

**Cooperative Council Citizens' Commission
Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton**

10.00am – 1.00pm

Monday 11 October 2010

Minutes

PRESENT:

Commissioners:

Richard Bridge (Waterloo Community Coalition)
Councillor Jackie Meldrum (Lambeth Council)
Allison Ogden Newton (Social Enterprise London)
Councillor Steve Reed (Co-operative Council Citizens'
Commission Chair, Lambeth Council)

Delegates:

Nana Amoa-Buahin (Human Resources, Lambeth
Council)
David Burn (Democratic Services and Scrutiny, Lambeth
Council)
Stella Clarke (Community Children's Services, Lambeth
Council)
Mike Dickens (Legal Services, Lambeth Council)
Carolyn Dwyer (Public Realm, Lambeth Council)
Julian Ellerby (Campaigns and Communications,
Lambeth Council)
Sally Leigh (Corporate Procurement, Lambeth Council)
George Marshman (Adult Social Care, Lambeth Council)
Sandra Morrison (Change Management and Team
Around the Child, Lambeth Council)
Andrew Pavlou (Legal Services, Lambeth Council)
John Readman (Community Learning, Lambeth Council)
Rachel Sharpe (Housing, Lambeth Council)
Jonathan Williams (Corporate Finance, Lambeth Council)

Lambeth Council Officers:

Derrick Anderson (Chief Executive)
Sophia Looney (Policy, Equalities and Performance)
Thomas Man (Policy, Equalities and Performance)
Anne Nunn (Democratic Services)
Julie Stoltman (Policy, Equalities and Performance)

APOLOGIES:

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair of the Commission, Councillor Steve Reed, welcomed everyone and highlighted the aims and objectives of the meeting.

2. Delegate initial statements

Children and Young People's Service (CYPS)

Delegates from the department made the following comments:

- Outcomes within CYPS had improved over recent years but further improvements were needed and there was a particular need for focus on prevention within the service.
- CYPS had strong records of community engagement and as such this would be beneficial for the Co-operative Council model as contacts and practices had already been established within the community.
- The principles within the White Paper were strongly aligned with those of CYPS. Two particular areas had been identified for the Co-operative Council pilot, including Adventure Playgrounds and Living Space. Although community-led commissioning had not previously been explored within the department, this was welcomed but there was a need to ensure that those most vulnerable were reached in implementing community-led commissioning.
- A culture shift was needed to enable more flexibility in delivering services including providing permission to make this shift. The pilots would provide clarity on how to provide services differently.
- Key issues related to co-design and co-production included how to build trust within local communities and it was essential to commit to community involvement. There was a high level of commitment to community involvement within the department.
- Although some services provision, for example safeguarding, would benefit from remaining in-house, many services could potentially be delivered in alternative ways.

Adults' and Community Services (ACS)

Delegates from the department made the following comments:

- ACS felt deeply responsible for the current direction of travel which was linked directly to the Personalisation agenda which was an example of the Council providing the funds but devolving power to the resident to choose the services. There was a need to review how productivity and efficiency could be increased whilst reducing costs.
- Employment was seen as a key element in the aim to enable residents to take control of their lives so this would need to be an important element in the Co-operative Council.

- Examples of services being provided by external agencies from within ACS included day care and sheltered housing and these would be promoted as part of the Co-operative Council pilots.
- There was a need to review whether transferring services into the community would generate real savings and high level engagement with the trade unions was vital.

Housing, Regeneration and Enterprise (HRE)

Delegates from the department made the following comments:

- Overall, the department was supportive of the Co-operative Council model and had identified areas in the short, medium and long terms which could be piloted as part of the model.
- One key element within developments within the department was to review how residents could be encouraged to take more responsibility for services. Community management of Council assets had been identified as a possible pilot for the Co-operative Council model.
- Resources involved in the Co-operative Council model would need to be explored in further detail and it would be necessary to identify whether it would be beneficial to transfer major contracts into the management of the community given the economies of scale involved.
- There was a need for a major cultural change to enable the implementation of the Co-operative Council model and it was anticipated that this would take some time.
- Housing services were well placed as pilot for the Co-operative Council model and many examples already existed, including Tenants Management Organisations. Ownership models of housing were to be explored further as this was an area currently underdeveloped.

Question and Answer Session

Commissioners requested information as to whether regulatory services were not to be co-operatised and whether departments had undertaken engagement activities around the Co-operative Council model.

Delegates from the departments clarified that certain regulatory services would benefit from being transferred into the community whereas other would not. Further engagement around the Co-operative Council would need to be carried out but there generally there had been significant interest in the model and existing community involvement would provide a good basis on which to build further engagement.

Office of the Chief Executive (OCE)

Delegates from OCE made the following comments:

- The Co-operative Council model was seen as an outcome rather than a tactic and there was a need to have a clear vision for the entire borough for the model to succeed. If the vision could be defined this would enable the right outcomes for the entire borough.
- There was a need to develop further relationships with the private sector as well as initiate a major cultural change within the organisation in order for the model to be successful. Staff would need to be encouraged to take ownership of the concept and elected members would help promote and champion the model as well as build relationship within the community.
- Further consideration needed to be given as to how to move the organisation in the right direction and enable the cultural change necessary for the success of the Co-operative Council. This included further clarity on how to create and encourage innovation in the organisation and to shift the focus onto the customer.

Finance and Resources (FR)

Delegates from FR made the following comments:

- In enabling the success of the Co-operative Council model, governance arrangements were in need of review to ensure these were fit for purpose.
- The Localism Bill aimed to empower local authorities to become more flexible but it was important to recognise that existing statute or EU legislation could impact on these powers.
- Complexity, flexibility and accountability would be key elements to consider in taking the Co-operative Council model forward
- The Co-operative Council model promoted new flexibility for existing procurement processes and practices within the Council and would enable further work to be carried out with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) within the borough. Detailed engagement with SMEs had already taken place and this was seen as a good base on which to build further involvement.
- The scale and complexity of the local government finance and the Co-operative Council model presented both opportunities and challenges, including how to ensure the right balance between delivering savings and securing future investment to enable change and how the Co-operative Council would deliver excellence.

3. Round-table discussion

In response to question and comments made by the commissioners, delegates made the following points:

- Trust was important in enabling better commissioning as well as improving the quality of relationships with communities. In being involved in the commissioning process, it was often possible to build

valuable relationships but further work was required to enable residents and community groups to better understand the need to identify and review the desired outcomes for the entire community rather than individual areas.

- There was a need to closely monitor contracts awarded to the Third Sector and any related safeguarding issues as the sector would be critical for the delivery of the Co-operative Council model. Further conversations with and motivation of the Third Sector was essential as well establishing any existing short term restrictions.
- Both residents and staff would need to be involved in the further development of the Co-operative Council to enable buy-in and to assess whether the direction of travel was desired by the community as a whole. The Co-operative Council was seen as a way of building capacity and relationships rather than just an approach.