

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING)

TUESDAY, 21ST JULY, 2015

PRESENT: Councillor J Procter in the Chair

Councillors J Bentley, D Collins, A Gabriel,
P Grahame, A Khan, J Pryor, K Ritchie and
G Wilkinson

12 Late Items

There were no late items.

13 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

14 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor M Iqbal.

15 Minutes - 30 June 2015

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2015 be approved as a correct record.

16 Matters arising from the minutes

Minute No. 9 – Sources of work for the Scrutiny Board

It was suggested that the issue of temporary accommodation be considered as part of the various themes identified by the Board.

The Board was advised that the City Development Scrutiny Board was meeting on 22 July to agree the terms of reference for the Housing Mix inquiry. Once agreed, all Members of this Scrutiny Board will be invited to the inquiry working group sessions.

RESOLVED – That the issue of temporary accommodation be considered as part of the various themes identified by the Board.

17 Refreshed Safer Leeds Strategy 2015-2016

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which presented the draft Safer Leeds Strategy for the Board's consideration and comment.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Mark Dobson, Executive Member (Environmental Protection and Community Safety)
- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Supt Sam Millar, Chief Officer (Community Safety).

The key areas of discussion were:

- Confirmation that separate plans existed for individual service areas. It was requested that details of the plans be forwarded to the Board.
- A suggestion that future reporting included examples of community based initiatives aimed at delivering the priorities set out within the Strategy.
- Development of restorative practices and multi-agency approaches.
- Clarification sought regarding funding arrangements beyond March 2016, particularly in relation to PCSOs. The Board asked to be kept informed regarding spending priorities.
- Concern regarding inconsistent approaches to the role and responsibilities of PCSOs across the city.
- Integration of PCSOs to support a broader range of work, e.g. environmental action work.
- A request that the Board be provided with a breakdown of PCSOs across all Wards.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Board notes the newly refreshed draft Safer Leeds Strategy 2015/16
- (b) That the above requests for information be provided.

(Councillor A Khan left the meeting at 2.30pm, during the consideration of this item.)

18 Director of Environment and Housing Officer Delegations

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented further details of the areas of responsibility delegated to the Director of Environment and Housing.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Areas of responsibility, including relevant senior officer contact details
- A list of relevant housing related functions.

RESOLVED – That the Board notes the areas of responsibility delegated to the Director of Environment and Housing.

19 Performance Update

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which presented performance information relevant to the Board's remit.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Details of the most recent 2015/16 performance data in relation to housing priorities
- Environment and Housing priorities previously within the remit of the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Richard Lewis, Executive Member (Regeneration, Transport and Planning)
- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Richard Ellis, Head of Finance (Strategy and Resources).

The key areas of discussion were:

- A suggestion that future reporting included an update on development of new build properties.
- An update on empty properties, including details of a scheme to purchase former right-to-buy properties to use as Council homes (delivering approximately 120 homes).
- The demands on Council housing and signposting alternative housing solutions within the private sector.
- A request was made for future reports to put into context the overall homeless prevention rate as a percentage figure.
- A request was made for future performance reports to indicate burglary figures on a monthly basis and in comparison to the previous year.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Board notes the most recent performance information contained in appendices 1 and 2.
- (b) That the Board continues to receive a general quarterly performance update, with more detailed information being provided at future themed meetings as requested.

20 Work Schedule

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's work schedule for the 2015/16 municipal year.

The following updates and areas of work were noted:

- Future meetings were to be focussed around 3 key themes (Housing; Community Safety; and Environmental issues) to discuss those areas of interest identified by the Board at its June meeting.

- The West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner were scheduled to attend the October Board meeting, which is themed around Community Safety.
- A request that the Board be kept informed regarding the work programme of Tenant Scrutiny Board.

RESOLVED – That the work schedule be approved.

21 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 15 September 2015 at 1.30pm (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 1.00pm)

(The meeting concluded at 3.20pm)