Leicester
City Council

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

Held: WEDNESDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2016 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Cutkelvin (Chair)
Councillor Gugnani (Vice Chair)

Councillor Aldred
Councillor Dr Chowdhury
Councillor Fonseca
Councillor Halford

Councillor Hunter

In Attendance

Councillor Master, Assistant City Mayor - Neighbourhood Services
Councillor Waddington, Assistant City Mayor - Jobs & Skills

Councillor Sood – Ward Councillor , Belgrave

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48. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Aldred declared a Regular Other Disclosable Interest in agenda item 10, Transforming Neighbourhood Services- North East, in that she was on the Community Centre, Community Association.

50. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) 5 October 2016

Members of the Commission were asked to confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission held 5 October 2016.

The Director, Neighbourhood and Environmental Services requested the following amendments to the minutes of the meeting held 5 October 2016 (new wording in italics):

Agenda item 35, Paragraph 7, bullet point 5

The bulky waste collection service currently cost approximately ~~£350,000~~ *£360,000* per annum to provide;

Agenda item 24, Paragraph 7, bullet point 13

- The ~~Waste Standards Authority~~ *Food Standards Agency* had ~~identified~~ *felt that* Leicester ~~as being very similar~~ *was comparable* to a London borough ~~in terms of waste management, so this Council's service had been bench-marked against equivalent London boroughs, as well as neighbouring authorities~~. However, *although some comparisons with London boroughs could be made, it was recognised that Leicester was very different to* ~~the expectations of residents in~~ a London borough ~~could be very different to those of residents in Leicester~~, so Members expressed some caution about the appropriateness of this comparison;

AGREED:

that the minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission held 5 October 2016, as amended above, be confirmed as a correct record.

b) <u>16 November 2016</u>

Members were also asked to confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission held 16 November 2016

AGREED:

that the minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission held 16 November 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.

51. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

52. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

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

53. PROGRESS ON ACTIONS AGREED AT THE LAST MEETING

The Chair outlined the progress on actions as agreed at the previous meetings.

Points made included the following:

Meeting held 16 November 2016

The Chair reiterated that the Executive had been urged to look at making concessions available for those people reliant on welfare benefits.

Meeting held 5 October 2016

Welfare Reform

The Chair stated that it had been agreed to supply Members with copies of the leaflet advising people on how to apply for assistance when facing financial hardship.

The Chair believed that the Assistant City Mayor for Children, Young People and Schools had been asked to ensure that the opportunities available for the personal development of children in households with decreasing income were monitored, to ensure that those children were not disproportionately disadvantaged because of the welfare reforms.

Citizens Advice Leicestershire City Advice Services Contract Performance 2015-16

Members indicated that they had not received information on how clients and Councillors could access Citizen's Advice LeicesterShire advice services. The Chair asked for the Head of Revenues and Customer Support to send this information again direct to each Councillor and for it to be included in the information bulletin issued by Members' Services.

The Chair announced that she would change the running order of business on the agenda, and the item on Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East, would be considered next.

54. TRANSFORMING NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES - NORTH EAST

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submitted a report that provided an overview of progress to date on the Transforming Neighbourhood Services (TNS) Programme in the North East area of Leicester.

The Director presented the report and then Mr Mashru, a local resident addressed the Commission in relation to the Belgrave Lunch Club. Mr Mashru's presentation included the following points:

- The Belgrave Lunch Club was fully committed to working with the Council to reduce costs.

- In the event of there being a new kitchen, they would like one to cater for at least 100 people as there were plans to expand the lunch club.

- The lunch club catered for the elderly and for people who were lonely with no one to care for them or to provide them with a meal. People were encouraged to come to the club to socialise. There were concerns that their health and wellbeing would deteriorate without this facility.

- Service users and families were concerned for the future of the lunch club.

Councillor Sood, as Ward Councillor for Belgrave, then addressed the Commission, and her points included the following:

- The lunch club had been running for several years and service users came from different areas of the City.

- The food was served on time.

- The club was useful for social networking.

- People were grateful that the library would remain open.

- The service users wanted their food to be cooked on the premises, rather than being cooked elsewhere and brought in.

The Chair stated that a number of questions had been submitted, which had arrived after the deadline for submitting questions to this particular meeting; however officers would respond directly to the person who had submitted the questions.

The Assistant Mayor, Neighbourhood Services explained that as part of the TNS programme, the Council were looking at all the services to establish whether they provided the best value for money, and to consider where improvements could be made. One of the proposals being considered was to reduce the size of the kitchen in the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre.

Councillor Hunter stated that another proposal was to close the Northfields Neighbourhood Centre, and she questioned how officers had worked with groups to find an alternative facility for them. The Senior Project Manager, Neighbourhood Services explained that there was a proposal to transfer the Northfields Neighbourhood Centre as a community asset, so that it would be open to the user groups. Officers would need to work with six or seven groups, some of which used other centres as well as the Northfield Centre. Councillor Hunter reiterated the need to work with those groups, as she said they would need support.

Councillor Hunter referred to the proposals for the Armadale Youth Centre and the Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre. The Senior Project Officer responded that the two buildings faced each other and this presented an opportunity for them to be used more efficiently. A consultation had taken place with the Youth Service and there was no suggestion that there would be a reduction in staff.

The Chair commented that TNS, when it first started, did not involve youth centres, but noted that they were now included. She said that youth groups really valued their own space and being able to make it their own. Officers were asked whether they had considered the possibility of tensions arising from situations where there were two very different groups meeting alongside each other. For example, some older people might feel uncomfortable alongside groups of teenagers. The Senior Project Officer responded that this issue had been raised and considered. They would need to give some thought as to how they could facilitate youth groups wishing to display their material.

Councillor Chowdhury commented that, with reference to community asset transfer, he had worked in a voluntary centre for many years and was aware that people in voluntary organisations had many responsibilities, and it was very difficult for them to compete with businesses. He stated that the Council needed to work with groups to facilitate the process in order to prevent another facility from disappearing.

The Chair stated that the Commission had previously expressed concerns about community asset transfers, and it was on the Commission's work programme for consideration at their next meeting on 25 January 2017. There had previously been problems over different groups gaining access and increasing hire costs. The Assistant Mayor responded that lessons had been learned from every community asset transfer that had occurred. The process commenced early, so that interested groups would know what they were undertaking and would have full access to the financial details. The Council did not undertake the process lightly and wanted it to succeed. They were aware that there had been occasions where groups having taken on the asset transfer, had excluded other groups or overcharged them. The Council were working with groups so that they fully understood the commitment they were undertaking. However, the process could work and some groups had made a success of their asset transfer.

Councillor Halford questioned whether officers were working closely with the Ward Councillors; she had become a Councillor half way through the TNS programme in her area and at the time had not felt fully consulted. The Assistant Mayor responded that the Ward Councillors were involved at every stage and had been invited to the consultation meetings. The Senior Project Officer added that a lot of work had been carried out to ensure consultation forms, with tear off response slips reached as wider range of people as possible. These had also been provided in other languages and translators had been provided at meetings. In respect of the criteria for agreeing for a group to take on a community asset transfer, officers checked that the successful group had the capacity and understanding for what they were undertaking and that it would fit in with the local community.

The Chair commented that the report referred to two centres as potentially providing some housing provision and she questioned whether self-service housing provision had been explored. The Senior Project Officer explained that officers were looking at some self-service options at the Belgrave and Hamilton Libraries, where there could be telephone access to customer

services. People had requested greater access to council services. The libraries were being considered because there was no front line housing office in those areas.

The Chair commented that people had been concerned about increased charges and in 2013, when TNS had been previously considered at Scrutiny, the Commission had requested a simplified system. The Head of Neighbourhood Services responded that the council had not increased charges last year, but they had been simplified.

RECOMMENDED:

1) Officers are asked to continue to talk to user groups to find a workable solution in respect of the Lunch Club held in the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, as it is clear that the club provided benefit for people in the community.

2) In respect of youth services, the Commission has concerns about putting groups of a very different demography alongside each other and request that consideration be given to making separate access or entrances available.

3) The Commission express concerns that the Youth Services Review is separate to the Transforming Neighbourhood Services Programme, and suggest that in future, those reviews are held at the same time.

4) The concept of shared space, such as café areas, in community and neighbourhood centres be re-visited, to ensure that members of the community have some affordable and easy access.

Councillor Hunter withdrew from the meeting at this point.

6.40 pm - 6.45 pm. The Chair adjourned the meeting for a short break.

55. REGULATORY SERVICES SPENDING REVIEW

The Head of Regulatory Services delivered a presentation on the Regulatory Services Spending Review, a copy of which is attached at the back of the minutes.

The Head of Regulatory Services explained that Phase One of the review had been completed, but Phase Two was ongoing, and therefore there were constraints on how much he could update Commission Members, because of the need to consult staff and the trade unions. The review was necessary because of the significant financial challenges that the authority was facing.

In response to a question about domestic violence, the Director for Neighbourhood and Environmental Services explained that there was package of support and a hotline for anyone who was at risk. If Members were aware of anyone who was at risk from domestic violence, they were asked to let the officers know, and they would signpost if appropriate. The Chair stated that an officer had previously attended the Commission to talk about Domestic Violence and could be invited again at Members request.

A Member commented that the required amount of savings from the review must necessarily impact on staff, but Members had not yet been advised of that level of detail. The Director responded that as part of the review, there had been a reduction from three Heads of Service to just one.

The Chair asked as to what percentage of the regulatory services was statutory, and the Head of Service responded that it was very difficult to be specific, and while some services were statutory, it was difficult to say where the statutory duty ended.

The Chair asked about opportunities to generate money from regulatory services, and the Head of Service responded that some services such as licensing, generated income, although the Council only applied costs to break even. Training courses provided an income, and advice to businesses was also offered although there had not been a big demand for this service. Members also heard that there was a charge for pest control, although there was no charge for rat treatment.

The Chair thanked officers for the report and acknowledged that there was a huge scope to the regulatory services that the Council provided. It was noted that the scope included areas that could be of public concern, such as potential food poisoning incidents, if the work was not carried out properly.

56. CLEANSING SERVICES SPENDING REVIEW

The Head of Parks and Open Spaces delivered a presentation on the Cleansing Services Spending Review, a copy of which is attached to the back of the minutes. He explained that any changes needed to be made in a measured and careful way. The Chair then invited comments and queries from Members.

Several Members expressed concerns over the problem of people spitting chewing gum onto the pavements and allowing their dogs to foul in public spaces. The Director commented that to deal with issues such as these effectively, a number of measures were needed including campaigns, enforcements if appropriate and engagement with the community.

The Chair expressed frustration at the problem of reporting dog fouling on parks, because there appeared to be a lack of clarity as to whose responsibility it was to clear it up. The Chair asked whether there could be a single point of contact for members of the public to report the problem. The Commission were

advised that people could report dog fouling to Customer Services or via the Love Leicester App and from there, the correct team would be notified. Problems such as dog fouling could be mapped through the Love Leicester App, and the Council could target its resources using that data. However, all officers would be expected to forward any such complaints to the correct service, if it was outside of their remit.

A Member made reference to a very small park in the North Evington Ward and asked whether it could be transformed into a play area. The Head of Parks and Open Spaces explained that there was limited green space in that area, and by turning that park into exclusively a play park, other service users would be excluded.

The Chair stated that there were people with specialist skills within the team and she asked how those specialisms could be retained following the review. The Commission heard that people would have generic job descriptions, so there would be greater flexibility.

A question was raised relating to recycling at City Hall. The Head of Parks and Open Spaces explained that currently there was limited recycling at City Hall, but changes to this were anticipated and a new system was being considered within the Corporate Waste Contract.

AGREED:

that the presentation be noted.

57. CONSIDERATION OF THE FLY TIPPING STRATEGY

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submitted a report that provided Members of the Commission with an overview of fly-tipping incidents in Leicester. The report requested Members views on the actions that were taking place to address the issue.

Members were referred to the benchmark statistics in the report and it was noted that of the listed local authorities, Nottingham had the lowest incidents of fly tipping. The Director explained that Nottingham defined fly tipping differently to other authorities and they also had approximately 100 Community Protection Officers compared to Leicester's 9 City Wardens.

The Chair thanked Officers for the report, stating that it was helpful and demonstrated the numerous problems that arose from fly tipping.

It was noted that the report included a reference to Direct Surveillance and a Member queried what this was. The Commission heard that this was covert surveillance with cameras, which was carried out under close controls under the Regulatory Powers Act.

A Member praised the City Wardens, stating that she had worked with them on some incidences of fly tipping and they had been excellent.

A suggestion was made for the Council to provide skips in the community, which would be free for people to use. The Assistant Mayor for Neighbourhood Services responded that the Council had offered this as a free community facility in the past, but unfortunately the scheme had been misused by some traders who had used the skips to dispose of their trade waste. Community clean up events were still being held however in some wards in the City and cleaning kits could be provided free of charge for this purpose.

AGREED:

1) that the report be noted; and

2) that the Commission endorse section 7.1 of the report, detailing the areas that are being considered, and as appropriate developed, to support the Council's newly defined intelligence led approach to fly tipping.

58. UPDATE ON THE TASK GROUP REVIEW "GETTING THE BEST OUT OF OUR SERVICES IN NEIGHBOURHOODS"

The Chair announced that due to time pressures, the update on this Task Group Review would be deferred to the next meeting of the Commission.

59. SPENDING REVIEWS

The Chair stated that the Commission had received updates on most of the spending reviews, with the exception of Standards and Development.

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services responded that the Budget Monitoring Reports for Period 6 had been updated to reflect progress with the reviews, including that on Standards and Development.

60. WORK PROGRAMME

The Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission Work Programme was noted.

The Chair stated that training on 'Channel Shift' for Councillors would be held on Thursday 8 December at 5.30pm. All Members were encouraged to attend, as the issue impacted on the business of the Commission. The Democratic Support Officer was asked to email a reminder to Members.

61. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Regulatory Services Spending Review

Roman Leszczyszyn
Head of Regulatory Services

Regulatory Services

- Diverse range of services involved in the protection of the public and environment
- Net budget (2016/17) is £4.4m. Gross expenditure is £7m. Income is £2.6m (grants, internal commissions, licence fees, sale of services)
- Budget pressure – c.£200K (unrealisable income and increased establishment)
- Establishment is 158 FTE.

Regulatory Services

- **Communities**
  - Domestic Violence
  - Anti-Social Behaviour Unit
  - Community Safety
  - City Wardens
  - Enviro-crime
  - Private Sector Housing
  - Area Environmental Health
  - Pest Control/Dog Wardens
  - Noise and Pollution
  - Building Control
  - Building Safety & Protection
- **Businesses**
  - Licensing (alcohol, taxis, street trading, pet shops, etc)
  - Licensing Enforcement
  - Food Safety Team
  - Trading Standards
  - Public Safety (health & safety workers, sports grounds safety, public health outbreaks)
  - Business Advice, Support & Training

Regulatory Services – Indicators

- 6,890 ASB incidents reported in 2015/16
- 166 Complex ASB cases referred by external teams and agencies
- 17 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts agreed
- 2 ASB injunctions/closure orders
- 16,748 applications, registrations and notifications in 2015/16
- 13,039 compliance checks on businesses
- 103 formal enforcement actions against businesses (excluding licensing)
- 256 businesses supported
- 43 Advice visits re: alcohol and tobacco

Regulatory Services - Indicators

- People trained 1433
- Untidy land interventions 838
- Rats inside premises treatments 1033
- Flea treatments 121
- Stray dogs 320
- Warnings and Notices issued for noise nuisance 280
- Welfare funerals 35
- Building Regulation applications (687) and inspections (2830)
- Dangerous structures emergency callouts 23
- Filthy or verminous premises 44
- Inspections of rented housing for defects 613
- Complex consumer fraud investigations 19
- Properties secured as part of the Alleygate Programme 1231
- Sports grounds certificated and inspected
- Fatality investigations (4) and accidents (170)
- Food premises closed used emergency powers 10
- Taxi driver licence suspended (16) and vehicles suspended (144)
- Domestic violence counselling sessions delivered 1386

Regulatory Services Spending Review

- Indicative Savings Target is £1m
- Spending Review Approach
  - Ensure delivery of Spending Review savings
  - Mitigate budget pressures
  - Assure delivery of 'statutory duties'
  - Assure delivery of 'local priorities'
  - Retain discretionary services (where there is no alternative supplier and it is a local priority).
  - Exploit opportunities for 'self-service', 'channel shift' and 'service migration'.
- Reduction in management (already achieved), service re-profiling to achieve indicative total savings of £420K.

Regulatory Services Spending Review

- Areas to consider safeguarding include:-
  - People at risk of domestic violence
  - People at risk of harassment
  - Consumers/customers e.g. restaurants, taxi users, sports spectators,
  - Private sector tenants
  - Public at large e.g. LCC's contribution to PREVENT, animal diseases, flytips.

Any Questions?

Roman Leszczyszyn
Head of Regulatory Services

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Cleansing Services Spending Review

Presentation to Neighbourhood Scrutiny 30 November 2016.

Stewart Doughty, Head of P&OS

Service Overview

- Maintain 487 miles highway land weekly
- Remove 3,900 tonnes of litter annually
- Maintain 2,653 streets weekly
- Over 1,500 litter bins, 333 within City centre
- Street washing
- Highway weed spraying
- Public conveniences
- 24 hours on call
  - RTA clean up/spillages/SHARPS/asbestos
- Removal of flytipping
- Winter maintenance

Statutory requirement

- Environment Protection Act 1990 imposes duties under Section 89 on LA to keep clean public highways.
- The Act, seeks to encourage LA to maintain other land within acceptable standards.
- Cleanliness standards should be monitored to ensure NI195 litter standards are maintained.
- Clearance from night time economy by 8.00am
- Advisory standards, re. graffiti and flyposting due to impact on the quality of the environment (none statutory).

Spending Review Programme

- Government Grant reduced by 50% in real terms 2019/20 to 2010/11 – Impacting all Council services
- Reduced spending by £100m per year
- Further cuts at least until 2019/20, est £50m-£60m
- Managed via Spending Review programme
- Indicative target for Waste & Cleansing £2.5m
- First phase £0.7m contribution Cleansing Services
  - 27% of net budget

It is recognised that a clean quality local environment supports a vibrant City and supports the sustainability and growth of the business and tourism offer:

secures quality, long term commercial investors

attracts and retains workers with scarce skills

meets landowners' and tenants' legal obligations and liabilities

deters anti-social behaviour and some criminal activities

secures the approval of electors, for whom local environmental quality is a fundamental test of an administration's efficiency and effectiveness

creates environments that are more easily maintained and less subject to vandalism.

It is critical that service reductions within Cleansing Services are carefully managed to minimise the impact on the service offer.

- Cleansing functions very visible, instant impact.
- Linked to wider enforcement litter campaigns.
- Introduction of small blitz team to tackle issues.
- Cleanliness standards monitoring.
- Review of schedules and frequencies.
- Continue to benchmark via APSE

Current Service Provision

- LCC benchmarks against 18 comparable LA's.
- 2014/15 key PI's:
  - Below avg cost per household £29.71 (£34.83).
  - Cost per head of population £12.70 (£15.05).
  - Overall quality band score 116 (97.39).
  - Highest results for recycling 82.37% (24.92%).
- Cleanliness standards, 87% litter, 90% detritus.

Service Options

– Through the streamlining of services into the cleansing role removal of the dedicated FIDO (faeces intake disposal operation) machine and operative and the dedicated Bring Bank team.

– Transfer of additional duties to other teams in order to reduce am bin & bag collection & cleaning of car parks.

– Review and reduce weekend cleaning of shop frontages & main gateways into City.

– Review how the Transfer Station is resourced.

– Review the use of roll on roll off vehicles in order to reduce 1 roll-on-roll off vehicle & driver.

– Review the operation of the Graffiti team in order to reduce the team.

– Redesign of schedules in order to reduce the City Centre Cleansing team.

– Redesign schedules in order to reduce the district sweeping team.

– Removal of 1 of the 2 mechanical brushes for district cleaning.

- Review of the management of corporate waste with a combined service collecting both mixed waste and recycled materials in a split body vehicle.
- Review of management/ supervision and admin team.

Maximise Income

- Trade waste
- RTA/spillages
- Graffiti removal
- Skip provision
- Market waste
- Bus shelters
- Shop fronts
- Dry waste recycling

Summary

- £700k phased initial saving (to be reviewed)
- Housing Caretakers inc in Housing review.
- Maximising income generation.
- Corporate fleet savings, add. £170k

Timeline

- Initial timeframe 3 year phased approach (with review).
  - Year 1 - April 2017 - £365k
  - Year 2 – April 2018 - £508k (143k)
  - Year 3 – April 2019 - £700k (192k)
- The fluidity of the reductions allows for changes in service provision based on outcomes as the proposed changes are introduced.

Questions ?

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