

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING)

THURSDAY, 8TH DECEMBER, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor G Wilkinson in the Chair

Councillors A Blackburn, K Bruce,
D Collins, A Gabriel, A Garthwaite,
P Grahame, A Khan, A Lamb, M Lyons and
K Ritchie

53 Appointment of Chair

Having been unable to attend the Board's November meeting, Councillor P Grahame wished to express her disappointment that Councillor J Procter had resigned as Chair of the Board, following his recent appointment as a Member of the European Parliament (MEP).

RESOLVED – That Councillor G Wilkinson be appointed Chair for the duration of the December Board meeting.

54 Late Items

There were no late items.

55 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

56 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors J Bentley and J Procter.

Notification had been received that Councillor A Lamb was to substitute for Councillor J Procter.

57 Minutes - 24 November 2016

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2016 be approved as a correct record.

58 Matters arising from the minutes

Minute No. 51 – Work Schedule

The Board was advised that the working group meeting of the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board in relation to the Best Council Plan had been moved to Monday, 16 January 2017 at 9.30 am. It was reported that Councillor A Blackburn had agreed to attend the working group meeting.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 19th January, 2017

Councillor A Garthwaite had submitted her apologies. Any other Board Members interested in attending were advised to contact Angela Brogden, Principal Scrutiny Adviser.

59 Scrutiny Inquiry into improving air quality in Leeds - session 2

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which presented information in relation to session 2 of the Board's inquiry into improving air quality in Leeds.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Lucinda Yeadon, Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability
- Councillor Rebecca Charwood, Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adults
- Councillor Denise Ragan, Scrutiny Board Member (City Development)
- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Polly Cook, Executive Programme Manager, Strategy and Resources
- Andrew Hall, Head of Transportation
- Kevin McGready, Advanced Health Improvement Specialist
- Dr Judith Y T Wang, Associate Professor in Transport Engineering – Resilient Transportation, University of Leeds
- Jane Astrid Devane, Shire Oak Primary School.

The key areas of discussion were:

- Utilising the Council's website to help raise awareness and share information – the Board acknowledged that the Council's website would act as an information hub, including signposting to other relevant webpages.
- State of the City workshop - a suggestion was made that the presentation provided at the recent State of the City workshop meeting regarding air quality be publicised on the Council's website.
- Other consultation and engagement initiatives – the Board acknowledged the range of existing and proposed initiatives targeted at key stakeholder groups which had been categorised as businesses, residents and schools (parents and children).
- Engaging with local schools – the Board discussed the importance of working with children and parents in terms of exploring alternative greener options for travelling to school and welcomed the input of Dr Wang from the University of Leeds in this regard.
- 'Green Week' pilot initiative - particular reference was made to the pilot initiative undertaken with Shire Oak Primary School in Headingley, which had a particular focus on Air Quality. The Board welcomed the attendance of the Headteacher of Shire Oak Primary School who highlighted the key outcomes arising from this initiative and also shared her views on expanding this work to other schools.
- The importance of joined up working involving planning and highways – concerns were raised about the impact of poor air quality, particularly

in relation to planned development close to main roads. As such, the Board emphasised the importance of a joined up approach involving planning and highways and agreed to explore this further as part of its ongoing inquiry.

- Instigating behaviour change towards more sustainable transport modes – it was recognised that more information was needed to help inform members of the public about the environmental benefits of electric and hybrid cars. Particular reference was also made to the Council's efforts in working with bus companies and taxi and private hire licensing surrounding more sustainable transport modes. However, it was noted that the Board's next inquiry session would be focusing on transport related matters in more detail.
- Working closely with Small and Medium Enterprises – it was acknowledged that further work was needed to engage with local small and medium sized businesses. Linked to this, the Board was informed that the local Chamber of Commerce had been unable to send a representative to attend today's meeting, but welcomed the opportunity to submit views in writing and also attend future inquiry sessions.
- Industry pollution data - a request was made for the Board to receive further information regarding the impacts of local industry pollution.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the above issues raised as part of session 2 of the Board's inquiry into improving air quality in Leeds, be noted.
- (b) That the requests for information be provided.

(Councillor A Khan joined the meeting at 10.50am during the consideration of this item.)

(Councillor D Collins left the meeting at 11.30am at the conclusion of this item.)

60 Peckfield Landfill Site - Update

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which presented a general update and written response from the Environment Agency in relation to 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
- Christine Boothroyd, Local resident and member of the Peckfield Liaison Committee.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The Board noted the written response of the Area Environment Manager (West Yorkshire) at the Environment Agency as well as acknowledging the meeting held between her and the Scrutiny Board Chair on 24th November. In Councillor Procter's absence, the Principal Scrutiny Adviser gave a brief overview of the issues raised during this meeting, with particular reference made to the existing demands placed upon the Environment Agency resources available across the district.
- Concerns were still raised that the Environment Agency had declined an invitation to attend today's meeting. Whilst the Board acknowledged the willingness of the Area Environment Manager (West Yorkshire) to also meet with the new Scrutiny Board Chair, it was felt that this should be extended to the full Scrutiny Board. As such, the Board requested that the new Scrutiny Board Chair continues to liaise with the Environment Agency to stress the importance of their attendance and to make arrangements for them to meet with the full Scrutiny Board.
- The Board discussed the role of the Peckfield Liaison Committee and it was suggested that Board Members may also wish to attend and observe a future meeting of this Committee.
- The Board noted that local residents had now sought the assistance of the local MP to escalate this matter and were also seeking support to declare the current situation as a statutory nuisance under the Environment Protection Act 1990 with a proposal to seek a reduction in council tax for the residents of Micklefield and Peckfield.
- The Board continued to discuss the role of the Council and the Environment Agency, particularly in terms of holding the operator to account. Linked to this, the Board discussed the distinctions between the role of the Environment Agency and the Council's Environmental Action Teams.
- The Minerals & Waste Team Leader provided an update from a planning perspective and highlighted the operator's intention to submit a S73 Variation of Condition planning application aimed at addressing existing phasing and access issues on site. The Board discussed potential submission deadlines and noted that this was likely to be February/March 2017.
- Particular clarification was sought regarding the operator's environmental management system. It was suggested that the Environment Agency be asked to provide further details regarding this.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the written response provided by the Environment Agency, be noted.
- (b) That the progress update provided by the Council's Minerals & Waste Planning Team, be noted.
- (c) That the above requests for information be provided.
- (d) That the new Scrutiny Board Chair continues to liaise with the Environment Agency to stress the importance of their attendance and to make arrangements for them to meet with the full Scrutiny Board.

(Councillor A Khan left the meeting at 12.20pm during the consideration of this item.)

61 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 was advised that the January meeting was themed around housing and was to include an update on Tenant Scrutiny Board. It was noted that the Board would also be considering the initial 2017/18 budget proposals during its January meeting.

RESOLVED – That subject to any on-going discussions and scheduling decisions, the Board's outline work schedule be approved.

62 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 19 January 2017 at 10.00am (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30am)

(The meeting concluded at 12.40pm)