

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

TUESDAY, 3RD DECEMBER, 2019

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, J Bentley,
A Blackburn, A Gabriel, P Grahame,
P Gruen, M Harland, N Sharpe, K Brooks,
T Smith and M Robinson

51 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal.

52 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

53 Late Items

There were no formal late items. However, Members were in receipt of copies of a supplementary report in regard to item 9.

54 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

55 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors Khan and D Collins. Councillor M Robinson attended as a substitute for Councillor Collins.

56 Minutes - 17 October 2019

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held 17th October 2019, be approved as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

Minute 45. A joint letter from the Executive Member for Communities and the Chair had been sent to Robert Jenrick MP (SoS Housing, Communities & Local Gov), in regard to the lack of Government investment to assist local authorities in delivering recommended fire safety measures in high rise buildings. The Board will receive an update as and when a response has been received.

Minute 48. The Chair wrote to the 21 signatories.

57 Waste Management Services

The report of the Head of Democratic Services, sets out the progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Board's earlier inquiry into Waste Management Services.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Rafique, Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles
- James Rogers, Director of Communities and Environment
- Helen Freeman, Chief Officer, Environmental Services
- John Woolmer, Deputy Chief Officer, Waste Management
- Mandy Snaith, Civic Enterprise Leeds

The following Members were in attendance representing the signatories:

- Councillor P Wadsworth (Scrutiny Referrer)
- Councillor M Robinson
- Councillor C Campbell
- Councillor D Blackburn

The following information was appended to the report, and considered by Members:

- Recommendation tracking flowchart (Appendix 1)
- Recommendation tracking (Appendix 2)
- Proposed End of Day Report Template & Glossary (Appendix 3)
- Waste Strategy for Leeds
- Community Committee report and its appendices

Further to the meeting held 17th October 2019, the Chair invited the referrer and each of the signatories listed in attendance to provide the Board with their views behind the referral to Scrutiny, to help the Board's consideration and it was highlighted that:

- The missed bins have reduced per day, but still unclear on how many houses are missed per day; the 'end of day' report does show an accurate representation;
- The 48 hour recovery time. Friday/Saturday missed bins aren't recovered until Tuesday, this is longer than 48 hours – causing obstructions on roads;
- The 'end of day' report is welcomed, however the codes put onto the report, should not be down to the driver and there are management issues surrounding that;
- The 'end of day' report does not share information as such where there are specific access issues and further detail needs to be added in regard to this;
- Daily loader limits;
- Providing higher coverage in regard to climate change;
- Consultation with Members prior to the 'pick up points' being considered;

- The brown bins are continually missed due to different crews collecting on different days. It would be a benefit to understand how crews are supervised.

The report set out for Members the status of the recommendations that Members had previously considered at the Board meeting in July 2019.

The status of recommendations were agreed as follows:

Recommendation 1 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 2 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 3 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 4 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 5 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 6 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 7 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 8 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 9 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 10 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 11 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 12 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 13 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
 Recommendation 14 – 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)

The Board discussed the following points:

- Recommendation 1 – *expansion of framework contracts*. A Member sought clarity on the enforcement and statistics of fly-tipping. In responding, officers explained that the recommendation response looked at how waste could be collected in areas that had communal bins and it was confirmed further information in regard to this can be provided to Members.
- Recommendation 3 – *communication and social media engagement*. A recent increase in the amount of materials households can include in their recycling bins was welcomed. However, a member queried why this had not been communicated to councillors. It was confirmed that this had been a quick contractual arrangement and had not yet been

communicated to Members. However, the Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles will be producing monthly updates for Members and this information is set to be included in the first of those.

- Recommendation 7 – *side waste policy*. A Member queried whether the policy surrounding side waste would be revised. In responding, officers confirmed the work included looking at solutions in high density areas such as Harehills, Headingley and Hyde Park and why those issues are re-occurring; once that has been identified, behaviours can be influenced on green bin usage. Following those solutions, an updated side waste policy can be looked at to reflect the changes made.
- Recommendation 8 – *in-cab technology*. Members queried whether the use of in-cab technology would be included in job specifications for staff. It was confirmed that this would be a requirement to ensure the effectiveness of the technology being used. In addition, the service are part way through the development programme for ensuring Crew Chargehands are in place and this would help identify where existing problems are.
- Recommendation 9 – *waste disposal facilities*. Discussions focused on the collaboration with City Development in ensuring the appropriate bin store locations are implemented into the layout of planning applications. Officers informed the Board that practical conversations with planning colleagues are held in regard to street design and access. The Deputy Chief Officer, Waste Management, suggested that planning colleagues spend time with the crews to highlight the issues with access. It was suggested that members involved in the East Leeds Extension use this locality as a test case for collaboration between waste management and planning services.
- Recommendation 10 – *fleet upgrade*. Members were provided with an update, and were informed 36 vehicles are in place and that 50% of the fleet has already been replaced. In addition to this, there are 18 spare vehicles within the fleet – the issue surrounding breakdowns will likely be improved when the fleet has been replaced with the new vehicles.
- Recommendation 14 – *provision of customer access information*. In responding to when residents be able to access available information, Members heard that by summer 2020, the public would be able to view information at the end of every day.

In responding to the points raised, the Director of Communities and Environment explained that the refuse service collect an average of 70 thousand bins every working day of the week and have a collection rate of 99.94%, which is measured after 48 hours. It was reiterated that the service are undergoing a comprehensive review, with a re-design of routes across the city (implementation during 2020) – with the changes made, an improvement to the 'end of day' report was expected. Furthermore, the Chief Officer, Environmental Services added that improvements are already being made by

the service in regard to recycling, social media improvements, expanding bottle banks and increasing electrical equipment.

Members acknowledged that the comments raised were covered under the recommendations that will be monitored further by the Scrutiny Board. On that basis, the Board agreed to not refer this matter again, and that a report on the progress of the recommendations, would be provided in six months.

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

- a) Noted that the contents of the report, the appendices, along with members comments raised during the meeting;
- b) Agreed the position status of the recommendations as set out above;
- c) Agreed not to pursue an additional inquiry, on the basis that an update report on the status of the recommendations would be brought back to the Board in six months.

58 Referral to Scrutiny: Proposal for road-safety park, family cycle trails and new event space at Temple Newsam

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report that presented a referral for Scrutiny, alongside some background information to help inform the Board's consideration.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor M Robinson
- Councillor Rafique, Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles
- James Rogers, Director of Communities and Environment
- Sean Flesher, Chief Officer, Parks and Countryside
- Emma Trickett, Project Manager

The referral for Scrutiny was submitted as follows:

To consider an inquiry into the proposals for a road-safety park, family cycle trails and a new event space at Temple Newsam, which were endorsed by the Executive Board at its meeting on 16 October.

Councillor Robinson presented the request for Scrutiny to the Board, informing Members that Temple Newsam has been a historic sporting facility, with club members from across the city. The Directors of the club had requested this referral via a member sponsor as they felt that all viable options to secure future golf provision at Temple Newsam had not yet been explored. The consultation date has been confirmed, and scheduled to end on 31 March 2020. Furthermore, there had been many golfing societies whom are interested in this, and identified it would be a loss to the city.

The Director of Communities and Environment informed the Board that at the Executive Board meeting, the Executive Members asked that alternative options be looked at, with the possible retention of the golf facilities. Further to that request, the consultation period had been extended to allow further

options to be explored, and ultimately the final decision would be made by the Executive Board. In addition to this, the Chief Officer, Parks and Countryside confirmed that once the consultation feedback has been received at the end of March 2020, those comments would be fed through the Executive Board.

In conclusion of this item, Members agreed to re-visit the referral once the consultation period had taken place after March 2020.

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

- a) Noted that the contents of the report, along with members comments raised during the meeting;
- b) Agreed that the matter be revisited by the Board once the consultation period has taken place and that this will not form part of the budget proposals for the 2020/21 municipal year.

59 Referral to Scrutiny: Disposal of Green Spaces in the Context of the Declared Climate Emergency

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report that presented a request for Scrutiny, alongside some background information to help inform the Board's consideration.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor C Campbell
- Councillor Lewis, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Resources
- Councillor Walshaw
- Chris Gomersall, Head of Land and Property
- Mark Mills, Head of Asset Management
- Kathryn Holloway, Policy and Plans

The request for Scrutiny was submitted as follows:

To consider an inquiry on the processes linked to the sale by the Council of all green spaces – including those smaller strips of ground and verges, as well as larger pieces of land that may form part of major projects.

Councillor Campbell presented the request for Scrutiny to the Board, and requested that the Board re-visit its policy on the sale of greenspace and highlighted the importance for communities to retain their greenspace.

In responding to the referral, the Head of Land and Property informed the Board of the following:

- Those seeking to buy greenspace are typically property owners to increase the size of their gardens, provide access to their driveways or a space for refuse bins;
- Applications for the sale of greenspace are usually refused and it is typically greenspace 'closed behind properties' that are sold off;
- A robust process in terms of planning consent is currently in place.

In addition, Councillor Walshaw explained that each application for purchase of land is reviewed on a case by case basis; the Asset Management Strategy Review was referred to, and it was confirmed that climate emergency considerations were being incorporated specifically in regard to biodiversity.

Members discussion focused on the consultation process prior to the selling of greenspace and was informed that in any sale of council land, Elected Members are consulted; as part of that process, City Development wrote to Members for comment.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Resources suggested that as part of the Asset Management Strategy Review, Members comments be considered as part of the consultation period to identify a revised approach. Members were informed a revised strategy would be taken to the Executive Board in February/March.

In summary of this item, the Board agreed that a future scrutiny session be accommodated, and a joint working group be arranged with the Scrutiny Boards (Infrastructure, Investment, and Inclusive Growth and Strategy and Resources), to be able to feed into the overall strategy.

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

- a) Noted that the contents of the report, along with members comments raised during the meeting;
- b) Agreed that the Principle Scrutiny Advisor would seek to arrange a working group with representatives from the three Scrutiny Boards whose remits cover this issue (Environment, Housing and Communities, Infrastructure, Investment, and Inclusive Growth and Strategy and Resources).

(Councillor Gruen and Brooks left the meeting at 16:55, respectively at the close of this item)

60 Referral to scrutiny: Impact of the anti-social use of fire works on Leeds' communities

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report that presented a referral for Scrutiny, alongside some background information to help inform the Board's consideration.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Amanda Carter
- Councillor Coupar, Executive Member for Communities
- James Rogers, Director of Communities and Environment
- Paul Money, Chief Officer, Safer Leeds
- Lisa Ramsden, ASB Service Delivery Manager

The referral for Scrutiny was submitted as follows:

To consider an inquiry into the use of fireworks in our communities, focusing on low level criminality, anti-social behaviour, and noise nuisance, in order to develop a better multi-agency approach for 2020.

Councillor Carter presented the request for Scrutiny to the Board, and expressed her concern in regard to the level of ASB attached to the use of fireworks city-wide. Councillor Carter queried the measurements that could be implemented in regard to the sale of fireworks and identified that fireworks with minimal sound would be a way forward. It was requested that the Board look into this matter.

In response, the ASB Service Delivery Manager explained:

- The work and research that had been undertaken in the review of licencing and firework displays;
- The 4 categories of fireworks;
- The rules around the times fireworks could be used and the penalties enforceable to those offences outside of those;
- The close working partnership with trading standards and the fire service;
- The increase of reporting by residents.

The Board discussed the following:

- Agreed the sale of fireworks needs exploring, as well as the noise and impact this has on communities;
- Unlicensed shops selling fireworks, and the enforcement in place;
- The misuse of fireworks and ASB associated;
- Concern in regard to animals.

In summary, the Board identified scope to carry out an inquiry into this matter and sought to undertake work specifically in looking at licencing, raising awareness, enforcement action and CCTV. The request for Scrutiny was accepted by the Board, and a future scrutiny session would be accommodated.

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

- a) Noted that the contents of the report, along with members comments raised during the meeting;
- b) Agreed to exercise its power to review the matter referred and requested that the work programme is updated to accommodate a future scrutiny session.

61 Work Schedule

The Head of Democratic Services 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 Wednesday 16th October 2019 were appended to the report.

Members discussed the items on the work schedule.

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

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

62 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the date and time of the next meeting as Thursday 9th January 2020 at 10.30am.

(The meeting concluded at 17:20)