

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

MONDAY, 9TH OCTOBER, 2017

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

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

33 Late Items

The following late information was submitted to the Board:

- Agenda item 9 - Review of cemetery and crematoria horticultural maintenance – working group summary note.

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

34 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

35 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor G Harper.

36 Minutes - 11 September 2017

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 11th September 2017 be approved as a correct record.

37 Scrutiny Inquiry into Leeds' response to Grenfell - Session 2

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support included a copy of the agreed terms of reference relating to the Scrutiny Board's Inquiry into Leeds' response to Grenfell and set out the key purpose of this second session of the inquiry.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Coupar, Executive Member for Communities
- Simon Costigan, Chief Officer Property and Contracts
- Jill Wildman, Chief Officer Housing Management
- Sarah Martin, Chief Officer, Civic Enterprise Leeds
- Richard Jackson, Head of Service, Facilities Management/Cleaning

- Dave Walton, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Nigel Charleston, Fire Protection, West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service

The Board received a presentation explaining the immediate, short-term and long-term actions that followed the Grenfell Tragedy in relation to the Council's 116 high-rise blocks. This also included a presentation on the fire safety checks procedure that is managed by Civic Enterprise Leeds.

The key areas of discussion were:

- An acknowledgement of the 'fire concordat' between the Council and West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service which has led to positive and active collaboration between both parties.
- The assurances given to residents surrounding the current 'stay put' policy associated with the compartmentation work that has been invested in existing blocks to prevent the spread of fire.
- The Council's existing sprinkler programme aimed at vulnerable blocks and the potential investment required for incorporating sprinkler systems into all blocks.
- The frequency of fire safety checks for high rise blocks.
- Details of existing processes for recording fire safety checks and actions, including future improvement areas already identified by the service.
- The potential fire risks associated with block chutes and bulky items.
- The need to ensure that contractor workers are also abiding by the fire safety procedures when working in high rise blocks.

As the final session of the Board's inquiry, the Chair thanked everyone for their contributions.

RESOLVED – That the information presented in line with session 2 of the Board's Inquiry be noted.

38 The development of Community Committees - Tracking of Scrutiny recommendations

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support presented a progress update on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the previous Scrutiny inquiry into the development of Community Committees.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- James Rogers, Director of Communities and Environment
- Councillor Coupar, Executive Member for Communities
- Shaid Mahmood, Chief Officer Communities
- Martin Dean, Area Leader

In consideration of the progress made, a position status category was assigned to each recommendation as follows:

- Recommendation 1 – (Cat 2) – Achieved
- Recommendation 2 – (Cat 2) – Achieved
- Recommendation 3 – (Cat 2) – Achieved
- Recommendation 4 – (Cat 2) – Achieved
- Recommendation 6 – (Cat 4) – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable). Continue monitoring.
- Recommendation 9 – (Cat 2) – Achieved
- Recommendation 10 – (Cat 2) – Achieved

The Chair highlighted that when the former Citizens and Communities Scrutiny Board had tracked the implementation of these recommendations in April 2017, the Board acknowledged the planned refresh of the Council's website as a key communication tool. A suggestion was therefore made for the new relevant Scrutiny Board to receive a demonstration of the new Council website. As this now falls within the remit of the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board, it was agreed that arrangements would be made for the Board to receive this demonstration.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the above position status categories against each of the recommendations are agreed.
- (b) That a demonstration of the new Council website is planned into the Board's work schedule.

39 Review of Cemetery and Crematoria Horticultural Maintenance

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support presented a summary note of the Scrutiny working group meeting held on 30th August 2017 in relation to the Board's review of cemetery and crematoria horticultural maintenance. This summary note also presented proposed recommendations stemming from the working group's discussion for the Scrutiny Board's consideration and agreement.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- James Rogers, Director of Communities and Environment
- Joanne Clough, Trading and Operational Support Manager
- Chris Simpson, Bereavement Services Manager

As well as acknowledging the key issues raised by the working group, the Board also discussed the Council's 'test and make safe' rolling maintenance programme linked to its 24 cemeteries as well as its statutory responsibilities for closed cemeteries.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Board notes the key issues raised by the working group.
- (b) That the proposed recommendations set out in the working group summary note are formally approved.

40 Work Schedule

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's work schedule for the 2017/18 municipal year.

The Chair confirmed arrangements for the following working group meetings:

- Raising Standards in the Private Rented Sector – Monday 23rd October 2017 at 10 am.
- Locality Working – Monday 30th October 2017 at 9 am
- Air Quality – Friday 15th December 2017 at 1.30 pm

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

41 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 6th November 2017 at 10.30 am (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 10.00 am)

(The meeting concluded at 12.15 pm)