

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS O&S COMMITTEE –

PUBLIC MEETING

1300 hours on Thursday 26 September 2019, Committee Room 2

Present:

Councillor Penny Holbrook (Chair)

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

Also Present:

Councillor John Cotton, Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equalities

Councillor John O'Shea, Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Parks

Rob James, Acting Director, Neighbourhoods

Darren Share, Assistant Director, Street Scene

Pam Powis, Senior Service Manager – Community Safety

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services

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) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

None received.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

4. ACTION NOTES AND ACTION TRACKER – 25 JULY 2019

(See documents 1 and 2)

RESOLVED:

- The action notes of the meeting held on 25 July 2019 were agreed;
- The action tracker was noted.

5. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BIRMINGHAM COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

(See document 3)

Cllr John Cotton, newly appointed chair of the Partnership, introduced the report. He thanked Dawn Baxendale, the previous chair, for her work in particular on bringing in the new three year strategy which has been drawn up with partners and will be in place from December.

Members raised the following points in the discussion:

- With regard to bleed control kits, tribute should be paid to the Daniel Baird Foundation for the work they have done, which brought this change about;
- Regarding modern slavery, officers reported that there was now a modern slavery statement in place and that procurement lines are checked. There are 22 champions trained in the organisation, and there is an e-learning package for staff. Since January, work has been done on a victim's pathway, particularly for male victims, for whom there are fewer services available. The actual number of victims of modern slavery identified in Birmingham is included in a weekly report from the Modern Slavery Network and this can be shared with committee members;
- The residents and pupils around Anderton Park have suffered as a result of the protests, hence the injunction, which was granted initially as an emergency injunction and is about the behaviour of the protesters and not what they are protesting about. There will be a full hearing commencing in October;
- In response to a question about how councillors can assure citizens where they have safety concerns, the importance of partnership working between the statutory partners is key here. The inception of local partnerships was discussed, and the importance of engagement with local members. Members need to understand how community groups are engaged and selected;
- A lot of work is being done around early intervention and prevention; communication is key to ensure people understand the difference between perception and actuality of crime; partnership working is important and the CSP brings that and adds value to the individual work of organisations; it is about a new way of delivering services and regular meetings are held with Chief Constable;

- Six local delivery partnership groups have been set up – part of their remit is about engaging with communities and working with them to try and resolve some of the issues;
- Aggressive begging is a problem in some areas; Cllr Cotton told Members that would be picked up as part of the PSPO, which will come back to Committee.;
- There are certain powers available to deal with organised crime through a number of different avenues – eg local partnerships, central partnerships, through serious organised crime operational group and also modern slavery operational group;
- All alcohol restricted areas are now PSPOs, and are monitored and enforced by the local police, who can serve notices of intention to prosecute. It is the understanding of the City Council that PCSOs also have this power;
- Concern was expressed that the delay with the city centre PSPO is causing delays with others. Members were told that where PSPOs contain begging clauses, there does need to be consistency and those PSPOs which do not have begging clauses in them will go forward;
- Discussions have started regarding the co-production approach. The importance of engaging, educating and enforcing was stressed and further discussions will bring on board BIDs and the police;
- With regards to the £7m Operation Guardian funding and what happens afterwards – this did produce positive outcomes, now looking to build on that through the Violence Reduction Unit with additional secured funding and Members will be kept updated as that work goes forward;
- There is a public demand for CCTV cameras, and the City Council should be looking at this in light of new legislation. The Cabinet Member noted that CCTV is just one of the tools we use, but an important one. Changes to regulations have led to of decommissioning of a number of cameras because of technical deficiencies. There are 258 remaining in total – this includes the community safety portfolio plus other cameras operating across the city;
- Further information was requested by Cllr Bridle who asked if a briefing note could be provided, taking account of the different CCTV portfolios;
- There was a discussion about the use of re-deployable cameras and how these are used, for example, in tackling fly-tipping;
- There is a need to keep an eye on crime data locally to determine how to deploy cameras to respond to issues;
- Members asked whether there was any information available on crime rates when cameras are removed. They were told that the 12 cameras within the CSP over the last few years have been managed through West Midlands Police and this data could be requested from them;
- Injunction in relation to travellers – Members were told that to get an injunction requires a lot of evidence and is a significant piece of work. The

opening of the new transit site will allow police to use s62 powers to require travellers to move on;

- Members asked about local police structures and how they match up with the new ward boundaries. Some work is currently being done with the police on aligning a single point of contact for each ward and it was suggested that this could be raised under the Localisation item at the next meeting;
- With regard to people not reporting crime, it is quicker and easier to report non urgent crime through Live Chat which is much more productive.

RESOLVED:

The report was noted. •

6. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR STREET SCENE AND PARKS

(See document 4)

Cllr John O'Shea, Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Parks, Rob James, Acting Director, Neighbourhoods and Darren Share, Assistant Director, Street Scene, attended for this item.

Cllr O'Shea introduced the report. In the course of the discussion and in response to Members' questions the following were amongst the main points raised:

- Over the past few months there has been an improvement in the service with missed collections halved, but there is still more to be done;
- The relationship with the workforce and Trades Unions is being re-set;
- Over the next few years a programme of purchasing new vehicles is being started, which will include looking at alternative fuels;
- There are some changes coming down the line over the next few years from central government in terms of what we recycle;
- A new model of street cleansing has just been launched;
- We have in-sourced Grounds Maintenance and new equipment has been purchased;
- There are many residents who are not aware of the Household Recycling Centres and Members are encouraged to promote these in their wards;
- Fly-tipping is a key area for the next 12 months; it has decreased slightly overall but is higher in some wards. There are people who drive into inner city wards to dump rubbish. Any work the committee wants to do on this would be welcomed;
- Clean day street closures were suggested and it was pointed out that this would need to be referred to the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment;
- There needs to be a review of how and what we collect; Members said that the paper recycling bin is not fit for purpose;

- The Cabinet Member offered members of the committee a visit to Tyseley and to Four Ashes to look at how recycling is processed;
- With regard to the issues in low rise flats – there will be a move to smaller vehicles, which are more manoeuvrable, as access is a real issue; also working with Planning to ensure access for vehicles is built in to any new developments;
- In some areas where there are access issues, for example small groves where parked cars are blocking access for the waste vehicles, residents are leafleted reminding them of the collection and road-sweeping days;
- With regard to tower blocks, there are different collection schedules for different blocks; this has been reviewed to look at what the frequency level needs to be and changes are now being implemented;
- Procurement of new vehicles – Members queried why this had not been done earlier;
- Allotments – there are vacancies on virtually all of our allotments and people should be encouraged to take these up;
- Friends of Parks – The Cabinet Member is a big supporter and if we are able to enhance the service they offer to the city, we should be doing that and at the moment some work is being done with the Friends of Cotteridge Park who want to be more involved with how the park is managed;
- Grass cutting – the ability to pick up and compost is a massive task, which has been looked at, however we cannot currently afford to take that task on;
- It was suggested that we look at getting specific areas cut more frequently, eg where games are played, and leave other areas for longer;
- Local members are in a good position to be able to advise on where land use has changed and so grass cutting/hedge maintenance needs to be changed.

RESOLVED:

The report was noted.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

(See document 5)

The work programme was discussed and the following agreed:

- Street Scene Task Force – email to be sent to Members to see who would be interested in being a member and a meeting with the Cabinet Member to be set up to start to take the work forward;
- October – Localisation and Performance;
- November – PSPOs.

It was also requested that the PRS update currently programmed for February be brought forward.

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.

The meeting ended at 1530 hours.