

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

THURSDAY, 11TH JULY, 2019

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, J Bentley,
A Blackburn, D Collins, P Grahame,
A Khan, P Gruen, M Harland, N Sharpe,
K Brooks, T Smith and D Ragan

15 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

16 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

17 Late Items

There were no late items.

18 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

19 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Gabriel. Councillor D Ragan attended as substitute.

20 Minutes - 13 June 2019

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held 13th June 2019, be agreed as a correct record.

CHAIRS COMMENT

The Chair thanked Sandra Pentelow, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, for all of her work and wished her well in her new post.

21 Scrutiny Inquiry into Kerbside Collection and Recycling of Domestic Waste - Directors Response and Draft Waste Strategy for Leeds

The report of the Director of Communities and Environment set out the responses to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) inquiry into the kerbside collection of recycling and domestic waste.

A copy of the draft waste strategy for Leeds was appended to the report.

The following were in attendance:

- James Rogers, Director Communities and Environment
- Councillor Rafique, Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles
- John Woolmer, Deputy Chief Officer Waste Management
- Polly Cooke, Executive Programme Manager
- Amy Dickinson, Service Manager Environmental Services
- Laura Driver, Customer Access Development Manager

Members' attention was brought to the recommendations which were outlined in the submitted report.

In addition, the Service Manager Environmental Services and Customer Access Development Manager, provided the Board with a presentation detailing work which had taken place between the Refuse Service and Customer Access, to produce information which would be accessible on the Council website when it goes live. Members were provided with a demonstration on how residents would view bin collection issues.

The Scrutiny Board considered the responses to the recommendations, and discussion focused on issues including the following:

Recommendation 1

- Clarity was sought regarding community waste disposal and storage systems. Officers confirmed that any community facilities would be implemented in full consultation with ward members to ensure the best solution is provided.

Recommendation 3

- A query was raised in relation to council departments being aware of the timescales for receiving the money for resources from the government. Members noted that upon implementation of the waste strategy, officers intended to lobby the government.

Recommendation 4

- A Member expressed that the context of the draft waste strategy was to state an ambition rather than outline a strategy for change. The Board was advised that the strategy provided a 2 year proposal; the Director of Communities and Environment clarified that although funding streams were somewhat unclear at present, the draft strategy outlines the proposed direction.
- Clarity was sought in regard to the conversion of gas supply from methane to hydrogen. Officers confirmed this has been subject to testing nationally and is deemed to be a safe alternative.
- In response to a query in regard to the 'city conversation' and for clarity regarding those who have been consulted with. The Board was advised that the conversation is in its early states. Officers confirmed this specific information listing consultees so far will be provided to the

Board. The Board suggested consultation through Community Committees, with community forums in addition to the wider public.

- The Board questioned the extent of focus on waste prevention, with particular reference to reducing food waste. The Board acknowledged that this waste stream in Leeds does not go to landfill unlike some other authorities and welcomes the focus on programmed waste prevention education so far.

Recommendation 6

- Clarity was sought on the new Crew Chargehand post; officers confirmed that recruitment was soon to take place following approval of the post. Those staff would receive the relevant in-cab training.

Recommendation 8

- Members queried the delayed rollout of the use of in-cab technology, in response, it was explained that there is specific focus to ensure that the technology will be maximised.

Recommendation 11

- A Member queried the provision in place to ensure that emergency TRO's are carried out in a timely fashion, and in response, officers confirmed suitable sites are currently being reviewed and that further progress information, would be provided to the Principal Scrutiny Advisor.

On conclusion of the discussion, the Chair thanked those in attendance for their contributions and hard work.

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

- a) Noted the Directors response to the recommendations from the Scrutiny Inquiry into Kerbside Collection and Recycling of Domestic Waste
- b) Noted the information contained within the submitted report and the appended City Waste Strategy
- c) Requested that the views of the Scrutiny Board regarding the draft waste strategy be provided verbally by officers as an update to Executive Board report on the 24th July 2019

22 Leeds Anti Social Behaviour Team Review

The report of the Director of Communities and Environment set out the progress with the LASBT review, and the recommendations agreed at the Executive Board meeting held 26th June 2019.

A copy of the Executive Board report 26 June 2019, and the ASB strategy was appended to the Agenda.

The following were in attendance:

- James Rogers, Director Communities and Environment

- Paul Money, Chief Officer, Safer Leeds
- Harvinder Saimbhi, Head of Operational Delivery ASB & Scrutiny Services
- David Longthorpe, Head of Housing Management
- Councillor Coupar, Executive Member for Communities

The Executive Member for Communities, thanked the Board for their work in terms of LASBT arrangements.

The following was discussed:

- *Community MARAC'S*. Members queried the involvement of elected members due to the GDPR aspects relating to tasking meetings. The Executive Member for Communities, agreed to raise the issue of Member involvement, and would look at arrangements in how information is shared between the police and ward members.
- *Triage of referrals*. Members requested that contact details be provided to elected members.
- *Graffiti*. The Board was advised of the focus in the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy on environmental harm which includes graffiti and vandalism.
- *Mediation*. Members noted this service would be free of cost to those who are deemed to require the use of mediation intervention by LASBT.

Members commended Officers for their work, prompt responses and service.

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

- a) Noted the progress made since the initial consultation with the Board
- b) Noted the information contained within the submitted report, and the appended ASB Strategy and Executive Board report
- c) Requested that the information outlined in the minutes, be provided as requested

23 Financial Health - Out-Turn Report 2018/19

The report of the Head of Democratic Services provided the Board with financial information relating to the budget out-turn for 2019/20.

An adapted copy of the Executive Board Report 26 June 2019, was appended to the report.

The following were in attendance:

- Neil Evans, Director Resources and Housing
- James Rogers, Director of Communities and Environment
- Michael Everitt, Head of Finance
- Kevin Mulvaney, Head of Finance
- Bhupinder Chana, Head of Finance

The Director of Resources and Housing noted an overspend of 600k in relation to the cost of maintenance of council buildings. The Director of Communities and Environment added there was a directorate underspend of 400k.

Members discussed a number of matters including:

- *Disrepair cases*. In response to a query in regard to overspending, Members heard there are a number of active litigation agencies in the city centre. Improving speed in responding and dealing with back-logged cases remains a focus.
- *Universal Credit (UC)*. Members sought clarity on how UC is impacting rental income, and were informed financial provision had been pre-planned. Resources have also been allocated to support tenants with the transition to managing their own rent payment.

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

Noted the outturn summary for the financial year 2018/19

24 Work Schedule

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's schedule for the 2019/20 municipal year. Copies of the draft work schedule and the minutes of the Executive Board meeting held 16th May 2019 and 26 June 2019 were appended to the report.

Members discussed the items scheduled for September meeting.

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

- a) Noted the matters outlined in the report and raised during the meeting
- b) Noted the Executive Board minutes
- c) Agreed the overall work schedule

25 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the date and time of the next meeting as Thursday 12th September 2019 at 10.30 am (with a pre-meeting for all Board members at 10.00 am)