

## **SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS)**

**MONDAY, 12TH JANUARY, 2009**

**PRESENT:** Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors A Blackburn, A Castle,  
A Gabriel, G Hyde, G Kirkland, J Marjoram,  
L Mulherin and M Rafique

### **73 Chair's Opening Remarks**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the January meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods).

### **74 Declarations of Interest**

The following personal interests were declared:-

- Councillor B Anderson in his capacity as a Director of West North West Homes (Agenda Items 8, 9 and 11) (Minutes 80, 81 and 83 refer)
- Councillor A Blackburn in her capacity as a Director of West North West Homes (Agenda Items 8, 9 and 11) (Minutes 80, 81 and 83 refer)
- Councillor A Castle in her capacity as a Member on the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority (Agenda Items 8 and 11) (Minutes 80 and 83 refers)
- Councillor A Gabriel in her capacity as a Member on the Beeston Hill and Holbeck Regeneration Board (Agenda Items 8, 9 and 11) (Minutes 80, 81 and 83 refer)
- Councillor G Hyde in his capacity as a Director of East North East Homes and as a dog owner (Agenda Items 8, 9, 11 and 12) (Minutes 79, 80, 81 and 83 refer)
- Councillor G Kirkland in his capacity as a Member on the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority (Agenda Items 8 and 11) (Minutes 80 and 83 refer)
- Councillor J Marjoram in his capacity as a Member on the Outer West Area Panel and as an owner of a contractor company within the HMO housing sector (Agenda Items 8, 9 and 11) (Minutes 80, 81 and 83 refer)
- Councillor M Rafique in his capacity as a Member on the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority (Agenda Items 8 and 11) (Minutes 80 and 83 refer)

### **75 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor B Cleasby, Councillor D Coupar and Councillor D Hollingsworth.

### **76 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008 be confirmed as a correct record.

## 77 **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

### (a) Miscellaneous Properties (Minute 65 (a) refers)

Councillor A Gabriel referred to the **miscellaneous properties** issue and sought further clarification on what was happening with properties not transferred to ALMOs and left derelict, especially properties in recreation areas, and the action being taken with the respective landlords in this regard.

She also made reference to the receipt of a recent report produced by the Asset and Development Manager on miscellaneous properties and commented on the need for more detailed information and clarification to have been included within this report.

At the request of the Chair, John Statham, Strategic Landlord Manager responded and agreed to prepare a detailed report on this issue for the Board's consideration.

### (b) Inquiry into Street Cleaning (Minute 70 refers)

The Board noted that the follow up information from the Chief Environmental Services Officer in relation to the Street Cleansing Services carried out to Carr Lane, Rawdon over the last 14 months would be sent out to Councillor B Cleasby by the end of the week

## 78 **Executive Board - Minutes**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008 be received and noted.

## 79 **Enforcement of Dog Fouling**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report presenting a monthly update on the enforcement of dog fouling across the city and a draft statement setting out the Board's recommendations on this matter.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:-

Appendix 1 - Dog Enforcement Report – November 2008

Appendix 2 - Draft Statement of Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) - Enforcement of Dog Fouling Recommendations

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:-

Councillor S Smith, Executive Member for Environmental Services  
Graham Wilson, Head of Environmental Action and Parking  
Stacey Campbell, Service Manager

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues as clarification to questions raised:-

- the Scrutiny Board commented that following the change in legislation in April 2008 which gave the responsibility for stray dogs to local authorities from the Police, £50,000 was transferred into the Dog Warden budget to cover costs. They sought clarification on how this money was being spent (*The Head of Environmental Action and Parking responded and explained that the funding was there to cover the costs involved in kennelling stray dogs, including the out of hours service costs, boarding fees and vets bills. The Board noted that, based on the figures outlined at the meeting, there would be a projected underspend on this year's budget and that the balance would be used to assist associated service delivery within the service*)
- the need to revise paragraph 3.6 within the Board's draft Statement to make it clearer that the Board had not suggested a suitable figure for Leeds in relation to the maximum number of dogs that any one person can walk at any one time and that this should be determined by the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods, as per recommendation 2 (*The Board agreed to this proposal*)
- the need to revise the wording in Recommendation 9 of the Board's Draft Statement requesting the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods to produce a Dog Control Strategy for Leeds by September 2009 (*The Board agreed to this proposal*)
- a request to provide a report with a general explanation of the Dog Warden Service with the next dog performance report (*The Head of Environmental Action and Parking responded and agreed to provide a report for the Board's February meeting*)

Following discussions of the draft statement setting out the Board's recommendations in relation to the Enforcement of Dog Fouling, the Board decided to defer the agreement of its Statement until the next meeting. The Board requested the Principal Scrutiny Adviser to revise the document as discussed above, and include a new recommendation around ensuring that the full budget provision for the Dog Warden Service each year was spent on improving that service.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- (b) That the November 2008 data relating to the numbers of dog fouling, Fixed Penalty Notices issued, prosecutions made, stray dogs impounded and dog service requests be noted.
- (c) That the Principal Scrutiny Adviser be requested to revise the Board's Statement on the Enforcement of Dog Fouling for consideration at the next meeting in February 2009.

#### **80 Leeds Strategic Plan Performance Report for Quarter 2 2008/09**

The Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement submitted a report regarding the Quarter 2 performance indicators (PIs) in respect of Environment and Neighbourhoods. The report and appendices charted progress against targets across the raft of individual performance indicators in this area, and highlighted areas of under-performance and/or concern in relation to improvement priorities and actions being taken to remedy matters.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:-

Councillor L Carter, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing  
Councillor S Smith, Executive Member for Environmental Services  
Andrew Mason, Chief Environmental Services Officer  
Stephen Boyle, Chief Regeneration Officer  
John Statham, Strategic Landlord Manager  
Superintendent Simon Whitehead, Leeds Area Community Safety Officer  
Debra Scott, Head of Service Improvement

For ease of reference, the Chair went through the appendices, page by page, inviting Board Members to comment on those areas of under performance and/or of concern in relation to the improvement priorities.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues as clarification to questions raised:-

- Improvement Priority Progress around 'Increasing the number of affordable homes' (PI Ref TP1b) – details on how the department intended to improve this target in view of the current financial restraints
- Improvement Priority Progress around the '**EASEL Regeneration Scheme**' – clarification of the timescales/ funding/ success rates of the scheme and the need for a breakdown of employment and apprenticeship figures in relation to all regeneration schemes  
*(The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing and the Chief Regeneration Officer responded. The Board noted that a full report on EASEL would be presented to the Executive Board in February 2009. In relation to the breakdown of employment figures for regeneration schemes (including the **Aire Valley Employment Team**), the Chief Regeneration Officer agreed to prepare a report on this issue for submission to the Board)*
- Improvement Priority Progress around the tension tracking Improvement Plan – clarification of its success and on the further pilot areas to be identified
- PI Ref LKI HAS4 'the number of homeless acceptances made in the year' – clarification of the change in the **Asylum process (NAM)** which had resulted in an increase in the volume of presentations and the need for information to be provided to the Board on where the anticipated increase of 120 acceptances in 08/09 are to be rehoused  
*(The Chief Regeneration Officer responded and agreed to forward the relevant details to the Board)*
- Overall assessment of progress around the improvement priority to 'reduce worklessness across the city with a focus on deprived areas'
  - clarification of the membership in relation to Worklessness Strategic Outcome Group and the Area Worklessness Groups
  - the need to engage with other major employers within the city, particularly within the Area Worklessness Groups

- the need for key providers to work collaboratively and move away from the fragmented approach
- the need for the Board to be supplied with examples of cases where existing support services/resources have made a positive long term impact on the future of individuals and their families
- the need for further detail of the **Yorkshire Forward** business case and developer/employer packages to be developed by task groups, including Regeneration, Park Lane College and Job Centre Plus  
*(The Chief Regeneration Officer responded and agreed to forward copies of the relevant information, as referred to above, to the Board)*
- PI Ref NI15 ‘Serious violent crime rate’ – the target for this indicator was considered too low
- PI Ref NI29 and NI 34 - the need for district level data to be supplied to the Board in relation to gun crime rate and domestic violence – murder  
*(The Leeds Area Community Safety Officer responded and acknowledged the importance of this missing data)*
- PI Ref NI49b ‘the total number of fatalities due to primary fires per 100,000 population’ – the need to continue to monitor this indicator on a regular basis
- PI Ref LK1 CS8A ‘addressing domestic violence’ – clarification of the recording practices used when incidents of domestic violence are reported

**RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.

## **81 Recommendation Tracking**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report tracking quarterly progress with previous Scrutiny recommendations.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:-

Appendix 1 - Recommendation tracking flowchart and classifications:  
Questions to be considered by Scrutiny Boards

Appendix 2 - Recommendation Tracking – Progress Report (January 2009)  
which focused on the following previous Scrutiny inquiries:-

- Bulky Waste Collections (2005)
- Anti-social behaviour interventions (2005)
- Affordable Housing (2006)
- Regeneration in Beeston Hill and Holbeck (2007)
- Lettings (2008)

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members’ queries and comments:-

Councillor J L Carter, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing  
Andrew Mason, Chief Environmental Services Officer  
Stephen Smith, Head of Environmental Services  
Gillian Mayfield, Public Safety Manager  
John Statham, Strategic Landlord Manager

Stephen Boyle, Chief Regeneration Officer  
Dave Richmond, Area Manager South  
Superintendent Simon Whitehead, Leeds Area Community Safety Officer

For ease of reference, the Chair went through Appendix 2, page by page, inviting Board Members to comment on the status categories 1 – 6 in respect of each recommendation, following which, the individual comments were duly noted and recorded by the Principal Scrutiny Adviser.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues as clarification to questions raised:-

### Bulky Waste Collections

- Recommendation 2 – the need to consult more with residents and to improve response times to Members e-mails
- Recommendation 5 – clarification of when the customer consultation and satisfaction surveys would be undertaken
- Recommendation 10 – the need for ongoing discussions to be undertaken between the Council and ALMOs around recharging when disposing of certain types of waste

### Anti-social behaviour interventions

- Recommendation 6 – clarification from the new **Youth Task Force** of whether the joint working between services continues to have an impact on service delivery
- Recommendation 13 – the need to refer this issue to the Head of Youth Service to get further clarification of where the **Revizit** programmes are located across the city
- Recommendation 16 - the need for the Board to monitor the use of **Parenting Orders** and to be informed whenever a Parenting Order was requested  
*(The Board agreed to this proposal)*

### Affordable Housing

- Recommendation 1 – for the Board to continue monitoring this as part of the ongoing monitoring of the Lettings Inquiry recommendations from 2008
- Recommendation 7 – the need for the criteria to be monitored
- Recommendation 9 – the need for the Board to be supplied with a progress report on the **Golden Triangle Partnership**  
*(The Strategic Landlord Manager responded and agreed to prepare a report on this issue)*

### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- (b) That the Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser be requested to forward a copy of the updated 'Recommendation Tracking – Progress Report'

with the agreed recommendation status positions to Board Members for their retention/information.

## 82 The Role of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report on the role of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:-

Councillor J L Carter, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing  
Superintendent Simon Whitehead, Leeds Area Community Safety Officer  
Inspector Steve Lavelle, Leeds Area Community Safety Officer

In addition to the above report, Board Members received a presentation on 'Safer Leeds' which covered the following specific issues:-

- Presentation Overview
- Role
- Induction Process
- Funding and Leeds City Council
- Regional Picture
- PCSO Core Activities
- Activity Report (All Leeds PCSOs)
- Surgeries/Contact Points
- Questions

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues as clarification to questions raised:-

- clarification of the number of PCSO's employed in the centre of Leeds and on a ward by ward basis
- clarification as to whom determines the role of PCSOs, especially around enforcement issues  
*(The Leeds Area Community Safety Officer responded and confirmed that it was the responsibility of the Chief Constable)*
- clarification of the hours worked by PCSOs and of the shift patterns
- the problems associated with residents contacting their local PCSOs and the need for contact numbers to be publicised through the Internet and police newsletters etc
- general reference to the fact that PCSOs did an excellent job within their communities
- the need to ensure that PCSOs were fulfilling their roles
- that neighbourhood team reports can now be accessed via the website **[www.westyorkshire.police.uk/npt](http://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/npt)**

**RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report and presentation be noted.

(Councillor M Rafique left the meeting at 12.40 pm at the conclusion of the above item).

**83 Update on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Mandatory Licensing**  
(Deferred for submission to the Scrutiny Board's Private Rented Sector Housing Working Group meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2009 for consideration)

**84 Current Work Programme**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the Board's current work programme.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:-

Current Work Programme (Appendix 1 refers)

Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009 (Appendix 2 refers)

The Chair informed the Board that Councillor Dobson (Chair of the Central and Corporate Functions Scrutiny Board) had wrote to him following a recommendation from his Board that the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) takes a proactive role in following the development of any future options for council housing in Leeds in light of the report considered by the Executive Board on 14th January. The Board agreed to this recommendation and decided to arrange a working group meeting to discuss possible terms of reference for taking forward this piece of work.

**RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.

**85 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2009 at 10.00 am to be held at the Moor Allerton Care Centre, Cranmer Close, Leeds 17.

(The meeting concluded at 12.45pm)