

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING)

THURSDAY, 22ND SEPTEMBER, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor J Procter in the Chair

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

23 Late Items

The following late information was submitted to the Board:

- Agenda item 10 – Draft terms of reference for the Board’s Inquiry into Air Quality.

The above information was not available at the time of agenda despatch, but was subsequently made available on the Council’s website.

24 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

25 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor P Grahame. It was reported that Councillor P Grahame was unable to attend today’s Board meeting as she was attending a full Board meeting of West Yorkshire Joint Services and she was Deputy Chair.

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

26 Minutes - 7th July 2016

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2016 be approved as a correct record.

27 Matters arising from the minutes

Minute No. 17 – Lettings Policy Review – consultation update

The Board was advised that further information in relation to age related policies had been submitted and was to be forwarded to Board Members in readiness for its housing themed meeting in October.

Minute No. 19 – Safer Leeds Plan 2016/17

The Board requested that the update regarding the level of PCSOs deployed across all Wards be circulated to Board Members prior to its Community Safety themed meeting scheduled for November.

28 Peckfield Landfill Site - Recommendation tracking

The Head of Governance Services submitted a report which presented a progress update on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the previous Scrutiny Inquiry into Peckfield Landfill Site.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor James Lewis, Ward Member for Kippax and Methley
- Louise White, Minerals & Waste Team Leader, City Development
- Julia Reynolds, Acting Team Leader, Contaminated Land, City Development
- Charlotte McKay, Team Leader Development Team, Legal Services
- Christine Boothroyd, Local resident and member of the Peckfield Landfill Community Liaison Committee.

The Board was provided with a comprehensive planning update on recent developments with the site, with particular references made to the pace of site restoration compared to infilling, which was considered slower than expected. Board Members were also advised that the operator had breached Condition 35 as waste disposal and restoration operations had not been confined to 3 successive cells at any one time. It was highlighted that Planning Officers had set out the required steps to be taken to complete the full restoration of one of the Cells (Cell 8) and the operator had committed to have this completed by 30th September 2016.

It was also highlighted that issues had been raised with the operator regarding existing operational phasing arrangements that were at risk of deviating from the planning permission. This therefore requires urgent attention from officers and the operator and may result in the operator submitting a Variation of Condition planning application to resolve this issue. Linked to this, Board Members were informed of the operator's intention to employ the services of a planning consultant to help provide a solution for all parties.

Other key areas of discussion were:

- An update on the role and make-up of the Peckfield Liaison Committee. The Board was advised that regular meetings had taken place to consider site progress and to raise concerns of local residents, which primarily relate to odour and litter problems.
- The Board discussed the robustness of the Environment Agency in monitoring the operating permit and requested details of existing permit breaches.

- In discussing general communication links with residents, there was particular concern raised about the limited capacity of the operator's Facebook site and out of hours protocol.
- The Board received a general overview of the factors to be considered as part of any contingency planning process in the event of the landfill being abandoned or orphaned. It was noted that whilst there had been no indication of this happening at Peckfield Landfill Site, discussions remain ongoing between Planning Officers and the Environment Agency regarding adequate aftercare provisions in such circumstances. However, the Board was concerned to learn that details surrounding associated financial provisions held by the Environment Agency were not known to the Council and therefore agreed to pursue this further with the Environment Agency.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That a letter be written to the Environment Agency outlining the Board's concerns and to seek clarification regarding existing operating permit breaches and contingency planning arrangements, including the need for greater transparency surrounding associated financial provisions.
- (b) That in relation to recommendation tracking, the Board determines that further information is required from the operator and the Environment Agency before agreeing the status of recommendations.

29 Odour monitoring and impacts relating to Veolia's Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility (RERF)

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report in relation to odour monitoring and impacts relating to Veolia's Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Emissions Daily Averages Chart for June, July and August 2016.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Lucinda Yeadon, Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability
- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Andrew Lingham, Head of Waste Strategy & Infrastructure
- Paul Fowler, General Manager, Veolia Leeds
- David Cowan, Head of Constructions, Veolia UK
- Raquel Carrasco, Organics and Technology Director, Veolia UK

The key areas of discussion were:

- Particular reference was made to the odours experienced by Scrutiny Board Members during its site visit in April 2016. In response, the Board noted the measures undertaken by Veolia, as referenced in the

report, to deal with odour since receiving complaints during its commissioning stage and also since the Board's visit in April. Such actions have resulted in no further complaints being received.

- The Board was advised that Veolia employed a Liaison Officer and had established a Community Liaison Group to address issues or concerns raised by residents. It was also advised that Veolia had a robust system for recording and responding to complaints.
- The Board still recognised the need for more effective engagement with the local community and Ward Members, including those in neighbouring areas too. The Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability gave a commitment to facilitate a meeting between Veolia and Elected Members to discuss possible improvements, including regular monitoring updates to be provided to Ward Members.
- Whilst acknowledging the steps being taken to gather on-site monitoring data, the Board reiterated the need for actions to be taken to review the cumulative impact of sites in the area.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Board notes the contents of the report and appendices
- (b) That the comments made by the Board are taken forward and the Board is kept informed of progress in this regard.

(Councillor G Wilkinson left the meeting at 12.00 pm during the consideration of this item)

(Councillor A Gabriel left the meeting at 12.10 pm during the consideration of this item)

(Councillor K Bruce left the meeting at 12.15 pm during the consideration of this item)

30 Environment related matters

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which presented a series of summaries of environment related matters identified by the Board in June.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Addressing areas of underperformance in recycling (Appendix 1)
- Engaging communities in the recycling agenda (Appendix 2)
- Reviewing existing recycling services and recyclables collected (Appendix 3)
- Maintenance of gullies (Appendix 4).

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Lucinda Yeadon, Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability
- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing

- Andrew Lingham, Head of Waste Strategy & Infrastructure.
- Paul Fowler, General Manager, Veolia Leeds
- David Cowan, Head of Constructions, Veolia UK
- Raquel Carrasco, Organics and Technology Director, Veolia UK

The key areas of discussion were:

Addressing areas of underperformance in recycling

- An update on technical issues at Veolia which had resulted in recycling targets not been met. The Board was advised that an improvement notice had been issued which required Veolia to identify reasons for underperformance and to submit an improvement plan detailing how they planned to resolve the issues.
- Clarification sought regarding Veolia's references to the commissioning phase. The Board was advised that this was in relation to testing to ensure maximum performance of equipment at the site and quality of recyclable materials extracted.

Engaging communities in the recycling agenda

- The issues experienced by householders regarding different types of plastics that could be recycled.
- A request for further information regarding the 'Green-Up' Tower Blocks Recycling Incentive Scheme Pilot. The Director of Environment and Housing undertook to provide the Board with an update on the pilot.

Reviewing existing recycling services and recyclables collected

- The need for a clear distinction regarding the different types of textiles that could be recycled. The Board discussed the need for greater education and public awareness of this issue.

Maintenance of gullies

- An update on a number of actions that had been identified in relation to gully cleansing since April 2016, which included:
 - An update on software that had been installed, which provided a full record of work undertaken across the city;
 - A proposal to develop a fast-fill water supply to reduce down-time.
 - An update on fleet replacement which it was anticipated would be in use from October 2016.

The Board also considered the important role of highway services in identifying blocked gullies.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the update on environment related themes be noted.

(b) That the above updates and requests for information be provided.

(Councillor J Bentley left the meeting at 12.35 pm during the consideration of this item)

31 Scrutiny Inquiry into improving air quality - draft terms of reference

The Head of Governance Services submitted a report which presented draft terms of reference for the Board's forthcoming inquiry into improving air quality in Leeds.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Lucinda Yeadon, Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability
- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Polly Cook, Executive Programme Manager, Strategy and Resources.

RESOLVED – That the Board approves the draft terms of reference, subject to the local universities being added under the list of witnesses, for the Board's forthcoming inquiry into improving air quality in Leeds.

32 Work Schedule

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

RESOLVED – That the Board's work schedule be approved.

33 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 13 October 2016 at 10.00am (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30am).

(The meeting concluded at 1.05pm)