

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS)

MONDAY, 11TH JANUARY, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors A Blackburn, A Castle,
R Downes, G Hyde, L Mulherin and
M Rafique

77 Councillor Kabeer Hussain

The Chair reported on the recent sudden death of Board Member, Kabeer Hussain. The Board observed a silence in respect of Councillor Hussain.

78 Late Items

The Board received a supplementary agenda which included an additional appendix to Agenda Item 10, Inquiry into Integrated Offender Management.

79 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Dowson, Hollingsworth, Jarosz and Marjoram.

80 Declarations of Interest

Councillor G Hyde declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 9, Procurement of the Grounds Maintenance Contract for 2011 – Draft Interim Statement, due to his position with the East North East ALMO. (Minute No.85 refers)

81 Minutes - 14th December 2009

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

82 Matters arising from the Minutes

Minute No.69 – Minutes and Matters Arising 9th November 2009

- Details of customer profiling data from the ALMOs and information on the number of customers taking advantage of the Council's incentive scheme for downsizing properties had been circulated to Board Members.
- Members had been issued with a draft project timeline relating to the introduction of additional Dog Control Orders in Leeds. Members expressed disappointment that this would not be fully implemented until April 2011, 2 years after the completion of the Inquiry.

- With regard to the new waste transfer station off Kirkstall Road, the Chief Environmental Services Officers clarified that the commencement date for the traffic survey and details of future consultations with local residents would be firmed up during the next stage of the bidding process when the Council will be identifying the 2 final bidders. It was reported that finer details surrounding the times and volume of vehicle operation would also not be known until the next stage of the bidding process. It was noted that a report on this matter was due to Executive Board in February 2010.

Minute No.72 – Worklessness Review – Update

Members had been issued with a briefing note regarding the 4 Families pilot programme.

83 Executive Board Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Executive Board meetings held on 24 November and 9 December be noted.

84 Inquiry into Recycling

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development summarised the previous session of the Board's Inquiry into recycling and also provided information from the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) on various recycling collection systems and other good practice guidance funded by Defra.

The Chair welcomed the following to the meeting:

- Samantha Veitch, Leeds Friends of the Earth
- Andrew Mason, Chief Environmental Services Officer
- Susan Upton, Head of Waste Management
- Rachel Gray, WRAP
- Andy Hartley, CO2Sense
- Councillor James Monaghan, Executive Member for Environmental Services

Andrew Mason and Susan Upton addressed the Board. Key issues highlighted included the following:

- Equality of access – acknowledging the need to provide recycling solutions to approximately 30,000 properties across Leeds.
- The opportunities arising from the recent industrial action to improve efficiencies.
- Rationalisation of collection routes – this was hoped to be completed by June and aims to release up to 9 refuse crews to be re-deployed for further recycling collections.

- Work with planning colleagues to improve provision for recycling within planning policies and applications
- Collection of food waste – that a six month pilot of 8,000 properties was to commence in February 2010. An evaluation would be reported to Executive Board following the pilot.

Samantha Veitch, Rachel Gray and Andy Hartley raised the following issues on behalf of their respective organisations:

- Examples of where successful increases in recycling rates in other urban areas had been achieved was shared with the Board – it was felt that restricting the collection of residual waste either through reduced numbers of collections or smaller bins had encouraged recycling.
- Recycling of glass – whether this should be done with other materials or not? It was reported that collection of mixed glass colours reduced the quality for recycling.
- Garden waste – that increased collections could have a negative impact by increasing the level of arisings. Greater emphasis was therefore placed upon providing more home composting units.
- Hard to reach properties – examples of offering alternative collection receptacles to residents in other authorities had proved successful.
- How to improve recycling opportunities for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) – these organisations often found it cost prohibitive or were unaware of facilities available. The role of the Council in supporting SMEs was felt to be important.
- Promotion of recycling and associated issues and how to educate on these issues.

Further to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- Packaging of goods and how the Council could influence companies not to use excess packaging. It was suggested that the Council liaises with companies such as ASDA, who is already part of WRAP's programme to optimise packaging. Local authorities, in conjunction with Trading Standards, had powers to prosecute companies who used excess packaging, but this was rarely used.
- Recycling of plastics – markets for recycling plastics were strong, but there were complex issues regarding the kinds of plastics that could be recycled and most efficient means of collection and sorting.
- Members requested further detail on the cost benefits for improving recycling rates.
- Production of a local 'green' business directory – it was suggested that this could be brought to businesses attention when business rates were distributed.
- Education and training issues. WRAP offered training services to collection crews which could improve recycling rates.
- Members requested details of the findings from the fortnightly SORT collection pilot now that it is completed.

The Chair thanked those present for their attendance. It was reported that the third session of the Inquiry would take account of planning issues.

RESOLVED – That the report and discussion be noted in line with the Board's Inquiry into Recycling.

85 Procurement of the Grounds Maintenance Contract for 2011 - Draft Interim Statement

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member development referred to the Board's Inquiry into the Procurement of the Grounds Maintenance Contract for 2011 and meetings of the Board's Working Group. A draft interim statement was attached to the report.

It was requested that details of the analysis conducted by the Grounds Maintenance Project Board as outlined in Recommendation 6 be brought to the Board. It was reported that this would be added to the recommendation.

RESOLVED – That the Board's interim statement on the procurement of the new Grounds Maintenance Contract for 2011 be agreed.

86 Inquiry into Integrated Offender Management - Update

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development provided the Board with an update regarding their Inquiry into Integrated Offender Management,

An appendix to the report summarised meetings of the Board's working group that had been held in November and December 2009. This set out key issues raised to date as part of the Board's Inquiry.

RESOLVED – That the report and summary of the working group meetings be noted.

87 Work Programme

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development included a copy of the Board's Work Programme which included an update on the reviews being conducted by the Board's working groups. Also attached was the current Forward Plan of Key decisions for the period 1 January 2010 to 30 April 2010.

Members discussed the possibility of considering the recent and pending inspection of the ALMOs.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

88 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 8 February 2010 at 10.00 a.m. (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30 a.m.)

The meeting concluded at 11.35 a.m.