

SCRUTINY BOARD (SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES)

MONDAY, 22ND JULY, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Bentley, A Blackburn,
N Buckley, D Coupar, P Davey,
R Grahame, M Harland, P Harrand,
G Hyde, J Jarosz and N Walshaw

11 Late Items

There were no late items.

12 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

In relation to the item entitled, 'Improving recycling through effective communication and education', Councillor R Grahame drew the Board's attention to his membership of the GMB Union (Minute No. 15 refers).

13 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

There were no apologies for absence.

14 Minutes - 10th June 2013

Further to minute no. 7, the Chair reported that arrangements were being made to organise a working group meeting to consider the full range of indicators considered by the Environment and Housing directorate relevant to the Scrutiny Board. These would be confirmed shortly.

Further to minute no.8, the Chair reported that the Resources and Council Services Scrutiny Board had also expressed an interest in undertaking a piece of work surrounding the Council's new Integrated Advice Service. To avoid duplication, it was considered appropriate for the Resources and Council Services Scrutiny Board to lead on this work but to invite representation from the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board. It was agreed that Councillor Jarosz would be the Board's nominated member if the Resources and Council Services Scrutiny Board does agree to lead on this piece of work.

Reference was made to an earlier request made during the Board's meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner on 16th May 2013 regarding clarification of the role of Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables. The Principal Scrutiny Adviser agreed to follow this up before the Board's next meeting.

RESOLVED –

(a) That the minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

(b) That Councillor Jarosz would be the Board's nominated member to join the Resources and Council Services Scrutiny Board if it decides to lead on a piece of work surrounding the Council's new Integrated Advice Service.

(c) That the Principal Scrutiny Adviser follows up an earlier request made by the Board regarding clarification of the role of Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables.

15 Strengthening the Council's relationship with local parish and town councils - formal response to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the formal response to the recommendations arising from the Board's recent review aimed at strengthening relationships with local Parish and Town Councils.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Kathy Kudelnitzky, Chief Officer Communities
- Phil Crabtree, Chief Planning Officer
- Chris Pilkington, Deputy Chief Officer of the Yorkshire Local Councils Association.

Apologies for absence were reported on behalf of Rory Barke, Area Leader, East and North East Leeds, due to illness.

In consideration of this report, the key areas discussed were:

- National Quality Status Scheme – it was noted that the National Association for Local Councils and other partners were now analysing the outcome of the recent consultation linked to the development of a new scheme. A re-launch of the scheme is still anticipated later this year.
- Integrated approach towards community engagement – it was noted that the Council's wider review around area working had focused more generally on strengthening the Council's relationships with other community groups/forums too. Linked to this, it was highlighted that the Planning and Transportation Services are now working closely with the new Citizens and Communities directorate to develop a better integrated approach towards community engagement.
- Revised Planning Charter – the Board requested an update regarding the review of the supplementary document to the Parish and Town Council Charter in relation to Planning. Following the initial consultation with local Parish and Town Councils in January and February, the Chief Planning Officer explained that a re-draft of this document would be made available in September for further consultation.
- Designated officers – the Chief Planning Officer explained that Development Management & Local Planning Officers had now been

identified to deal with planning applications within the area wedges of the city. Designated Planning Officers had also been identified within each wedge and would therefore be the first point of contact for local Parish and Town Councils. It was reported that local Parish and Town Councils would be notified of these contact details shortly.

- Neighbourhood Planning – it was noted that 39 areas across Leeds are either working on Neighbourhood Plans or have shown an interest. The role of the designated officers already in place for each Neighbourhood Planning area has also received positive feedback from local Parish and Town Councils.
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – the Board discussed the implications surrounding the proposed CIL but acknowledged that local arrangements are still yet to be agreed.
- Support to local Parish and Town Councils – linked to recommendation 2 within the Board's report, Members reiterated the importance of ensuring that local Parish and Town Councils can access training and support when needed.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That a further update report be brought back to the Scrutiny Board in December 2013.

(Councillor P Harrand arrived at 10.20 am and Councillor A Blackburn arrived at 10.30 am during consideration of this item).

16 Improving recycling through effective communication and education - formal response to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the formal response to the recommendations arising from the Board's recent review aimed at improving recycling through effective communication and education.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Councillor Mark Dobson, Executive Board Member for Environment.

In consideration of this report, the following key points were discussed:

- Recycling plastics – it was noted that the new A to Z Guide to Reducing, Re-Using and Recycling would make reference to plastics to help explain which plastics are recycled in Leeds.
- Monitoring market trends for recyclable materials – particular reference was made to the increased market value of metal and textiles.
- Exploring best practice models – reference was made to the high recycling rates within other European countries and whether lessons could be taken on board locally. However, it was acknowledged that

high public commitment towards recycling was generally a contributing factor.

- Working with private landlords - reference was made to the Leeds Landlord Accreditation Scheme as an appropriate method of working with landlords to encourage tenants to reduce waste and recycle more.
- Targeted campaigns – particular reference was made to success of the ‘Leave Leeds Tidy’ campaign which aimed to reduce the impact of the student change-over period (around 1st July when many students move house) on the environment and local community.
- Alternate weekly collections (AWC) of recyclable and residual waste – it was noted that the Board had agreed to undertake a separate piece of work to help evaluate phase 1 of AWC so that lessons can be applied to the phase 2 roll out in November. This work will be undertaken via working group meetings scheduled for 24th July and 29th August.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted
- (b) That a further update report be brought back to the Scrutiny Board in December 2013.

17 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the Board’s latest work schedule for the forthcoming municipal year.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Councillor Mark Dobson, Executive Board Member for Environment.

The Chair invited the Executive Board Member for Environment to share his views around other potential areas of work for the Board to undertake this year in relation to his portfolio.

The main areas raised were as follows:

- Fuel poverty – evaluating the approaches already taken to address fuel poverty and what lessons could be learned i.e. Wrap Up Leeds and the Bulk Fuel Purchasing Scheme. It was noted that this piece of work could be linked to the Board’s on-going tracking of recommendations made during its earlier Fuel Poverty Inquiry.
- Exploring other viable solutions for areas of the city not expecting to receive alternative weekly collections of recyclable and residual waste.
- Reviewing the allocation of resources for street cleanliness in terms of delivering value for money.

In addition to the above, the Board also expressed an interest in conducting a piece of work around tackling Pay Day Loan operators, including illegal Pay Day Loan operators.

RESOLVED – That the Board’s work schedule be updated to reflect the key issues discussed during today’s meeting.

18 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 9th September 2013 at 10.00 am (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30 am)

(The meeting concluded at 11.50 am).