MINUTES OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE LONDON BOROUGHS OF BRENT, LEWISHAM AND SOUTHWARK
Held as an online meeting via MS Teams on Tuesday 18 March 2025 at 6pm

PRESENT: Councillor Mili Patel (Chair - London Borough of Brent), Councillors Stephanie Cryan and Barrie Hargrove (London Borough of Southwark) & Councillors Amanda De Ryk and James Walsh (London Borough of Lewisham).

1.   **Appointment of Chair**

      RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 10 of the Joint Committee's Terms of Reference, Councillor Mili Patel (London Borough of Brent) be appointed as Chair for the duration of the meeting.

      Members noted the chairing arrangements for the meeting reflected the change in schedule of meeting dates for the 2024-25 Municipal Year.

2.   **Apologies for Absence and Clarification of Alternate Members**

      An apology for absence was received from Councillor Jake Rubin (London Borough of Brent).

      No other apologies were received at the meeting.

3.   **Declarations of Interest**

      There were no declarations of interest declared by Members at the meeting.

4.   **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

      RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Joint Committee of the London Boroughs of Brent, Lewisham and Southwark held on Tuesday 26 November 2024 be approved as a correct record.

5.   **Provision for Public Participation**

      No deputations or requests to speak were received at the meeting.

6.   **Shared Technology Service Update Report**

      Fabio Negro (Managing Director Shared Technology Services) introduced the report to the Joint Committee providing an update on key performance areas in relation to the Shared Technology Service (STS).

      Members noted the summary of key performance management indicators for the service across all three Council's, which had been included within the report and in terms of detailed service performance, the Joint Committee were advised of the following:

- In this reporting period (November 2024 to January 2025), SLA performance for priority 3 (P3) operational incident issues had improved by around 5% and priority 4 (P4) operational request calls SLA had been maintained within the SLAs in the main.

- STS had achieved the second lowest number of open issues and requests for staff since the inception of the shared service, despite having the largest user base on record. A slight increase in tickets was seen in February 2025.

- STS had introduced a new Customer Experience survey to gain improved feedback on customer interactions.

- Recent Audit reviews had been positive, with the lowest amount of outstanding audit actions remaining.

- The Laptop project for Brent was now underway with the Southwark Business Case approved.

- Since April of last year, the STS had seen a growing demand on services with the number of tickets logged into STS queues increasing with it noted that the number of supported users had grown from 10,500 users in 2020 to 12,500 in 2024.

- Savings had been agreed for 2025/26 with discussions ongoing in relation to further savings requirements for 2026/27.

- The Shared Service was receiving less P1 issues and P1 incidents continued to reduce.

The Chair thanked Fabio Negro for the service performance update provided and noted that a reduction in P1 incidents was positive. The Chair enquired whether the additional investment, albeit being a one-off investment, was sustainable given the number of on-site engineers. Fabio Negro highlighted that the service was undergoing significant change alongside the laptop refresh and this would inevitably cause issues. In 2020, there were 11,000 users being supported by the Shared Service and currently there were approximately 13,000 users. However, the Service had seen an increase of staff by 15-20%. The Service Improvement Team dealt with management and change control with the team working to reduce P1 and P2 incidents resulting in less calls.

The Chair councillor then invited comments from Members with the following issue(s) raised:

- In regard to the P3 incidents, further details were sought on what measures were being taken to improve these and in regard to the 170 open tickets from 2023-24. In regard to customer satisfaction, clarification was sought as to what lessons were learnt and what improvements would be made. In response, Fabio Negro confirmed that P4 incidents were meeting the SLA's but were an ongoing challenge and there were many projects ongoing that affected the statistics.

- Members asked for a breakdown on the projects affecting the tickets and what mitigations were being placed. It was noted that it was difficult to compare call numbers across all 3 Councils.

- The staff survey showed that IT posed barriers to working effectively, for example monitors not working, loss of connectivity and the reluctance to report continuously. In response, Fabop Negro advised that the outcome of the survey and lessons learnt in response were recognised and under review.

- Members asked about the laptop refresh. Fabio Negro explained that a business case was produced a few weeks with the options now being finalised, following which the business case would be updated.

- Details were sought about the transfer from Vodafone to O2. Fabio Negro explained that the switch over for Brent and Lewisham went relatively smoothly and there were no issues with coverage, although Vodafone had wider coverage. It was simply a tariff change with Southwark, as Southwark already had a contract with O2.

- In light of the importance of IT in relation to the delivery of services for residents clarification was sought in regard to any reputational damage or risk to Councils should SLAs not be met. Fabio Negro assured members that the Service would continue to do its best and strived to meet SLA's. In regard to customer satisfaction, the team was using a management framework to manage this. Also, issues were raised up to operational management if a customer was not satisfied.

Having considered the service performance update, the Chair than invited Fabio Negro to introduce the STS Social Value Update Report to the Joint Committee for formal approval and adoption.

In presenting the update the following key areas were outlined:

- Recruitment had been made for the new Head of Procurement.

- Members asked for any projects over £100K to be highlighted on a separate report.

- Social value work was ongoing with the Good Things Foundation and with LOTI.

- There was an aim to gain much value from the contract with Virgin Media for network connections between remote sites as well as from the O2 Contract.

- All 3 Councils had added their position around social value in the report.

- The new Procurement Act would help with account management and timely payments and suppliers will be held to account for delivery.

The Chair thanked Fabio Negro for the outline provided in relation to the STS Social Value Update Report with comments then invited from Members and the following issues raised:

- In noting the new Procurement Act, Members agreed that it would be positive to see how each authority benefits from the social value with clear comparisons. The act must ensure that it was aligning with each Council's values, the impact of which should be noted as well as the needs of each Council to procure accordingly.

- It must be ensured that the social value policies were aligned across all 3 Councils.

The Impact Report and Communications Pack for National Device Bank Partners by the Good Things Foundation was noted for reference.

Fabio Negro then moved on to present the Proposed Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) Revisions for 2025 to members with the following key areas outlined:

- The nature and outcome of the review and changes proposed as a result, which followed a previous workshop.

- Members were keen for Wi-Fi to continue in external buildings. Fabio Negro stated that this will be discussed at the Operational Manager's meeting next week.

- Clarification was sought on whether the external buildings were Council or non-Council buildings. In response, Fabio Negro said that historically libraries were provided with Wi-Fi, however it may be provided to hospitals but issues around staff needed to be sorted. A further update on the Technology Road Map would be brought to the meeting in July 2025.

As no further issues were raised, the Joint Committee completed their consideration of the update report. The Chair thanked Fabio Negro for the updates provided and it was **RESOLVED**:

(1) To note the progress being made across the various areas in the detail of the report.

(2) To note the changes to the Inter-Authority Agreement, as outlined in the report

(3) To note the Social Value Update report.

7. **Date of Next Meeting**

Members NOTED that the provisional list of dates for the Joint Committee during the 2025-26 Municipal Year were currently being finalised and would be circulated following confirmation by each respective partner borough.

8. **Any Other Urgent Business**

None identified.

9.   **Exclusion of Press and Public**

At this stage in proceedings the Chair advised that she intended to move into closed session for the remainder of the meeting in order to consider a separate report for the Joint Committee providing updates on the Cyber Security status, threats, and mitigations in relation to the Shared Technology Services (STS).

Given the commercially sensitive nature of the details contained within the update, the Joint Committee were advised that the report would need to be considered in closed session which would require the Joint Committee to pass a formal resolution excluding the press and public for consideration of the item.

It was therefore **AGREED** that that under Section 100A (4) of the Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for consideration of the following item on the grounds that it would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

10.   **Shared Technology Service Cyber Security Update Report**

Fabio Negro (Managing Director - Shared Technology Services) then introduced the update report in relation to the STS Risk Register. In considering the report Members noted the update and detail provided on cyber and financial risks, including the deployment of a Security Operation Centre, review of firewall configurations along with work to develop a Third Party supply management tool with LOTI

The Chair thanked Fabio Negro for his update with additional clarification provided for Members in relation to issues raised relating to risks associated with the handling of P3 and P4 incidents and roll out of the Windows 11 laptop refresh programme and benchmarking.

Fabio Negro (Managing Director - Shared Technology Services) then introduced the update report in relation to Cyber Security status, threats, and mitigations for the Shared Technology Service (STS). In considering the report Members noted the update provided in relation to the monitoring of all user endpoint devices and work with the STS Cyber Security team to mitigate any threat along with further development of Cyber Security controls, including firewalls and third party suppliers and work with Emergency Planning teams across all 3 Councils to share ideas and risks.

The Chair thanked Fabio Negro for his update with additional clarification provided for Members in relation to issues raised relating to costs (including third part suppliers), funding and life cycle of IT equipment:

As no further matters were raised, the Joint Committee completed their consideration of the update report. The Chair thanked Fabio Negro for the details provided and it was **RESOLVED** to note the update and actions being taken as detailed in the report.

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm

COUNCILLOR MILI PATEL
Chair