

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)
held at 10.00 am on Thursday, 2 December 2021

Present:

Members: Councillor L Bigham (Chair)

Councillor R Auluck
Councillor R Bailey
Councillor J Blundell (substitute for Councillor M Heaven)
Councillor A Hopkins
Councillor J Mutton
Councillor S Nazir
Councillor R Thay

Other Members: Councillor P Hetherton, Cabinet Member for City Services
Councillor D Welsh, Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing

Employees (by Directorate):

Law and Governance: S Bennett, G Holmes

Streetscene and Regulatory Service: A Chowns

Transportation and Highways: N Thomas

Apologies:- Councillors M Heaven, G Lloyd and S Walsh

Public Business

12. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

13. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 November, 2021 were agreed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

14. **Flood Risk Management and Drainage Update Report**

The Scrutiny Board considered a Briefing Note, together with a comprehensive presentation at the meeting, which provided information regarding:-

- An update on the annual Drainage Capital Programme
- Flood Alleviation projects:-
 - Washbrook Lane/ Browns Lane/Butt Lane/Windmill Hill, Allesley
 - Broad Lane/Banner Lane, Upper Eastern Green
- Flood Risk Management Plans
- Severn Trent Community Fund
- Severn Trent Water Flow Separation Project
- Sustainable Drainage Influencing Developers
- Sustainable Drainage Commuted Sums
- Advice to Developers
- Drainage Cleansing, Camera Survey and Lining Contract
- Catchment Coordination (River Sherbourne and River Sowe)
- Transformational Schemes

The Scrutiny Board asked questions and received responses on a number of issues, including:-

- Flooding issues relating to the March Way Estate, Allard Way – officers indicated that this matter would be investigated
- Developments on flood plains and the input/advice given in relation to planning applications, including mitigating measures
- The impact of climate change on flooding incidents in the City over the last 10 years and how data is collected and used to measure the impact and provide information to shape policies, manage the service and enable forward planning
- Consultation work undertaken by the Team and the value of local information that residents can provide
- The drainage infrastructure in the City and work undertaken with Severn Trent who are responsible for the majority of the infrastructure in the City
- The implications of residents paving over gardens/drives, which are significantly reduced by the use of sustainable porous material and by providing appropriate drainage
- Work undertaken by the City Council to ensure culverts are cleansed and maintained

The Scrutiny Board welcomed all the work undertaken in this regard.

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

- 1) Note and support the activities of the Lead Flood Authority relating to drainage and flood risk matters**
- 2) Request that a future meeting consider an item on Water Courses, including investment in infrastructure in the City, with appropriate organisations, including Severn Trent Water and the Canal Trust, to be invited**

15. **Update on Housing Licensing Scheme and Enforcement**

The Scrutiny Board considered a Briefing Note, together with a comprehensive presentation at the meeting, which provided a progress of the services provided by the Property Licensing and Housing Enforcement Team and outputs relating to enforcement and the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing schemes that operate in Coventry.

Issues covered included:-

- The work of the Property Licensing and Housing Enforcement Team
- Information relating to Housing Enforcement between April 2020 and April 2021 and April 2021 to September 2021
- Information relating to Property Licensing Administration, including number of valid licences received and the length of licences issued
- Investment in property in the City as a result of Licensing
- Enforcement Activity, including the number of Notices issues, proactive HMO inspections carried out and licensing applications received

The Scrutiny Board asked questions and received responses on a number of issues, including:-

- Enforcement activity including civil penalties and the £30k cap on civil penalties; banning orders; and the circumstances under which criminal prosecution is undertaken
- How the service is self financing
- The definition of HMO's and the number of HMO's in the City
- Work being undertaken to ascertain if there has been any impact on rents charges in the City as a result of the introduction of Additional Licensing

The Scrutiny Board supported all the work undertaken in this regard.

RESOLVED that the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) note the information provided.

16. **Work Programme and Outstanding Issues 2021-2022**

The Scrutiny Board considered the Work Programme for 2021/22 and noted that, further to Minute 15 above, an item on Water Courses would be added to the Work Programme.

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

There were no other items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 12 Noon)