

London Borough of Hackney  
Budget Scrutiny Task Group - Enforcement  
Municipal Year 2015/16  
Date of Meeting Monday, 2nd November, 2015

Minutes of the proceedings of the  
Budget Scrutiny Task Group –  
Enforcement held at  
Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street,  
London E8 1EA

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**Chair**

**Councillor Caroline Selman**

**Councillors in  
Attendance**

**Cllr Richard Lufkin, Cllr James Peters and Cllr Peter Snell**

**Apologies:**

**Co-optees**



**Officers In Attendance**

**Gifty Edila (Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services), Mark Griffin (Head of Environment and Waste Strategy), Tom McCourt (Assistant Director - Public Realm), James Newman (Head of Finance - Health and Community Services) and Kim Wright (Group Director Neighbourhoods and Housing)**

**Other People in  
Attendance**

**Members of the Public**

**Officer Contact:**

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**Councillor Caroline Selman in the Chair**

**1 Apologies for Absence**

- 1.1. Apologies were received from John Lumley, Jackie Moylan, and Joanna Sumner. Apologies for late attendance were received from Cllr James Peters.

**2 Urgent Items/Order of Business**

- 2.1. There were no urgent items.

**3 Declarations of Interest**

- 3.1. Cllr Peter Snell declared a past interest; he previously worked for London Borough of Newham and had received a redundancy settlement in which London Borough of Hackney is noted. Cllr Snell declared an interest as an Environmental Health professional.

#### **4 Proposals for 2016-2017**

- 4.1. The Chair, Cllr Caroline Selman, introduced the item on proposals for 2016-2017 proposing to review proposals in the agenda reports for Private Sector Housing and Environmental Enforcement. The Chair proposed to consider these service areas and proposals for next steps including the Enforcement cross-cutting review.
- 4.2. The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services introduced the Private Sector Housing Report outlining the key themes and strategies. The main areas of work regarding the mandatory scheme including the licensing of houses in multiple occupation (HMO's). It was noted that the council has legal powers to charge for HMO registration although this is not the main focus for the service. The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services noted the other licensing activities and the work to consider the feasibility of additional and selective licensing schemes across specified wards and across the whole borough are being considered.
- 4.3. The Government is about to issue a consultation on proposals for the future of the Mandatory Licensing Scheme for HMO's; the proposals may significantly increase the number of HMO's the council would be required to licence along with the fee income received and associated costs incurred.
- 4.4. The conclusion is that there is a lot of uncertainty and the service is not able to predict the financial outcomes, however, it is recognised that the service will have to be self-financing with full-cost recovery.
- 4.5. The Chair thanked the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services for the presentation and wanted to understand how the service proposals relate to the wider cross-cutting review. The Cabinet Member for Housing indicated that how they relate to the cross-cutting review is still to be clarified, however, proposals will have to be future proofed and meet rising demand. The cross-cutting review is focused on future years. Due to the uncertainty around the regulatory framework income forecasting is not possible at this time.
- 4.6. A Member of the Task Group suggested that if the intention is to set up a scheme that has up-front costs including the recruitment of staff it may not be appropriate, in his view, to consider changes to the existing structure and is therefore not an area for consideration at this point.
- 4.7. The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services suggested that it will become part of the wider cross-cutting review to consider resourcing; where income can be attracted and self-financing opportunities.
- 4.8. The Cabinet Member for Housing noted that the HMO regulation changes are significant and that the Council is looking at how the law may change. The Council is lobbying to improve the private rented sector (PRS) and educate landlords, within existing budgets.
- 4.9. In response to a Member question the Cabinet Member for Housing indicated that the Housing Bill received its second reading today; the Bill does not make licensing any easier regarding landlord registration or data sharing; retaliatory

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evictions have to be dealt with through the local authority and are therefore time and resource consuming and may be of no immediate help to tenants.

- 4.10. The Chair welcomed officers who attended to present the environmental enforcement proposals for 2016-2017.
- 4.11. The Assistant Director, Public Realm introduced the item confirming that the proposals were for £65k which relates to two posts and the service has considered a range of options relating to income generation, reorganisation, and service reduction.
- 4.12. The service was reorganised 2 years ago; 60% of the service is waste enforcement. The service proposals looked at how to do things differently whilst minimising the service impact. Proposals considered the potential ambassadorial functions of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) that could be incorporated to deliver a wider range of services more seamlessly in the public realm.
- 4.13. The Assistant Director, Public Realm confirmed that the savings proposals relate to two posts. Priority was given to waste and ways of minimising risks through decriminalising enforcement for skips. Frontline services protected through the role of the CEOs and late night parking zones enabling checking licensing of skips more effectively and taking advantage of all proposals to align services more effectively.
- 4.14. A Member noted the costs involved in waste disposal and the predicted increase in future costs. What is the council doing to encourage recycling and reduce waste disposal and waste treatment costs. The Head of Waste Strategy outlined the hierarchy approach re behaviour change; reduce, reuse, recycle and ultimately enforcement. The service is working with environmental operations to maximise income. The service tracks business waste for businesses with waste removal contracts and can track overproduction of waste by businesses. In addition the service is able to track unpaid waste removal. Regarding household waste the service is doing modelling to include reduced collection and maximise recycling.
- 4.15. In response to a query it was noted that non-recyclable waste is more expensive and costs will increase to dispose of this waste. The North London Waste Authority (NLWA) facility is approaching the end of its life and the cost of replacement and operation will have to be funded as the council currently only pays for operational costs. In addition, there will always be some non-recycling residual waste.
- 4.16. The Assistant Director, Public Realm, indicated that the service is looking at ways of increasing recycling rates on estates and street properties and looking at operational functions and behaviour change to reduce residual waste.
- 4.17. The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods noted that, together with the Cabinet Member for Housing, the council has developed a project to increase recycling rates on estates to target behaviour change and improve recycling facilities. The project is being monitored to consider rolling it out across the borough.
- 4.18. A Member wanted to understand what work is being done through schools to educate young people. The Head of Waste Strategy indicated that there is a schools programme regarding recycling and includes environmental quality in the remit.

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- 4.19. The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods also indicated that the council is developing recycling incentives and will share information on the scheme with Members.

**Action: Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods to provide details of the recycling incentives scheme.**

- 4.20. The Cabinet Member for Housing indicated that there is a monthly monitoring programme through Hackney Homes and Waste Strategy, and other teams including Communications to disseminate the message. De Beauvoir Estate has seen a positive impact as a result. Issues of education regarding waste contamination are important as are the appropriate location of recycling bins and chutes.
- 4.21. Member suggested that the proposals provide the insight regarding the council's direction of travel in terms of aligning services and wanted to understand if this approach is developing in other service areas. The Assistant Director, Public Realm, indicated that the service is working with other teams to consider other approaches and elsewhere to consider links with Information Technology (IT).
- 4.22. The Chair wanted to understand the risks around IT. The Assistant Director, Public Realm, noted that the IT system has been procured to include a system for parking permits and an appeals process which has to be linked into the system. The appeals system process costs are anticipated to be minimal as it is about how the different systems talk to each other.
- 4.23. The Chair wanted to understand the timeline for the broader enforcement cross-cutting review programme and the timeline for this work. The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services noted that there has been agreement to work through the details of the review and officers apologised as they had hoped to make a presentation to the meeting. The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services made reference to the documents that were tabled at the meeting as follows:
- The Cross Cutting Enforcement Programme – Benefits Headlines and Examples
  - Enforcement Cross Cutting Programme Workstreams Update October 2015
  - Cross Cutting Enforcement Programme – High Level Milestone Plan
- 4.24. The Chair wanted to understand the ordering and timings associated with the Cross Cutting Programme and it was noted that it is anticipated that a range of draft proposals with options would be presented at the November 2015 Programme Board with a Delegated powers Report to follow early in the new year. It is anticipated that phase 2 of the review will include presentation and inclusion of the Enforcement Task Group in its development and delivery.
- 4.25. A Member indicated that it would be useful to have an understanding of what has taken place to date to provide greater context and that this information should be provided as part of the phase 2 work of the cross-cutting review. It was acknowledged that the Task Group are considering service area proposals ahead of the cross cutting programme phase 2 workstream.
- 4.26. The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services indicated that this is being considered as part of the activity audit work stream and discussions with Assistant directors will inform the direction of travel together with the appropriate ways to provide it with available resources. Officers are unable to provide

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financial information until details about resources are clarified; restructuring in some areas has been held back in order to align proposals with the review.

- 4.27. The Director of Health and Community Services noted that the 25% savings was not just from reductions but included income generation and the requirements from budgets going forward. The Deputy Mayor noted that it is about doing more with less.
- 4.28. The Chair suggested that it would be useful to have a presentation on the Night Time Economy (NTE) as part of the Task Group involvement in phase 2.
- 4.29. In response to a Member query regarding income generation the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services outlined that there is a well-developed pre-planning team that continues to exceed income targets. The service is looking at Local Development Orders as a further opportunity to generate income in the planning field.
- 4.30. The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods noted that the exercise is not just about restructuring but ensuring efficiency and quality of services and links with enforcement.
- 4.31. The Deputy Mayor noted that options for proposals will be presented, potentially, in January or February 2016. The Chair indicated that it is important that the Task Group receive information in a timely way in order to enable the Group to properly consider proposals. The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods noted that options may not cover every service area and it was noted that Enforcement is a more complex area than public realm.
- 4.32. The Chair thanked Officers and Members for attending.

## **5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

- 5.1. Minutes of the previous meeting were not discussed at the meeting and are to be considered at the next meeting of the Enforcement Task and Finish Group.

## **6 Any Other Business**

- 6.1. There was no other business.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00 - 8.30 pm