

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)
held at 4.00 pm on Wednesday, 23 July 2014

Present:

Members: Councillor B Singh (Chair)
 Councillor M Hammon
 Councillor L Harvard
 Councillor D Skinner
 Councillor R Thay

Employees (by Directorate):

A Jackman, Place Directorate
C Knight, Place Directorate
M Rossi, Resources Directorate
S Symonds, Resources Directorate

Apologies: Councillor M Auluck, C Miks and K Mulhall

Public Business

1. Declaration of Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the Public Services, Energy and Environment Scrutiny Board (4) meeting held on 26th March 2014 were signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

3. 20mph Zones and 20mph Speed Limit Prioritisation Criteria

The Scrutiny Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Place concerning the prioritisation criteria for 20mph zones in Coventry.

The same report was due to be considered by the Cabinet Member (Public Services) on 29th July 2014 and any comments made by the Scrutiny Board would be considered by the Cabinet Member.

The City Council receives many petitions advising of road safety concerns and requesting 20mph zones or 20mph speed limits. Historically these types of scheme have been introduced as Local Safety, Perceived Safety or Safer Routes to Schools schemes.

There was no adopted policy for dealing with 20mph related requests and their prioritisation other than the safety scheme process.

On 9th July 2013 the Cabinet Member (Public Services) considered a petition requesting a 20mph speed limit and in response requested the Public Services, Energy and Environment Scrutiny Board (4) consider and make recommendations on how to assess and prioritise requests for 20mph zones and 20mph limits outside of the safety scheme process.

The Public Services, Energy and Environment Scrutiny Board (4) established a Task and Finish Group to undertake this work and make recommendations. Cabinet Member (Public Services) committed to these recommendations at the meeting of 25th March 2014.

These recommendations have been utilised to create a prioritisation criteria for 20mph zone and speed limit requests. The report set out the proposed prioritisation criteria.

A budget of £125,000 had been allocated from the Highways Maintenance and Investment Capital Programme budget through the Local Transport Plan for 20mph zones in 2014/15.

The Scrutiny Board questioned Officers on matters relating to the enforcement of 20mph speed limits and the different methods used to reduce speeds of traffic such as speed bumps and signs. Members noted that parked cars can also be strategically aligned to narrow the road space and reduce the speed of traffic. Members further discussed trends in national research into the impact of 20mph zones and how the density of traffic would be considered in the criteria.

RESOLVED, that the Scrutiny Board endorses the recommendations to the Cabinet Member (Public Services).

4. Traffic Management and Enforcement

The Scrutiny Board considered a briefing note of the Executive Director, Place with an overview on how traffic in Coventry was managed to reduce congestion and disruption to road users.

The Scrutiny Board noted the proactive and reactive measures put in place to keep traffic moving on the highway. One of the proactive ways was the co-ordination of street works with a number of partners and stakeholders including Warwickshire County Council, Highways Agency, Centro, bus operators, statutory undertakers and event organisers. This was done to ensure that the Council could manage road space for everyone. Members noted that in 2015, the City Council were proposing to introduce a Joint Permit Scheme with Warwickshire County Council which would further increase the Council's ability to minimise disruption caused by road works.

Members questioned officers about the other methods of minimising disruption which included the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras, Variable Message Signs (VMS) and other methods such as using the Council's website, Twitter and links to the local media.

RESOLVED, that the Scrutiny Board noted how traffic in Coventry is managed to reduce congestion and disruption to road users.

NOTE:

The remaining items of business were deferred to the next meeting due to the Scrutiny Board being inquorate.