

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

**NEIGHBOURHOOD AND
COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
15 OCTOBER 2015**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY, 15
OCTOBER 2015 AT 1400 HOURS IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, COUNCIL
HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT:-

Councillor Iqbal in the Chair;

Councillors Atwal, Cartwright, Harmer, Hartley, Lines, Mackey, Pears, Spence and Williams.

ALSO PRESENT:-

Councillor Penny Holbrook	- Cabinet Member for Skills, Learning and Culture
Alison Harwood	- Look up title
Mashuq Ally	- Assistant Director, Equalities, Community Safety and Cohesion
Penny Smith	- Programme Director
Matt Kelly	- Assistant Director, Fleet and Waste Management
Councillor Barbara Dring	
Councillor Mahmood Hussain	
Rose Kielly	- Group Overview and Scrutiny Manager
Amanda Simcox	- Scrutiny Research and Policy Officer
Marie Reynolds	- Committee Services

NOTICE OF RECORDING

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It was noted that the meeting was being webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site (www.birminghamnewsroom.com) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs. The whole of the meeting would be filmed except where there were confidential or exempt items.

APOLOGIES

- 29 Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Harmer for lateness and Councillors Jenkins and Phillips for their inability to attend the meeting.
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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 30 Members were reminded that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests relating to any items of business to be discussed at this meeting. If a pecuniary interest was declared a Member must not speak or take part in that agenda item. Any declarations would be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
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MINUTES

- 31 That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2015 having been circulated to members were confirmed and signed as a true and correct record.
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BIRMINGHAM WHERE THE WORLD MEETS TRACKING REPORT

RO9

- 32 Councillor Penny Holbrook, Cabinet Member for Skills, Learning and Culture gave a presentation on Heritage Week. She provided a brief background as to how Heritage Week had been established and referred to the huge amount of work Councillor Waseem Zaffar had been responsible for in organising the event together with his connections. She added that the event would not have taken place if it had not been for the involvement of Councillor Waseem Zaffar.

She referred to the dates that it had been set 10 – 17 September and being able to specifically link into the national heritage days. She confirmed that there was a great deal of engagement and although tried to engage with schools as much as possible, this was limited due to the start of the autumn term. She added that if it had taken place later in September this would have clashed with the ‘Super September Weekend.’ She highlighted the huge amount of effort that had gone into the event in terms of projects and various other events that included the social history of local areas.

She confirmed that the feedback from all citizens involved was marvellous, and referred to the different partners that were involved which included Carl Chinn, the civic societies and the contribution from the City Council, which were officers’ time as well as a small budget to mainly fund marketing. She added that all of the actual events were facilitated by other people for free or at their own cost. Reference was made to the brilliant launch that took place in Lloyds

Bank Headquarters with the reason being it coincided with their anniversary of opening their first bank in the city, and most noticeably was Councillor Waseem Zaffar was able to negotiate a special event in Parliament where Birmingham's heritage was showcased.

She confirmed that they were still reviewing the progress of the event and stated that there remained a commitment to repeat Heritage Week, however, were mindful of the city council's shrinking resources.

She concluded by stating that it was a wonderful opportunity and thanked all who were involved.

Councillor Cartwright expressed a vote of thanks to Councillor Waseem Zaffar for the wonderful event that had taken place on 11 September 2015 at the MG motor factory and the book that was to be published of the memories of the ex-Rover workers.

As a result of the presentation, in response to comments and questions from members, the following were amongst the points raised:-

Councillor Holbrook stated that the evaluation of the event was very important and Councillor Zaffar, herself and the team would continue evaluating over the next month or so. She detailed the ways in which they would be evaluating the event, and highlighted the best supported events were the 'Look and Share with you.' She further highlighted how the event had facilitated in bringing people together and learning and understanding about their local heritage and communities.

With regard to future improvements that could be made next time, Councillor Holbrook stated that more work around the schools could be considered so that young people could have an understanding of their heritage, and to look at bolstering the opportunity for more communities to come together and share their stories.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Councillor Holbrook for her presentation.

At the request of the Chairman, recommendation 9 was agreed.

PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION

33 The following report of the Cabinet Member for Inclusion and Community Safety was submitted:-

(See document No. 1)

RO1

Mashuq Ally, Assistant Director, Equalities, Community Safety and Cohesion

referred to the review of the Director for Regulations and Enforcement and subsequently detailed the reason for a printed booklet not being viable as part of the 'Welcome to Birmingham' welcome pack. He made reference to the preference agreed with the improved signposting in the form of a leaflet which would signpost directly to the 'Welcome to Birmingham' web site as well as to other services across the city. It was identified that the home page of the web site would have to be looked at in order to ensure people could navigate through the home page. Although he had not yet received an update of the progress of the work anticipated that it had been undertaken.

In response to the Chairman that new citizens were finding difficulty in accessing the page, Mashuq Ally agreed to look into the issue.

At the request of the Chairman, recommendation 1 was agreed.

RO8

Mashuq Ally reported on the long outstanding recommendation. He highlighted the new guidance for district committees that had been agreed by Cabinet in July 2015 and in addition to that, the changes to the Constitution in May 2015. He referred to the delegated powers districts now had through the changes which ensured that there would be engagement with all communities across the neighbourhoods, wards and districts and there would no longer be the focus on specific community groups.

At the request of the Chairman, recommendation 8 was agreed.

PREVENT PROGRAMME

Mashuq Ally, Assistant Director, Equalities, Community Safety and Cohesion presented the following report:-

(See document No. 2)

Mashuq Ally whilst presenting the report, highlighted that it may be of interest to the committee that under the 'prevent funding' they might like to see a presentation from Children's Services in how they were safeguarding young people and adults. Further reference was made to the page 30 of the document whereupon it was suggested that the committee may wish to see a restricted presentation on the CTLP report.

In response to the above, the Chairman confirmed that the committee would consider the above-mentioned suggested presentations.

As a result of the presentation and in response to comments and questions from members, the following were amongst the points raised:-

Mashuq Ally referred to the resources that were being invested nationally in this area due to the high risk to the cities of this country. He stated that the

resources received did not equate to the size of the city however there were discussions and dialogue with the Home Office ongoing in this regard. He further stated that there were two separate resources for West Midlands Police and West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit. He referred to the city council officers and West Midlands police highlighting that they were involved on a day to day basis with the communities and citizens of the city and therefore the intelligence they gathered was actually vital in dealing with this agenda, and if there was not enough foot soldiers in the future, there would be a problem regarding the amount of information gathered on the ground.

Mashuq Ally referred to the meeting that had been highlighted previously and had not been very well attended and suggested that it be re-scheduled with West Midlands Police and that scrutiny became involved in identifying with elected members a more suitable time.

He highlighted the importance of elected members understanding the agenda. He referred to the build-up of trust between the city council and citizens and the co-operation received by all as a result of this. Reference was made to the fact that once individuals and communities were being scrutinised by the intelligence service they saw the city council as a vanguard for their civil liberties and human rights and a form of protection. He stated that the enforcement services were sensitive to that and was why they worked very closely with officers. He stated that elected members may receive complaints from citizens particularly now that there was a piece of legislation in place, and unless they were aware of what the agenda was about, it could prove difficult in providing the correct response.

He referred to the fact that where there were people contemplating going to an Islamic state and it was highlighted the importance of the city council working with members, in preventing this from happening. Due to the fact that often members were better informed of what was happening with their citizens and local communities than the enforcement services. He stated that nobody wanted mistakes made in this area and fortunately in Birmingham although there had been people thinking of going to an Islamic state the numbers had been negligible when compared with other cities.

Mashuq Ally referred to 4.4 of the report relating to Channel and stated that if members came into contact with people that they considered vulnerable to refer them to this mechanism. He stated that it was a pre-criminal space that provided wraparound support to families or individuals. He confirmed that its resources were being invested in helping and supporting people and ensuring their civil liberties and human rights were being protected. He stated that the local authority led on the Channel programme which he chaired.

In response to the Chairman's enquiry as to how people could make contact with Channel, Mashuq Ally confirmed that there was a co-ordinator for the programme and agreed to provide the contact details to the committee. He stated that members could refer people through his office and that they would be treated with the utmost sensitivity. When applying to Channel, individuals would be assessed and if believed required help and support they would be provided with a mentor who would work with them in addressing the issues.

However there could be occasions where it was believed the individual required help and assistance in other areas and if this was the case, they would be signposted to the appropriate area. He added that Birmingham was seen as a centre of good practice and that the government and other local authorities had learned from what had been achieved through Channel.

Mashuq Ally made reference to page 6 of the report and confirmed that all of the posts illustrated were filled. He confirmed that they were funded through the Home Office and were all doing excellent work albeit they were a very small team. He highlighted that the HEFE co-ordinator not only covered Birmingham but also West Midlands. He further highlighted that the Schools Resilience Advisor worked closely with schools improvement and suggested that it may be useful in the future if she gave a presentation to the committee on the work that had been undertaken in schools in this area.

He stated that they were constantly lobbying the Home office for resources and again the time would be approaching shortly for additional bids to be submitted. He confirmed that there was a limitation as to how much money was provided for projects due to the changes the government had made to the process. He added that the decision making regarding the applications rested with the Home Office and it was highlighted that they wanted to be clear that those applications being commissioned were not involved in any form of radicalisation or extremist activity.

Mashuq Ally referred to the point raised relating to the programme, that for it to succeed in the long-term there needed to be joined-up working in getting people buying into their community, which he agreed was very important.

He stated that whilst this programme was dealing with the day to day business of apprehending potential terrorists or vulnerable people that could be radicalised or seduced into terrorism activity, there was also a long-term agenda. He questioned how do we enable young people to take pride in their city and how could that be facilitated to enable them to make a positive contribution to the city but also alongside that there was the need to deal with the wicked issues.

He referred to the systemic problems in some of the wards which included social economic issues and stated that whilst over the last 8 years they had been dealing with ideological based terrorism and radicalisation, the scenario was moving towards people becoming radicalised due to their unhappiness. He questioned why someone living in a deprived area would leave the city in order to move to an Islamic state and therefore highlighted that there was a real need to be much clearer of what the causes were believing that the long-term preventative measure was enabling citizens to have a stake in their city in order that they could make a positive contribution. He added that on the side of public agencies how should some of the systemic issues that have been present for some decades that are making some of our communities unhappy be addressed.

With regard to staff training, Mashuq Ally referred to the contact that had been

made with the management of Grand Central and also the nearby large retail outlets, adding that the Police were also involved in providing training in these areas. He further referred to the fact that the city council were in dialogue with HS2 regarding training.

At this juncture the Chairman confirmed that Marcus Beale would be reporting on the Community Safety Partnership at the meeting scheduled on 18 February 2016.

Following further comments, Mashuq Ally referred to the information requested and confirmed that as he did not have the figures at present would email to members. He referred to the performance framework for measuring success and that the Prevent programme board provided that on behalf of the city council and its partners which was escalated up to the Strategic board in order that the political and officer leadership was aware of how it was performing in terms against the resources.

Mashuq Ally referred to the 'no platform policy' highlighting that the policy had strengthened the approach to people who used council venues and had also been extended to schools, adding that it had ensured that none of the local authority buildings were being used.

Mashuq Ally made reference to the 2 reports and the involvement of a government select committee in making it clear, that as far as schools were concerned, the Intelligence Service, West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit and the City Council, did not believe that there had been the promotion of extremism in schools. Regarding the Trojan horse issues, it was concluded that it was about bad behaviour and bad governance which the schools improvement was addressing successfully. He stated that the city's approach was to strengthen the governance arrangements and the training and development of all the schools to ensure that they were protected and secure, not only in relation to extremism, but also in terms of bad governance.

Mashuq Ally made reference to the country's armed services to deal with what he thought would be against the law now, if British citizens outside the services engaged in activities in any part of the world, that resulted in injury or the killing of any individuals. He stated that part of the issue around the Islamic state and Syria, was that there was the need in having to deal with people that go there as individuals and engage in war fare, and as British citizens, when they returned would be arrested.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Mashuq Ally for his presentation.

34

RESOLVED:-

That the information be noted.

THE OPERATIONAL ROLL OUT OF WHEELED BINS

Penny Smith, Programme Director, gave a presentation on the roll-out programme. She reported that the programme had completed earlier than expected in Perry Barr Ward. She detailed how the bins when delivered were checked 3 different ways against each property and that they were all chipped. It was noted during that period, residents raised issues about whether their properties were suitable and it had resulted in an additional 200 bins being issued to residents that requested bins, although believed by the department that their properties were unsuitable.

Matt Kelly, Assistant Director highlighted the problem with the roll-out programme being undertaken very quickly across the city which had proved a somewhat difficult time. He reported that the majority of collections from Perry Barr were on time however, the real issues were around recycling collections whereupon he detailed the various reasons for this and believed that as staff especially permanent staff became more familiar with their rounds, progress would improve.

As a result of the presentation, in response to comments and questions from members the following were amongst the points raised:-

Matt Kelly referred to the high level of assisted collections undertook each year and the technology that was in place to support the system, adding that as long as the information was on the system then collections would not get missed. He highlighted that some adjustments in Perry Barr Ward had been made in order to recognise new houses that had not been receiving collections and referred to the problems that had arisen with residents living above shops.

He referred to the fact that when they were recruiting drivers, they wanted employees that were able to manage the rounds and were health and safety conscious and therefore it was important that the right people were recruited for the right jobs. He referred to the challenges that had arisen in the depots that related to contamination, recycling and others and the fact that these had to be addressed whilst the new service was introduced.

Councillor Mahmood Hussain stated that the roll-out programme had not been delivered sufficiently although confirmed that the streets were much cleaner due to the lack of split bags. He believed that the management needed to be more supportive in order for improvements to be made.

Councillor Barbara Dring stated that generally the roll-out programme across Oscott Ward had been quite successful however there had been problems with assisted collections which had since been resolved. She stated that issues needed to be addressed regarding late collections, and that recycling would be better if it was collected on the same day as the refuse collection. She further stated that there were issues with bins that were not being returned to their point of collection

In response to the above, Matt Kelly referred to the late collections and stated

that they were trying to get back on schedule by meeting targets on a daily basis.

With regard to stolen bins he highlighted that the bin was chipped and a scanner was required in order to denote where it belonged.

With regard to the leafing problems, he confirmed that once the garden waste collections had ceased on 26 November they were looking to use those people to undertake some work on collections to support the community collections and leafing.

Matt Kelly referred to issues relating to flytipping and the fact that residents had suggested that the department amalgamate collections which they were considering.

In response to further comments from members, the following points were made:-

Matt Kelly referred to the issues around safety relating to the drivers and the requirement that all the department's drivers were subject to a full medical examination at the age of 45 years. He referred to the additional medical examination as a requirement for drivers every 5 years, and if employees (drivers) were on medication the department dealt with them sympathetically.

Matt Kelly referred to the issues of recycling and stated that the service would improve highlighting that it did also depend on individual crews whereby some could be more efficient than others, adding that the department were driving that as much as they could.

With regard in terms of overspend, he confirmed that the department were required to provide a balanced budget throughout the service and made reference to the high levels of sickness especially in Perry Barr Ward which were issues for the department that had to be managed.

In response to concerns raised by Councillors Pears and Mackie, Matt Kelly agreed to progress outside of the meeting.

Matt Kelly responded to the issue raised by Councillor Lines, and confirmed that the incident had been recorded and that the contractor was committed to putting it right and agreed that it was totally unacceptable behaviour. He highlighted that the new vehicles were now fitted with cameras and that the web-fleet was able to ascertain how fast the vehicles were being driven which was all contributory to health and safety of the general public.

Matt Kelly referred to the missed collections highlighting that they should not be repeated after 3 times, as they were then considered 'hot spots' and would be checked out as to the cause of the problem. He referred to the increased waste at Christmas and other festivals and stated that the department would make allowances for the additional waste. He further referred to the joined-up working of the teams and the department in educating residents and the enforcement side in dealing with trade waste.

With regard to the Call Centre and the associated issues, he stated that it had been brought back in-house and that calls were recorded through the centre. He stated that they worked closely with the centre to minimise any confusion and that enquiries from councillors were supposed to be escalated straightaway. He added that he would look into this area and respond directly to Councillor Atwal.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Penny Smith and Matt Kelly for attending the meeting and reporting.

Upon further consideration, it was:-

35

RESOLVED:-

That the information and comments be noted.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY SERVICES O&S COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME**

The following paper was received:-

(See document No. 2)

The Chairman stated that Councillor Shafique Shah, Cabinet Member for Social Cohesion, Equalities and Community Safety was expected to be in attendance at the next meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Gary Ladbrooke (District Head – Sutton Coldfield District & Interim Head for Yardley District) and confirmed that he was the link for district committees.

36

RESOLVED:-

That the work programme be noted.

DATES OF MEETINGS

37

It was noted that the Committee meets on the following Thursdays at 1400 hours in the Council House:-

19 November (Room 1)	17 December (Room 6)
21 January (Room 6)	18 February (Room 6)
17 March (Room 2)	21 April (Room 6)

REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS

RECEIVED (IF ANY)

- 38 The Chairman advised that there had been no requests for call in/councillor call for action/petitions received.
-

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

- 39 No other urgent business was raised.
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AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

- 40 **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 1610 hours.

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CHAIRMAN