

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)
held at 10.00 am on Thursday, 19 September 2019

Present:

Members: (Chair)
(Shadow Cabinet Member)

Councillor M Ali
Councillor R Ali
Councillor C Miks
Councillor R Thay
Councillor S Walsh

Non-Voting Opposition

Members:

Co-Opted Members:

Other Members: Councillors

Employees (by Directorate):

N Cowper, Place Directorate
S Elliot, Place Directorate
N Thomas, Place Directorate

Apologies: Councillor

Public Business

7. Councillor M Heaven

The Chair, Councillor N Akhtar, welcomed Councillor M Heaven to her first meeting of the City Council.

8. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

9. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 July, 2019 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

10. Flood Risk Management and Drainage Update Report

The Scrutiny Board considered a Briefing Note which provided an update in relation to Flood Risk Management and Drainage issues.

The Briefing Note:-

- Updated on the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Statutory Consultee (provision of drainage advice) role on planning applications
- Informed of the role and work of the Regional and Coastal Flood Committee
- Provided an update on the flooding events and improvements at Butt Lane, Allesley and Broad Lane, Upper Eastern Green
- Outlined the activities undertaken during the delivery of the annual Drainage Capital Programme
- Detailed key flood risk management activities since the last report

The Scrutiny Board questioned officers on aspects of the Briefing Note including:-

- The Allesley Flood Risk Management Scheme and its anticipated impact on flood risk for residents
- Natural Flood Management measures
- Paving of domestic gardens; planning permission consent for off road parking/dropped kerbs; and drainage requirements
- Environmental Impact Assessments for new developments
- Adjacent landowner responsibility in relation to keeping rivers clear and enforcement powers available to the Environment Agency to ensure this happens
- Partnership working with Severn Trent, including response times
- Gully cleaning/maintenance in the City
- Planning considerations, including S 106 agreements
- Pre-App advice for Planning Applications

RESOLVED that the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4):-

- 1. Notes the progress of the Lead Local Flood Authority in drainage and flood risk matters**
- 2. Requests that the Briefing Note be circulated to all Members of the City Council for information.**

11. Fly Tipping in Coventry

The Scrutiny Board considered a Briefing Note which detailed progress on tackling fly-tipping in the City. The Briefing Note indicated that there had been a 47% increase in the number of fly-tips reported, with an increase from 4,704 in 2017/18 to 6,922 in 2018/19. The Scrutiny Board noted that fly-tipping was increasing nationally.

An online reporting form was making it easier for the public to check if the fly-tipping had already been reported and, if not, to ensure that an accurate report is

then generated. The number of enforcement actions by the Street Enforcement Service had also increased markedly from 2,613 in 2017/18 to 3, 925 in 2018/19, a 50% increase. Despite the marked increase in fly-tipping, the Council had slightly increased the proportion of fly-tips attended to and addressed and had developed metrics to identify, determine and address the levels of cleanliness across the City.

Fly tipping has reduced in the first quarter of 2019/20 when compared with the same period last year. The Scrutiny Board noted that it was too early to determine if this is part of a long-term trend, but indicated that the progress was encouraging.

The Briefing Note detailed the following measures to address the increase in fly tipping:-

- Fly tipping on private land
- Redesigning the service
- Focus on “Hot Streets”
- Surveillance
- Pilot Surveillance Project

The Scrutiny Board questioned officers on aspects of the Briefing Note, particularly in relation to:-

- Working with private landowners and providing assistance and guidance
- How evidence is preserved and collected
- Work undertaken with partners, such as the West Midlands Fire Service, to ensure public safety
- Recovering Council costs from defendants
- The use of surveillance cameras including, locations, costs, operational issues relating to “hot streets” and working with local residents
- Educating residents about fly tipping and providing information about alternatives for removing rubbish, including “5 items” and a scheme developed with the British Heart Foundation to recycle unwanted student items
- The “Your Rubbish” app developed with Coventry University

The Scrutiny Board expressed their appreciation of all the work undertaken in this regard and asked that their thanks be conveyed to appropriate staff.

RESOLVED that the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4):-

- 1) Notes and welcomes the actions and programmes in place to tackle fly tipping**
- 2) Request that their thanks be conveyed to appropriate staff for all the work undertaken in this regard**
- 3) Request that an evaluation report on the Pilot Surveillance project be submitted to the Scrutiny Board in due course.**

12. **Preparations for Christmas Waste Collections 2019**

The Scrutiny Board considered a Briefing Note outlining the plans for the Christmas Waste collection 2019.

The collection of waste over the Christmas and New Year period differs each year around how the bank holidays fall. The introduction of the alternate weekly collection service and the extension of the garden and food waste collections in 2107 prompted further considerations as to how to minimise disruption to residents over this period. Last year collections were suspended over the Christmas week with all residents receiving a domestic collection (green bin) the week before and after Christmas.

There is no contractual obligation for domestic waste employees to work during the Council's Christmas shutdown week or on the Mondays or Saturdays that need to be worked over the festive period to cover bank holidays. The service is therefore reliant on volunteers from within the workforce alongside temporary (agency) staff. Suspending collections for the Christmas shutdown week reduces the number of non-working days and therefore reduces the number and costs of temporary staff required.

The Briefing Note detailed the pattern of Christmas collections for 2019 and outlined lessons learnt following problems experienced last year.

The Scrutiny Board questioned officers on aspects on the Briefing Note including:-

- Side waste that will be collected in provided clear sacks
- Work that will be undertaken with the Communications Team, both before the Christmas period and during the Christmas period to provide up to date information via social media
- The diversity of the workforce.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board notes the contents of the Briefing Note.

13. **Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) Work Programme and Outstanding Issues 2019/20**

The Scrutiny Board noted their Work Programme for 2019/20, including a revised date for the November meeting (now 14 November) and an additional meeting on 19 December, 2019.

14. **Any Other Items of Urgent Public Business**

There were no other items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 12.00 pm)