrose through three 5 bed units, providing a capacity of 15 persons. In addition, 167 Willesden Lane would provide a new 5 bed respite unit. Christabel Shawcross advised Members that the requirements of the service had changed and the option to tender was determined by the need to obtain a specialist, experienced provider who would provide better quality and a more cost effective service in the long term.

Councillor J Long enquired whether service users had been consulted with regard to the changes. She also enquired whether all users from Melrose would be re-provided in Tudor Gardens and were the places provided on a permanent live-in basis.

In reply, Christabel Shawcross confirmed that users and carers had been consulted about the changes and that the model of care had also been discussed resulting in the agreement of a new service model and the changes had been explained to users. She advised that Tudor Gardens would provide a high level of accommodation and service, although not all users from Melrose would be re-provided as 3 users did not require 24 hour registered care. Christabel Shawcross confirmed that Tudor Gardens provided permanent live-in accommodation as the age profile of the users was becoming older.

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

**(iii) Day Services Modernisation Learning Disabilities**

Christabel Shawcross advised Members that Government policy had focused attention on providing more personal care plans, and as a result, consideration of the future of the Council's 3 day centres at Albert Road, Strathcona and Stonebridge was required. It was considered that although visitors valued the day centres, they were not always meeting service needs, nor were they in a good state of repair. In addition, costs were involved in providing Council transport for users to these centres, many of whom then went out to projects.

Christabel Shawcross then outlined the options that were being considered in consultation with carers and users. Option 1 involved reducing the number of day centres to 2 by 2010. The Albert Road Day Centre would be re-provided as part of the South Kilburn regeneration and a new day centre would be built at the Stonebridge site which would be close to a number of bus routes and the funds released from staff budgets could be used for direct payments to

users or their carers and/or outreach. It was felt that this option was the most likely one that would be pursued. Option 2 would reduce the number of day centres to 1 and then to an outreach service, thus releasing further funding for direct payments, although it would present more of a challenge in terms of the considerable planning required to develop resources in the community and to seek outreach bases. Option 3 involved retaining all 3 day centres although this was not considered viable as the day centres were not fit for purpose and fewer people would be using them over time, making it an inefficient and more costly service. Option 4, in future to consider a partnership with another more specialist provider would involve transfer of staff. Members noted that adults did not want to go to day centres but wanted access to community facilities and make use of direct payments.

Christabel Shawcross advised Members that a decision was likely to be made in March 2008. She explained that there was an increase in the number of younger people with learning disabilities and a high level of direct payments were being made. Day centres could, however, still play a useful role in providing users with the opportunity to engage with each other and provide respite for carers. The focus would be on users coming to a centre to participate in activities, the new centre being a resource model which would provide for those with high levels of disability as provided by Albert Road, whilst those with autism would be provided by ASSPECTS at Stathcona.

During discussion, Councillor J Long enquired about the timescale for the refurbishment of the day centres. She sought observations with regard to the perceived state of day services for those with learning disabilities. With regard to direct payments, Councillor J Long enquired what these were spent on and were more payments made to certain groups. She also enquired what steps were taken to ensure the development of a supporting network. Councillor Castle commented that there was opportunity for abuse with regard to the direct payments and enquired whether there were any resources available to provide a check on recipients of these payments. He also asked if there was a watchdog officer role in respect of this issue.

In response, Christabel Shawcross advised the Select Committee that provided the recommendations were approved by Executive in March 2008, the resource day centre would be built within approximately a year following a re-assessment and review of people who needed to be re-provided within 11 months, meaning the new centre would be ready within 2 years of the decision made by the Executive. The timing depended on the go ahead for South Kilburn regeneration. Christabel Shawcross commented that carers would inevitably be concerned when changes were proposed, however every effort would be made to re-assure them and provide all assistance necessary. Quarterly assessments revealed that direct payments generally reflected the composition of the population of Brent, although efforts were being made to encourage older persons to take up direct payments as they were under-represented. Members noted that direct payments went towards care arrangements, purchasing a service or to provide respite care.

Christabel Shawcross stated that an adult protection policy was in place to safeguard and protect adults, however Government legislation prevented the

Council from enforcing Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks for employees of those receiving direct payments. However, users were advised on how to safely recruit, given ongoing advice and support by external agency, recommended to have CRB checks done, and arrangements were reviewed by finance/care managers annually. Although the Council requested that those receiving direct payments be subject to a police check, this was not legally required therefore not enforceable. Christabel Shawcross stressed that the safety of clients was the Council's priority and it was responsible for protecting its clients, whose cases were reviewed annually. In addition, finance officers reviewed direct payments and would suspend any where fraud was suspected and investigations undertaken. Christabel Shawcross stated that it was proposed to develop an outreach service to provide a support network and Members noted that some clients pooled resources so that they could arrange a specific activity through their carers.

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

**(iv) Authority to Tender reports on:-**

- ***Housing Support Services for People with Mental Health Needs***
- ***Floating Housing Support for Older People***
- ***Housing Support Services for Ex-offenders, Drug and Alcohol Users and Young People***

Christabel Shawcross introduced the briefing note with regard to this item. Replying to a query from Councillor J Long with regard to the proportion of external and internal tenders, Christabel Shawcross suggested that most tenders were external and it was anticipated the tendering process would result in providing a better quality service.

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

**(v) Meal Services Contract**

Christabel Shawcross introduced the briefing note and stated that the number of tenders was not known at this stage.

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

**(vi) Festivals Strategy**

During discussion of this item, Councillor Detre queried the reasons why Shakespeare Day would be considered as a date suitable to organise celebrations or festivals.

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

***(vii) Temporary Accommodation Update***

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

***(viii) The Future of Customer Contact Progress***

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

***(ix) Delegation of Anti-Social Behaviour Order Functions to Brent Housing Partnership***

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

***(x) Barham Park Estate Redevelopment Options***

Councillor J Long enquired whether a realistic date could be obtained with regard to proposals for the redevelopment of Barham Park Estate.

**8. The Forward Plan – Issue 8 (2007/08)**

Issue 8 of the Forward Plan (03.01.08 to 01.05.08) was before members of the Select Committee. Following consideration of Issue 8 of the Forward Plan, the Select Committee made the following requests:-

***(i) Clock Cottage, Kenton Road, Harrow***

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item updating Members on the progress of the report. The request was suggested by the Chair.

*The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were requested to attend the meeting and respond to Members' questions.*

***(ii) Voluntary Organisations Update***

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item updating Members on the progress of this report. The request was suggested by Councillor J Long.

*The relevant lead officer for this item was requested to attend the meeting and respond to Members' questions.*

**(iii) Fees and Charges for 2008/2009**

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item updating Members on the progress of the report. The request was suggested by Councillor Detre.

*The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were not requested to attend the meeting.*

**(iv) Travel Services**

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item providing information on the size of the contract and its monetary value. The request was suggested by the Chair.

*The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were not requested to attend the meeting.*

**(v) A Business Case for a New Civic Centre**

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item updating Members on the progress of the report. The request was suggested by Councillor Detre.

*The relevant lead officer for this item was requested to attend the meeting and to respond to Members' questions.*

**(vi) Library Strategy**

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item providing any changes resulting from the public consultation. The request was suggested by Councillor J Long.

*The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were not requested to attend the meeting..*

**(vii) Waste Policy and Compulsory Recycling**

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item updating Members on the progress of the report. The request was suggested by Councillor Detre.

*The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were not requested to attend the meeting.*

**(viii) Wembley Security Arrangements**

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item updating Members on the progress of this report. The request was suggested by Councillor V Brown.



*The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were not requested to attend the meeting.*

**(ix) Contract Award - CCTV Framework Agreement**

The Select Committee requested a briefing note updating Members on the progress of the report and providing information on the number of CCTVs used by various organisations in Brent. The request was suggested by Councillor Detre.

*The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were not requested to attend the meeting.*

**(x) Renewal of S31 Agreement with Central and Northwest London Health Trust (CNWL) for Brent Mental Health Services**

The Select Committee requested a briefing note on this item updating Members on the progress of this report. The request was suggested by Councillor Detre.

*The relevant Lead Member and lead officer for this item were not requested to attend the meeting.*

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

There were none.

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forward Plan Select Committee would be held on Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

**11. Any Other Urgent Business**

None

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm.

D COUGHLIN  
Chair