

Subject: Secretariat Quarterly Review, Quarter 4, 2014-15

Report to: GLA Oversight Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 30 June 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 fourth quarter of 2014-15 (January-March 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 2014.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes the core Secretariat quarterly monitoring report for the fourth quarter of 2014-15 (January-March 2015).**

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

- 3.1 On 12 January 2015, the Mayor responded to the Budget and Performance Committee's **Pre-Budget Report**, accepting a number of recommendations to improve the quality of the budget document, and to provide further information on issues such as housing, policing and apprenticeships to help the Assembly's scrutiny. The Budget and Performance Committee held three meetings in early January to scrutinise the Mayor's draft budget, resulting in the publication of its **Response to the Mayor's draft consultation budget**, published on 20 January. As a result of the Committee's work, the Mayor agreed to include additional transparency requirements to its grant agreements with organisations such as **London & Partners**. He also agreed that TfL should review the impact of the introduction of the **Pay As You Go daily cap** after six months.

- 3.2 In March, the Committee examined various funding options for **Crossrail 2**. It reviewed reports prepared by London First and PricewaterhouseCoopers which considered how half of the cost of Crossrail 2 could be met by private sources. Representatives from both organisations gave evidence alongside the Mayor's advisor on Crossrail 2 and Aviation. With a draft Bill expected during the next Parliament, all parties agreed it was crucial to maintain the momentum on the project to ensure that it is brought to fruition, delivering numerous benefits to those living and working in London. The Committee also heard evidence from the Chairman of the **Independent Investment Programme Advisory Group (IIPAG)** who discussed its role advising TfL on its investment programme. The Chairman noted that IIPAG was fulfilling its existing remit but that consideration would have to be given to providing additional resources should its role be expanded in the future.
- 3.3 The Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee met in March to discuss the quarter three 2014-15 report of the **Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime** and the **Metropolitan Police Service**. The Committee questioned guests on the Met's staff composition and running costs, its commercial and information technology strategies, and the Operational Police Measure. The Metropolitan Police Service (Met) reported that its **staffing overspend was falling** but noted that it was using a **high volume of agency staff** to assist it through transition and to overcome issues with attracting and retaining permanent staff in certain roles. Finally, the Sub-Committee conducted a discussion with representatives from GLA Group Finance and Resources about various **revenue risks** faced by the GLA including forecasting income from council tax and business rates, and the possible impacts of further fiscal devolution to London. The guests reported that despite the Mayor indicating otherwise in his evidence session on the 2015-16 final draft budget, no proposals were actually being considered about funding additional projects from the surplus reserves.

4. London's Economy

- 4.1 In March 2015, the Economy Committee published *Final Demand*, its report on **personal problem debt**. The Committee recommended a number of actions to be taken by the Mayor, London boroughs, central Government and the Money Advice Service to address problem debt and promote affordable savings options. The report was well received by the debt sector. The Mayor has agreed to act on some of the Committee's recommendations, particularly those relating to public awareness and young people's understanding of illegal money lending.
- 4.2 During this quarter, the Committee hosted a seminar to explore the future of **financial services** in the capital. The event was attended by 50 stakeholders from business groups, think tanks and academia. A number of factors which could challenge London's financial services were covered during the discussion including: new regulatory frameworks; competition with other global financial centres; the relationship with Europe; growing public scrutiny; and changing investment trends. In March 2015 the Committee produced a podcast summary of the event.
- 4.3 And in its ongoing role in scrutinising the London Enterprise Panel (LEP), the Committee met in January with members of the **LEP's SME and Skills and Employment Working Groups** and the **Deputy Mayor for Business and Enterprise**. The Committee discussed a number of issues including London's economic outlook; initiatives aimed at support for SMEs; devolution of skills and employment programmes; the Mayor's commitments on job creation; apprenticeship starts and promoting the London Living Wage; the Committee's findings and recommendations on the issue of internships; and the work of London & Partners.

- 4.4 At its final meeting of the year in March 2015, the Committee examined difficulties faced by **microbusinesses** in the capital. In discussion with a panel of expert guests the Committee explored a number of issues including workspace regulation; support to meet financial and business requirements; business rates; and employment.

5. Housing

- 5.1 In February the Housing Committee published its report on the **regeneration of social housing estates**, *Knock it Down or Do it Up?*, which looked at how to improve the regeneration process, including the decision of councils or housing associations either to renovate or demolish. The report established best practice guidelines to ensure a robust decision-making process and early and on-going engagement with residents. It has received very favourable reviews in the trade press; was mentioned recently in the Financial Times; and is referenced numerous times in the recent Institute for Public Policy Research's report on estate regeneration. A response from the Mayor is expected shortly.
- 5.2 The Housing Committee held its second meeting on **Affordable Home Ownership** in February. Shared ownership is a topic of great interest to many Londoners hoping to get on the housing ladder. But the investigation has found little evidence that shared ownership is delivering on its original purpose: to help significant numbers of Londoners move on to full ownership in the private sector. Many now view it as an alternative form of long-term tenure. There are also concerns around the processes involved, including buying and "staircasing" (buying more of the property). A report on this topic will be published early in the new municipal year.
- 5.3 Two meetings took place in March. The first considered **the impact of investor buyers on the market for new-build properties in London**. The Committee heard conflicting views on the size and geographic extent of the so-called 'buy-to-leave' phenomenon (whereby properties are bought purely as an investment and left vacant), a topic which has attracted considerable media attention in recent months. The Committee agreed that the lack of robust data on this topic is hindering understanding of the significant role of investor buyers in the London new-build market. Accordingly, the Committee has written to the Mayor to ask him to consider whether he could support research into this matter to clarify the situation.
- 5.4 The last meeting of the year, in March 2015, provided an opportunity for Committee Members to question the **Deputy Mayor for Housing, Land and Property** on a range of issues. These included: tackling and preventing rough sleeping; the impacts of welfare reform in London; and the number of affordable homes built between 2011 and 2015. During the meeting the Deputy Mayor suggested he consult the Committee on the commissioning framework for the forthcoming rough sleeping programme. The Committee has now responded to this outline document, in consultation with external stakeholders, and awaits further detail later in the year.

6. Regeneration

- 6.1 March saw the Regeneration Committee publish its report, *The Regeneration Game*, on **stadium-led regeneration**. The report found that the potential benefits of stadium-led regeneration could

be enhanced if the Mayor introduced a charter for stadium-led regeneration in the London Plan. This would include commitments to pay stadium employees the London Living Wage; support the Mayor's housing targets for mixed and balanced communities; and establish a community forum to involve local groups in a new stadium before it is built. The Committee also recommend that all stadium expansion schemes are included within the categories of development that are referable to the Mayor, and that he publishes details of the clawback arrangements between the London Legacy Development Corporation and West Ham United FC, should the club be sold. The report secured commitment from two London football clubs to pay their staff the London Living Wage.

- 6.2 The Regeneration Committee held a **site visit to Smithfield Market** in February. Members received a briefing from the City of London about the City's objectives for the Smithfield and Farringdon area, before touring the market with representatives of Smithfield Market Tenants' Association.
- 6.3 Also in February, the Committee followed its site visit to **the Royal Docks** (in December 2014) with a meeting to discuss the Mayor and the LEP's role in regeneration of the area, and lessons from the redevelopment of Canary Wharf. Guests included a former Chief Executive of the London Docklands Development Corporation, along with representatives from the GLA, Centre for Cities, and London First. The meeting provided a robust debate on the challenges facing the Mayor in leading regeneration of the Docks such as land management; balancing commercial and residential development; and maximising investment through the Enterprise Zone.
- 6.4 In March, the Committee held a meeting on **high street regeneration**. This session followed up the Committee's 2014 work on the Outer London Fund and Mayor's Regeneration Fund, and looked ahead at the newly launched High Street Fund. The Mayor has introduced an innovative crowd-based match funding mechanism to enable non-public sector organisations to bid for support through the new High Street Fund. This was called for in the Committee's January 2014 report.

7. Planning

- 7.1 Tall buildings has been a subject of recent debate in London. On 9 March, the Chair of the Planning Committee, in consultation with the Deputy Chair, sent a letter to the Mayor to return to some of the issues in relation to **London's skyline and tall buildings**. The letter followed up developments that have taken place since the Assembly approved a unanimous motion on the subject in November 2014, and urged the Mayor to adopt new policies to control and protect London's skyline from the negative effects of tall buildings.
- 7.2 On 22 January 2015, the Committee met with a number of experts to discuss **options for accommodating London's forecast population growth of one million** in the coming decade. The Mayor's existing approach is to ensure growth takes place within the current boundaries, without encroaching on the Green Belt or London's protected open spaces. Members discussed a range of options for amending this approach in the future including: maximising London's brownfield potential; intensifying suburban development; accommodating growth outside of London; and relevant issues should greenfield development become a serious option.
- 7.3 A recurring theme in relation to accommodating London's growth is **the need to increase housing density**. On 18 March 2015, the Committee discussed the role of different housing 'typologies' in

increasing density. The discussion focussed on how to help accommodate a range of individuals and families, without sacrificing residential quality or sustainability. Members also reviewed the suitability of different approaches to locating new housing development in London including: opportunity Areas; estate renewal; small, infill and difficult sites; and options for suburban intensification.

- 7.4 On 18 March, the Committee noted the responses to its report **Localism in London**, published in November 2014. A number of positive comments were reported to Members as well as an update on progress in implementation of the Localism Act, received from the Department of Communities and Local Government. The Committee resolved to follow up and monitor a number of issues in the development of its future work programme.

8. Health

- 8.1 The Health Committee published its report on **general practice care in London** on 3 March. The report highlighted the increased pressures faced by London GPs, as demand reaches unprecedented levels, driven by London's rapid population growth. It also pointed to the need for better access to GP care, and improved patient satisfaction, by increasing the number of GPs; improving premises; and raising workforce morale. Launched at the Docklands Medical Centre, the report was well received by stakeholders and received widespread media coverage, including ITV London, London Live, the Guardian, the Evening Standard and specialist trade press.
- 8.2 At its meeting on 12 January 2015, the Health Committee discussed with the Mayor the findings and recommendations of the **London Health Commission**. Members sought the Mayor's views on the proposed convening role he would hold to ensure coherent delivery of stakeholders' responses to the recommendations; the suggested appointment of a London Health Commissioner; and making the case for more funds for public health and healthcare in London.
- 8.3 The Committee held the second evidence-gathering session on **mental health service provision in London** on 14 January with expert guests from the national mental health charity Mind, a mental health trust and a community support organisation. The discussion explored the contributing factors to poor mental health for BME individuals; the barriers they face in accessing mental health care and support; and ways in which the Mayor could help improve access to services and support. The Committee is due to publish its findings this summer.
- 8.4 On 4 March, Members of the Committee visited the Tuberculosis Centre at the Whittington Hospital in preparation for the launch of an investigation into **tuberculosis in London**. Members toured the facilities and met with clinical and nursing staff to talk about the challenges of managing and controlling tuberculosis in London. Members also met patients undergoing treatment at the Centre to discuss their experiences. The visit highlighted a number of areas of focus for the Committee's forthcoming investigation.

9. Environment

- 9.1 The Environment Committee published three reports this quarter. The report on **food waste recycling**, *Bag it or bin it?* was published in March. The report looked at ways to manage food waste better and reduce the financial costs and environmental harms of sending it to

landfill. Recommendations included collecting food and organic waste separately across all property types in every borough; that the Mayor should support London Councils in seeking resources from the government to support this; and that the Mayor should support food waste reduction and recycling programmes from his own resources. This report received extensive coverage on national and regional TV and radio, as well as in the trade press.

- 9.2 In February, the Committee published its response to the consultation on the proposed **Ultra Low Emission Zone** (ULEZ). The Committee argued for the zone to be introduced sooner than 2020; for it to be extended as soon as practicable beyond the central congestion charging zone into boroughs that wish to participate; and for the effect of the zone to be strengthened by progressively stepping up the charge for non-compliance. The Committee's views were reported in the national press and broadcast media, as well as the sector press and social media. Since the response, the Mayor has signed an order for a largely unchanged ULEZ. However the UK Supreme Court has also ordered the Government to produce a revised national air quality strategy and the Committee may revisit its call for a faster, wider, stronger zone as part of the response to that judgment.
- 9.3 In its report on **adapting to severe weather and climate change**, *Come rain or shine*, the Committee warned that London is not well prepared for the risks of severe weather, and that climate change is likely to make things worse. Recommendations addressed the need to update building standards and regulations, especially to keep homes cool in hot weather; to ensure that the drainage network is sufficient to deal with future heavy rainfall; to promote flood-resistant buildings in flood-prone areas; and to set out an updated action plan for the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. Overall, the report found a need for Mayoral and other strategies to be driven by an assessment of weather and climate risks, and what needs to be done to adapt to those risks, especially as some of them increase. It was covered in sector press and local radio.
- 9.4 In February and March, the Environment Committee held meetings on London's **water issues**, and **biodiversity** respectively.

10. Policing and Crime

- 10.1 The Police and Crime Committee published two major reports this quarter. In March, the Committee published *Tightening the net: the Metropolitan Police Service's response to online theft and fraud* which examined trends in online theft and fraud and assessed how the Met is dealing with the threat to businesses and the public. The report recommended that the Met should appoint a senior ranking officer, responsible for ensuring the whole force is prepared to tackle online crime. It also recommended that the Office for National Statistics should introduce specific questions into the Crime Survey for England and Wales to measure online victimisation and that the Mayor, in partnership with the City of London Police and other key stakeholders, should lead a London-wide campaign during 2015-16 to draw attention to the threat of online crime, and raise awareness of the organisation Action Fraud.
- 10.2 The Committee's March publication on London's approach to **safeguarding children** – *Confronting Child Sexual Exploitation in London* – explored London's approach to protecting children and young people from sexual exploitation. The report recommended that the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) set out a clear performance monitoring framework for child sexual exploitation

(CSE) and asked all London Local Safeguarding Children Boards to ensure robust mechanisms are working to monitor the effectiveness of CSE strategies and procedures.

- 10.3 The Committee commenced its investigation into **youth reoffending** in January, to assess what more the Mayor could do to address the issue. As well as covering this at meetings in January, February and March, the Committee held a session to hear directly from young ex-offenders who have experience of the youth justice system in London. The group, who work with the charity User Voice, came from a variety of backgrounds: some had been placed into custody; others were in the early stages of working with Youth Offending Teams in the community. Members heard about their experiences of support received both in prison and in the community, and discussed with them what they wanted to see from an effective youth justice system.
- 10.4 The Police and Crime Committee continued to conduct regular question and answer sessions to hold MOPAC to account. A senior Met representative also attended each of the question and answer sessions this quarter. The Committee has, in particular, focused on the Met's role in counter terrorism. In January, for example, the Committee examined the Met's response to the terrorist attacks on the offices of Charlie Hebdo in Paris. In March, the Committee looked at the Prevent strategy, aimed at tackling radicalisation, in preparation for an investigation in the new municipal year. Other topics considered during this quarter included the application of the Local Policing Model; violent crime; the policing of protests; and the ethics of policing in London.

11. Transport in London

- 11.1 In January, the Transport Committee published a report on **door-to-door transport services**, following a meeting with service operators and users in late 2014. The report recommended a number of short, medium and long-term steps toward the greater integration of door-to-door services. TfL has since responded to the Committee to confirm it supports almost all of the recommendations. These will feed in to TfL's ongoing Social Needs Transport Review, which is examining provision of such services. One specific impact was that TfL's planned closure of the Capital Call service was suspended, as recommended by the Committee, until the outcome of this review.
- 11.2 The Committee followed up its work on London's **taxi and private hire services**, following the publication of a report on this topic in December. The Committee met TfL Commissioner Sir Peter Hendy in February, in front of a full public gallery, to discuss how TfL would be implementing the report's recommendations. Members also discussed the need for greater transparency around the Mayor's engagement with the industry, specifically the 'Cabbies Cabinet', a regular meeting between the Mayor and trade organisations. The Committee wrote to the Mayor to urge him to open up this process to scrutiny, with Sir Peter stating he would also recommend this step. Subsequent to this meeting, the Committee has obtained further details of how TfL received legal advice ahead of the decision to provide a private hire license to the operator Uber, an issue that has attracted considerable controversy.
- 11.3 In March, the Committee published a report on **TfL customer services**, following a rapporteurship investigation led by Valerie Shawcross CBE AM. The investigation found that TfL had made improvements to its customer service in recent years, for instance by developing its social media presence. However, there was still a need for an overarching customer charter to set out what

passengers can expect from TfL. The Committee also recommended TfL make it easier for passengers to complain; improve the transparency of its customer service performance measures; and designate responsibility for customer service to a member of the TfL Board. TfL responded to the Committee's concerns during the investigation by simplifying the menu options on its customer service helpline, which had been found to be confusing for callers.

- 11.4 The Committee has focused heavily on the **disruption for rail passengers at London Bridge**, as a result of Network Rail's Thameslink upgrade programme. The Committee met Network Rail in January following evidence of poor service performance in late 2014 and early 2015. A number of steps were taken to improve performance, including greater coordination between staff based at London Bridge and changes to the Southern timetable. However service disruptions continued to affect passengers, and the Committee called in Network Rail and Govia Thameslink Railway for an urgent meeting to discuss the ongoing problems in March. Following this meeting, the Committee received previously undisclosed information about levels of passenger compensation, and regular updates on service performance. The Committee will continue to monitor this situation.

12. Education Panel

- 12.1 The **Education Panel** met in February to discuss the performance of London's schools relative to other English regions and other comparable cities and countries. The Panel received a presentation from Andreas Schleicher, Director for the Directorate of Education and Skills OECD, by video conference. They also discussed Ofsted's view of how London's schools are performing, and the key challenges to raising standards for all children. Questions were put to Munira Mirza, Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture, about the effectiveness of the Mayor's programmes funded by the London School's Excellence Fund. In follow-up work, the Panel pressed the Deputy Mayor to reassess the cost of producing data to enable a separate Programme for International Student Assessment score for London which allowing comparisons to be made with key competitor city regions or nations.

13. Devolution Working Group

- 13.1 The **Devolution Working Group** held two meetings in February to discuss how London could benefit from further devolution of powers and resources. The Group heard initially from Sir Richard Leese, Chair of the Core Cities Group and Leader of Manchester City Council, and from Harvey McGrath, Vice-Chair London Enterprise Panel to discuss how the Greater Manchester Agreement would affect governance in the city and what practical additional powers would be devolved to the city region. A further meeting heard from Sir Edward Lister, the Mayor's Chief of Staff, Mayor Jules Pipe, Chair of London Councils, and Cllr Philippa Roe, Executive group lead Member for Devolution and Public Service Reform, about what a London proposition for further devolution should include. Further discussions were also held with Stephen Greenhalgh, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, about how the criminal justice system could be devolved to London government and the benefits that would bring in terms of financial savings and greater service delivery efficiency.

14. Meetings of the full Assembly

- 14.1 The Assembly meets ten times every year to question the Mayor publicly on behalf of the electorate. There were three Mayor's Question Time meetings in the fourth quarter of 2014-15, held on 21 January, 23 February and 25 March 2015.
- 14.2 There were three Plenary meetings of the Assembly in the fourth quarter. On 28 January, the Assembly considered the Mayor's Consolidated Draft Budget Proposals for 2015-16. On 6 February, the Assembly put questions to, Sir Edward Lister, Chief of Staff and Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning and Stewart Murray, Assistant Director for Planning, on the Draft Further Alterations to the London Plan. On 11 March, the Assembly noted the Mayor's commitments for 2014-15 and questioned the Mayor in his role as Chairman of the London Legacy Development Corporation. The Assembly also agreed to hold a confirmation hearing on appointing Gareth Bacon AM as Chairman of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority.

15. GLA Oversight Committee

- 15.1 At its meeting on 27 January 2015, the Committee was consulted on pan-GLA group collaborative procurement proposals and considered what information the Assembly wanted the Mayor to include in the Mayor's Annual Report for 2015-16.
- 15.2 On 24 February 2015, the Committee put questions to the Director, Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation, on proposals to share committee services with the Corporation. At the same meeting, the Committee also put questions to the Mayor's Chief of Staff and Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning and the Head of Governance and Resilience on the GLA's resilience activities in 2014.
- 15.3 At its meeting on 24 March 2014, the Committee put questions to the Senior Adviser - Team London, Volunteering, Charities & Sponsorship, on her role and work at the GLA, and received a report updating the Assembly on the London Survey.
- 15.4 During the fourth quarter, the GLA Oversight Committee also considered a range of routine business items, including a workforce report, proposed changes to the GLA establishment and the allocation of the Assembly budget.

16. Events

- 16.1 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:
- Network Rail lunchtime briefing on route studies, including the Sussex route – 21 January
 - Annual GLA Holocaust Memorial Day Ceremony – 26 January
 - City University student briefing ahead of Mayor's Question Time – Final Budget - 23 February
 - Chairman's Annual Event – Police Volunteers' Reception in London's Living Room – 5 March
 - Age Friendly Cities Conference in Canary Wharf – 16 March

- Transport for London lunchtime briefing on commercial activity – 18 March
- People’s Question Time in Wood Green – 19 March
- Alzheimer’s Society lunchtime briefing providing Dementia Friends training – 25 March

17. Legal Implications

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

18. Financial Implications

18.1 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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