

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING)

THURSDAY, 24TH NOVEMBER, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor J Procter in the Chair

Councillors J Bentley, A Blackburn,
K Bruce, D Collins, A Gabriel,
A Garthwaite, A Khan, M Lyons, S Ragan,
K Ritchie and G Wilkinson

43 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair advised that arrangements were now being made to appoint a new Chair of the Scrutiny Board following his recent appointment as a Member of the European Parliament (MEP). The Board congratulated the Chair on his recent appointment.

44 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:

Agenda item 7 – Part consideration of Community Safety Related Matters under the provisions of Access to information Procedure Rule 10.4 (2) and (7) 'Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual' and 'Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.'

45 Late Items

There were no late items.

46 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

47 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor P Grahame.

Notification had been received that Councillor D Ragan was to substitute for Councillor P Grahame.

48 Minutes - 13 October 2016

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2016 be approved as a correct record.

49 Matters arising from the minutes

Minute No. 40 – Housing Related Matters (Tenant Scrutiny Board)

Reference was made to the Board's request for further information in respect to the Tenant Scrutiny Board's governance and support arrangements. It was highlighted that the Chairs of the Scrutiny Board and the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee have been provided with a briefing note from Housing Leeds in the first instance and that the intention is to use the Scrutiny Board's next Housing themed meeting in January to discuss this further with Board Members.

50 Community Safety Related Matters

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which provided a brief overview of community safety related themes / services that had been identified by the Board.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Debra Coupar, Executive Member for Communities
- Councillor Josie Jarosz, Leeds Member of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel
- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Superintendent Sam Millar, Chief Officer (Community Safety)
- Harvinder Saimbhi, Head of Anti-Social Behaviour.

The key areas of discussion were:

Addressing anti-social behaviour

- Development of the out of hours' service to receive and log calls, which was welcomed by the Board.
- The types of support aimed at encouraging individuals to report crime. However, it was also suggested that the service seeks legal advice on whether existing witness statement forms could be changed to help protect the identity of witnesses, particularly from the perpetrators.
- Confirmation that there had been a small increase in the reporting of hate crime since Brexit. The Board was advised about the development of local reporting centres and also the proactive work being undertaken with local schools.
- The use of restorative practice methodologies to resolve cases. Linked to this, Members cited examples of positive initiatives with organisations such as the Blue Cross and Dogs Trust which involve the use of animals as part of a rehabilitation programme for offenders. It

was therefore suggested that this approach be explored in the development of a local menu of restorative practice methods.

- Concern about the costs associated with replacing Designated Public Places Orders (DPPOs) with Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs). It was noted that these would also require careful monitoring to ensure their effectiveness.
- In acknowledging the positive work being undertaken with local schools, Members were mindful that the service also needs to look beyond the school environment when engaging with young people in localities. This point was also acknowledged as part of the work linked to the establishment of a Hate Crime Strategic Board.
- The Board acknowledged the vital role of local Police Community Support Officers in working closely with local communities in addressing anti-social behaviour. In acknowledging the commitment to reach the full PCSO complement by early next year, particular references were made to ensuring that local ward allocations are kept separate to PCSO commitments allocated to city wide initiatives, such as the Managed Approach in Holbeck.

Addressing youth offending

- Particular reference was made to the approaches taken in addressing gang culture and it was noted that existing strategies adopt a multi-agency approach across localities.
- The Board highlighted a need for additional resources to also support and encourage the take up of youth activities in communities.
- Whilst acknowledging the Council's efforts in working closely with employers to help address youth unemployment generally across the city, the Board recognised the need to strengthen links with employers in supporting young offenders into work too.

Tackling begging across the city

- Clarification about the support available to people begging on the street. The Board was advised about outreach services, hostels and signposting.
- The need to develop effective communication and engagement strategies aimed at publicising how best to support people begging, i.e. offering food instead of money and supporting local charities and organisations. Linked to this, Members also recognised the need to clearly publicise a contact number that people can use if they are concerned about the welfare or behaviour of someone begging in the city.

The future provision of CCTV

- The important role of Community Committees regarding future provision of CCTV and the need for them to be consulted as a key stakeholder. Linked to this, it was requested that Community

Committees be provided with details of the location of existing cameras and priority areas.

- Whilst it was noted that the performance information reports to Elected Members have ceased pending further development, the Board urged that the new reports be developed and circulated as soon as possible.
- Confirmation that the review of provision included a focus on high rise buildings.
- An update on development of soft market testing and the importance of wireless connectivity to provide greater flexibility.
- The role of PPPU and development of a Project Board to support this area of work.

Following consideration of further community safety related matters, designated as exempt under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (2) and (7), which was considered in private during the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted
- (b) That the above requests for information be provided.

(Councillor A Blackburn joined the meeting at 10.20am during the consideration of this item.)

51 Work Schedule

The Head of Governance Services and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's work schedule for the 2016/17 municipal year.

The Board noted that the December Board meeting was themed around Environment and included the next session of the Board's Inquiry into Air Quality and an update on Peckfield Landfill Site.

The Board requested that further information surrounding the Pubwatch scheme is included as part of the next Community Safety themed meeting in February 2017. It was noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner had also been invited to attend this particular meeting.

The Board was notified of the work being undertaken by the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board to facilitate the views of Scrutiny in relation to the development of a refreshed Best Council Plan. A working group meeting had been provisionally scheduled for Monday 19th December to undertake this work and other Scrutiny Boards had been invited to nominate up to 3 representatives to contribute to this working group. During the meeting Councillor Garthwaite volunteered to attend on behalf of the Environment and Housing Scrutiny Board. Other Board Members were advised to contact the Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser as soon as possible if they also wished to attend this working group meeting.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That further information surrounding the Pubwatch scheme is included as part of the next Community Safety themed meeting in February 2017
- (b) That Councillor Garthwaite attends the working group meeting of the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board to represent the Board in the discussions surrounding the development of a refreshed Best Council Plan.
- (c) That any other Board Members wishing to attend the working group meeting of the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board notifies the Principal Scrutiny Adviser as soon as possible.

52 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 8 December 2016 at 10.00am (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30am)

(The meeting concluded at 12.40pm)