

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

EDGBASTON DISTRICT COMMITTEE 9 MARCH 2015
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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EDGBASTON DISTRICT COMMITTEE HELD ON
MONDAY 9 MARCH 2015 AT 1000 HOURS IN
COMMITTEE ROOMS 3 & 4, COUNCIL HOUSE,
BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT: - Councillor Bruce Lines in the Chair;

Councillors Deirdre Alden, John Alden, Caroline Badley, Vivienne Barton, John Clancy, John Lines, James McKay Matthew Gregson, James Hutchings and Fergus Robinson.

ALSO PRESENT: -

Joel Chambers - Public Health Intern, People Directorate
Keith Dugmore – Edgbaston District Interim Lead Officer
Fazal Khan – Finance Manager
Charlene Mulhern - Information Manager, People Directorate
Natalie Potter - Acting Senior Service Manager, Landlord Services, South Quadrant
Varun Shingari – Edgbaston District Contact Lawyer
Errol Wilson – Committee Services

(There were 5 members of the public present)

NOTICE OF RECORDING

221 The District Committee were advised that the meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site and members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

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APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Elaine Williams. Apologies for lateness were submitted on behalf of Councillors Deirdre Alden and Vivienne Barton.

An apology for absence was also received from Steve Hollingworth, Edgbaston District Champion.

MINUTES

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RESOLVED: -

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2015, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**EDGBASTON REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2014/2015 – 2014/2015 –
(MONTH 10 APRIL 2014 TO JANUARY 2015)**

The following joint report of the Service Directors (Districts and Housing) and the Director of Finance was submitted:-

(See document No. 1)

Fazal Khan, Finance Manager, District Finance, introduced the report, and advised that the report was a provisional Edgbaston District one. He added that the information contained in the report was prepared and sent to the Committee before the final numbers were considered by Cabinet and that the numbers within the report were consistent to that which would be presented to the Cabinet on the 16 March 2015. He drew the Committee's attention to the information in the report and the appendices that were attached to the report and advised that Appendix 1 relates to the financial performance statement; Appendix 2 identifies the Community Chest financial performance; Appendix 3 relates to the savings programme and Appendix 4 gives a summary of the capital projects. He added that the report was for noting.

Mr Khan highlighted that paragraph 5.17 details the strategy the City Council was proposing to adopt to meet the historic legacy issues i.e. historic overspends in terms of balances and reserves and the in-year overspends of all 10 districts. He added that the proposal before Cabinet on the 16 March 2015 would be that the Corporate Resources of £6.46m would be made available to resolve those issues.

The Chairman made reference to stated that in relation to page 6 of the report it has not got his signature and that it will not have his signature. He stated that Edgbaston District have always had a balanced budget with the exception of one year which was as a result of Sports and Leisure and other facilities which was uncontrollable on the District part. He further stated that over the years a number of districts had received a substantial funding to balance or goes towards balancing their budget.

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He highlighted that Edgbaston District had never received anything. He added that the District had delivered services and continues to deliver services across the District and had gone over and above, by maintaining the Health and Well-Being Hub without any support from the Centre. The Edgbaston District was now in a position where they had £130k carried forward, which had been allocated to a number of important projects in each Ward of the district. Yet, the District was being told that £83k of this amount would be taken away again to balance the books of the other eight districts, as there was only one other district in a similar position to Edgbaston District. The Chairman remarked that this was a bitter pill to swallow.

Councillor Badley stated that she was never happy with rewarding budgets that were not balanced. She commented that £83k was being clawed back when the District was trying to maintain services across the four Wards was a lot of money. She enquired what could be done concerning the issue.

The Chairman stated that if all Members on the Committee were supportive that the money was committed, the projects should go ahead. He added that he could make representation to the Cabinet and the Leader of the City Council, Councillor Sir Albert Bore and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Ian Ward.

Councillor J Lines stated that if the District had committed the money to worthwhile causes within the district, then the Chairman had their support. He added that he would like the names of the districts which had consistently failed to balance their budget on a year-on-year basis. He remarked that a number of these districts were probably the ones that had the highest financial support within the City. He questioned whether this information was made available and suggested that they could be named and shamed. The Chairman advised that Hodge Hill District was in a similar position to Edgbaston District as it had the smallest budget.

Councillor Hutchings referred to the £6.46m that would be written off for the overspending districts and enquired whether the information was correct. Mr Khan advised that the information was correct and that this was also stated in the Cabinet report. Councillor Hutchings commented that the last time about £12m was written off in relation to the overspending Districts. He enquired whether Mr Khan could confirm that figure. Mr Khan stated that it was a significant figure which was around £12m should his memory serves him right. He added that this was across all ten districts, but that Edgbaston District did not receive any significant support. Councillor Hutchings commented that Councillor Badley's comment was correct and that in principle it was wrong to subsidise overspending districts time after time and not supporting districts that control their budgets. He added that with regards the £83k, he would like to see somewhere this money could be utilised in projects that the district had planned.

Councillor McKay made reference to the £1.7m project overspend for Sutton Coldfield in the Cabinet report. He added that if the Chairman was looking to the Committee for another way of supporting this before it goes to Cabinet, then, the Chairman had the support if they could explore a different way. Councillor Hutchings stated that Sutton Coldfield's problem was as a result of the Widney Leisure Centre.

The Chairman stated that the only people who would be suffering from the decision was the people of Edgbaston District

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Councillor Clancy stated that there was cross party support from the Committee and that the Chairman had his support and that they would continue to make representations themselves. Mr Khan stated that the £133k he had referred to in presenting the report was, used to meet the Edgbaston District prior year reserves, not before but after i.e. the £133k that was left had already had the £83k taken from it.

Councillor J Lines stated that it could only be assumed on fairness and responsibility. He added that in terms of responsibility they had taken this on board and had shown that the District could be trusted with public funds. He questioned whether the District would be responsible or whether that responsibility had been taken of the district when the report goes to Cabinet. He further questioned whether the decisions that the District Committee had just made could be reversed by the Leader/Deputy Leader of the City Council. Mr Khan stated that his understanding was that the numbers he had shared with the Committee were the ones that were in the Cabinet report. He added that it was the Cabinet and Deputy Leader, Councillor Ian Ward who had led proposal to provide corporate resources for the £6.46m to be allocated to the districts. He stated that this was a strategy that was adopted by the Executive to try and resolve the districts' current financial pressures.

Councillor J Alden made reference to Appendix 4 of the report and stated that there were two references to Grove Park. He added that this was a Trust Park to which he and Councillor Gregson had declared their non-pecuniary interest.

The Chairman thanked everyone concerned for achieving a balanced budget over the years.

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RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the latest provisional revenue budget position at the end of January 2015 (Month 10) and year-end projected break-even position as detailed in report Appendix 1 be noted;
- (ii) that the latest provisional Community Chest allocations and the current provisional financial position as detailed in report Appendix 2 be noted;
- (iii) that the provisional position with regard to the Savings Programme for 2014/15 as detailed in report Appendix 3 be noted; and
- (iv) That the position with regard to the capital projects for 2014/15 as detailed in report Appendix 4 be noted.

PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR DISTRICT COMMITTEES – QUARTER 3

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Natalie Potter, Acting Senior Service Manager, Landlord Services, South Quadrant, Place introduced the report. She drew the Committee's attention to the information in the Performance Narrative

(See document No. 2)

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In the course of the discussions that ensued, the following were amongst the issues raised and the comments made in response to questions: -

- a. Ms Potter noted Councillor Gregson's concern with regard to the responses Members had received in relation to anti-social behaviour cases i.e. 'clash of lifestyles between the victim and the anti-social behaviour perpetrator' and how this was looked. Ms Potter advised that this would be done.
- b. Ms Potter further noted Councillor J Alden's enquiry with regards to the information concerning the rent collected and the amount of rent arrears outstanding on pages 10 and 11 of the report and advised that she would take this back to the Team and for a response to be submitted to a future Committee meeting. Councillor J Lines commented that there would not be another District Committee meeting and that there was a need for this to be considered in another way so that Members could glean
- c. Concern with regard to the term 'clash of lifestyles' was also raised by Councillor J Lines and the fact that every tenant had signed an agreement with the City Council and that within that agreement, tenants were required to adhere to the terms and conditions of their tenancies. He further stated that if they were breaking that these rules, action should be taken. He added that there was nowhere in the tenancy agreement that 'clash of lifestyles' was stated. He requested that some information be given in terms of the ways that the Housing service would improve the problems they were having concerning anti-social behaviour.
- d. Ms Potter gave a brief information as to her background advised that anti-social behaviour was her background and advised that anti-social behaviour was something she was passionate about, something that she had commitment to and was something that she did understand in terms of some of the frustration of some of the local officers with regard to some of the legislation that were available to be able to take the action that was needed. She would get involved with any hands-on individual cases in ensuring they were reviewing the cases accurately. It was hoped that the new powers being introduced, they would have a better way in which to tackle the issues as well as areas where there were cross tenure conflict between private and Council tenants. She added that the Committee had her commitment that she will be addressing these issues and that where they could they will take action.
- e. Evidence was where they struggle to take things further in terms of 'clash of lifestyles' due to what they needed to present at court, but there were amicable solutions that they needed to achieve that could be done through close consultation with all parties involved.
- f. Councillor Clancy made reference to the comments that were made at the previous District Committee meeting concerning anti-social behaviour. He added that these comments were made on a regular basis over the past two years, but that he had not seen any real development. He stated that it had been said at the last District Committee meeting that they did not want officers to attend the District Committee to speak of 100% successes etc., and that one of the problem with the phrase 'successful completion', but what constitutes a successful completion.

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- g. What might seem to be a successful completion was closed down, but as councillor and individual citizens, the thing was still on-going and was causing issues. It might be closed down in the case file, but was still on-going in the community. He remarked that he would rather the situation had been resolved, rather than the 'successful conclusion' as he was unsure what constitutes a successful conclusion.
- h. Councillor Clancy stated that he concurred with what had been stated earlier with regard to 'clash of lifestyles' and that no progress had been made concerning the issue. He added that it appeared to be that a professional judgment had been made 'out in the field' that this was a 'clash of lifestyles', but that he did not think that officers were engaging enough with what ordinary people nor councillors regard to be a 'clash of lifestyles'. This was a situation where it was appropriate for Elected Members to say that this did not make sense. He further stated that the way in which these situations were being resolved, and closed down, was perceived where appropriate actions were not being taken.
- i. What was important was for Elected Members to be kept informed concerning anti-social behaviour in their Wards and that this did not mean that officers should give them the figures at District Committee meetings. What was meant was that it was proactive – keeping Elected Members informed, but this had not happened. There was something fundamentally wrong in the way anti-social behaviour was being dealt with as perceived by citizens and Elected Members.
- j. In terms of satisfactory cleaning, it was not being reported where the excellent cleaning was. It was uncertain what satisfactory cleaning was and that another standard was required.
- k. Ms Potter advised that in relation to successful closures' and the breakdown of what this was, these standards were set through House Mark. These include various codes or various ways in which a case could be closed down. This was always done in consultation with residents. Once the residents were contacted they had various things such as early intervention, successful estate management and unsuccessful ones which were management moves, management decision to close. A perpetrator move was an unsuccessful closure. There were stringent breakdowns of cases. If this was not filled out, then the satisfactory closure would be something that was different to 100%. All of these should be done in consultation with the resident.
- l. On occasions, it had to be a management decision that a case was closed, but again, these should be coming back as unsuccessful. If there were particular cases where it was felt that staff had not dealt with them properly, she was happy to meet with Members to look at these cases. In terms of the one-on-one disputes, these were at times difficult to address as these were based on evidence and what issues the officers currently had. Officers were exploring all the options before concluding that these cases should be closed i.e. have they contacted neighbours; did they send surveys around the roads etc. All these types of actions should be happening. Depending on what evidence was received a decision would then be made.

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- m. In relation to the satisfactory blocks, this was an offer that was presented to the other District Committees. If required the Committee could be sent a breakdown of the audit so that the Committee could have an understanding of how these Blocks were marked.
- n. Councillor D Alden commented that sometimes the City Council goes overboard with consultation and then another time things happen, but the Members were not consulted. She made reference to a recent visit being undertaken by Council officers to the Priory Estate in Edgbaston Ward, and that she was surprised to see that on all the Blocks where there were four, they were all fitted with entry phones, but that the local Councillors knew nothing about this. She further stated that following a recent meeting with Ms Potter, she had received an email from a resident from the Priory Estate giving her the details of when the entry phones would be installed to the properties. She added that this information was not mentioned at the meeting with Ms Potter, nor was this information mentioned to the Housing Liaison Board.
- o. Councillor D Alden made reference to a resident who had advised her that she looked in on her 94 year-old lady who was living in one of the flats. A concern was that when the entry phone was installed, she would not be able to call on the elderly lady, and that should the elderly lady have a fall, she would not be able to let her into the property as a result of the entry phones being installed to the properties. She questioned whether there had been any consultation with residents prior to the entry phones being installed. She further questioned why the local Councillors were not informed.
- p. Ms Potter advised that she was not aware of the work being undertaken. She undertook to visit the site and to then report back to Councillor D Alden concerning the issue. She added that prior to any work being undertaken residents should have been consulted. If they were not being consulted, she would investigate the reason for this and give a response to Members. Ms Potter stated that she would make the Members aware of any information that concerns their Ward. She advised that the lack of information could have resulted in the handover period, when she took over her current role.
- q. Councillor D Alden enquired whether this would be routine and whether this was happening to the other estates such as Roman Way which was a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) and whether the residents were required to pay for the entry phones. Ms Potter advised that there was an upgrade programme in place to upgrade some of the intercom systems across the Wards following a review of the concierge programme.
- r. Councillor J Lines advised that the information would be made available in the next agenda item. He congratulated the officers for their work in the constituency with regard to community involvement. He stated that this was second to none and that whenever there was anything happening within the District, the Housing officers were always ready and willing to get involved for such things as dumped refuse etc.
- s. Ms Potter undertook to pass on the congratulation and thank you from the Committee to her colleagues. She advised that in relation to the anti-social behaviour legislation that will soon come into effect, there were such things as

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Community Public Notices that would be introduced, which was on a cross tenure basis, there were various to the injunctions that were currently in place.

- t. With regard to the Community Public Notices (CPN), these were cross tenure orders and were for a persistent behaviour, which meant that Housing could do such things like issuing a Fixed Penalty if they needed to as well as issue court proceedings against individuals. This could also be used in relation to gardening issues and the dumping of refuse. There were variations in relation to anti-social behaviour orders. Ms Potter advised that the powers were quite lengthy with regard to the new legislations. She undertook to do a full brief with Members concerning the changes.
- u. Councillor Clancy raised the issue of the 'orphan lamps' and that Mr Guy Chaundy, former Senior Service Manager had stated at the previous District Committee meeting that he had hoped that the issue had been dealt with or should have been dealt with i.e. the Simmons Drive orphan lamp. Councillor Clancy stated that this orphan lamp remained exactly as it was three years ago. Ms Potter undertook to have the issue resolved. Councillor D Alden advised that Housing had resolved the one in Edgbaston Ward that was mentioned at the previous meeting having admitted that it was their responsibility.
- v. The Chairman commented that it appeared that there 'was light at the end of the tunnel'. He stated that there was a case that he had been dealing with for three years and that someone had taken responsibility for this also.

THE NEW HOUSING STRUCTURE

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Natalie Potter, Acting Senior Service Manager, Landlord Services, South Quadrant, Place gave the following verbal update on the item and advised that she would be circulating the structure to the Committee shortly: -

- I. With regard to the Place based management role, a list with all the place based managers was previously circulated.
- II. They have now moved towards a Place based management approach. This was an approach to improving the place and neighbourhoods, including integrated working across boundaries to find solutions to longstanding problems or issues in the community i.e. a neighbourhood management approach.
- III. They were working with stakeholders and the community to get a consensus for a priority in improving the locality.
- IV. They have demonstrated some of their commitment through the locality by the work already undertaken within Housing, but this would see the development of Place Based Managers working in each Ward of the City. This had already come into effect over the last two weeks.
- V. As of March 2015, they had given a commitment that they would have the Place Based Managers in place which has happened and there was at least

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one contact point for the Wards in Edgbaston District. This would bring a commitment to ownership of problems and coordination to find solutions as well as working together to make things work for the benefit of neighbourhoods.

- VI. A commitment to pulling resources of the Place Directorate together to focus on improving neighbourhoods and across the City and for the Place Directorate and with other directorates for the same end.
- VII. Deliver on the expectations that they would have common ownership of problems, integrate services where possible and collaborate to resolve issues. Passing the buck was not an acceptable practice and they would not walk by when they identify a problem.
- VIII. One approach with dealing with anti-social behaviour and nuisance with our partners, Place based officers would be trained to use new enforcement powers and tools under the new Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014.
- IX. This mainstream approach would be in place by the beginning of March 2015, with the commitment of the new way of working across all the directorates, by amending job roles to carry additional Place Based Managers from within the current staffing resource, by supporting existing Place Based Management, with a single point of contact for services where this was not possible.

Ms Potter stated that it was hoped that as a result of issues such as the 'orphan lamps' where there was a discrepancy, they would have a 'one face' approach to the issue for it to be resolved. They would also have a commitment from other areas such as Fleet and Waste Management, Housing and Highways land, that there would be a commitment to them working together. A brief discussion then ensued concerning the new Housing structure.

Ms Potter noted Councillor J Lines' comments and advised that the Place managers for the Wards had been put into their place and that the structure will be circulated. She highlighted that the major change that would occur in terms of the Ward Managers. There was cross tenure working of the Housing remit per se'. There was a Place Based Management Board and their current buy-in that they were awaiting from some of the other directorates was yet to be finalised. This could be one of the reasons the communication was not passed down from the Centre. She undertook to take this information back.

The Chairman stated that the only information he had with regard to the future of Housing was that he had attended a workshop recently where a Housing Association gave a presentation on how they could work together with the City Council in partnership on delivering services. He added that what came out of this was district and any partnership working with Registered Social Landlords should be brought to the attention of the districts and their respective HLBs or the District Housing Panels. He advised that he had not received any further updates or information concerning the issue. He stated that he was aware that this was the plan from the Centre. Ms Potter advised that she would take the information back. In some Wards where there was a small housing stock, there were discussions to getting a buy-in from the Private Tenancy Team to have a Place Based Manager there rather than it be a Housing led person.

In Bournville, for example, they had a community safety officer as a Place Based Manager there rather than a Housing Manager as a result of stock levels in Bournville being very low. The issues would be wider than what they would be able to deal with if they were just focusing on the Council stock. Councillor J Lines remarked that the problem was that they did not have a Cabinet Member for Housing in the City of Birmingham and that Housing was 'hobbling on without any leadership'.

The Chairman thanked Natalie Potter for attending the meeting and presenting the information.

HEALTH – NHS LINK HEALTH & WELLBEING

227 Charlene Mulhern, Information Manager, People Directorate and Joel Chamberlain, Public Health Intern, People Directorate attended the meeting.

Ms Mulhern gave a verbal presentation of the following information:-

- They have been working with all the Districts since 2013 with the district officers and the integrated members to look at health priorities with colleagues working with each district to look at their health priorities and for each district to identify three or more health priorities.
- The districts were required to put into place their own action plans etc., but that since this year it was identified that further support by the district was required to help improve the health and well-being of citizens.
- The integrated people core offer was really about how they collaborate with districts, how they recognise district needs and priorities and how they utilise the district directorates and people support in helping districts to maximise their resources.
- Commission or arrange different services across the City, looking at what services being commissioned currently and whether there were any gaps or improvements that needed to be made through engagements with districts.
- The aim was to involve districts in the commissioning plans which was currently happening and on-going in the future, supporting districts to potentially obtaining new resources i.e. utilising their intelligence on information they have or groups that the districts work with.
- Providing relevant people information data, establishing an intelligence task group and work was on-going around cross directorate working that information was produced in a clear way to work with districts.
- Supporting districts around developing their policies and action plans. They have links with the three CCGs – working with CCGs to help both the districts and the CCGs to achieve their priorities.
- A mapping exercise was currently being done to understand not just what the district priorities were, but what the CCG priorities were, what the People

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Directorate priorities were so as to get a broader understanding as to what they were working toward.

- They have met with the Executive Members and service heads that were eager to implement this service model. It was clear that everyone needed to think differently as this would involve a change in culture and structures and there seem to be a strong political and strategic leadership with bringing this work forward.
- A people Directorate was put together that looked a key principles being summarised.
- Joel Chamberlain Public Health Intern, People Directorate will be based in Edgbaston District once per fortnight to support the District Lead Officer to deal with any work around the health and well-being priorities. Colleagues would also be helping to support the districts with any issues concerning the health and well-being policies and action plans.

Councillor D Alden made reference to the districts developing their policies and stated that the District did not have a budget. She added that the budget they had this year was taken up with everything and that it would be difficult to balance the books without finding spare monies for things. She further stated that the District did not have a budget for next year. Councillor D Alden further referred to the mapping exercise; plan and people talking which sounds very good, but that at the same time something in 'concrete' that the City Council was doing was the closing of pitches across the City. She questioned what policies would be developed for the District when they had no budget for next year. She further question how this was going to be developed into policies.

Ms Mulhern advised that they would not be developing any new policies, but the District policy statement that the District was already working on. Councillor D Alden reiterated that the District did not have a budget. She questioned what the policy statement was.

Keith Dugmore, Edgbaston District Interim Lead Officer advised that the District was required to produce an annual Service Plan for the District and that part of this Service Plan was the policy statement for the District which looked at various aspect of what the District would like to do, service and support even without funding. He stated that one of the key things that they would like to do with colleagues from the NHS. This was data collection which gives the opportunity with the data the District had to look at various aspects and opportunities with the funding. It was known that the funding would not be there but they would be able to apply for additional funding externally to do some targeted work within the Wards.

Councillor Hutchings commented that Sir Bob Kerslake had proposed the possibility of the District Committees becoming the Scrutiny Committees for public services within the districts. He enquired how this would fit in where the NHS was concerned. He further questioned that with the great difficulty the City Council has had concerning Children's Social Services, the Children's Social Services Commissioner, had been critical of the lack of cooperative working with the NHS. He further enquired whether there had been any improvement in that direction.

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Ms Mulhern advised that they were from Birmingham Public Health and that they had moved from the NHS to Birmingham City Council in 2013, but that they had links with the CCG, the NHS and Public Health England. In terms of the question in relation to Children's Social Services, they could only ensure that they were working closely and better together in the future about any strategies or policies being put into place on the back of what the Kerslake report had put in place. In terms of the District Committee not coming together in the future, it would involve working with the District Lead and the District Committee to support moving forward around the district's policy statement. Ms Mulhern undertook to take the Children's issue back to her superiors for a response.

The Chairman invited Dr Luke Evans, a resident of Harborne Ward to comment on the matter.

Dr Luke Evans made the following statements: -

- (i) Nationally their health care would take up by 2060 the entire GDP in spending. The reason behind this was partly to do with obesity, and an aging population. Currently over the last decade, they had an increase of people reaching 100 years old by 73%.
- (ii) This translates when it comes down to Edgbaston and Birmingham – Birmingham had an obesity rate of 20%, which is pitted in the top 20%. The issues that came through in Edgbaston mirrored those that were felt nationally. This was such things as mental health, obesity and the elderly care.
- (iii) The joint strategic needs of Birmingham identified some of these issues and the Edgbaston District health profile picks these up as well. Anything put in by the City Council i.e. the cycling lanes and the idea behind giving £24m from central government to the Council to improve access to bikes, taking away the practicality of putting this in place, he voiced concerns that as a General Practitioner on the 'coal face', hearing these incentives and Ms Mulhern and Mr Chamberlain speaking of the strategy behind the works going on.
- (iv) The key imperative here was to get that strategy out to people like himself who was on the 'coal face'.
- (v) As professionals, they were often the last to know about what was happening. He wanted to raise the thought process of turning the ideas and strategy into practical, tangible things that they could do as health care professionals at the front line. He stated that he only wanted to raise this as an issue and to enquire whether any thoughts was going into this that they could put this into something tangible.

The Chairman commented that the initiative was on-going, but 'one hand did not know what the other was doing'. Ms Mulhern advised that she would take the issues back. A brief discussion concerning the link between housing and health then ensued.

The Chairman thanked Charlene Mulhern and Joel Chamberlain for attending the meeting and presenting the information. He further expressed thanks to Dr Luke for his contribution concerning the item.

GUIDANCE NOTE – EMERGING PROPOSALS IMPACTING ON DISTRICTS AND COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

228 The Chairman agreed for agenda items 8 and 9 to be taken together and advised that these were for noting. Councillor J Alden referred to page 3 of agenda item 8 paragraph 4c; 4d and 4e and commented that in his opinion Sir Bob Kerslake did not understand Birmingham. Councillor D Alden stated that her understanding was that the District Committees would become scrutiny committees with a small budget for commissioning services. She added that at the last City Council meeting, it was stated that the small budget will not come into effect until 2016. If there was going to be a smaller budget like Community Chest, but was decided on a smaller basis, but not for the first 12 months. She enquired whether her understanding was correct.

Mr Khan then drew the Committee's attention to the City Council's Business Plan 2015, page 20, paragraph 5.3 states what Council D Alden stated. He added that it went on to say that '... depending on the progress being made, it may be a problem to establish a part year allocation of a small budget'. There was potential for a small funding made to committees in the new financial year, but this was still to be evaluated. A brief discussion then ensued concerning the issue.

GOOD NEWS STORIES

229 Keith Dugmore, Edgbaston District Interim Lead presented the item. He stated that the District Newsletter being put together by a post graduate student would shortly be circulated prior to it going to print.

It was proposed to hold a Disability Event in Queen's Park Harborne. He stated that one of the things they struggle with in Edgbaston District was access to events for people with disabilities. The event was planned for mid-June 2015 and the aim was to have a number of agencies that work with the disabled such as Focus, Guide Dogs for the Blind etc. The funds generated from the event would go to the District Disability Plan.

In terms of the work experience programme they were looking to have 10 young people employed within the District for two weeks at 30 hours per week. This would be over the next few months and would give better access to a variety of services for all the 30 hours.

Councillor J Alden requested that the Charities and Trust Committee be notified as Queens Park was a Trust Park. Councillor McKay thanked Mr Dugmore for the disability item.

The Chairman stated that this was relative to what they were speaking about earlier to the carry forward of the underspend and the usage of that i.e. disability access to a number of facilities across the District. The value to those people was immeasurable

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS (REPORTS BY OFFICERS)

Kyles Way Development, Bartley Green

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Councillor J Lines gave a brief overview of the issues and drew the Committee's attention to the response received from Planning and Regeneration, pertaining to the complaint with regard to the Planning Application 2014/04621/PA. He advised that the land was given planning permission by the City, but that the Planning Committee would not accept the advice of an officer to have an entrance to that site which would not interfere with local residents as the site had a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Councillor J Lines made reference to Minute No. 218 and advised that there was some doubt on the validity of this and that he had acquired a map with the TPO and discovered that the whole site had a TPO1435. He stated that he had advised the officers that what they had on their website as a TPO. He showed the Committee a diagram which indicated the TPO on the site, but that he had received a map that purports to be the accurate TPO which in his view had changed.

Councillor J Lines remarked that he had never known anything where the City Council uses its powers to get its own way and disregard the views of the local people in such a blatant and determined way. He added that he could not believe that people in the City was given the 'run around'. He stated that Members were being given spurious information and that with total disregard they were 'grubbing' around money and grubbing around the hedge rows of their green and pleasant land'. Many of the mature trees were being cut down. He questioned whether they could hope to get the truth and honesty from officers or politicians.

The Chairman stated that there were two points in the response: -
The overhead cables and trees had been removed to facilitate the work. He stated that this was not true and that this had not happened and that the site was exactly as it was 12 months ago. He remarked that this was factually incorrect and yet, the cables were the electricity cables and it was doubtful whether the City Council would be moving them. He highlighted that the second point was with regard to the District Engineer and the professional opinion that was made by the District Engineer which was dismissed. The explanation was that *the person in planning had decided that the assumption was incorrect.* The Chairman further remarked that if this was not an insult, then he did not know what was. He stated that the conclusion of the letter that the complaint was not upheld was unsatisfactory. He added that it was amazing that with such a large development, residents in the main would have been satisfied to let it go ahead with a minor amendment to the access and the majority of people could have been satisfied and they moved forward, but the decision was made to satisfy the few rather than the many. It was doubtful they would get to the truth or a happy conclusion.

Councillor J Alden advised that he did not attend the Planning Committee meeting on the 2 October 2014, as he had tendered his apology as he was returning from his holidays. Councillor Clancy advised that he had attended the Planning Committee meeting, but that he had voted against the proposal. Councillor Gregson stated that based on what he had heard the matter should be pursued.

(Councillors John Alden and John Clancy declared their non-pecuniary interest in the matter and advised that they were unable to comment on the issue as they were members of the Planning Committee).

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RESOLVED:-

The Committee agreed for the matter to be pursued.

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In response to an enquiry by Councillor J Alden, the Chairman advised that this was the last District Committee meeting for this Municipal Year and that as to the future of District Committees, it was doubtful whether they would continue given the budget they had. He added that he was unable to give an answer to the question. He expressed thanks to most Members for their contributions and support over the past year. He further expressed thanks on behalf of the Committee to Keith Dugmore and team for their commitment and hard work and everything that they did in the District and the commitment they have in delivering what the people of the District wanted.

The Committee expressed thanks to the Chairman for his hard work and commitment over the year.

AUTHORITY TO ACT BETWEEN MEETINGS

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RESOLVED:-

That the Chairman is hereby authorised to act until the next meeting of the Committee except that, in respect of the exercise of the Council's non-Executive functions, the appropriate Chief Officers are hereby authorised to act in consultation with the Chairman and that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services is authorised to affix the Corporate Seal to any document necessary to give effect to a decision of the said officers acting in pursuance of the power hereby delegated to them; further that a report of all action taken under this authority be submitted to the next meeting and that such report shall explain why this authority was used.

The meeting ended at 1155 hours.

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Chairman