

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

**HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS O&S COMMITTEE –**

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**1300 hours on Thursday 24 October 2019, Committee Room 6**

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**Present:**

Councillor Penny Holbrook (Chair) in the chair for items 6-11

Councillor Mahmood Hussain (Deputy Chair) in the chair for items 1-5

Councillors Deirdre Alden, Marje Bridle, Roger Harmer, Shabrana Hussain and Mary Locke

**Also Present:**

Karen Cheney, Head of Service, Neighbourhood Development and Support Unit

Mira Gola, HR Business Partner

Chris Jordan, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods

Karl Robinson, Senior Manager, Housing Modernisation and Strategy

Darren Share, Assistant Director, Street Scene

Martin Tolley, Head of Capital Investments

Jayne Bowles, Scrutiny Officer

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services

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**1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST**

The Chairman advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site ([www.civico.net/birmingham](http://www.civico.net/birmingham)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Gary Sambrook.

An apology for lateness had been submitted by Councillor Penny Holbrook and Councillor Mahmood Hussain therefore chaired the first part of the meeting.

### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

### 4. ACTION NOTES AND ACTION TRACKER

(See documents 1 and 2)

#### **RESOLVED:**

- The action notes of the meeting held on 26 September 2019 were agreed;
- The action tracker was noted.

### 5. PERFORMANCE REPORTING

(See document 3)

The Committee agreed for the agenda to be varied and for this item to be brought forward.

Mira Gola, Darren Share, Assistant Director, Street Scene, Karl Robinson, Senior Manager, Housing Modernisation and Strategy, and Martin Tolley, Head of Capital Investments, attended for this item.

Mira Gola is currently transitioning into her new role, replacing Lesley Ariss as Head of Business Improvement and Support.

Members were taken through the performance report and told that the annual measures will be reported at year end.

All service delivery measures have exceeded target except the void turnaround

Martin Tolley told Members that from a repairs and maintenance perspective, they are working with contractors to turn the void situation around and hope to see an upturn in the course of the next few months.

In response to Members' questions, the following were among the main points raised:

- In response to concerns that including bottom ash in the recycling figures is misleading, it was agreed that as the bottom ash figures are recorded they would be added into the narrative every month from now onwards;
- In terms of Birmingham's position in the league table of recycling, Birmingham is in the bottom quartile which is not dissimilar to other core cities;
- A breakdown of the recycling figures was requested and it was agreed this information, from April to now, could be provided;
- In the 'Increase Reuse, Recycling and Green Waste' measure, Reuse refers to recycling which is used as something else rather than going through the

process as it is and bulky waste collections are now being looked at, for example items of furniture being re-used rather than crushed;

- With regard to missed collections and how these are recorded, Members made the point that where whole roads are missed, only those households reporting a missed collection are included in the figures and therefore either the title of the performance measure, or the way data is collected, needed to change;
- It was agreed that this performance measure would be reviewed for the next performance year;
- With regard to educating residents, it was confirmed that bins are tagged where residents have not sorted recycling correctly, leaflets are handed out and crew members also speak to residents if they are around;
- The WRCO on the wagon records any areas which are not recycling or where there are high levels of contamination with a view to mapping where those areas are;
- Flats above shops are a particular problem nationally – in Birmingham there are over 18,000 properties that do not have wheelie bins where residents are having to leave rubbish in their properties for a week at a time and a solution needs to be found for this;
- Fly-tipping is a problem and as it is a criminal offence where evidence is found this can lead to prosecution, with vehicles being seized, fines and imprisonment;
- The council has moved to monitoring street cleansing via an APSE based system called LANS and have been carrying out analysis by ward which can now start to be shared with ward councillors;
- The system is used by the majority of councils in the UK and APSE takes the data and uses it to benchmark;
- Restructure of street cleansing teams – a recruitment process is being carried out over the winter to be ready for April to move from an agency team to permanent members of staff;
- In terms of voids, a request was made for further information on the average time between a tenant moving out and a new tenant moving in, and how we compare;
- With regard to housing repairs, it was pointed out that Constituency reports used to report on the different contract areas, making it easy to monitor performance by contractor, whereas now there is just one city-wide report, and officers undertook to look into why that ceased;
- Officers were asked whether we were any nearer to monitoring the Housing Service closely against a range of measures and whether it would be possible to have that information for council tenants to look at the repairs service and lettings service, maybe by ward but ideally by HLB area;

- Members were told that there is a performance monitoring group which is chaired by the City HLB Chair and that group looks at performance figures and that a response would be provided regarding breaking down the figures by HLB area;
- Members discussed the timing of future performance monitoring reports and agreed these should be presented on a quarterly basis.

**RESOLVED:**

- The further information requested to be forwarded to Members;
- The report was noted.

The meeting was then adjourned for a short break.

The meeting then resumed at the point where the meeting had been adjourned, with Councillor Holbrook in the chair.

## **6. LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOODS**

(See document 4)

Chris Jordan, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods, and Karen Cheney, Head of Service, Neighbourhood Development and Support Unit, attended for this item.

The Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods had given her apologies but will be attending Committee in November for further consideration of this item.

In the course of the discussion and in response to Members' questions, the following points were raised:

- Members were encouraged by the progress being made;
- A more detailed report on Relationship Managers was requested for the next meeting;
- With regard to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Members asked whether some of the 85% strategic investment money could be localised, as only a small number of wards will benefit from the 15% within the ward;
- Members were told that the CIL is being reviewed and similar questions have been fed into the officers undertaking the review;
- The role of Pioneer Places is very much about peer to peer mentoring;
- It was noted that a lot of wards have not done ward plans and Members asked what the benefits were of doing a ward plan;
- There are challenges with Ward Forums in terms of attendance and local engagement and Members were told that there has been some good practice with a new style of more informal meetings;
- The Localisation Week celebration event had gone well with a useful question and answer session;

- Members felt a major challenge is that we are still very centralised and they as a committee have a key role in working out how to deliver localisation;
- A view was expressed that members should be lobbying for community chest again as this used to provide a small pot of money to be used in the wards and it was suggested that this could be raised with the Cabinet Member at the next meeting;
- It was acknowledged the localisation requires culture change from officers, members and communities.

**RESOLVED:**

- A more detailed report on Relationship Managers to be provided for the next meeting;
- The report was noted.

**7. WORK PROGRAMME**

(See document 5)

The work programme was discussed and the following agreed:

- November – Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods (Local Neighbourhoods and Bereavement Services)
- December – Budget Consultation with Cabinet Members; PSPO update; PRS update
- January – Housing Options; Housing Zero Carbon; Performance Monitoring
- Street Scene Taskforce – new dates to be sought.

**RESOLVED:**

The work programme was noted.

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was noted.

**9. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

None.

**10. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

## 11. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

### **RESOLVED:**

That in an urgent situation between meetings the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer, has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

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The meeting ended at 1511 hours.