

Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel

Minutes - 21 March 2018

Attendance

Members of the Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Ian Angus (Chair)
Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Greg Brackenridge
Cllr Val Evans
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal
Cllr Christopher Haynes (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Keith Inston
Cllr Arun Photay

In Attendance

Cllr Steve Evans

Employees

Martin Stevens (Scrutiny Officer) (Minutes)
Earl Piggott-Smith (Scrutiny Officer)
Ross Cook, Service Director-City Environment)
Shaun Walker (Service Lead – Residential)

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Philip Bateman, Cllr John Rowley and Cllr Caroline Siarkiewicz.
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
There were no declarations of interest.
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting**
The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 November 2017 were confirmed as a correct record.

4 **Matters arising**

The Cabinet Member for City Environment stated an amicable resolution had been reached with waste and recycling contractor Amey. The Council's waste and recycling contract with them would be terminated in September 2018 and the service would be brought back in-house.

5 **Parking Outside Schools Scrutiny Review**

Earl Piggott-Smith (Scrutiny Officer) presented a report on the Parking Outside Schools Scrutiny review. The report had recently been considered at Cabinet where all the recommendations had been accepted. He recommended the Scrutiny Panel receive a progress report on the recommendations contained within the report in October 2018.

The Cabinet Member for City Environment praised the review. The evidence had been obtained from a wide range of sources. He was unsure whether the funds of approx, £40,000, could be obtained for the second camera vehicle recommended.

The Chair stated there had been some good coverage of the issue in the local press recently. He wanted the Council's communication team to be more proactive as per the recommendations in the report.

Resolved: That the Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel receive a progress report on the recommendations of the Parking Outside Schools Scrutiny review at the meeting scheduled for October.

6 **Dog Control in Wolverhampton**

Shaun Walker, Service Lead – Residential, presented a report on Dog Control. The Dog Fouling Patrol Service had been outsourced to Kingdom in the last two to three years. Micro chipping had significantly reduced the number of stray dogs. 85-90% of the dog population were now microchipped. The legislation had caused a positive impact and had reduced the budget required for stray dogs by over £60,000. The number of reported dog fouling cases had reduced. There used to be 400 to 500 cases reported each year. For the first 9 months of this year there had only been 157 cases reported. The Council abided by the Black Country enforcement policy.

The Service Lead – Residential referred to the figures in the report listing the fixed penalty notices for dog fouling by year. In 2017 there had not been many fixed penalty notices issued compared to the previous year. As a consequence of seeing these figures he had asked Kingdom to increase their dog fouling patrols. It was clear litter patrols were more of a priority for Kingdom. He would be introducing some key performance indicators to ensure there were more dog patrols in the future.

The Cabinet Member for City Environment commented that press coverage in the Express and Star had raised public awareness of the fines people could face. Radio 4 had also done an interview with the Council on the issue. The Council needed to work with Kingdom on their unsociable hours patrols.

The Service Lead – Residential referred to the Social Media platforms which the public could use to report issues with dogs. They could also use the website and traditional methods of communication.

A Panel Member asked if the canals were ever patrolled as there were a few issues with dog fouling by the canals in Wednesfield. There also needed to be more bins in canal areas, particularly as children often walked by the canals. The Service Lead – Residential said he would raise the issue of patrols by the canal with Kingdom. Requests for additional bins should be made with the Council's Customer Services Centre.

The Chair stated people needed to be encouraged to report dog fouling so the Council and Kingdom could have a more accurate picture of the problem.

Resolved:

- A) The Council explore with Kingdom that their Dog Control Enforcement Officers patrol at different hours such as early in the morning and later in the evening.
- B) That Members encourage their constituents to report issues of dog fouling.
- C) That Officers approach Kingdom about more enforcement and the placement of bins by the Canals.

7

Future Work Plan

The Chair referred to the Work Plan circulated with the agenda. He asked Members of the Panel for suggestions to the work plan to be emailed to the Scrutiny Officer or raised at the next meeting of the Panel. There would be a further opportunity to suggest items for the Work Plan at the Annual Scrutiny day proposed for June.