

Minutes of the Meeting of the NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: WEDNESDAY, 3 JULY 2019 at 5:30 pm

<u>PRESENT:</u>

<u>Councillor Khote (Chair)</u> <u>Councillor Thalukdar (Vice-Chair)</u>

In Attendance:Councillor AliCouncillor AqbanyCouncillor GovindCouncillor JoshiCouncillor Solanki

Also Present: Councillor Clair and Councillor Malik

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interest they may have in the business to be discussed.

Councillor Solanki declared that she worked in a food and retail environment but would be participating in the discussions with an open mind.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Commission received the minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2019.

It was requested that Minute 60. Apologies for Absence be amended to record Councillor Aqbany's apologies as those were passed to the Vice Chair prior to the meeting.

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting held 20 March 2019 be agreed as a correct record subject to the above amendment.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

NOTED:

The Terms of Reference of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission be noted.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION 2019/20

NOTED:

The Membership of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission for the 2019/20 municipal year as follows:

Councillor Khote (Chair) Councillor Thalakdur (Vice Chair) Councillor Ali Councillor Aqbany Councillor Govind Councillor Joshi Councillor Solanki (1 unallocated non-grouped place).

6. DATES OF COMMISSION MEETINGS 2019/20

NOTED:

The dates of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission for the 2019/20 municipal year as follows:

Wednesday 3 July 2019 Wednesday 4 September 2019 Wednesday 30 October 2019 Wednesday 15 January 2020 Wednesday 4 March 2020 Wednesday 22 April 2020

7. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

8. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that there were no questions, representations or statements of case received.

9. PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW

The Director of Neighbourhoods and Environmental Services and the Director of Finance delivered an overview of the key areas and services relating to the

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission portfolio.

Members noted the presentation on Neighborhood and Environmental Services and verbal update on the aspects of the Finance Division which related to this Commission. The work areas were noted, which would help them to set the Commission's Work Programme for the forthcoming year.

Members discussed various portfolio areas which included the following points:

Members praised officers for the swift responses with traveller issues and on illegal sites at hot spots in the city. Members suggested that railings or grass verges/soil bunds could be used to deter unauthorised encampments. Officers confirmed target hardening is used where appropriate. Members were reassured that the Council had robust systems to deal with these issues across the city.

Officers from the service were praised for the work carried out on Melton Road where footways had been cleaned and prompt action had been taken to tackle Pan spitting.

Concerns were raised about anti-social behaviour issues in the city's parks and when this occurs the impact this can have on families and vulnerable people that use the parks. Members suggested that the Council should explore solutions for this as it was a city-wide problem. The safety of parks was noted and that measures to provide reassurance and to tackle any issues were in place including the employment of parks officers, work with the police if required and use of security as appropriate. Officers asked Members to highlight any particular concerns and they will follow up.

Members reported issues regarding maintenance around the Courtyards on the St Peters and St Matthews Housing Estate and suggested a visit. Officers said they would support and link in with Housing colleagues.

Members enquired about the use of the Love Leicester app and the impact it had on the service. Officers agreed to provide details to Members.

Members referred to the CCTV System and the recent £1.2 million investment. A question was asked about the use of and access to mobile CCTV cameras. It was confirmed that the investment included purchase of additional mobile cameras. Camera deployment was supported by a risk-based assessment so that cameras were placed in locations with the most need at the time. It was noted that there tended to be a high demand for cameras sometimes fuelled by the perception of crime or community safety concerns as opposed to actual crime being known to take place in an area.

Members raised questions about the service delivered by Biffa and environmental impacts of waste disposal. Officers confirmed that the City Council had a contract with waste management company, Biffa Leicester, and confirmed the disposal routes available including the recycling of waste and at Gypsum Close Household Waste Recycling Centre the available reuse shop that is run by local charity LOROS. It was noted some waste did go abroad but there were strict regulations governing that, that Biffa Leicester were required to adhere to.

Members discussed littering associated with legal highs and enquired about the Council's policy to prevent the issue escalating further. It was noted that the Council had introduced a Public Space Protection Order for New Psychoactive Substances and the action available under the PSPO, including the ongoing role of the Police and also use of dispersal orders.

Members were asked to raise any specific ward issues outside of the meeting.

Members noted that the major challenge to services and all Councils was the reduction in funding. However, despite this, good outcomes were being achieved such as reduction in fly tipping and improvements in Food Safety Standards. To further improve the delivery and access to services, Officers were looking at for example, smart technologies to improve customer contact. The Director of Finance advised that customers were encouraged to access services independently and hubs were available in libraries and community centres around the city. Information was available online and Officers agreed to sign post Members and highlight these facilities, so Members can share details with constituents.

Members were informed that the Council were developing plans for consultation in the future for a Selective Licensing scheme in areas where there was a high density of privately rented accommodation. Initially locations such as parts of Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields, Castle, Fosse, Saffron, Stoneygate and Westcotes wards.

Members enquired about business rates and it was noted that the Valuation Office determined this and that the Council were only responsible for billing and collecting the business rates.

Agreed:

- 1) That an option of joint working with Housing Scrutiny Commission on "Universal Credit" to be added to the work programme.
- 2) That the Director of Finance circulate details of multi hub locations through the Members Bulletin to all members.
- 3) That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be requested to progress and action the priorities for the service mentioned in his presentation.

10. REGULATION OF LEICESTER'S FOOD BUSINESS SECTOR - THE SERVICE PLAN 2019/20

The Director of Neighbourhoods and Environmental Services submitted a report introducing the draft Food Services Plan 2019/20.

Deputy City Mayor Clair introduced the report and Members were asked to

note the report.

The Food Safety Manager delivered a presentation supporting the report.

Members of the Commission discussed various areas, which included the following points:

Members shared their concerns with pan masala packets that are imported and sold. Members enquired whether there were any licensing policies to monitor the sale of this product. It was noted that the Food Standards Agency were responsible for testing significant quantities of food imports and if poor products were identified authorities were then notified. Imported products that were sold under the counter were products that were problematic as they would not be declared correctly.

It was noted that planned Food Safety inspections took place periodically and as appropriate dependent on the potential risk posed by an establishment and the products it sells.

Members suggested that a forum, similar to the Food and Drink Forum launched recently, where information could be shared by regulators would be a means of keeping both people and businesses informed.

Members shared their concerns about private catering businesses and those that were advertised online via social media. Officers advised that all food businesses should be registered with the service and if they came across any that had not previously been detected they would take the appropriate action. It was noted that festivals with stalls did have to meet hygiene standards.

Members of the commission welcomed the report and praised the Food Safety Team for the work they do in ensuring the public felt reassured with the standard of food businesses in the city. Displaying the hygiene rating and information was helpful however it was noted that it was the view of the committee that, the display of the hygiene rating that is displayed in many of the Food outlets should be made mandatory. Officers informed the Commission that the Food Standards Agency were keen to do this but there had been delays due to Brexit.

Members of the Commission were informed on the plans the Food Safety Service had with the Public Health Team to launch Health Food takeaways.

Members noted the Service were also looking into apprenticeship options to give young people the opportunity to be introduced to and work within Environmental Health/Safety.

Agreed:

- 1) That the Food Safety Team be commended for the great work they carry out and;
- 2) That the Food Safety team consider reaching out to young people in the city to raise awareness of food safety issues and the impact this

can have.

11. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

The current work programme was received. Members of the Commission were invited to submit suggestions for items for inclusion on the work programme to the Chair or Scrutiny Policy Officer.

The Chair suggested a possible task group topic which was a community lottery, this would give the Commission to look at advantages and disadvantages. Members were asked to pass any comments or other suggestions to the Scrutiny Policy Officer.

AGREED:

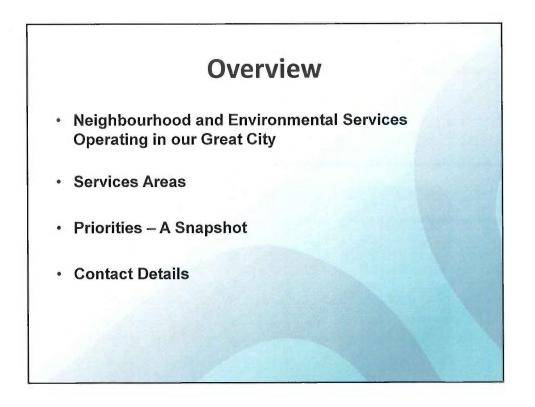
That the work programme be noted.

12. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

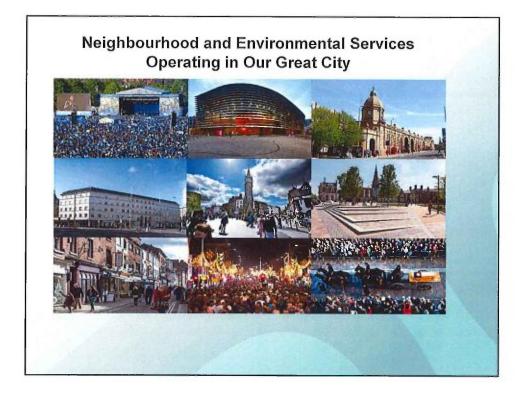
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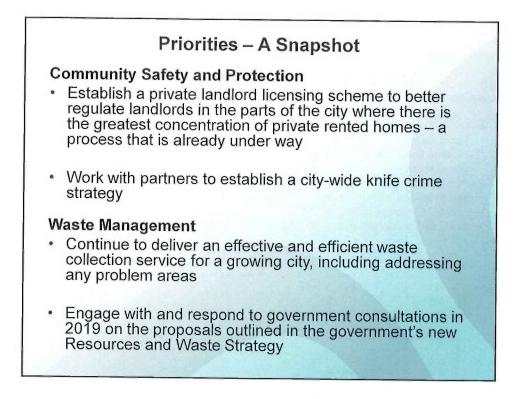


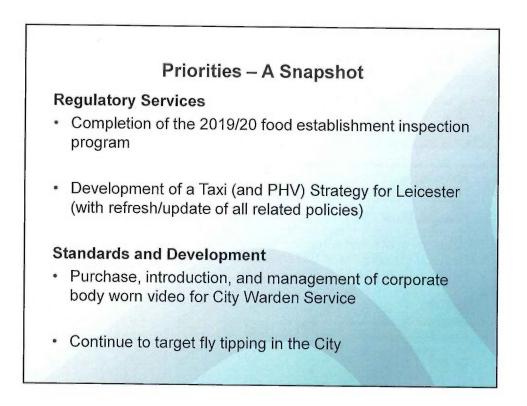


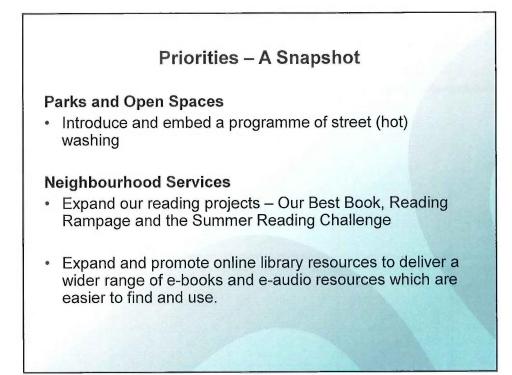


 Building Control - seek to protect the safety of the public from dans structures and demolitions





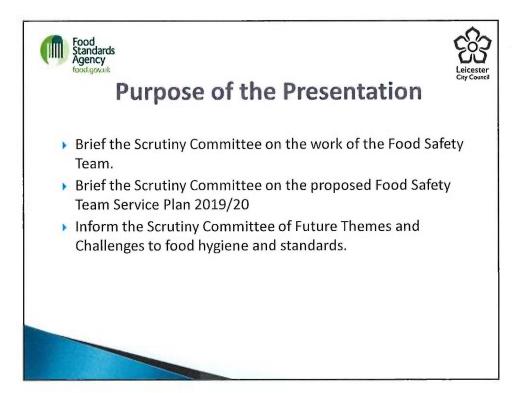






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Establishment Type	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Primary producers	0	0	0	0	1
manufacturers & distributers	73	81	90	93	100
importers/exporters	6	6	9	7	17
distributors/transporters	77	82	87	94	95
retailers	730	773	782	795	821
restaurants & caterers	1942	2000	2028	1991	2079
totals	2828	2942	2996	2980	3113
 3113 Food Establish Growth overall Significant turn ove Approx 50% subject 	r approx.	550 new reg		year.	

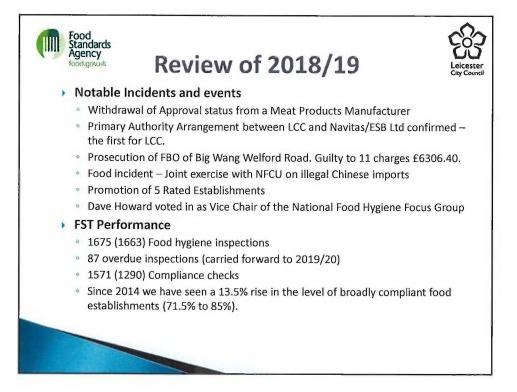


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