

Subject: Secretariat Quarterly Review, Quarter 1, 2015-16

Report to: GLA Oversight Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 17 September 2015

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report presents an overview of the work and outputs of the Assembly core Secretariat during the first quarter of 2015-16 (April-June 2015). The report also highlights responses to previous reports that have been received during the period and indicates where the Assembly's recommendations have been accepted and implemented.
- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to inform the Committee's role of overseeing the work programme. The report is structured to reflect the committees agreed by the Assembly at its Annual Meeting in May 2015.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes the core Secretariat quarterly monitoring report for the first quarter of 2015-16 (April-June 2015).**

3. The Mayor and GLA Group's Budgets and Performance

- 3.1 The Budget and Performance Committee met in June to hear evidence from experts as part of its investigation into **police outsourcing**. Representatives from the National Outsourcing Association, local government and the Centre for Public Service Partnerships each provided an overview of their experience in public sector outsourcing, and the key lessons that the Met should learn if it decides to contract out more services in the future. The discussion informed the second meeting in this investigation, which took place in July; the Committee is due to publish its findings in the autumn.

4. London's Economy

- 4.1 The Economy Committee used its first two meetings of the year to investigate the **role of the third sector in employment programmes**. Guests at the meetings included representatives from the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, employment support providers, London boroughs, funders and the GLA. The Committee also received a number of written submissions. The Committee will publish its report in due course.
- 4.2 The Mayor formally responded to *Final Demand*, the Committee's report on personal problem debt. The Mayor partially accepted some of the Committee's recommendations. The Mayor reiterated his support for Toynbee Hall's plans to establish a London Debt Observatory. He committed to passing on the Committee's recommendation to incorporate illegal money lending content within the financial education work supported by the GLA. And the Mayor will also liaise with the Money Advice Service about the outcomes of its debt advice marketing campaign, in order to understand any learning that could be particularly applied in London.

5. Housing

- 5.1 The Housing Committee published its report into affordable home ownership, *First Steps on the Ladder*, in June. The report finds that rising prices could jeopardise the Mayor's affordable ownership model. It notes that half the households who purchased shared ownership homes in 2013-14 had annual household incomes of more than £39,000, a figure which is above the Mayor's definition of 'middle-income'. Moreover, few purchasers had been able to increase the proportion of the home they owned.
- 5.2 The Housing Committee's investigation into Purpose Built Student Accommodation began with the June meeting. The investigation focused on whether new student blocks are squeezing out affordable homes, whether they meet the needs of most London students and whether the Mayor's policy to disperse the blocks to outer London is working. The profile of the investigation was raised by the Deputy Chair being invited, in advance of the meeting, to speak at a Savills breakfast launch for their latest report on this subject. He was very well received and a number of key contacts were made or cemented. Savills then attended the June meeting to advise the Committee. The investigation will continue in September when a site visit is planned.

6. Regeneration

- 6.1 In April, the Regeneration Committee wrote to the Mayor following its work in 2014/15 on the Royal Docks. The letter called on the Mayor to learn from the experience of Canary Wharf in supporting local employment, and to devise a plan for management of the area, including the GLA's exit strategy. Members received the Mayor's response in May in which he committed to conducting a management review of the Royal Docks later in 2015, and to updating the Committee accordingly.
- 6.2 In May the Mayor also wrote to the Committee regarding its March 2015 report, *The Regeneration Game*, on stadium-led regeneration. The Chairman has since replied on behalf of members to request further detail in relation to the report's recommendations.

- 6.3 The Committee used its June meeting slot to return to Vauxhall and Nine Elms to support its investigation on transport-led regeneration. Members received a briefing from TfL on the use of the Growth Fund to redevelop Vauxhall Cross gyratory, and heard from stakeholders about the impact of transport improvements on the area's regeneration. The visit also provided an update on the wider regeneration programme, including the work of the Nine Elms Partnership, the skills and employment strategy, and progress of residential and commercial development and community infrastructure.

7. Planning

- 7.1 The Mayor is proposing to revise the London Plan again. The current version was published in January however it has to be revised again to bring the Plan in line with **new national housing standards** and **car parking policy**. The Planning Committee focussed on how to ensure that, as far as possible, the new housing standards reflect the specific housing design and quality requirements needed to address the unique density and flatted nature of housing development in London.
- 7.2 The Committee also looked at the impact that the Mayor's proposed changes to the London Plan on parking standards would affect outer London, particularly in relation to providing parking spaces near homes in areas with poor transport accessibility. These meetings informed the Committee's consultation response to the Mayor, which was submitted on 22 June.

8. Health

- 8.1 The rapporteurship of the Health Committee's Deputy Chair, Andrew Boff AM, into **access to health care services for d/Deaf people** concluded in June with a launch event to mark the publication of the Committee's report. The report called on health care providers to urgently review their services to better meet the needs of deaf Londoners, and urged joint commissioning of support services for deaf people, including greater access to BSL interpreting services. The event, at City Hall, was well attended by stakeholders who had contributed to the investigation. The event included two qualified BSL interpreters and two Speech-to-Text reporters and a large projector screen, in order to make it accessible to a deaf audience. A BSL invitation in video format was created to invite guests and a BSL version of the Executive Summary for the report is available. The report was very positively received by campaign groups, who praised the Committee's efforts in giving a voice to under-represented Londoners and putting the issue firmly on the public agenda.
- 8.2 The Committee also formally launched its investigation into **tuberculosis in London**, holding the first of two public meetings with stakeholders from the NHS and Public Health England. The discussion explored the contributing factors to London's status as the tuberculosis capital of Western Europe; how the new collaborative tuberculosis strategy might be delivered in London; and ways in which the Mayor could help improve access to services and support. The Committee is due to publish its findings in the autumn.

9. Environment

- 9.1 **Air pollution** continues to be a key focus for the Environment Committee. In May, the Airports Commission issued a short-notice consultation on the air pollution effects of the shortlisted airport expansion options at Heathrow and Gatwick. The Committee's response took issue with the Commission's argument that increased air pollution from a new runway would be acceptable provided it did not make local air pollution worse than the most polluted place in London, and thereby did not further delay the region's overall compliance with EU pollution limit values. It also noted that the Commission's analysis was flawed and that it looked very possible that the pollution caused by a new runway at Heathrow could in fact be the worst in the London region by 2030. Despite the Mayor and others also making very similar points in the same consultation round, the Airports Commission has since repeated the argument to justify its recommendation of a new north-west runway at Heathrow. Air pollution remains one of the issues facing the Government in considering how to respond to the recommendation.
- 9.2 In June, the Committee held a discussion with the GLA, TfL and external experts on the implications of the UK Supreme Court's April judgement that the UK Government must submit a revised air quality plan to the European Commission by the end of 2015. The Committee heard about measures the Mayor is urging the Government to take, such as a vehicle scrappage scheme, reform of vehicle excise duty, and ultimately the introduction of pollution-related road pricing as part of a thorough reform of driving taxes. The Committee also pressed the Mayor's Senior Advisor for Environment and Energy on what more the Mayor could do to reduce toxic emissions, including widening and strengthening his forthcoming Ultra-Low Emission Zone. The discussion fed into the Committee's investigation into **diesel emissions**, which was published in July.
- 9.3 The Environment Committee launched its investigation into **domestic solar energy** in June. This review seeks to examine the reasons for London's low level of installed *solar power capacity* compared to other parts of the UK, and how the Mayor could provide stronger leadership in this area. In June, Members visited two very different projects to speak to stakeholders about solar power in London. First, they met the creators of a community-led solar energy scheme on a housing estate in Brixton, before visiting a recently completed development at Kingsgate House in Chelsea that uses innovative solar panel designs. Following a formal meeting in July, the Committee aims to publish a report in the autumn.

10. Policing and Crime

- 10.1 The Police and Crime Committee dedicated much of the first quarter to its investigation into preventing extremism in London. The Government's Prevent Strategy provides a framework and funding to tackle extremism at a local level. With a rise in the number of people at risk of engaging in extremist activity, and recent high profile cases – such as the Bethnal Green schoolgirls who travelled to Syria – the Committee is looking at how the Prevent framework and funding is currently delivered across London. MOPAC has said it would like greater oversight of Prevent and the Committee is looking at the implications and opportunities of this. Members received evidence from a range of guests, including academics, London boroughs, and the former independent reviewer of terrorism legislation, Lord Alex Carlile. The investigation is helping to generate discussion amongst Londoners: following the Committee's meetings, phone-in radio shows have featured preventing extremism as part of their debate.

- 10.2 Shortly after the publication of an independent report into how the Met and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) handle rape cases in London, the Committee met with stakeholders to discuss how the Met and CPS provide support to victims, investigate offences and bring cases to court. The Rt. Hon. Dame Elish Angiolini DBE QC, who was commissioned to conduct the independent review, and Baljit Ubhey, Chief Crown Prosecutor, London were invited to give evidence alongside MOPAC and the Met. The Committee heard that the Met and CPS have accepted all of the 46 recommendations made in Dame Elish's review and are focusing on putting more resources into the investigation of rape and working more effectively with a range of partners.
- 10.3 The Committee continue to conduct regular question and answer sessions with the Met and MOPAC. The Committee has, in particular, focused on body worn cameras following the Mayor's announcement that all of the Met's neighbourhood and response officers will be issued a camera. The Committee discussed some of the concerns that Londoners have about the cameras with the Met and MOPAC, and heard that protocols were in place to ensure that the cameras are turned on only to collect evidence and improve transparency.
- 10.4 Other topics considered during this quarter included violent crime; London's Local Policing Model; and the ethics of policing in London. The Committee has also responded to topical issues such as the Hatton Garden burglary, election fraud, and the policing of protests.
- 10.5 In addition to Committee meetings, Members aim to influence and shape the policing agenda by responding to consultations. In April, the Committee submitted its response to the Met's "2020" consultation, which looked at how policing could be transformed to meet new threats and challenges. The Committee highlighted that building and maintaining trust must be a key aspect of any transformation, and that silo working is unlikely to help the Met to meet the demand placed on it in the future.

11. Transport in London

- 11.1 In the past quarter, the Transport Committee has seen evidence of its impact on transport policy in a range of areas. In April, the Committee received a response from TfL to its report on **door-to-door transport services**, which highlighted ongoing concerns with service performance and recommended a more coordinated approach between service providers. TfL accepted almost all of the Committee's recommendations and will consider them further as part of its Social Needs Transport Review. One key change announced by TfL was that it was suspending the closure of the Capital Call service, as recommended by the Committee, while the review is ongoing.
- 11.2 The Committee has continued to follow up its work on **taxi and private hire services**. In June, the Chair visited Heathrow Airport to learn about enforcement problems with private hire vehicles. Evidence of the Committee's impact was seen in the launch of a TfL consultation on card payments in licensed taxis. The Committee raised concerns about the lack of card acceptance in many licensed taxis, and TfL has now set out new proposals to address this issue. The Committee subsequently responded to the consultation.
- 11.3 TfL provided a response to the Committee's report on **customer services**. This confirmed that TfL was planning to implement all but one of the Committee's recommendations. In particular, TfL

agreed to publish a single customer charter for its services, and asked Committee representatives to be involved in the development of this. TfL also confirmed that it would be making further changes to its customer helpline, specifically by putting an option to make a complaint on the main menu, as recommended by the Committee.

- 11.4 In June, the Committee launched a new investigation into proposals for the **devolution of National Rail services to London**. The Committee met a range of experts and stakeholders at a Committee meeting and further informal session in June, including TfL, Kent and Surrey councils, train operators, London TravelWatch, Network Rail, trade unions, the London Chamber of Commerce, Transport for All and London Councils. In addition, Committee Members held informal meetings with Department for Transport officials and representatives of passengers in Sevenoaks; whose rail services the Mayor has proposed making part of the London Overground network. The Committee's visit to Sevenoaks attracted significant media attention.
- 11.5 The Committee's rail devolution investigation has already had a direct impact on the debate, in a way that is likely to influence the government's approach to this issue. In 2012-13, previous proposals from the Mayor to devolve control of the South Eastern franchise to TfL were rejected by the government, in part because of the opposition of Kent County Council. Ahead of the Committee's meeting in June, Kent responded to the Committee by setting out a new, more supportive position in relation to devolution, and reiterated this at the Committee meeting. Surrey County Council also indicated they were open to devolution during the meeting. This has changed the dynamic of the devolution debate and has been welcomed by the Mayor's Office and TfL.

12. Devolution Working Group

- 12.1 The Devolution Working Group continues to examine a wide range of policy areas where devolution of powers and responsibilities to London Government and the boroughs could improve the effectiveness and quality of public services. Committee meetings were held with Sir Robin Wales, Mayor of Newham, Cllr Stephen Alambritis, Leader of the London Borough of Merton, Tony Travers, Director LSE London and Chair of the London Finance Commission and Andrew Eyres, Chief Officer for Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group. Further briefing meetings were held with external experts. The Working Group's report will be published in September.

13. Meetings of the full Assembly

- 13.1 The Assembly meets ten times every year to question the Mayor publicly on behalf of the electorate. There were two Mayor's Question Time meetings in the first quarter of 2015-16, held on 21 May and 17 June 2015.
- 13.2 There were two Plenary meetings of the Assembly in the first quarter. On 13 May 2015, the Assembly established the Assembly Committees and Bodies for 2015/16, appointed Members to Committees and elected Committee Chairs and Deputy Chairs. At its meeting on 3 June 2015, the Assembly put questions to Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, and Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe QPM, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, on policing in London.

14. GLA Oversight Committee

- 14.1 The GLA Oversight Committee met once during this quarter on 30 June 2015.
- 14.2 At the meeting, the Committee re-established the Education Panel, the Head of Paid Service Performance Review Panel, the Standing Orders Working Group, and the Devolution Working Group.
- 14.3 The Committee was consulted on the draft GLA Annual Governance Statement for 2014-15, and on proposals for a shared service arrangement for TfL to undertake the GLA's insurance arrangements. The Committee also agreed to authorise expenditure to commission external contractors to conduct surveys on behalf of the Transport Committee and the Health Committee.
- 14.4 The Committee noted the core Secretariat quarterly monitoring report for the fourth quarter of 2014/15 (January-March 2015), agreed the Assembly's contribution to the GLA's Annual Equalities Report 2014/15, and agreed its work programme for 2015/16.

15. Events

- 15.1 In addition to many events associated with individual investigations, the Assembly has a programme of events in order to fulfil Members' representative roles, raise the profile of the Assembly, and engage Londoners in the work of the Assembly. For this quarter, the following took place:
- Beijing Municipal People's Congress delegation visit, hosted by Roger Evans AM – 8 May;
 - Jordanian MPs delegation visit, hosted by Roger Evans AM – 11 May;
 - Israeli Green Building Council delegation visit, hosted by Nicky Gavron AM – 19 May;
 - London Cab Drivers Club AGM, Valerie Shawcross AM and Caroline Pidgeon AM were invited to give short speeches before taking questions from the group – 17 June;
 - GLA Armed Forces' Day Flag Raising Ceremony at City Hall, hosted by Assembly Chair, Jennette Arnold OBE AM and Mayor Boris Johnson – 22 June; and
 - London Cycling Awards, attended by Caroline Pidgeon AM and Valerie Shawcross AM who both won the 'Cycling Champion of the Year' award – 29 June.

16. Legal Implications

- 16.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

17. Financial Implications

- 17.1 There are no financial implications to the GLA arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers: None

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