

London Borough of Hackney  
Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission  
Municipal Year 2014/15  
Date of Meeting Monday, 10th November, 2014

Minutes of the proceedings of  
the Governance & Resources  
Scrutiny Commission held at  
Hackney Town Hall, Mare  
Street, London E8 1EA

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<b>Chair</b>	<b>Councillor Rick Muir</b>
<b>Councillors in Attendance</b>	<b>Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr Will Brett and Cllr Rebecca Rennison</b>
<b>Apologies:</b>	<b>Cllr Nick Sharman</b>
<b>Co-optees</b>	
<b>Officers In Attendance</b>	<b>Michael Honeysett (Assistant Director Financial Management), Shawnee Keck (Policy Advisor), Joanna Sumner (Assistant Chief Executive) and Ian Williams (Corporate Director of Finance and Resources)</b>
<b>Other People in Attendance</b>	<b>Councillor Geoff Taylor (Cabinet Member for Finance)</b>
<b>Members of the Public</b>	
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	<b>Tracey Anderson</b>  020 8356 3312  <a href="mailto:tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk">tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk</a>

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## Councillor Rick Muir in the Chair

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
  - 1.1 None.
  
- 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business**
  - 2.1 None.
  
- 3 Declarations of Interest**
  - 3.1 None.

**4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2014 were agreed.

<b>RESOLVED</b>	Minutes were approved.
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**4.2 Matters arising**

4.2.1 The Commission agreed to invite the Corporate Director of Legal HR and Regulatory Services and the Chair of the Corporate Committee to discuss the role and remit of the Corporate Committee.

In response to the Commissions request the Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services informed the Commission they could recommend the committee members receive additional training about the role of the Committee. The officer explained it was the role of the Chair and Governance Services to provide training to the Committee Members if Members were confused about the role and purpose of the committee’s work.

4.2.2 Members of Governance and Resources discussed this response and concluded the concerns raised required a broader discussion about the governance of the committee, especially in relation to clarifying the Committee’s role on:

- Risk management
- Regulatory functions
- Authority
- Powers
- Outputs and the committee’s contribution to the Council’s governance.

4.2.3 Members agreed to request the attendance of the responsible London Borough of Hackney (LBH) officers and invite the Members of the Corporate Committee for the discussion at the next G&R meeting in December 2014.

<b>ACTION</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Officer to request for the attendance of the relevant LBH officer from Governance Services and invite Members of the Corporate Committee to the discussion at the next meeting.
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**5 London Borough of Hackney Policy Update - Long Term Unemployment**

5.1 The Chair welcomed Shawnee Keck, Policy Advisor from LBH Chief Executive Directorate to the meeting. Also in attendance is Joanna Sumner, the Assistant Chief Executive for Programme Projects and Performance.

- 5.1.1 The Chair explained the officer would be providing some information to assist with the Commission's deep dive work looking at long term unemployment in Hackney. The main points of the presentation are outlined below.
- 5.1.2 Through the Sustainable Community Strategy LBH conducted the following reviews:
- Cohesion
  - Child Poverty
  - Worklessness.
- 5.1.3 In the worklessness review they conducted a deep dive into the benefits to explore and understand the benefit profile in Hackney. Through this exercise they looked at the provision offered, evaluated their success and the strategic partnership commissioning.
- 5.1.4 The review found employability was not a guaranteed output and there was a series of outputs.
- 5.1.5 The population on benefits is mixed and there is no one dominant group, therefore solutions implemented will require a mixed approach.
- 5.1.6 A large volume of individuals were not benefiting from the programme.
- 5.1.7 LBH has a core group (approximately 72%) who are classified as long term unemployed.
- 5.1.8 28,000 on benefits. The number on benefits has decreased in recent years by 14% but this is due to growth and population changes.
- 5.1.9 14,000 on long term benefits and this number has remained static.
- 5.1.10 15% of the working age population are on benefits in LBH.
- 5.1.11 46% of the benefit claimants are on IB.
- 5.1.12 The majority of claimants are men aged 45-64. 25% of men aged 55-59 and 30% of men aged 60-64. However there has been a 3% reduction in the 45-54 age group.
- 5.1.13 The data on under 25s show they remain on benefit for 6 months or less.
- 5.1.14 In relation to the gender split men of all ages are the most common claimant population and some women are significantly affected.
- 5.1.15 The data shows the gender split is 51% male, 46% female but both gender groups present for IB at age 35.
- 5.1.16 For IB claimants 6420 claim for mental health and 1800 claim for musculoskeletal the remainder claim for other reasons. IB claimant numbers have remained static over the last decade. The officer pointed out it is difficult to get on this benefit but the numbers on this benefit in Hackney have not changed.

- 5.1.17 Hackney's cohort looks similar to the rest of East London. Implementing solutions for this group will require intensive support that is expensive. If individuals from this cohort receive health support it is through adult social care. However many people fall below the threshold for adult social care support and thus are entered into the employment programme. The single work programme assessment favours physical disability and does not recognise mental health. The changes to the labour market have made it harder for this group to get back into employment.
- 5.1.18 Through their policy review work they have found the problem that needs to be fixed is primarily a health problem not employment. The support requirements should have a health and wellbeing focus and integrated with health services.
- 5.1.19 Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimant levels are equivalent to 2004 levels. The benefit is moving people off the benefit system and they are not staying long term.
- 5.1.20 The JSA data shows:
- 21% Mixed White & Black Caribbean women 18-24
  - 24% of British Mixed ethnicity women.
- 5.1.21 2% of lone parents in LBH are on benefits. In relation to lone parent benefit women aged 35-44 are the majority population.
- 5.1.22 LBH worked with DWP to review the data in relation to ethnicity. This data showed the male unemployment rate was:
- 17% in Black African, Caribbean and Mixed Black & White.
  - 35% Black Caribbean men aged 18-24 are over represented by 2.5 times their number in the population.
- 5.1.23 31% of the benefit cohort is represented by the Black community. The lead ethnic group from this community was previously Black Caribbean, but latest data shows it is split between Black Caribbean and African.
- 5.1.24 8% of the black population on benefit are working age.
- 5.1.25 24% of Black Caribbean are on JSA.
- 5.1.26 The majority of IB claimants are from the White population.
- 5.1.27 11% on benefits are from the ethnic category 'Other'.
- 5.1.28 From the evaluations carried out they found the following was needed:
- 1 Longer investment timeframes for vulnerable groups
  - 2 Training that leads to a job
  - 3 Building in time to fail
  - 4 Tailored and personalised support
  - 5 Better off in work incentive like Tower Hamlets
  - 6 Self esteem is different for different populations
  - 7 Broader definition of work: enterprise and volunteering
  - 8 More connections with local employers
  - 9 Intermediate labour markets.

- 5.1.29 The long term unemployed was a vulnerable group that did not benefit from generic support programmes. Many people from this cohort treated in the employment programme do not follow a linear sequence, instead their pathway is chaotic. Quite often this meant people would fall out of the programme. If they were required to re-enter the programme it would be from the start.
- 5.1.30 Work related activity with a health focus like the work of the Culture Team in LBH may be more beneficial for this group.
- 5.1.31 Following the review and evaluations the recommendations made were:
- 1 Priority Groups
    - Men
    - ex-offenders
    - 18-24s
    - mental and emotional health
    - Social housing.
  - 2 Family Centered Delivery
    - Holistic approach and suite of services aligned for parents and young people in the same household.
  - 3 Smart Services
    - Sharing budgets, data, staff, training and planning within and across the Partnership for integrated delivery.
  - 4 Embed Employment
    - Evidence based targeting to those most in need.
  - 5 Evidenced Based Policy
    - Holistic approach and suite of services aligned for parents and young people in the same household.
  - 6 Employment Advisors
    - Sharing budgets, data, staff, training and planning within and across the Partnership for integrated delivery.
- 5.2 **Question, comments and discussion**
- a) Members queried if during the review they considered the reverse people who developed depression due to unemployment. The officer confirmed there is a strong relationship between the two. The review found a large number of mental health claimants cited unemployment. It should be noted that the labour market has changed significantly post recession. Post recession reviews conducted show some individuals' unemployment during this period have not returned to work.
- b) Members discussed the possibility of commissioning services that enabled social care to join up with employment programmes. Highlighting this group had unique needs and they wondered if the Council or its partners would have the flexibility to commission services to match these needs. The officer informed the Commission Hackney's unemployed group was different group to other boroughs and applying a one size fits all programme would not be suitable. The officer explained while approximately 80% would respond to a programme there was 20% that needed flexibility in the programme. Flexibility

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was explained to be funding for things like clothing to attend an interview and transport costs. This group needed time for rehabilitation but they found in these programmes there was no time factored in for rehabilitation. This means if an individual had another crisis they would fall out of the programme.

- c) Members commented on a key challenge with the employment programme was not everybody would get into work. The officer highlighted local authorities could use their public health role to help meet the needs of this cohort. The officer explained this cohort may not be successful in an employment programme, but may be more successful in a work related activity programme, to stop the deterioration of their health and improve their health and wellbeing.
- d) Members asked how all the different areas of the council could work together to address this. The officer informed it would require sequencing the services to provide the appropriate support. E.g. solving their housing issue first, would enable the individual to consider work. The officer highlighted these inter dependencies and sequence of events would enable a person to move forward.

Consideration would need to be given to the environment the services are delivered in. It was pointed out the landscape has changed since this review and different dynamics. The next step will be to take the learning and apply it to the new landscape to assess the needs now.

- e) The Members enquired if the work related activity by the Culture Team was still commissioned. The officer could not confirm who the programme was commissioned by because the Culture Team was disbanded. It was anticipated the programme was still Commissioned. The officer highlighted the most effective programmes for this group was one that did not have employment as an end goal.
- f) Members queried if the review identified the different types of mental health for Hackney IB claimants. The officer advised the review only identified mental health and behavioural.
- g) Members agreed the first step for their deep dive would be to talk with residents who are long term unemployed. Members discussed how they should approach this deep dive. They discussed focusing on people who were aged 35 (the trigger point to claiming) to find out if they have fallen through the net of support services or individuals who have been on the benefit for 12 months. The officer agreed looking at the two groups discussed would be focusing on prevention with the aim of stopping the cycle and this would be a good place to start. This cohort on benefit was expensive and would continue to cost more in the future. From the review they were unable to identify where the claimants resided, in social housing or private sector. Speaking to people from this cohort they could establish where they were located. After exploring this first the Commission could look at other factors that can impact such as environmental and gender.
- h) Members discussed focusing on service users with mental ill health and not musculoskeletal.
- i) The Cabinet Member for Finance commented speaking to service users would require talking to them in their environment and this would be different to how

the Council usually conducts consultation exercises. The officer agreed and advised their consultation was with frontline staff. The level of support required was intense and similar to the support provided to people Not Education Employment or Training (NEETs). Members agreed conducting this research would need to be flexible and sensitive and likely to involve grass routes organisation delivering and advising on the engagement.

- j) A Member suggested the Commission reviews the report produced by Community Safety Social Inclusion Scrutiny Commission on worklessness. The Member explained in this review they interviewed service users in a focus group. The Chair requested for Overview and Scrutiny Officer to send this report to G&R Members.

<b>ACTION</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Officer to circulate the CSSI Worklessness report to G&R Members.
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- k) Members discussed starting with service users that have been out of work for a minimum of 12 months. The officer advised when a service user transitioned to IB employers did not view them as employable. The officer reminded Members of their discussion with the experts in September who advised them not to worry too much about their starting point for the deep dive as this may not necessarily determine the outcome. Getting the views of service users was the most importance factor.
- l) Members discussed speaking to frontline staff to get a sense of who would be best placed to engage with this service user group. The officer advised the voluntary sector organisations were closest to the service user in these cases. Members discussed talking to service users who have moved off IB to get their view of the support required to return to work. Members agreed this exercise would require a great deal of sensitivity to get these service users to open up. The planning of this should include service providers to understand how to approach this and engage service users.
- m) During the discussion Members asked if there were examples of best practice they could review or visit around the UK, related to this topic area? The officer advised DWP informed London is unique and has a different set of issues in this area that need addressing. Within London each area has its own specific challenges that do not mirror another area. For this reason it is hard to make comparisons and apply what works in one area to another.
- n) Members queried if international comparisons were available and would be more useful in this instance. The officer informed studies related to intermediate work could be relevant. The officer explained through these studies they showed work activity delivered by a not for profit organisations e.g. recycling plant may help this cohort. It is believed a programme similar to this is operated locally by the Homerton Hospital but this would need to be clarified.
- o) Officers present at the meeting explained following the general election, for all political parties a key priority to aim of reducing the benefit spend. London has worked its way through the recession and this has led to changes in the labour

market. Consideration needs to be given to the type of jobs available this group can access. The labour market has become increasingly competitive and the minimum skills sets required have increased. The officer informed the local economy provides 19% part time employment and 2% full time employment. For this cohort there will be limited job opportunities in the local economy.

- p) Members discussed how progress would be measured. Officers pointed out through the discussions with service users, they would identify the measures for success. The officer explained for this group the aim should be to improve health and wellbeing activity first. This would enable the Council to assess who is engaging and understand their needs and the support required. Taking a holistic view of their life and review who is in their household e.g. children could help to stop the cycle and equip all individuals to join the labour market.
- q) The Chair summarised key discussion points and next steps:
1. They have established the output for this group may not lead to a job but improved health and wellbeing.
  2. Clarify if their focus should be mental health looking at prevention or the whole group.
  3. Identify who they should talk to: Service users (case type, gender etc), Partners and Council service areas.
  4. Talk to experts or other boroughs doing similar type of work. The Commission and steering group to consider other experts to talk to or visit
  5. Establish a timeline for output by March 2015.

## **6 Public Spend Review - Lewisham, Lambeth and Southwark Community Budget Programme**

- 6.1 The Chair informed the presentation from Lewisham Council was postponed because the officer had taken ill and was unable to attend the meeting.
- 6.2 The Chair referred to the presentation in the agenda and advised it outlined the lessons learned from their Universal Credit Pilot, DWP Deep Dive and Troubled Families activity.
- 6.3 Upon completion of the pilot work Lewisham, Lambeth and Southwark Council produced a joint proposal for a Community Budget pilot. This programme of work is aimed at supporting people with complex needs into work.
- 6.4 The PowerPoint presentation in the agenda gives some information about this previous work and their Community Budget pilot.
- 6.5 Members noted the information.

## **7 Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission - 2014/15 Work Programme**

- 7.1 The work programme for the Commission on pages 137 - 142 was noted for information.



- 7.2 Members discussed the requirements for Cllr Taylor's Cabinet Question time and requested for the Overview and Scrutiny Officer to provide performance data related to Cllr Taylor's portfolio areas.

The Corporate Director of Finance and Resources from LBH suggested the Commission review the last Cabinet Question Time for information.

- 7.3 The Corporate Director of Finance and Resources suggested he provides an update following the Government's annual Autumn Statement on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2014 to outline the implications for local government.

Members agreed.

<b>ACTION</b>	
	1 Overview and Scrutiny Officer to circulate to Members performance data related Cllr Taylor's Cabinet portfolio and the minutes of the previous Cabinet Question Time in 2013/14.
	2 Overview and Scrutiny Officer to add to the G&R work programme an update on the annual Autumn Statement.

## **8 Any Other Business**

- 8.1 The Chair reminded Members about the debate Tackling Inequalities in Hackney on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at 7pm in the Town Hall, Assembly Rooms.

This event was being hosted by Community Safety Social Inclusion Scrutiny Commission.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00 - 8.45 pm