

Minutes

PROPERTY, HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SELECT COMMITTEE

8 June 2022

Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge



	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Keith Burrows (Chairman) Alan Chapman (Vice-Chairman) Shehryar Ahmad-Wallana Elizabeth Garelick Kamal Preet Kaur Peter Money (Opposition Lead) Peter Smallwood</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Mark Braddock, Senior Democratic Services Manager Steve Clarke, Democratic Services Officer</p>
3.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO REPORT THE PRESENCE OF ANY SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies had been received from Councillor Adam Bennett with Councillor Peter Smallwood substituting.</p>
4.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
5.	<p>TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting dated 12 May 2022 be approved as a correct record.</p>
6.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED AS PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS MARKED PART 2 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items were marked Part 1 and would therefore be considered in public.</p>
7.	<p>INTRODUCTION TO OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY IN HILLINGDON (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>Mark Braddock, Senior Democratic Services Manager, was in attendance for this item and introduced himself as the Council's Statutory Scrutiny Officer, a post required by all councils; he presented the officer report to the Committee. Members received an introduction to how overview and scrutiny worked at Hillingdon aimed primarily at newly</p>

elected Councillors but also as a refresher for returning Councillors.

Members were informed of the purpose and role of Select Committees and how they fit into the Council's overall governance structure. The Committee noted that the Local Government Act 2000, Health and Social Care Act 2001, Police and Justice Act 2006 (and later Acts and regulations) required councils to establish 'overview and scrutiny committees' to:

- Assist in the development of Council policy;
- Question and evaluate the actions of the Cabinet; and
- Have the power to make reports and recommendations to the Cabinet on such matters.

It was also noted that one committee must hold health providers to account, in Hillingdon this was the Health and Social Care Select Committee; additionally, one committee must act as a crime and disorder committee to scrutinise community safety activity and partners like the Police, in Hillingdon this was the Residents' Services Select Committee. It was highlighted that the remits of Hillingdon's Select Committees had been aligned to the portfolios of Cabinet Members; for example the remit of the Property, Highways and Transport Select Committee aligned with the remit of the Cabinet Member for Property, Highways and Transport. This remit included the following service areas:

- Property and Estates
- Capital Programme – Major Projects
- Transportation
- Highways
- Repairs and Engineering
- Building Safety / Facilities Management

There were some additional facets to the Committee's remit in that they were the cross-cutting topic lead on the Civic Centre, Property and Built Assets, in addition to having a non-statutory scrutiny role on utility companies.

The Committee received information as to the duties and powers of Select Committees with their key statutory powers being the ability to 'Call-in' executive decisions, to send a report to the Cabinet with recommendations, to require the attendance of individuals at Select Committee meetings and to request certain information. It was highlighted that Select Committees had no direct decision-making powers and that they could only make recommendations to the decision-making Cabinet. The Select Committee's primary role was described as a critical friend to the decision-making Cabinet.

Members received detail around one of their primary functions which would be to carry out in-depth policy reviews; this was a fundamental way in which Select Committees could influence Council activity. Reviews usually consisted of evidence gathering and witness sessions, with the possibility to conduct site visits should they be appropriate for the review. Policy reviews would conclude with a report containing recommendations to the Cabinet and it was noted that the Committee's clerk would form a key support role in gathering research and organising the review for the Select Committee. Further to active policy reviews, the Select Committee would review the implementation of past policy reviews which came under their remit; it was noted that the previous Public Safety and Transport Select Committee had conducted a review of Electric Vehicles (EVs) and EV Infrastructure, the clerk agreed to circulate the final report for the EV review to Members as they would be reviewing the implementation of

the recommendations later in the municipal year.

Members were also informed about the scrutiny call-in function of the Select Committee which guidance stated that it was only to be used exceptionally when Select Committee Councillors felt that a decision made, that fell within the scrutiny remit of the Committee, needed to be revisited or possibly changed. The Committee were informed of the process for using the online app used by Hillingdon's Select Committee Councillors to request that a decision be called-in; the process was relatively straight forward, and the minute of each individual Cabinet Member decision contained a link to the call-in app for quick reference. Crucially, it was noted that a majority of the relevant Select Committee's Members would be required to agree to the request to call-in a decision before the decision would formally be called-in. The call-in window would expire at 5pm, five working days after the date of any decision being made.

The Committee thanked officers for their presentation and stressed the importance of effectively monitoring the Council's activities in addition to monitoring the implementation of previous policy reviews conducted by the Select Committees.

RESOLVED: That the Select Committee noted the report and the presentation from officers.

8. **FORWARD PLAN** (*Agenda Item 6*)

The Democratic Services Officer notified Members that, since the publication of the meeting's agenda, the July 2022 Forward Plan had been published with four new items under the Select Committee's scrutiny remit. Information regarding the four new items was circulated to Members.

Members commented on the upcoming Building Safety Strategy 2022 – 2025 and discussed the importance of monitoring the implementation of the strategy from an overview and scrutiny point of view. The Committee sought to add a Building Safety Strategy item onto the work programme with an eye to possibly receiving a semi-regular update from officers.

The Committee also discussed the possibility of recommending changes to the terms of the contracts going to Cabinet on a number of items with regard to contract extensions and reviewing the performance of contractors. The Chairman confirmed that the length of contracts and the terms thereof were matters for the Cabinet to decide upon at the outset of a contract, whereas the role of the Select Committee would be to monitor the implementation of a contract. Officers added to this noting that any contracts entered into by the Council went through a rigorous process to ensure that the Council was receiving best value. Members of the Select Committee had the ability to add a particular item to the Committee's work programme if concerns were raised during the term of a contract and could request that officers are called in to explain to the Committee why a contractor may not be performing to standard.

RESOLVED: That the Property, Highways and Transport Select Committee noted the Cabinet Forward Plan.

9. **WORK PROGRAMME** (*Agenda Item 7*)

The Committee noted that the date of the July 2022 meeting had moved to Wednesday 13 July and would be held in Committee Room 6. Additionally, officers notified the Committee of some changes to the work programme since publication of the agenda in

that, a Council Strategy 2022 – 2026 Consultation item had been added to the July meeting, and the Mid-Year Budget Planning Report had been moved to the September meeting.

The Committee also sought to add the previously discussed Building Safety Strategy monitoring item to the work programme and to include an additional interim report on the implementation of the short-term recommendations from the previous Public Safety and Transport Select Committee's review into Electric Vehicle Infrastructure.

RESOLVED: That the Property, Highways and Transport Select Committee agreed to amend the Committee's Work Programme as discussed.

The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 7.49 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Steve Clarke on 01895 250693. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.