
EXTERNAL ORGANISATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 JANUARY 2008

Present – Councillors Hussain (Chairman), Hollick (Vice Chairman), Gradwell, Hayes, Murray, Mrs. Rothwell (as substitute for Councillor Hamilton) Rushton, J. Walsh and Williamson.

Also in attendance

Councillor Spencer Defence Authority	-	GM Fire and Civil Nominated
Spokesperson Mr. D. Grogan Legal and	-	Assistant Director of Democratic Services
Mr. J. Addison Manager	-	Scrutiny Support

- Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bashir-Ismael, Burrows, Chadwick and Hamilton.

Councillor Hussain in the Chair

23 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8th November, 2007, were submitted and signed as a correct record.

Attached Reports:

[Minutes \(enclosure\)](#)

24 MONITORING OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE/SCRUTINY PANEL DECISIONS

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report that informed members of the progress of decisions taken and issues raised by the Committee.

Resolved - That the report be noted

Attached Reports:

[Monitoring of Scrutiny Committee/Scrutiny Panel Decisions \(enclosure\)](#)

25 WORK PROGRAMME OF COMMITTEE

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report which provided members with suitable criteria to aid in the selection of topics for scrutiny and outlined the Committee's work programme.

Members views and comments were sought in relation to any further items and issues that they wanted including on the Committee's work programme.

Resolved - That the report be noted

Attached Reports:

[Work Programme of Committee \(enclosure\)](#)

26 APPOINTMENTS MADE BY COUNCIL TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report detailing the current position in relation to a review of the way the Council engaged with partner organisations.

Members were reminded that, at the last meeting, the Committee requested that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services contact the Council's representatives on outside bodies seeking information on their viewpoint as to the frequency and usefulness of the body to which they are appointed and whether the Council should continue to nominate to it.

The purpose of the report was to place before Members 2 questionnaires which would provide detailed information and inform the final report to Committee on this matter.

In seeking to deliver the Committee's resolution, consideration was given to the most appropriate mechanisms which would both provide the information required and would be relatively straightforward to administer. In this regard, it was decided to produce two questionnaires. One questionnaire would be sent to the

Council's representatives on the various outside bodies in line with the resolution of the Committee on 8th November, 2007.

The second questionnaire would be sent to the organisations themselves. The purpose of doing this was to obtain the organisations perspective of the role and value of having the Council represented on it and to ask whether the organisation would suffer any detrimental effect should the Council withdraw its nominee(s).

A suggested list of organisations who would be contacted was attached to the report.

Resolved – That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to circulate the questionnaires to the organisations listed in the report and to the Council's representatives thereon.

Attached Reports:

[Appointments Made by Council to Outside Bodies \(enclosure\)](#)

27 ISSUES IN RELATION TO JOINT AUTHORITIES

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report advising of the appointments made by the Council to the joint authorities and any decisions taken by the joint authorities since the last meeting which impacted on the authority.

In relation to the Greater Manchester Police Authority, a copy of the Authority's Scrutiny Committee agenda had been circulated to Members.

In relation to the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority, the Authority had met on 13th December, 2007, but there were no items specifically relating to the Council.

The Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority had met on 23rd November, 2007, but there had been no items specifically relating to the Council.

Members were reminded that it had been the intention to invite the Council's representatives on the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority to the meeting to discuss and comment upon issues raised by Members. In this regard, Members were contacted and asked to submit any items which they wished discussed. As no

items were received, the Chairman agreed to postpone this session in favour of inviting the representatives of all the Joint Authorities to attend the next meeting and to give a short report on work undertaken during 2007/08 and to give an indication of the major issues which would be faced in 2008/09. Such discussions would then inform the Committee's Work Programme for 2008/09

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Resolved – (i) That the Committee continue to receive reports on the issues in relation to joint authorities in the current format.

(ii) That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services prepare a possible list of issues to be discussed with the representatives of the joint authorities at the next meeting, such list to be circulated, initially to Members of the Committee and subsequently to the joint authorities.

Attached Reports:

[Issues in Relation to Joint Authorities \(enclosure\)](#)

28 MEMBERS QUESTIONS

The following question was raised by the Chairman, Councillor Hussain in accordance with Standing Order 35

Members will be aware that a large number of households in the Bromley Cross area, were deprived of telephone connections over the Christmas and New Year period due to cable ducts becoming flooded.

At no time were the residents of the area advised of the need to undertake any repair work to rectify the situation and following the lost connections very little information was released by BT. Many elderly residents who did not have the advantage of mobile phones were cut off over the holiday period and could have been placed in some danger should an emergency situation have arisen.

Accordingly, the Committee would request BT to provide a full and detailed explanation on the cause of the fault, the detailed plans for repair and an explanation as to why the residents were not kept informed of the initial problem and given an estimate of time when they could expect to be reconnected. In addition, BT be requested to outline any communication/consultation it had with the Council over the proposed works. and measures which could be put in place to ensure that this kind of situation does not happen

again.

In discussing the question, Members raised concerns about the impact of such disconnections on local businesses.

The Committee was also advised of a similar incident in Monton Street, Great Lever, which had affected a number of vulnerable residents.

Resolved – (i) That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services seek a response from BT to the issues raised both in the question and by Members at the meeting.

(ii) That an invitation be extended to representatives of BT to attend the next meeting of the Committee to discuss the issue with Members.

(The meeting started at 2.00pm and ended at 2.30pm)

Attached Reports:

[Members Questions](#)