



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCRUTINY
COMMISSION

Held: THURSDAY, 4 JULY 2013 at 5.30pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Cutkelvin (Chair)
Councillor Gugnani (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Bhatti	Councillor Desai
Councillor Cleaver	Councillor Grant
Councillor Corral	Councillor Naylor

Also present:

Councillor Russell – Assistant City Mayor (Neighbourhood Services)
Councillor Mrs Sood – Assistant City Mayor (Community Involvement)

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17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this time.

19. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission held on 4th June 2013, as previously circulated, be agreed as a correct record.

20. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

i) **Minute 10 – City Mayor’s Delivery Plan**

It was noted that the regular quarterly updates on the relevant targets had yet to commence.

ii) **Minute 11 – Work Programme**

It was noted that the items raised for discussion at future meetings had been incorporated into the Work Programme 2013/14.

iii) **Community Services Fees and Charges Scheme**

Members were reminded that a Special Meeting of the Scrutiny Commission was to be held at 5.30pm on Tuesday 20th August to discuss this scheme in detail and to consider the feedback from the current consultation exercise.

21. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

22. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that no questions, representations or statements of case had been received.

23. NEW HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE

The Director of Environmental Services presented a report that provided the Commission with information about Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) in the City and the recent decision of the Assistant City Mayor to approve the development of a new HWRC at Gypsum Close.

A brief presentation was given that highlighted the ways household waste was collected and members were informed that currently some 70% of household waste collected was diverted from going to landfill. The levels of complaints received regarding household waste collections were decreasing year on year and the success rate of household collections was currently 99.98%. The Commission were informed that the City Council would be continuing to offer a weekly household collection, unlike some areas that were moving to fortnightly collections.

Councillor Russell, Assistant City Mayor stated that the City Council had recently been awarded £3.5m to fund a new Household Waste recycling Centre (HWRC) and that, as part of this facility it was intended to recycle various items collected and make these available to the more disadvantaged people in Leicester and a pilot would be run to assess the demand for such a service in conjunction with the Voluntary and Charity sector. The Commission expressed the view that the results of the pilot be brought back.

RESOLVED:

that the information be noted and that feedback on the pilot scheme to recycle certain goods collected be reported back to the Commission in November/December 2013.

24. WARD COMMUNITY MEETINGS (WCMS) IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Director Delivery, Communications and Political Governance presented a report that outlined the work undertaken to date on the Ward Community Meeting improvement project, in three wards across the city initially. The three wards had been Freeman, Charnwood and Westcotes, with Eyres Monsell subsequently added as it was taking an innovative approach to replace its ward meetings with community walkabouts. Members were informed that the outcome of the project was to enable more effective and less bureaucratic meetings to take place, together with improved communications and marketing, a streamlined process for community ward budgets and the recruitment (six month secondment) of a community engagement officer. This officer would help to achieve a more consistent good practice and dedicated resource across all wards. It was however recognised that there was a need for flexibility but that a 'one size fits all' approach would not be followed.

The Scrutiny Commission were informed that the community engagement had now been recruited, on a six month secondment and consultations was underway with the ward councillors of the additional new wards to be included in the second phase of the pilot along with the previous 4 wards, namely: -

Evington
New Parks
Thurncourt
Spinney Hills
Coleman
Belgrave and Latimer

Feedback on the impact of the implementation arrangements on the ten wards, the evaluation and feedback results and options for improvements and recommendations for the future would be brought back to this Scrutiny Commission. The Chair indicated that this topic would be kept on the Agenda for the foreseeable future.

Discussion took place around finding ways of communicating more effectively with local people, as it was felt that meetings were not always the best approach although an alternative approach could be to look at opportunities for the public to be involved in the building of agendas. Use of social media was suggested as part of a communications strategy and also to look at those wards where attendances were consistently high. A further alternative was to look at combining several existing meetings in an area into one meeting.

Other issues highlighted were the shortage of suitable venues in several wards and of the need to undertake more careful checks on whether funding given

had actually been spent for the purposes intended and of processes to reclaim funding if necessary. A query was raised around the joint bids process when funding was applied for from more than one Ward. Officers stated that there was a need to look at the whole application process as well as joint bids. A suggestion was made that councillors should be made more accountable for their respective ward budgets and also for the meetings.

In concluding the Chair stated that it would be useful to have formal feedback from councillors who had been involved in Phase 1 of the pilot as well as gathering information on the areas of good practice going on across the City and highlight what actually works well as part of the phase 2 pilot process.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the draft Councillor Guide, circulated with the report, be brought back to this Commission before being circulated to all councillors**
- 2) that feedback be obtained from those councillors involved in phase 1 of the pilot, particularly around the proposed implementation arrangements and communications strategy outlined as part of phase 2 of the pilot and reported back to this Commission**
- 3) that more work be undertaken to engage Young People in the Ward Community Meeting process.**

25. TRANSFORMING NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

The Director of Culture and Neighbourhood Services gave a presentation that briefed the Scrutiny Commission on the progress and approach to the Neighbourhood Transformation Project.

Councillor Russell, Assistant City Mayor (Neighbourhood Services) outlined the key points in the presentation prior to the detailed presentation being given.

The presentation covered the following areas: -

- **Introductory Information**
 - Progress to date
 - Programme structure
 - Vision statement
- **A vision for neighbourhood working**
 - The Council's ambition and direction for neighbourhood based services
- **People and Places**
 - A brief description of Leicester's neighbourhoods

- **Current Provision**
Information and analysis on the current provision in neighbourhoods
- **Managing change**
Developing the vision
Involving residents and partner organisations
Exploring service integration and new ways of working
Managing the organisational implications.

Members were informed that the purpose of the exercise outlined analysing the buildings available with a view to utilising them more efficiently with shrinking resources. A series of options was likely to be put forward at the end of the exercise as there was a need to reduce the budget currently spent on the service. A brief update on progress with the project would be given at each meeting of the Scrutiny Commission.

The Scrutiny Commission noted the presentation and welcomed the consultation that had already taken place and further requested that they be given a chance to look at the consultation about to be undertaken with residents/service users/volunteers in the areas under review prior to the final decision being taken by the City Mayor and Executive.

RESOLVED:

- 1) **that the presentation be noted**
- 2) **the Scrutiny Commission to receive the feedback on the consultation about to be undertaken with residents/service users/volunteers in the areas under review prior to the final decision being taken by the City Mayor and the Executive.**

26. ACCESS CONTROL PILOT

The Director of Culture and Neighbourhood Services presented a report that presented information on progress and outcomes from the introduction of the Access Controlled (ACS) entry scheme across 4 sites ranging from small and medium sized community facilities. The report also set out proposals to roll out the access control scheme across community facilities following the programme outlined in the report.

Members considered the report and questioned whether issues around the resolution of conflicts had been considered and officers responded by stating that they would ensure that this was included within the Site Induction Pack to be made available to all users of community facilities.

Members were further informed that systems were in place to extend the ACS system to a number of facilities although there were concerns as to its

operation in larger buildings that could lead to operational difficulties and might mean that such buildings would continue to be operated by staff. Although smaller ACS equipped facilities would not be staffed at all there would be staff members available on-line at all times offer support and advice.

Members stated that the information contained in the various responses received from key holders to the sample survey on the ACS, and appended to the report, was very useful and questioned whether the issues identified had been actioned. Officers stated that a number of the issues had already been resolved and would continue to be addressed as they were raised.

In concluding the Commission welcomed the access arrangements outlined in the report and of the plans for extending the scheme but expressed the view that they be kept informed of progress as the scheme was rolled out.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the access arrangements, as outlined in the report be welcomed**
- 2) that the Scrutiny Commission be provided with regular progress updates as the access scheme is rolled out to community facilities across the City.**

27. WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Commission received th Draft Work Programme for 2013/14 for consideration and comment.

It was noted that the suggestions made by members at the last meeting had been incorporated into the Work Programme.

Members were reminded that a Special Meeting of the Scrutiny Commission had been arranged for Tuesday 20th August 2013 at 5.30pm to consider the following items: -

- Community Centres Charging Scheme
- Move of Customer Services Centre
- City Wardens

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the Draft Work Programme 2013/14, as circulated, be received**
- 2) that a Site Visit be arranged to enable members of theScrutiny Commission to visit the existing Customer Service Centre at New Walk Centre prior to the Special Meeting on 20th August 2013.**

Suggested dates and times to be circulated.

28. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Urgent Business.

29. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.00pm.

