

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

WEDNESDAY, 28TH NOVEMBER, 2018

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, J Bentley, H Bithell,
A Blackburn, D Cohen, D Collins,
A Gabriel, R Grahame, P Gruen,
M Harland, A Khan and P Truswell

40 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

41 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

42 Late Items

There were no late items.

43 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

44 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor McCormack, Councillor Wilkinson, and Councillor P Grahame. Councillor Cohen attended as substitute for Councillor Wilkinson and Councillor R Grahame attended as a substitute for Councillor P Grahame.

45 Minutes - 03 October 2018

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October 2018 be agreed as a true record.

46 Matters Arising

Minute 35 Response to Scrutiny Inquiry into Leeds' response to Grenfell – The Board were in receipt of the Briefing Paper from the House of Commons (Fire Safety Work) and discussed the concerns of residents in privately owned high rise accommodation. The Chair confirmed that he would raise the concerns raised by the Board with the Director of Resources and Housing and Councillor Coupar, Executive Member for Communities.

Recommendation 6 Fire Safety – The Board sought clarify on the action taken since the 3rd of October 2018. A verbal update was provided which advised that the initial response on behalf Rt Hon Sajid Javid M.P in February 2018 was that Council's should use their existing resources to fund such work.

Since October there has been information provided from Birmingham about the combined lobbying with another Local Authority to request funding from the Government to fund sprinkler systems. Leeds City Council has responded to confirm that it would support any joint lobbying to ask for funding to install sprinkler systems to high rise blocks.

47 Locality Working and Priority Neighbourhood Update

The report of the Director of Communities and Environment provided an update on progress with Locality Working, including emerging issues and areas for further development. The report outlined the 4 key features of the new arrangements,

- Community Committees
- Neighbourhood improvement Boards
- Strategic Delivery Team
- Core Team

The following were in attendance:

- Jane Maxwell – Area Leader, Communities and Environment
- Martin Dean – Area Leader, Communities and Environment

Key issues identified in discussions with the Board included:

- Clarity regarding the evaluation of outcomes in the 6 priority areas including health inequality indicators. The Board were advised of the need to monitor and evaluate the projects against performance indicators and the ongoing work to develop indicators to implement across the 6 priority areas, with input from external partners.
- The need for a comprehensive approach in order to keep a focus on those wards with areas just above 1% index of multiple deprivation, that are not within the 6 priority neighbourhoods.
- Clarity regarding the timeframe for implementation of projects. Members noted the response that a future report could review how services meet the needs of each ward.
- Work to identify services where take up of an offer is low and to understand the reasons for this. – i.e. health screening in areas of high health inequalities.
- The need to work with partners to alleviate high unemployment rates in the most deprived areas of Leeds, including the further training opportunities in the locality and digital access/WI-FI in high rise residential blocks.
- Clarification on how communication feeds through the strategic boards and committees to front line services for delivery and vice versa in accordance with new governance arrangements.
- That Schools Clusters, Children's Centres and Children and Young People Hubs are engaging and form part of the partnership.
- How to connect volunteers to spaces available in the community, to support and accommodate homework space and adult training.

RESOLVED - The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

A. Note the contents of the report and the progress made

- B. Note the Board's discussions and the issues identified for further consideration
- C. Support the request that the Chair of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) work with officers to engage dialogue with the Chairs of other Scrutiny Boards to support the direction and progress of the present work; and noting the suggestion that the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) may have a key role in this work

48 Inquiry into Kerbside Collection and Recycling of Domestic Waste - Session 2

The report of the Head of Service (Waste Strategy) provided the Board with an update on service standards and engagement with customers.

The following were in attendance:

- Helen Freeman – Chief Officer, Environmental Action
- John Woolmer – Deputy Chief Officer, Waste Management
- Susan Hardy – Head of Service, Cleaner Neighbourhoods
- Adam Quesne – Head of Customer Contact
- Andrew Lingham – Head of Service, Waste Strategy
- Matthew Birkett – Service Manager, Communities and Environment
- Councillor M Rafique, Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles

Key issues identified in discussions with the Board included:

- Clarity regarding the clinical waste removal process.
- Members referred to recent media coverage which suggested recycling bins could be withdrawn from certain areas of the city. Officers provided assurance that this was not an accurate media reflection of the report which had referred to two specific areas of the city where an opt-in scheme is in operation, recycling is still available for residents in those areas. Work was on-going with universities to promote an opt-in pilot, to encourage students to recycle.
- Further collaboration with the Highways Team was suggested to alleviate issues with access. Clarity was sought regarding the use of traffic regulation orders and the impact this would have in the community.
- Footpath obstructions caused by bins left out for 48 hours which impact on visually impaired residents.
- The use of in-cab technology, including the barriers which need to be overcome, to ensure its utilisation across the fleet.
- The role of Community Committee environmental sub-groups in providing local ward members with updates.
- Side Waste – Clarity was sought regarding the implementation of the policy for the collection of side waste in areas of alternate weekly collections. Members also questioned if side waste would be collected where a previous collection had been missed.
- Clarity was sought regarding the types of bags used for mixed dry recyclables. Members noted inconsistencies in the information provided and how this is advertised.

- Clarity was sought regarding the analysis of black and green bins to identify if there were any particular themes that the public need advice on. Members heard of difficulties in dealing with contaminated waste which impacts directly on recycling.
- The enforcement options currently available to the Council and their effectiveness.
- The need to re-evaluate the methodology for recording and reporting missed bin collections to Elected Members, the contact centre and the wider public.
- The Board requested further details relating to the number of customer complaints received over the past 3 years, including a breakdown by type of complaint; the number of complaints resolved at each stage and referrals to the Local Government Ombudsman.

(During consideration of this item, Councillors: Akhtar, Cohen, Blackburn, Collins, Gabriel & Khan withdrew from the meeting for a short while)

RESOLVED- The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):
 A. Noted the contents of the report and information provided at the meeting;
 B. Requested that the information outlined in the minute be provided as requested.

49 Work Schedule

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's work schedule for the 2018/19 municipal year. A copy of the notes from the Scrutiny Working Group which considered Housing Repairs and the Social Housing Green Paper were appended to the report.

RESOLVED-

- A. To note the matters outlined in this report.
- B. To agree the overall work schedule (as presented at Appendix 1) as the basis for the Board's work for the remainder of 2018/19.

50 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED- To note the date and time of the next meeting as Wednesday 23rd January 2019 at 10am.