

SCRUTINY BOARD (CITY DEVELOPMENT)

TUESDAY, 13TH OCTOBER, 2009

PRESENT: Councillor R Pryke in the Chair

Councillors C Beverley, R Downes,
R Harington, T Murray, A Ogilvie,
D Schofield, N Taggart and G Wilkinson

48 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the October meeting of the Scrutiny Board (City Development).

49 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor M Lobley.

50 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meetings held on 1st September 2009 and 16th September 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

51 Work Programme

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report providing Members with a copy of the Board's current Work Programme. The Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st October 2009 to 31st January 2010 and the Executive Board Minutes of 26th August 2009 and 17th September 2009 were also attached to the report.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That the Executive Board minutes of 26th August 2009 and 17th September 2009, together with the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st October 2009 to 31st January 2010 be noted.
- c) That the Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser be requested to update the work programme to incorporate those updates requested at today's meeting,
- d) That in relation to a recent Yorkshire Evening Post article on Section 106 payments, the Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser be requested to circulate a copy of an e mail the Chair received from the Director of City Development in response to this article
- e) That a report be prepared on the issue of Section 106 payments for consideration at the next meeting on 10th November 2009.

52 Provision of Shared Space and Shared Surface Streets

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the review of the Street Design Guide and the provision of shared space and shared surface streets.

Appended to the report was a copy of a document entitled 'Adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document of the Street Design Guide and Response to the Deputation of the National Federation of the Blind – Report of the Director of City Development' which had been previously considered at the Executive Board meeting held on 26th August 2009 for the information/comment of the meeting.

Mike Darwin, Head of Highways Development Services, City Development was in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification of the department's protocol and consultation process in relation to changes in street furniture following a recent ward incident involving concrete balls placed on a pavement without prior consultation with interested parties
(The Head of Highways Development Services responded and agreed to liaise with the Chief Highways Officer with a view to forwarding a response to the Board via the Principal Scrutiny Adviser)
- clarification as to the rules which allow speed restriction signs to be used at 20 mph, but not 30mph
(The Head of Highways Development Services responded and confirmed that this was the case as the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 does not permit 30 mph repeater signs)
- *reducing street furniture and signage*

RESOLVED- That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.

53 Inquiry to Review the Method by which Planning Applications are Publicised and Community Involvement takes place - Draft Terms of Reference

Referring to Minute 8 of the meeting held on 9th June 2010, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the proposed draft terms of reference in relation to an inquiry to review the method by which planning applications were publicised and community involvement takes place.

Appended to the report was a copy of a document entitled 'Scrutiny Board (City Development - Inquiry to Review the Method by which Planning Applications are Publicised and Community Involvement takes place – Draft Terms of Reference' for the information/comment of meeting.

The Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser informed the meeting that Councillor A Carter, Executive Member with portfolio responsibility for development and regeneration and the Director of City Development had no comments to make on the draft terms of reference.

The following officers were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:-

Martin Sellens, Head of Planning Services, City Development
Helen Cerroti, Development Project Manager, City Development

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification as to why the department had made a decision to remove postal codes from planning applications advertised in local newspapers (*The Head of Planning Services responded and outlined the statutory responsibilities in relation to publishing planning applications. He agreed to address the general issue of how planning applications were advertised in local newspapers as there was scope to improve the current layout and presentation*)
- clarification of the Area Committee driver identified in Section 1.4 within the context of the inquiry in relation to their intention to strengthen their community engagement responsibilities (*The Head of Planning Services responded and made reference to Area Community Engagement Plans and a requirement to let the public know what was happening within their area in relation to planning applications*)
- clarification as to why planning applications relating to the Bramley and Stanningley ward can be only inspected in Armley library (*The Head of Planning Services responded and agreed to review the current process of inspecting planning applications at local libraries*)
- the need for the inquiry to address the issue relating to the amount of time spent on minor details at Plans Panel meetings
- the need to involve the public more within the democratic process and to make it more interesting from start to finish

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That approval be given to the terms of reference in relation to the Board's Inquiry to review the method by which planning applications are publicised and community involvement takes place in accordance with the report now submitted.

(Councillor N Taggart joined the meeting at 10.35am during discussions of the above item)

54 Performance Working Group

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the targets set by the Board's Performance Working Group held on 2nd September 2009.

Appended to the report was a copy of the minutes of the Scrutiny Board (City Development) Performance Working Group held on 2nd September 2009, together with a list of all targets monitored by the Board, including comments on how the data was collected, for the information/comment of the meeting.

Paul Maney, Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement, City Development was in attendance and responded to Member's queries and comments.

He specifically referred to the minutes of the Working Group held on 2nd September 2009 and on a point of accuracy, he stated that Minute 2.2 should have read as follows:-

'Paul Maney proceeded to explain to members the process by which targets were agreed. Within the Local Area Agreement there are up to 35 indicators agreed with the Government. Performance against these targets affects the amount of funding allocated to the authority, so clearly officers are reluctant to agree to targets which are too challenging.'

He also referred to one or two further factual inaccuracies and the Board accepted the revised minute as now reported subject to any further factual amendments by the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement .

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification as to whether or not the new Inspector Assessment process commencing in November 2009 would have an impact on the proposed changes
(The Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement responded and outlined the on-going inspection process, with specific reference to un-announced inspections)
- clarification of the process arising in setting targets
(The Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement responded and outlined the current process with specific reference to national and regional targets imposed by Government, together with local area agreements and the Annual Audit process)
- clarification of 'NI 18 Adult participation in sport' and how this was quantified and measured
(The Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement responded and outlined the current method of collection and reporting procedures)
- clarification of 'NI 151 Overall employment rate (working age)' in relation to 'closing the gap' and how the Council was able to obtain the full picture arising from a 'two speed city' status
(The Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement responded and informed the meeting that there was no specific detail available on particular pockets of employment rates. However he suggested that in order to achieve the full picture and that the Job Seeker Allowance would be a better way to address this specific issue)
- the need to implement an easy reporting mechanism about employment figures which would allow interested parties to have current and accurate data on this issue
- clarification as to why there was a difference in reporting periods i.e. either on a monthly, quarterly or annually basis
(The Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement responded and confirmed the difference in reporting periods and the reasons for it)

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That the notes of the meeting of the Performance Working Group held on 2nd September 2009 be received.
- c) That the Chair consider and identify from the indicators provided at today's meeting a number of indicators which the Performance Working Group could examine in detail with a view to identifying specific indicators where improvements could be made.
- d) That the Principal Scrutiny Adviser be requested to invite the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement to attend the Working Group in order to assist in its deliberations.
- e) That the Working Group consider what locally determined performance indicators could be applied to measure the performance of City Centre Management.

55 Legible Leeds Project

The Director of City Development submitted a report on the Legible Leeds Project for the information/comment of the meeting.

The following officers were in attendance and responded to Member's queries and comments:-

Cath Follin, City Centre Manager, City Development
Clare Owen, Project Manager, City Development

In addition to the above report, copies of the following documents were also circulated as supplementary information:-

- a copy of a visual presentation in relation to City Centre and Legibility
- 'Leeds Live It Love It Walk It – your shopping, strolling and leisure map to the city'

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification of the number of maps produced to date
(The City Centre Manager responded and informed the meeting that to date 15,000 maps had been produced. A further 50,000 had been printed and were being distributed to city centre hotels and visitor locations)
- clarification as to whether the department had requested a fee from those shops identified on the map and the selection process undertaken
(The City Centre Manager responded and outlined the selection process. The Board noted that the department had not implemented a charging policy and accepted the point made that introducing too many shops on the map would have had a cluttering affect)
- the need for the map to be distributed to all Members of Council
(The City Centre Manager responded and agreed to distribute the map via the Party Group offices)

- the need for the department to consider looking at numbering city centre car parks when producing future maps to assist motorists and visitors to the city. It was also suggested that the department should look at producing a new city centre map showing the highway routes following the completion of the Inner Ring Road and for Elected Members to be involved within the process
(The City Centre Manager responded and agreed to discuss the above issues with the Director of City Development)

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report be noted.
- b) That officers within City Centre Management be congratulated on producing the 'Leeds Live It Love It Walk It' map.
- c) That a progress report on this issue be submitted to the Board in February/March 2010.

56 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 10th November 2009 at 10.00am in the Civic Hall, Leeds
(Pre-meeting for Board Members at 9.30am)

(The meeting concluded at 11.25am)