

Subject: Secretariat Quarterly Monitoring Report November 2022 – January 2023

Report to:	GLA Oversight Committee
Report of:	Executive Director of Assembly Secretariat
Date:	1 November 2023
Public Access:	This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report presents an overview of the work and outputs of the Assembly Secretariat November 2022 -January 2023.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **The Committee is recommended to note the Secretariat Quarterly Monitoring report for November 2022 to January 2023.**

3. Scrutiny Activity

- 3.1 Committees have been proceeding with their planned work programmes, with some limited adaptations to reflect adjusted plans – for example, holding an additional informal meeting on Missing Children.

4. Assembly Committee Updates

Budget and Performance Committee

- 4.1 On 21 November, the Budget and Performance Committee wrote to the Mayor on his 2023-24 Budget guidance and Q1 2022-23 Greater London Authority (GLA) financial performance. The Budget and Performance Committee began its scrutiny of the Mayor's GLA Group budget proposals for 2023-24 at a Committee meeting on 22 November 2022 with GLA officers to discuss the 2023-24 Budget for the GLA Core. The Committee discussed the slow progress on delivering the Mayor's Green Bond Programme, the repair work required at the Crystal Palace National Sports Centre, and

that over the last six years the Mayor had received additional unanticipated income from business rates and council tax that averaged £198 million for each year. The Committee then met on 7 December 2022 to consider the 2023-24 Budget proposals for the mayoral development corporations and on 8 December 2022 to discuss the budget proposals for the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), the Metropolitan Police Service and the London Fire Commissioner.

- 4.2 On 4 January 2023 the Committee met with officers from Transport for London and the Deputy Mayor for Transport. This was followed by a meeting with the Mayor on 5 January 2023. On 13 January 2023 the Budget and Performance Committee published its response to the Mayor's 2023-24 Budget consultation. This highlighted that there was a significant growth in the reserves held by the GLA, despite planned reductions. The report asked the Mayor to reassess the GLA Group reserves position and establish a clear and consistent policy for the use of reserves across the GLA Group. On 18 January the Mayor published his Draft Consolidated Budget.

GLA Oversight Committee

- 4.3 On 9 November 2022 the GLA Oversight Committee considered the Mayor's £90 million investment in his Green Bond Programme, which aimed to deliver investment in green initiatives of £500 million. This meeting covered governance of the programme, and a meeting of the Environment Committee on 10 November 2022 considered the projects that would be delivered under the programme. On 14 December the Committee met to review the latest GLA's workforce report and to look at progress in delivering the 42 recommendations from the independent review by The Equal Group into whether there are structural barriers that prevent Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority staff progressing their careers at the GLA.
- 4.4 The GLA Oversight Committee met on 12 January 2023 to discuss the Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Annual Equality Reports. This was a Question and Answer session with the Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice, Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard. This was the rescheduled meeting from 13 September 2022, following the death of the Queen.
- 4.5 The Committee wrote to the Mayor on 30 January 2023 to request a response to a letter sent on 25 March 2022, following the Committee's Question and Answer sessions with Mayoral Advisors.

Transport Committee

- 4.6 The Transport Committee met on 15 November 2022 to look at Rail Reform and the Railways in London, with guests from the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers Union (RMT), Great British Railways, London Travelwatch, and Transport for London (TfL). There was also a second section of the meeting examining London TravelWatch's 2023-24 Business Plan. On 14 December 2022, the Committee started a two-part investigation into Road User Charging, with panellists from BusinessLDN, Centre for London, Possible, Rebel Group, the Federation of Small Businesses, and the Campaign for Better Transport.
- 4.7 On 17 January the Transport Committee held a meeting on public transport fares in London. The Committee heard from the Deputy Mayor, TfL, Campaign for Better Transport, London TravelWatch and Age UK London and discussed the increase in fares for 2023-24, the impact this increase would have on passengers, the future of travel concessions and different fare structures. A letter to the Mayor is expected later this year.

Police and Crime Committee

- 4.8 On 2 November the Committee met with MOPAC to explore how MOPAC is faring ten years on from its creation and how effectively it delivers its functions. The Committee discussed the decision by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services to place the Met into the Engage stage of monitoring and how MOPAC is ensuring local oversight of policing. The Committee also noted that MOPAC is failing to publish the minutes and papers from its various partnership boards.
- 4.9 On 30 November the Committee held the first of its meetings on its investigation into counter-terrorism and radicalisation. The aims of the investigation are to assess the changing nature of terror, London's preparedness for a terrorist attack, and how agencies are countering radicalisation. The Committee met with Lord Toby Harris to explore the findings from his second Independent Review of London's Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident, published in March 2022, as well as Dr Shiraz Maher, Director, International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, King's College London; Robin Simcox, Commissioner for the Commission for Countering Extremism; Charlotte Dixon-Sutcliffe MBE, Chairwoman, Survivors Against Terror; and Brendan Cox, Member, Survivors Against Terror to explore radicalisation and extremism in London.
- 4.10 On 16 November the Committee used its powers to summons the Mayor to a meeting, alongside Sir Tom Winsor, to explore the Mayor's actions in relation to the resignation of the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM. Following this, the Chairman summonsed documents from the Mayor, in his capacity as the occupant of MOPAC, in order that the Committee could investigate further matters surrounding the resignation of the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner. The Committee again summonsed the Mayor to a further meeting on 13 December 2022.
- 4.11 On 11 January the Committee held the second meeting of its investigation into counter-terrorism and radicalisation. The Committee heard from the Metropolitan Police Service (the Met), Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and London Fire Brigade. It also requested written evidence from the London Ambulance Service and Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (which was received in February).
- 4.12 The Committee also continued its scrutiny of the Met and MOPAC through its monthly question and answer sessions. On 25 January, the Committee met with the Met Commissioner, Sir Mark Rowley QPM with two MOPAC representatives - Diana Luchford, Chief Executive and Kenny Bowie, Director of Strategy and Met Oversight. The session was used to discuss the offending of David Carrick, the Commissioners' priorities of 'more trust, less crime, and high standards', the HMICFRS 'Engage' process, and reducing homicides in London.
- 4.13 In terms of outputs, the Committee sent a letter to the Mayor following its meeting with MOPAC in November 2022. The Committee recommended that MOPAC should provide quarterly updates to the Committee on how it is supporting the Met to address the failings identified by HMICFRS and to exit the Engage process and quarterly briefings detailing current issues it has flagged as part of its proactive oversight of the Met, and what action is underway to address them. It also published its *Probation Services in London* report on 20 January which made 13 recommendations largely directed at MOPAC and the London Probation Services. In February, the Committee received a response from the DMPC. The Committee also received responses from the Mayor and Independent Office for Police Conduct to its report on police conduct and complaints.

Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee (FREP)

- 4.14 The Committee had an informal meeting with the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience and the London Fire Commissioner to discuss the Independent Culture Review on 12 January 2023 in advance of the formal meeting on 1 February 2023 which provided an opportunity for an open discussion on the findings of the review and how these were being addressed.
- 4.15 The Committee had a site visit on 18 January 2023 to the London Fire Brigade's Control Centre in Merton where it learned about the latest developments to deliver information to call handlers, including live video from police surveillance cameras being displayed on the big screen that shows the location of all live incidents and appliances. Members received presentations on Control's operation and from the London Resilience Group which has its local authority coordination centre co-located at Merton. Members were able to sit with call handlers and hear how live calls were dealt with. The visit added to the Committee's current investigation of London's Resilience and Emergency Planning.

Economy Committee

- 4.16 The Committee held a meeting on 30 November 2022 as part of an investigation into '*Winning the race to net zero for London's businesses*'. The investigation aimed to explore the impact of unsustainable freight and congestion on businesses in London, and to identify the incentives and opportunities for businesses of making a modal shift to more sustainable freight, including cargo bikes and electric vans. At the meeting, the Committee questioned guests about the opportunities, risks and barriers for businesses using cargo bikes in London, as well as the Mayor's cargo bikes strategy, which is due to be published in 2023. Guests emphasised the benefits of cargo bikes, but also noted several areas where change is needed in order to scale up their use, in relation to infrastructure, regulation and public awareness.
- 4.17 The Economy Committee met on 18 January 2022 to discuss barriers to work for asylum seekers and refugees. In the first part of the meeting, the Committee heard from Breaking Barriers, Refugee Action, City of Sanctuary and a person with lived experience of being an asylum seeker and trying to work in the UK. In the second part they heard from two Deputy Mayors, Debbie Weekes-Bernard and Jules Pipe, who were questioned about GLA initiatives related to both skills and social inclusion which can reduce barriers to work for asylum seekers and refugees. The Committee asked questions about the legal barriers to asylum seekers accessing work, and the barriers to refugees continue to face in accessing work, including language and skills barriers.

Health Committee

- 4.18 The Committee held its final meeting of the calendar year on 24 November 2022, in order to scrutinise the new GLA Group Public Health Unit (PHU). This is a new Unit which was established earlier this year within the GLA and is designed to provide public health advice and support across the GLA Group. The Committee set out to understand what the purpose of the PHU is and how it is intended to strengthen London's public health system. It also asked what the PHU has achieved since it was established and what success would look like in twelve months' time. Guests included Dr Tom Coffey, the Mayor's Health Adviser, Vicky Hobart, the GLA Group Director of Public Health and Will Balakrishnan, Director of Commissioning and Partnership at MOPAC.

- 4.19 On 24 January 2023, the Health Committee visited London Ambulance Service’s Newham Emergency Operations Centre and Dockside Education Centre. Members of the Committee were shown around the Education Centre, which is where paramedics are trained, and then had the opportunity to listen in on 999 calls in the Emergency Operations Centre. This was followed by a meeting at which the Committee put questions to London Ambulance Service staff about its new strategy. The Committee subsequently wrote to London Ambulance Service on 20 February 2023 with recommendations about how the new strategy could be strengthened.

Housing Committee

- 4.20 The Housing Committee held a two-part investigation into exempt supported accommodation. This included a call for evidence in October, informal roundtables on 22 November and a formal meeting on 6 December 2022. Guests included Tom Copley, Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development; Bob Blackman, MP for Harrow East; and representatives from Crisis and Birmingham City Council. The Committee explored the provision of supported accommodation in London and assessed concerns with a particular part of the sector – non-commissioned exempt supported accommodation.
- 4.21 The Housing Committee held an informal meeting on 5 January 2023 to discuss the topic of older people’s housing in London. The Committee heard from the Centre for Ageing Better, Age UK, the International Longevity Centre, London Older Lesbian Co-housing, and the Race Equality Foundation.

Planning and Regeneration Committee

- 4.23 In November 2022, the Committee met to discuss the impact of the two Mayoral Development Corporations that exist in London – Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation, and London Legacy Development Corporation. Representatives from both organisations attended, as well as representatives from community groups/those who have worked with communities, including the East End Trades Guild, OPDC community Review Group, and academics Tony Travers and Myfanwy Taylor.
- 4.24 On 17 Jan 2023 the Planning and Regeneration Committee published its report, ‘the Future of Planning in London’, which considered how the proposals in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill could affect London. The report featured 11 recommendations.

Environment Committee

- 4.25 In November 2022 the Environment Committee explored the GLA’s Green Bond programme and Climate Budgeting with guests from the Connected Places Catapult, 3Ci, Climate Bonds Initiative, and GLA. On 7 December 2022, the Committee had panels on noise pollution in London and also light pollution. On 10 January 2023, the Environment Committee held a meeting on London’s Environmental Priorities for 2023 which provided an opportunity for Assembly Members to engage with local environmental groups and campaigners. The discussion covered a range of issues, including tree planting, biodiversity, environmental messaging and air pollution.

5 Legal Implications

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

6 Financial Implications

6.1 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

None.

Contact Information

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