

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

9 November 2015

Executive Member Questions

The Committee is invited to note the below update and question the Executive Member on his work and the work of the Committee.

It is also recommended that the procedure for Executive Member questions set out overleaf be agreed.

Any questions that the Committee or members of the public may have should be submitted in advance to jonathan.moore@islington.gov.uk no later than Wednesday 4th November 2015.

Executive Member Update

- The 'Pause' programme has now launched in Islington. Pause is a programme that started in Hackney and is currently being piloted around the country with DfE funding. The project involved working with a cohort of women who have repeatedly become pregnant and had babies taken into care. In Islington we have seen 50 women have 207 children taken into care between them at a huge financial cost to the Council, and an unimaginable emotional cost to the women. The Pause programme has enabled us to hire a team of support workers who will work with 21 of these women. The women agree to a long acting reversible contraceptive (LARC) whilst providing the women with the support practitioner who provides advice, support and assistance to the women in addressing all of the factors that have contributed to the situation in which they find themselves. You can find out more about this exciting project at www.pause.org.uk.
- Following the conclusion of the consultation period, we have decided to delay a decision on the future of Lough Road. It was clear that parents felt there are not yet a full enough range of alternative options for them, so we have pledged that will spend the next three months co-producing some alternative options before making a final decision in February.
- We are currently recruiting a new Director of Children's Services following the secondment of our previous Director, Eleanor Schooling, to be interim Head of Social Care at Ofsted. This is the most important appointment we will have made since appointing Lesley Seary as Chief Executive and the interview panel will include the Chief Executive, Council Leader Cllr Richard Watts and myself alongside Cllr Gill and Cllr Gallagher.
- It's election time for the Youth Council - we have an incredible 37 candidates this time, all of whom are raring to get onto the campaign trail. Electoral Services will be running the election on polling day and we are hoping for a record turnout, so yet again the young people of Islington can show the adults how it should be done...

Procedure for Executive Member Questions at Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

- (a) Elected members and members of the public may ask the Executive Member for Children and Families questions on any matter in relation to the executive portfolio or the work of the committee.
- (b) The intention of the session is to complement and enhance the work of the committee. The Executive Member may submit written information in advance of the meeting to advise of his recent work and other topical and timely matters of relevance. The session is not intended to replace or replicate the questions sessions held at each ordinary meeting of the Council.
- (c) Questions should be submitted in writing to the committee clerk no later than three clear working days in advance of the meeting. Such questions will be notified to the Executive Member which may facilitate a more detailed answer at the meeting. Details of how questions should be submitted will be detailed on the agenda for the meeting.
- (d) Questioners should provide their name to enable this to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes of the meeting will include a summary of the question and the response.
- (e) The Chair may permit questions to be asked at the meeting without notice.
- (f) The time set aside for questions shall be no longer than 15 minutes.
- (g) No individual may ask more than two questions at each meeting.
- (h) Where there is more than one question on any particular subject or closely related subjects, the Executive Member may give a joint reply to the questions.
- (i) The committee clerk shall have power to edit or amend written questions to make them concise but without affecting the substance, following consultation with the questioner.
- (j) An answer may take the form of:
 - A direct oral answer;
 - Where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
 - Where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner within 5 working days provided the questioner has given contact details.
- (k) Priority shall normally be given to questions notified in advance.
- (l) The Chair may permit supplementary questions to be asked. Supplementary questions must arise directly out of the original question or the reply.
- (m) A question may be rejected by the committee clerk, or the Chair at the meeting, if it:
 - does not relate to the executive portfolio or the work of the committee;
 - is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
 - is substantially the same as a question asked to the Executive Member at any meeting within the last six months;
 - requests the disclosure of information which is confidential or exempt; or
 - names, or clearly identifies, a member of staff or any other individual.