

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)
held at 10.00 am on Thursday, 8 July 2021

Note: This meeting was not held as a public meeting in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972

Present:

Members of the Board: Councillor L Bigham (Chair)
 Councillor R Auluck
 Councillor R Bailey
 Councillor M Heaven
 Councillor A Hopkins
 Councillor J Mutton
 Councillor S Nazir
 Councillor R Thay

Other Members (invited): Councillor P Akhtar (Deputy Cabinet Member Policing and Equalities)
 Councillor P Hetherton (Cabinet Member City Services)
 Councillor AS Khan (Cabinet Member Policing and Equalities)
 Councillor Lloyd (Deputy Cabinet Member City Services)
 Councillor Welsh (Cabinet Member Housing and Communities)

Employees (by Service):

Law and Governance V Castree, G Holmes

Streetscene and Regulatory Services A Walster, (Director), D Butler, C Eggington, C Hickin, M McHugh,

Apologies: Councillor S Walsh

Public Business

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 18th March 2021 were agreed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

3. Fly Tipping in Coventry

The Scrutiny Board considered a briefing note on Fly-tipping in Coventry. The Cabinet Member for City Services, Councillor Hetherton, introduced the item and focussed on the preventative work and thanked the community activists who had worked hard to clear their neighbourhoods. The Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities, Cllr AS Khan also added that the challenge would be to educate people on how to dispose of their rubbish correctly, balanced with high profile enforcement. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, Councillor Welsh explained that private landlords can be held accountable through licensing conditions, to make sure their tenants have information and sufficient bins to deal with their rubbish effectively.

The briefing note provided information on the challenges around waste disposal and fly tipping over recent years and that the COVID-19 epidemic had significantly changed the landscape of waste disposal and the ability to challenge adverse behaviour. Recorded fly tipping within the City had increased by 54% to 10,765 in 2020/21.

Data tables included in the briefing note showed recorded fly-tipping by Ward in 2020/2, with Foleshill, St. Michael's, Upper Stoke and Lower Stoke being the four highest wards in the city.

The Scrutiny Board noted that whilst it was early days, 2021/22 by comparison had provided more of a settled environment for waste disposal services, education of residents in waste matters and enforcement activities. There had been pleasing reductions evident in the worst affected wards.

Examination of waste type data showed that the vast majority of fly tipping in the city was classified as 'domestic'. It was apparent that commercial/business waste formed a relatively small part of the problem.

The increase in fly tipping throughout the past year was also accompanied by increased levels of enforcement. The Street Enforcement Service investigated all reports that were referred to it and carried out formal action as appropriate, which was hampered by the inability to carryout formal interviews under caution due to Covid-19 restrictions.

The Scrutiny Board questioned officers and the Cabinet Members and received responses on the following issues:

- The reported figures included all incidents that were cleared up, not just those reported by members of the public.
- There are not huge numbers of repeat offenders, the reasons are mainly due to ignorance, laziness, or the thought that they could get away with it.
- There are concessions available for the bulky lift service and the reduced cost period would be extended for a bit longer. There would also be an additional "mop-up" round of waste collection to empty contaminated bins, so they were not left on the street. This would be alongside education, door knocking and pictorial leaflets to break the waste continuum.
- Additional teams had been established with the additional resource allocated. 90 tonnes of rubbish had been removed from roads and work was continuing. There was also funding available to support community

clear ups. 60 groups across the city had been supported, including skips for the rubbish.

- Enforcement action for rented properties is targeted at the landlord as this is the most effective way of getting the issue addressed. Landlords were responsible for providing information about rubbish disposal to their tenants.
- Commercial waste, as well as DIY waste had seen a small spike was not a significant issue compared with household waste.
- The issue of dumped cannabis plants was dealt with alongside police action.
- The street champion scheme can support areas where residents are afraid to come forward due to reprisals and officers would work with Members in those wards where that was a particular issue.
- Involving the community must be balanced between responsibility for keeping their areas clean, but the Council's work. The benefits for involving the community went wider than just a cleaner locality but had a positive impact on community cohesion.
- Littering from food outlets was dealt with through enforcement and those outlets with a late-night refreshment licence would be covered as part of the licence conditions.
- The Cabinet Member for City Services was considering a Day of Action for Council employees to work with people in areas where the rubbish is.

RESOLVED that the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)

1) Note the content of the briefing note: and

2) Establish a Members Task and Finish Group (the membership to be determined) to:

- **Explore with officers the reasons why fly tipping occurs**
- **Determine what further measures can be taken to improve the situation**

4. Local Development Scheme

The Scrutiny Board considered a report on the Local Development Scheme, which would be considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 13 July, 2021.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, Councillor Welsh introduced the report explaining that it was a legal requirement that a local planning authority must prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS), which is a project plan setting out the timetable for the preparation of Development Plan documents. The report updated the previous LDS which was published in 2015. There would also be additional detailed Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) which could be considered by scrutiny, particularly the one on affordable housing.

The Scrutiny Board questioned the Cabinet Member and officers and received the following information:

- SPD's cannot change the numbers or ratios of affordable housing in the Local Plan but can amplify and maximise. Numbers will be considered as part of the review of the Local Plan.
- "Affordable Housing" is a required terms with a specific definition

- The Council had a commitment to social and affordable housing but there was a limit to what the Council can do within the framework it has.
- The Tall Building SPD is very specific and applies to the City Centre to protect the views zones of the spires.
- 2021 Census data would be available from May 2022 in draft form which should be able to use for comparisons with projections.
- The communities themselves are responsible for neighbourhood plans. The Council's statutory duties relate to the consultation stage where the Council would act as a consultee and to arrange the referendum, but it is the community's responsibility to lead on it.

RESOLVED that the content of the Local Development Scheme be noted and that Cabinet be requested to note that the Communities and Neighbourhood Scrutiny Board supports the Local Development Scheme.

5. **Work Programme 2021-22 and Outstanding Issues**

The Board considered the Work Programme 2021-22 and requested the following issues be considered as future items.

- Residents Parking Schemes
- Housing Development Infrastructure
- Christmas Waste Review – to include contingency planning and prioritisation of streets
- 20 mile an hour city - linked with Average Speed Camera item
- Update on the PFI lighting scheme and saving we were making
- Flood risk management – December
- Pavements and pathways – November
- Impact of VLR and Utilities on Highways
- Electric Vehicle Charging Points
- Feedback on the Hot Street Pilot

6. **Any Other Items of Public Business**

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 11.50 am)