

SCRUTINY BOARD (SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES)

MONDAY, 21ST OCTOBER, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Bentley, A Blackburn,
P Davey, P Grahame, M Harland,
P Harrand, G Hyde, J Jarosz and
N Walshaw

35 Late Items

There were no late items.

36 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

37 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor N Buckley and Councillor D Coupar, with Councillor P Grahame in attendance as substitute. It was reported that Councillor R Grahame had been requested to attend an urgent meeting in his capacity as a Member of the West Yorkshire Fire Authority.

38 Minutes - 9 September and 25 September 2013

Further to minute no. 22, the Chair reported that Councillor Jarosz had contributed to the work of the Resources and Council Services Scrutiny Board in considering High Cost Lenders and had provided a summary note of the findings arising from this piece of scrutiny work to Board Members.

Further to minute no. 24, the Chair reported that Board Members had received the additional information requested around tackling illegal money lending. This included details of the confidential hotline and the data mapping undertaken to assess areas most at risk of illegal lending.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 9th September 2013 and 25th September 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

39 Recommendation Tracking - Fuel Poverty Inquiry

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the scrutiny inquiry into fuel poverty.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Mark Dobson, Executive Board Member for Environment
- Robert Curtis, Fuel Poverty Officer, Environment Policy Team
- Brenda Fullard, Consultant in Public Health
- Lucy Jackson, Consultant in Public Health (Older people and Long Term Conditions)
- Shaid Mahmood, Area Leader, South East Leeds

In consideration of this report, the following issues were discussed:

- Bulk fuel purchasing – Members discussed some of the key lessons arising from the pilot scheme and acknowledged that a full evaluation was currently being undertaken. In moving forward, a suggestion was made for Scrutiny to assist in the development of a citywide approach towards bulk fuel purchasing.
- Funding from Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) – it was reported that all three CCGs have now committed funding to strengthen existing activity within the third sector to reduce the hazardous effects of cold on vulnerable people.
- Warm Homes Healthy People fund – it was acknowledged that this Department of Health funding stream for third sector organisations to provide winter warmth measures to vulnerable people will no longer be available. Public Health are therefore exploring alternative funding opportunities to enable this activity to take place.
- Local leadership – Members discussed the relationships being developed locally in driving forward the fuel poverty agenda, with particular reference to the role of Area Lead Members.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the progress status assigned to each recommendation be approved.
- (b) That the Board receives a further update in the new year.
- (c) That the Board undertakes a separate piece of work in assisting to develop a citywide approach towards bulk fuel purchasing.

40 Evaluation of Phase One Alternate Weekly Collections of Recyclable and Residual Waste

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development referred to the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Board in assisting to evaluate the Phase One roll out of Alternate Weekly Collections and identifying lessons for Phase Two. Attached to this was a copy of the report from the Director of Environment and Housing to Executive Board on 9th October on the Phase One evaluation.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Mark Dobson, Executive Board Member for Environment
- Susan Upton, Chief Officer Waste Management

In consideration of this report, the following issues were discussed:

- Scrutiny findings and recommendations – Members were asked to formally endorse the Scrutiny Board’s report which was agreed and sent to the directorate on 19th September to be included with the Executive Board report.
- Performance data – it was noted that the performance data previously requested by the Board in relation to missed bin collections had now been circulated. A further request was made for comparator data with other relevant core cities in relation to recycling rates.
- Waste Recycling Advisers (WRAs) – it was reported that the service continues to receive positive feedback on the work undertaken by the WRAs. Members were informed that the number of WRAs for Phase Two will be kept under review to ensure that suitable support is provided.
- The Executive Board Member for Environment also reiterated the importance of exploring other viable solutions for those areas of the city not expecting to receive alternate weekly collections of recyclable and residual waste.

RESOLVED –

(a) That the Scrutiny Board formally endorses the report setting out its observations, conclusions and recommendations in relation to the evaluation of Phase One Alternate Weekly Collections of Recyclable and Residual Waste

(b) That the Board receives a further update in the new year.

41 Grounds Maintenance Contract - tracking of scrutiny recommendations/desired outcomes

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the review of the grounds maintenance contract last year.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Mark Dobson, Executive Board Member for Environment
- Sean Flesher, Chief Officer Parks and Countryside
- Simon Frosdick, Business Development Manager, Parks and Countryside

In consideration of this report, the following issues were discussed:

- Shrub beds – the Board reiterated the importance of ensuring that Ward Members and relevant Parish and Town Councils are consulted appropriately on the future use and maintenance of shrub beds.
- Gritting pavements – it was noted that Parks and Countryside work closely with Highways and Transportation and will assist with gritting if necessary.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the progress status assigned to each recommendation be categorised as 4 (not achieved – progress made acceptable).
- (b) That a further update is brought back to the Scrutiny Board in six months.

42 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the Board's latest work schedule for the forthcoming municipal year.

Particular reference was made to the agreed areas of work yet to be scheduled. The Scrutiny Board decided to prioritise these in the following order:

- Development of a citywide approach to bulk fuel purchasing
- Illegal Money Lending – development of a local communication workstream
- Exploring other viable solutions for areas of the city not expecting to receive alternate weekly collections of recyclable and residual waste
- Reviewing other options for reducing or diverting waste from landfill
- Reviewing the role of the third sector within localities and exploring how links can be strengthened
- Reviewing the allocation of resources for street cleanliness in terms of delivering value for money
- Promoting localism and exploring future opportunities in delivering services underpinned by the locality design principles

RESOLVED – That the Board's work schedule be updated to reflect the key issues discussed during today's meeting.

43 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 11th November 2013 at 10.00 a.m. (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30 a.m.)

(The meeting concluded at 11.25 am).