



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: TUESDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2022 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Thalukdar (Chair)

Councillor Kitterick Councillor O'Donnell
Councillor Pickering Councillor Rahman

In Attendance:

Councillor Clair, Deputy City Mayor for Culture, Leisure, Sport, and Regulatory
Services

Councillor Clarke, Deputy City Mayor for Environment and Transportation

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39. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Solanki.

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to disclose any pecuniary or other interest they may have in the business on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

41. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair announced that he would take the agenda items out of order, starting with the Textiles Presentation.

42. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission held 4 October 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

43. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

44. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Chair announced that a number of questions had been received as set out in the agenda and these would be taken during the Textiles Factories – Pollution report item.

45. TEXTILES FACTORIES - POLLUTION REPORT

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submitted a presentation to give the Commission an oversight of Textile Manufacturing and Dye Works in Leicester.

The Head of Regulatory, Neighbourhood and Environmental Services presented the item.

It was noted that:

- Currently there were five Dye Works in Leicester City, of which two were Environment Agency regulated.
- The size and scale of the activity was the deciding factor in whether the regulations were monitored by the Local Authority or Environment Agency.
- The cleaning process at the factories involved the use of heat and solvents which gave rise to odour emission. The solvents had a low odour threshold, which could give rise to complaints.
- The Local Authority is bound by the Environmental Protection Act 1990. responsible to investigate any complaints in relation to statutory nuisance and has the power to serve an abatement notice.
- The Environment Agency (EA) deals with premises under the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999, where the capacity is greater than ten tonnes per day. A permit is required and any complaints would be dealt with by the Environment Agency.
- Permitted Textile and Fabric finishing sites must operate to Sector Guidance Note 6/08(11). Statutory guidance for textile and fabric finishing and coating sets emission limits within the permit, which must not be exceeded by the company using them.
- The 6/08(11) guidance was due for review and revised guidance was expected in early 2023.
- The new guidance would require existing companies to reapply to the Environment Agency for a new permit.
- A general principle was that businesses must operate with the Best Available Technology (BAT).
- A case study was noted where Eurodyers Ltd was prosecuted by the EA for operating without a permit. The site was then taken over by Saffron Shades, which operated under the ten tonne threshold and no longer required a permit.

Several complaints were received and the Pollution Team investigated using Statutory Nuisance powers. Odour nuisance was witnessed in June 2022 and a site visit was made to the premises. Advice was given during the visit and Saffron Shades had continued to work to improve the factory. Complaints then reduced and no further nuisances had been witnessed.

- A compliance revisit was scheduled with Saffron Shades for later in the month.
- A second case study Colours Dyeworks was raised previously at the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny due to odour and noise complaints. As it was a site that was over the ten tonne limit it was the responsibility of the EA to investigate complaints about that site.
- Colour Dyeworks had an A1 permit to operate. This permit contained a number of conditions that the operators must comply with including noise, odour, water, and energy efficiency.
- The last time that stack emissions had been modified was 2006. The results showed that the impact from the stenter stack was 'insignificant' and no Environmental Quality Standard (EQS), Environmental Assessment Levels (EAL) or Statutory Emission Limit Values (ELV) were breached.
- In September 2021 there was an increase in complaints to the Noise and Pollution team regarding odour. This prompted a further investigation with the EA. In May 2022 a joint site visit was carried out which found that operating conditions at the site were good and the EA were satisfied with operating practices.
- As part of the companies odour management controls, any complaints are logged and they should be lodged directly with the EA to investigate - . Residents have been advised to contact the EA.
- During the visit to Colours Dyeworks, they advised that they were in the process of updating the abatement technology, the kit was on site and due to be installed by February 2023.
- A sister company in the City, Jersey Dyers, had recently installed the same abatement technology with very good results. Officers from the Pollution Team had inspected and noted considerable improvements in odour control. The company had also seen huge energy savings.
- The textile industry was considered low risk in terms of emissions. For this reason it was thought that the new textile industry guidance requirements were likely to be similar to the required levels in the previous 2003 sector guidance note. There was likely to be a requirement for annual stack monitoring.
- With previous knowledge of the process for site inspections and the installation of the KMA abatement kit, Its anticipated that levels of pollutants will be well within required standards.
- It could be possible that emissions monitoring could report as 'below detection limits' as the equipment had limits to which it can accurately test. This would not report a zero emission, but that the emission is below the limit of detection.
- Leicester had the second largest concentration of textile firms in the country, and was the largest for garment manufacture, employing over a fifth of the UK textiles workforce. The sector was worth over £500m to the local economy and was a priority for the local economy.
- A review of the Leicester Labour Market Partnership, that looked at ways to proactively address concerns of non-compliance in Leicester's garment sector had recently been published, this aligned with Operation Tacit – an enforcement

partnership made up of – GLAA, HSE, National Crime Agency, Leicestershire Police to tackle labour abuse and modern slavery

- Leicester City Council had taken a leading role in helping to align the work of a range of organisations engaged in supporting local businesses, community organisations and textiles workers.

In response to the questions asked by Mr Ball and Members it was noted that:

- In terms of health risk, Leicester City Council were regulating with the Environment Agency to permitted standards. Colour Dyeworks was allowed to operate within those permitted standards.
- Colour Dyeworks was a company that was improving and were installing the appropriate abatement technology that meets the recognised legal standards.
- When applying for a permit, a business was required to carry out emissions monitoring to show standards met to receive the permit however there was currently no requirement for future monitoring as part of that process.
- When asked if there had been any monitoring of benzene levels, it was noted that the Environmental Agency should be approached to provide information on what the stack emissions contained.
- The site visit that took place in May 2022 was a full inspection of the operational procedures from start to finish, including process controls, how they monitor and maintain process parameters and checking of their maintenance and record keeping.
- In the time between January 2022 and July 2022 ten complaints had been logged with the Environment Agency.
- If a new site were to apply for a permit, then the Planning and Pollution team would assess any impact on the surrounding area and look at steps that may mitigate those impacts. There would also be opportunities for parties to object.

AGREED:

1. That the contents of the report be noted and comments made by Members of the Commission taken into account as set out above.
2. That the Commission be provided with any information from the EA on benzene monitoring as part of pollution control.
3. That the Commission be provided with details of all site visit records and audit trails in relation to Colour Dyers.
4. That the Commission are updated on the new 6/08(11) guidance legalisation due in 2023.
5. That the Commission receive an update report relating to Colour Dyers after February 2023 on the installation of the new abatement equipment and outcomes.
6. That the Environmental Agency be invited to a future committee meeting to explore this topic further.
7. That an updated report on Textiles Factories be scheduled to a future meeting.

46. NOISE AND POLLUTION SERVICES - DASHBOARD PERFORMANCE

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submitted a presentation on the Noise and Pollution Teams Overview and Performance Dashboard.

The Deputy City Mayor for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Regulatory Services introduced the report informing how noise pollution was being monitored and investigated and noting that noise pollution could be detrimental to people's health.

The Head of Neighbourhoods and Environmental Services presented the item, it was noted that:

- The Noise and Pollution Control (NPC) Team investigate complaints of statutory nuisance.
- Statutory nuisance can be caused by noise, odour, smoke, dust arising from one property that materially interferes with the enjoyment of others. This could be for residential or commercial premises.
- The monitoring service runs Monday to Friday during office hours and Wednesday to Saturday nights until 02.00 hours.
- Almost 4000 noise complaints were received between 2021-22. This figure included complaints with multiple calls about ongoing issues.
- Residents could submit a complaint online at <https://my.leicester.gov.uk/>
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- The largest number of complaints related to loud music, which equated to over 1000 complaints in 2021-22.
- The noise team worked alongside the licensing team to tackle loud music complaints relating to bars and pubs.
- 160 complaints were received regarding bonfires in 2021-22.
- The target response time to complaint calls was 1 hour. 77% of call outs were cancelled before the team arrived on site.
- Of all the calls received in 2021-22, 91% were actioned within the hour.
- A case study completed on a venue in September 2022 resulted in 12 pieces of sound equipment being seized, a review of the premises licence and charges of £800 to get the equipment back.

In response to Members' questions, it was noted that:

- The increase in domestic violence was being dealt with in partnership between the noise and pollution team and CrASBU. If the circumstances showed sufficient evidence of a noise complaint in its own right it would be actioned for prosecution. If safety was involved then CrASBU would take their own action separately and use evidence provided from the noise and pollution team.

- Leicester City Council was one of the few Councils that still operated a telephone system for noise complaints and offered a one hour response. If the noise had stopped before an officer were to be present, it would be advised to notify the noise team as the officer could be diverted to the next complaint.

AGREED:

That the Commission receive a report over view of the Noise and Pollution teams work in six months' time.

47. STREET CLEANSING REPORT

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submitted a presentation on the Neighbourhood Services Litter and Street Cleansing Strategy for Leicester.

The Deputy City Mayor for Environment and Transportation introduced the item.

The Head of Parks and Open Spaces presented the report, it was noted that:

- Leicester City Council (LCC) have a statutory duty to maintain DEFRA statutory requirements for Litter, detritus, Cleansing Services also undertake graffiti, fly posting removal, abandoned vehicles, public toilet maintenance, needle collection, out of hours cover, gum and stain removal.
- DEFRA statutory requirements were bound under section 89(7) of the Environmental Protection ACT 1990, "To ensure that their land (or land for which they are responsible) is, so far as is practicable, kept clear of litter and refuse."
- The reports for 2021-22 citywide performance showed that Leicester was operating above the national standard in all areas.
- Leicester's 21 wards are inspected on a quarterly basis, 16 random locations are inspected for Litter, Detritus, Graffiti and flyposting.
- Standards were achieved with support from the Street Cleaning teams, made up of 58 staff across 8 teams who clean 3000 streets per week.
- For the last 3 years, LCC had been in operation with BID Leicester on City Centre Gum Buster, with an average of 500 gum stains removed daily.
- Leicester has 1752 multi-purpose litter and dog waste bins, which are installed, repaired and maintained by the Cleansing Services Team.
- In 2021, 138k of capital funding was used to refurbish the public toilets at Welford Road, Humberstone Park, Western Park, Knighton Lane East, East Park Road, Abbey Park and Knighton Park.
- In 2020 self-contained graffiti removal vehicles were introduced. The data for 2021 shows that 6457 tags were removed from 1528 locations.

In response to Members' questions, it was noted that:

- All needle data is collected, LCC work closely with the police and all data was recorded on a database.
- The public toilets on Infirmary Square and Belgrave Road were closed down due to misuse and a hotspot for needles and drug paraphernalia.
- Ongoing monitoring in key areas within the city centre. Chewing gum was a nationwide issue, LCC were currently working on ideas such as messages being displayed on electronic billboards and the campaign was also sponsored by chewing gum manufacturers.

Members expressed thanks to the Cleansing Team for keeping Leicester clean.

AGREED:

That the Commission receive a copy of the report on Street Cleansing for 2022.

48. LEICESTER EAST SITUATION

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental services gave a verbal update on the recent events occurring in Leicester East

It was noted that:

- The Diwali period was successful and over 40,000 people gathered on Belgrave Road peacefully to take part in organised events.
- Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and Library had also resumed to usual capacity and this was taken as public confidence with residents returning to those facilities.
- Leicester City Council (LCC) continued to work with Public Sector Partners, Neighbouring Authorities and Blue Light Services.
- Work was continuing to promote young people coming forward as community volunteers and leaders.
- Leicestershire Police had made 73 arrests in relation to the May and September incidents.
- Intelligence was key to supporting Leicestershire Police ongoing work, and they had requested the public to provide information directly to them.
- LCC were continuing to work with the Central Government and the Home Office to support future work and learning from what had happened in Leicester and how that would reflect on the national picture.

Councillor Clair, Deputy City Mayor, Culture Leisure and Tourism thanked the Director for the update and noted that the Abbey Park bonfire event had a record turnout of 26000 people.

In response to Members questions, it was noted that:

- LCC was continuing to work closely with schools and colleges to review the Prevent agenda.

- Police liaison officers were visiting schools and colleges daily, to try and identify any early signs of extremism.
- The co-ordinating group had been meeting every 14 days, rather than every 7 as they felt the risk was declining.
- The situation had shown signs of stabilization, although there was still some tensions in the city.
- At this stage there were no proposed timelines for the review.

AGREED:

1. That all Commission Members receive an update by email on the development of the situation.
2. That inquiries into the causes of the situation are re-established on a cross community basis, at the earliest possible opportunity.

49. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair noted that any suggestions for future items should be emailed to himself or the Scrutiny Policy Officer.

Members requested an update on the re-tendering of the Biffa Contract be added to the work programme.

AGREED:

That an update on Aylestone Dyeworks and the re-tendering of the Biffa Contract be added to the work programme for scheduling to a future Commission meeting.

50. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

With there being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.30pm.