

SOUTH (OUTER) AREA COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 18TH OCTOBER, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor R Finnigan in the Chair

Councillors J Dunn, J Elliott, B Gettings,
S Golton, T Grayshon, T Leadley,
L Mulherin, K Renshaw, S Smith, S Varley
and D Wilson

28 Late Items

In accordance with his powers under Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair agreed to admit to the agenda, as a late item of urgent business, a report submitted by the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods relating to the proposed delegation to Area Committees of elements of the Streetscene Service (Agenda Item 17, Minute No. 37 refers). The report had not been available at the time of agenda despatch due to the need for it first to be considered at the meeting of the Area Committee Chairs' Forum held on 8th October 2010.

29 Declaration of Interests

Councillor T Leadley declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 11, Well Being Budget Report due to the application for funding at St Peter's Community Hall and his position as Chairman of Morley Town Council Planning Committee. Minute No. 35 refers.

Councillors J Elliott, R Finnigan, B Gettings, T Grayshon, T Leadley and S Varley declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 12, Area Managers Report, due to their Membership of Morley Town Council. Minute No. 36 refers.

30 Minutes - 6 September 2010

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2010 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendments.

- Should read Councillor R Finnigan in the Chair.
- Minute No 26, Area Managers Report – Reference to the need for further discussion between Area Management and Town Centre Management regarding authority to proceed with changes to Town Centre Management arrangements.
- Minute No 23, South Leeds Divisional Community Safety Partnership Update Report – To note the assurance received from Inspectors Jenkinson and Morgan that there would be continued commitment to PaCT meetings.

31 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Minute 24, Outer South Community Centres Report

A question was asked regarding previous assurances regarding the future use of the Blackgates site for community purposes. It was agreed that Governance Services would check previous minutes to verify this.

32 Open Forum

The agenda made reference to the provision contained in the Area Committee Procedure rules for an Open Forum Session at each ordinary meeting of an Area Committee, for members of the public to ask questions or to make representations on matters within the terms of reference of the Area Committee. On this occasion, no matters were raised under this item by those members of the public who were in attendance.

The Chair welcomed Paul Clark, Chief Executive of Aire Valley Homes to the meeting. He informed the Area Committee that he would be attending all the Area Committees in the Aire Valley Homes area and would be looking to establish close working links.

33 Vision for Leeds

The report of the Director of Leeds Initiative informed the Board that this was the 3rd Vision for Leeds and gave a progress update and outlined the next steps including the public consultation phase.

The Chair welcomed Martin Dean, Deputy Director Leeds Initiative to the meeting.

It was reported that there were 3 areas of major change to the Vision:

- Environment – Climate Change Strategy
- Economic situation – Change in what can be achieved and effects of the recession
- Population growth – Leeds population could reach one million by 2030 with a much higher proportion of elderly people and younger people.

Consultation had been held with key stakeholders and the following issues had been highlighted:

- For Leeds to be fair, welcoming and opening – reflecting equality and diversity across the City
- For Leeds to be prosperous and sustainable.
- That Leeds should be safe, healthy and successful in all communities across the City.

It was reported that achieving these could lead to Leeds being recognised as the best City in Britain by 2030 and the Committee was informed of the timetable for the remainder of the consultation period and in response to comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- Consultation with Town and Parish Councils
- Measurement of engagement – this was both qualitative and quantitative. Figures would be assessed by returns of questionnaires and responses and visits to the Vision for Leeds website. The University of Leeds would be doing a detailed analysis of the consultation and it would be ensured that a representative view of all communities across the City would be taken.
- The Vision would take account of all localities and needed to be relevant to all communities across Leeds.
- Population estimations had been taken from government statistics and a University of Leeds study. Large cities were likely to see an influx of younger people due to university provision and other opportunities available.
- Transport options – the proposed trolleybus scheme and other public transport options across the City.
- The survey was designed to leave questions open to get a wide ranging view of answers.
- Cultural opportunities across the City.

The Chair thanked Martin Dean for his attendance.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

34 Health and Environmental Action Services Activities

The report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods provided Members with ward level information about the scope and activities of Health and Environmental Action Services with a particular focus on enforcement action and the work of the Environment Action Teams which was aligned to strategic outcomes.

The Chair welcomed Paul Spandler, Service Manager, South Environmental Action Team to the meeting.

Members attention was brought to the tables detailed in the report which provided information on the numbers of service requests and enforcement and penalty notices issued across various service areas. These related to issues such as dog fouling, fly tipping, litter, noise pollution, abandoned vehicles and pest control.

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- The Dog Warden Service was, to a degree, intelligence led and reported problem areas would be targeted. It was recognised that there were restrictions to the service due to staffing levels and operating hours but Environmental Action Team Officers had now been trained to deal with enforcement issues in relation to dog fouling.
- Empty properties – it was reported that figures related to properties that were either derelict or in a state of disrepair and there was a list of referred tenants for properties that could be brought back into use. The Empty Properties Team tried where possible to identify owners of empty properties and compulsory purchase orders and enforced sale procedures could be used where necessary. It was requested that an officer from the Empty Properties Team should attend a future meeting of the Area Committee.
- To what extent were Health and Environmental Action Service proactive or reactive – it was reported that there was a service standard that at least 20% of services should be proactive – these being identified by officers and Elected Members. This standard was more than met across the service and close working links with other council departments contributed to this.
- Enforcement and licensing issues relating to takeaways and hot food premises, particular with regards to littering.
- Other issues discussed including delegation of services, locality working and licensing of scrap yards.

The Chair thanked Paul Spandler for his attendance.

RESOLVED – That the report and discussion be noted.

35 Grounds Maintenance Update Report

The report of the Chief Environment Services Officer referred to the approval of a new grounds maintenance contract. The report advised Members of key issues that had emerged and that the start of the contract had been revised from 1 March 2011 to 1 January 2012.

The Chair welcomed Simon Costigan, Head of Housing Management, Aire Valley Homes to the meeting.

Simon Costigan addressed the meeting and gave the Committee a briefing on the procurement contract and the consultation leading to it. Members attention was brought to the following issues:

- Engagement with Parish and Town Councils
- Issues previously identified by Area Committees
- The Inquiry of the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)
- Contract Issues
- The Procurement Process

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- Provision of mapping information which detailed who was responsible for grassed areas. It was reported that this would be difficult to do due to the size of the area covered and complexities of different clients and contractors but would be explored.
- Responsibility of clearing litter before grass was cut fell on the contractor. The new contract would be more robust with monitoring issues such as this and financial penalties could be imposed where contractors were not carrying out duties to the contractual requirements.
- Opportunities for involvement of other services such as Streetscene.
- Concern that the award of one overall contract for the City excluded smaller organisations from tendering. It was reported that a market testing exercise had shown that there was economy of scale with one contract and it would provide a more consistent approach to service delivery. Parish and Town Council's had not expressed an interest in submitting tenders for the contract but did want to be involved in monitoring the contract.
- Variations in the contract – it was reported that there was flexibility in the contract to allow for variations such as having areas where cuttings are collected and areas where cuttings are left.

The Chair thanked Simon Costigan for his attendance.

RESOLVED – That the report and discussion be noted.

(Councillor Mulherin left the meeting at 5.20 p.m. during the discussion on this item)

36 Outer South Area Committee Well Being Budget Report

The report of the Director of Neighbourhoods provided the Area Committee with the following:

- An update on both the revenue and capital elements of the Area Committee's budget.
- Details of projects that require approval.
- A summary of all revenue and capital projects agreed to date.
- A summary of the revenue allocation for 2010/11 Well being Revenue Budget already approved and linked to the priorities and outcomes identified in the approved Area Delivery Plan (ADP).
- An update on the Small Grants budget.

Members attention was brought to the following applications for Wellbeing funds:

- Robin Hood Athletic Football Club
- St Peter's Community Hall
- Magpie Lane Play Space

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted
- (b) That the position of the Well Being Budget as set out at paragraph 3.0 be noted.
- (c) That the allocation of £5,000 to Robin Hood Athletic Football Club as detailed in paragraph 3.2.4 be approved.
- (d) That the ring fence revenue amounts for 2010/11 as outlined in Appendix 1 be noted.
- (e) That the Wellbeing capital projects already agreed as listed in Appendix 2 be noted.
- (f) That £6,332 capital for St Peter's Community Hall – Stonework Repairs to Gable End Wall be approved.
- (g) That £7,576 capital for Magpie Lane Play Space be approved.
- (h) That the small grants situation as described in paragraph 5.1 be noted.

(Councillor Leadley abstained from the voting on the decision for St Peter's Community Hall due to his earlier declaration of interest)

37 Area Managers Report

The report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods provided Members with details of a range of activities that had taken place in the Outer South Leeds Area and provided an update of actions and achievements of the Area Management Team relating to priorities and work of the Area Committee since the last meeting in September 2010.

Members attention was brought to the following issues:

- Changes to Town Centre Management
- Town and District Regeneration Scheme
- Morley Literature Festival
- Signage for Dog Fouling Enforcement

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- The Morley Literature had once again been a success with successful events also held in Drighlington and Churwell.
- Funding for Town Centre Management – this was due to be considered by Morley Town Council's General Purposes Committee
- Morley War Memorial
- Ginnel mapping and ownership issues in relation to clearing overgrown vegetation and litter

Members passed their congratulations to Councillor Gettings for his role as the Chair of the Morley Literature Festival.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) Subject to clarifying locations in Ardsley Robin Hood, Members agree the sites for signage to tackle dog fouling issues as detailed in Appendix 1.

38 Briefing Note on Proposed Delegation of Elements of the Streetscene Service

The report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods referred to the meeting of the Area Committee Chair's where it was agreed that a further report be prepared to look at the potential delegation of a range of Streetscene Services to the Area Committee.

It was reported that this delegation would give more control at a local level and Members supported the principle but raised concern that adequate budgets should follow. It was reported that further details of the delegation needed to be worked out and a further report would be brought to the Area Committee in due course.

Members attention was brought to the agreed recommendations of the Area Chairs:

- That the scope of services to be delegated includes those set out at paragraph 1.3 and excludes refuse and recycling collection services.
- That further information on service and resource levels on an Area Committee basis is shared with Members once it is compiled.
- That the process of producing DLEQS monitoring data as a tool for assessing service performance be commenced.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

39 Dates, Times and Venues of Future Meetings

Monday, 29 November 2010 – Drighlington Meeting Hall

Monday, 31 January 2011 – Morley Town Hall

Monday, 14 March 2011 – Civic Chamber, Rothwell One Stop Centre

All meetings commence at 4.00 p.m.

The meeting concluded at 5.55 p.m.