

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES)

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT
ON TUESDAY 20TH JANUARY, 2015

Overview
& Scrutiny



PRESENT: Councillor McKinley (in the Chair)

Councillors Atkinson, Gatherer, Hartill, J. Kelly,
Lappin, P. Maguire, S. McGuire, O'Brien and
Weavers

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Member	Minute No.	Reason	Action
Councillor Atkinson	24 - Employment Development Action Plan	Other Interest - due to her employment with Merseytravel.	Stayed in the room and took part in the consideration of the item.
Councillor O'Brien	24 - Employment Development Action Plan	Other Interest - due to his daughters' employment with Sefton@Work.	Stayed in the room and took part in the consideration of the item.

20. MINUTES

The Committee considered the Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 December 2014. During consideration of the Minutes, Members requested that the Committee place on record its appreciation to Officers in relation to the management of the Meeting and the set of Minutes produced arising from that meeting.

In relation to Minute No. 16 (Infrastructure Working Group), Councillor Weavers reported that Cabinet had considered and agreed the recommendations contained in the report at its meeting held on 15 February 2015. Councillor Weavers took the opportunity to thank all the Officers and Members for their hard work in undertaking and completing the review.

RESOLVED: That

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1. the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2014, be confirmed as a correct record; and
2. the Committee place on record its appreciation and thanks to the Officers in relation to the management of the meeting and the set of Minutes produced arising from that meeting.

21. MERSEYSIDE RECYCLING AND WASTE AUTHORITY - ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received a presentation from Carl Beer, Chief Executive of the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority in relation to progress against the Joint Merseyside Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

The following headlines were reported on:-

- The Waste Hierarchy: Prevention being the most favoured option for waste management followed by preparing materials for re-use, recycling, other recovery and disposal.
- The Merseyside and Halton Waste Partnership serves 1.5 million residents involving 688,000 households with an average 36% recycling rate. Includes 16 Household Waste Recycling Centres, 2 material recovery facilities, 4 Waste Transfer Stations and more than 200 bring bank sites.
- Delivery of the Joint Waste Prevention plan with a target in relation to reducing the total amount of waste produced per household, the key themes targetted being: food, textiles, junk mail and home composting. Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority has been Nationally recognised for its programme of action.
- Waste Prevention has been progressed by raising awareness and educating communities by advertising on Radio City and Juice FM (over 1,100 broadcasts), over 100,000 magazine adverts, over 43,000 junk mail leaflets stickers and almost 50,000 visits to the “recycleformerseyside” website.
- Establishment of the Merseyside Textile Forum which aims to increase re-use and recycling of textiles on Merseyside. Liverpool University student campuses, 3 tonnes collected from the 5 textile banks.
- Progress of the Joint Strategy in relation to Carbon reduction 2013/14 with a target to reduce the carbon emissions from municipal waste management services.
- Progress of the Strategy in relation to behavioural change – for example: in total over 23,700 people engaged at 312 events through Merseyside Recycling Waste Authority funded education and awareness activities during 2012/13 and those included: 4328 visitors at 170 events at Gillmoss and Bidston Recycling Distribution Centres, 6074 visitors at 70 events at the Southport Eco-Centre and 4523 people at 24 events delivered by other organisations.

The following key headlines were also reported upon:

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- Very good value for money long-term Energy From Waste disposal contract which will save £100's millions over landfill.
- Recycling rate over 70% at Household Waste Recycling Centres.
- 6500+ education visits to Recycling Discovery Centres.
- Community fund projects.
- Future priorities will be around the circular economy.
- Collection and Disposal target of 50% by 2020.

The Committee also considered an introductory report to the presentation from the Director of Built Environment that detailed the progress of the Merseyside Waste Partnership against the delivery of the objectives of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

The reported stated that:-

1. All Merseyside Authorities had ratified the 30 year Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy "Resources Merseyside" that was developed following comprehensive resident and industry consultation. It was reported that the Strategy was designed to meet and support relevant European and national statutory drivers for Resource (Waste) Management, Climate Change and Low Carbon Economy aspirations.
2. The aim of the joint waste strategy "Resources Merseyside" was to deliver waste management within the context of wider resource management and climate change by:
 - Recognising waste as a valuable resource
 - Minimising the environmental impact of waste management
 - Preventing the creation of waste on Merseyside in the first place
 - Increasing re-use, recycling, composting and the recovery of energy from waste
 - Reducing the amount of waste to land fill
 - Raising awareness and promoting education in resource efficiency, making it easier for everyone to contribute to sustainable waste management activities
 - Consuming less but producing more
 - Tackling climate change by the reduction of carbon emissions from waste management and support for our Low Carbon economy
 - Protecting and enhancing our environment
 - Using and generating renewable energy and fuels.
3. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) have previously requested an annual update on progress against the strategy. The report highlighted that Sefton Council was unable to deliver the objectives of the strategy alone and that collective action from all Merseyside Waste partners was required in order that the objectives of the Strategy are achieved in the most economic manner and future direct financial and environmental liabilities minimised. It was reported

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that all partners had previously signed a memorandum of understanding to work together for the best mutual interest and this bolsters the statutory based joint working relationships. A Senior Officer Working Group and operational officer groups meet regularly to progress work streams and projects to deliver the strategy.

4. A review of the performance of the Merseyside Waste Partnership in 2012/13 had been undertaken by the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority. The review formed the basis for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider joint progress against the joint waste strategy objectives. The annual review was presented by Mr Beer at the meeting.
5. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should continue to review the progress of the Merseyside Waste Partnership in delivering the key objectives of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

Members raised the following points of observation:

Question/Observation/Comment	Response
Will items such as plastic food containers be included in future recycling plans?	Merseyside Recycling Waste Authority would like to offer that service but at the moment the commodity price of recycling plastic trays does not make it economical. However, a trial could be explored.
Waste prevention in relation to unnecessary packaging and manufacturers over - packaging products. This is a national problem.	Noted.
The performance of St. Helens Council has improved in terms of recycling. What improvements have they made?	St. Helens Council went from a weekly collection to a fortnightly collection and weekly kerb side collection of paper, glass, textiles, food, plastic and cardboard. The reason performance has improved is due to the change from weekly to fortnightly residual waste collection and fortnightly to weekly recycling collection, similar to that in place with Sefton Council. .

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Carl Beer, Chief Executive for Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority, be thanked for his verbal presentation; and

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- (2) this Committee agreed that adequate progress has been made in 2013/14 by the Waste Partnership towards the objectives of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

22. PUBLIC HEALTH - IMPACT ON REGENERATION AND WIDER DETERMINANTS

The Committee received a presentation from Rachael Musgrave, Consultant in Public Health, in relation to Public Health and the impact on Regeneration and the correlation and direct relation between Regeneration and Health.

The following headlines were presented:-

- Life expectancy based on areas along the Southport to Hunts Cross Merseyrail Network and the difference across the Borough in relation to life expectancy.
- A graph was presented illustrating how foodbank use had risen along with Hospital Admissions for malnutrition nationally since the financial crisis in 2008. The national research evidence stated that: Good quality employment is important for health. Poor quality employment and unemployment are bad for health and wellbeing and make existing poor health worse.

Inequality is bad for everybody, equal societies do better across a range of outcomes for example health, education and crime. The research evidence states that to maximise opportunities to improve Public Health at a regional level. Link economic growth with public sector reform to prevent poverty and promote prosperity.

- Promotion of the living wage.
- Use joint spending power to promote good employment.
- Improve quality and affordability of housing locally the priorities were stated as being:-

Advocate for good quality paid employment; interventions to support people returning and staying in work (Sefton@work); Healthy Bootle model testing efforts to tackle the causes of ill health on a focused geography. Explore using the joint public sector procurement and commissioning investment to drive social value.

Members raised the following questions/points of observation:

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Question/Observation/Comment	Response
<p>The Healthy Bootle project – is there any Member involvement?</p> <p>Is there an action plan?</p>	<p>Discussions with portfolio holders have taken place and we intend to approach Ward Members along with a wide range of other key stakeholders.</p> <p>In terms of an action plan, the Health and Wellbeing Board has a Wider Determinants Forum which has recently set its priorities including: creating good quality employment and creating sustainable places. These will direct the Forum’s work programme going forward as part of the Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy.</p>
<p>Life Expectancy – do you see the gap increasing or reducing?</p>	<p>Progress has been made but health inequalities remains a key challenge for Sefton. There are a number of factors that influence health inequalities. The economy is one critical aspect. Sefton has a much older population overall and within our younger communities unemployment is increasing. Public Health having a remit within the Local Authority presents a real opportunity to address the inequalities identified throughout the Borough.</p>
<p>Is it a coincidence that the life expectancy in the wards closest to the Port (Seaforth and Litherland, Bootle New Strand, Bootle Oriel Road and Bank Hall) is much lower than those in other parts of the Borough?</p>	<p>Life expectancy patterns across the Borough have remained the same for some time. There is an established association between life expectancy and deprivation and behaviour (life style choices).</p>

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Ms. Rachael Musgrave, Consultant in Public Health be thanked for her informative presentation; and
- (2) Ms. Musgrave be requested to include Councillor Lappin in the discussions on the “Healthy Bootle” project.

23. FLOOD AND COASTAL EROSION RISK MANAGEMENT – ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Built Environment which referred to a stipulation contained in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requiring the Lead Local Flood Risk Authority to review and scrutinise its flood risk management functions and coastal erosion management functions. It was reported that this had previously been agreed to be provided through the provision of an annual report.

The report identified the progress that had been made in the last year, highlighted key issues and set out priorities for the coming year. It was reported that activities within Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) could be broadly split into the following outcomes:

- Understanding Risk to our communities – work that seeks to improve our understanding of flood and coastal erosion risk.
- Avoiding increased risk to our communities – controlling actions that may increase risk or impact on flooding or coastal erosion.
- Reducing risk to our communities – maintenance and improvement of the infrastructure.
- Reducing consequences to our communities – preparing for flood or coastal erosion events and working with our communities to increase their resilience.

The report also referred to flood insurance and indicated that last year the Government had consulted on a new approach to flood insurance which would see additional costs on premiums and excess capped. It was reported that this approach would see those at risk of flooding paying some of the cost spread across all home insurance premiums. It was reported that this approach did not apply to homes built after 2009 that are at significant risk of flooding.

It was further reported that further consultation had been undertaken on detailed elements of the scheme. The report drew Member's attention to an additional aspect that confirmed that Flood Re would provide transitional support to households at flood risk over a 25 year period as part of a gradual transition towards more risk reflective prices; this would provide time for choices to be made and risk management action to be taken.

The report referred to future funding and stated that where previously indicative grant allocations were set on an annual basis, Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs had promoted the setting of a six year indicative allocation to promote better forward planning. The report highlighted that the overall funding available still fell short of demand and as such the settlement for Merseyside had been disappointing.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

24. EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

Further to Minute No. 8 of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 September 2014 the Committee considered the report of the Director of Built Environment.

The report detailed the implementation of recommendations contained in the Final Report of the Employment Development Working Group and highlighted that the Cabinet on 5 December 2013, Minute No. 72 refers, approved the recommendations as set out in that Final Report. The Cabinet had resolved that the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Tourism be requested to develop an action plan/implementation plan for each of the agreed recommendations, including timescales and milestones for completion.

It was further reported that an action plan had been agreed by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Tourism at his meeting held on 10 April 2014, which summarised activity across his portfolio and also identified initiatives undertaken with other portfolio holders. The revised and updated action plan for implementing each of the Employment Development Working Group's recommendations was attached to the report.

The Head of Economy and Tourism, Mr. Mark Long referred Members to the document attached to the report and entitled "Shared Prosperity – A Draft Policy".

Mr. Long reported on the following headlines contained within the draft policy:-

- Accelerating growth, creating Jobs, reducing poverty – an agenda for change.
- A profile of Jobs and Growth in Sefton and the Liverpool City Region.
- Sefton Council and its corporate priorities.
- Partners for More and Better Jobs.
- Policy Instruments.
- Developing the Model for the Future.

A Member of the Committee raised concern regarding the Port and the undertaking from Peel Ports to employ local people.

The Chair reminded Members that some years ago the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) had undertaken a review in relation to the Port Master Plan. The Chair indicated that a report was scheduled to be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee in relation to progress against recommendations of the Port Master Plan Working Group.

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The Chair, Councillor McKinley, thanked Mr. Long for the updated version of the report. He stated that in his opinion the document was the first step in addressing the issues identified in the Final Report of the Economic Development Working Group in relation to supply and demand and social value. He also highlighted that he was encouraged by the notion of accepting Capital to stimulate the local economy.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) a report be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee in relation to the progress made against the recommendations of the Port Master Plan Working Group.

25. TOWN CENTRES WORKING GROUP - FINAL REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Corporate Services in relation to the Development of Local Town Centres element of the Employment Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group's Final Report.

RESOLVED:

That this Committee supports the contents of the Local Town Centres Working Group's Final Report and recommends the Cabinet to agree the recommendations as set out in paragraph 9 of the report.

26. CABINET MEMBER REPORTS

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Corporate Services that updated Members on the activities of the Cabinet Members for the December 2014 period for the following portfolios that fall within the remit of this Committee:-

- Cabinet Member – Communities and Environment;
- Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Tourism;
- Cabinet Member – Transportation; and
- Cabinet Member – Children, Schools, Families and Leisure.

RESOLVED:

That the activities undertaken by the various Cabinet Members, whose portfolio falls within the remit of this Committee, be noted.

27. WORK PROGRAMME KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Corporate Services in relation to the Committee's programme of work. A number of Key Decisions within the latest Key Decision Forward Plan fell under the remit of this Committee and Members were reminded of their right to pre-scrutinise such items.

The report referred to the completion of the Employment Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group, Local Town Centres element that had been considered elsewhere on the Agenda.

The report outlined progress in relation to the Shale Gas (Fracking) Working Group and sought approval to include Councillors Hartill and Maguire on the membership of that group.

The report also included the scoping document of the Working Group, as detailed in Appendix B to the report, for the Committee to agree.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer, Mrs. Ruth Harrison, referred Members to Appendix C to the report which detailed the programme of work for the Committee for the Municipal Year 2014/15.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Committee notes items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan;
- (2) completion of the review regarding Development of Local Town Centres and Economies be accepted;
- (3) the Committee notes the establishment and progress of the Shale Gas (Fracking) Working Group;
- (4) Councillors Hartill and Maguire be included as Members of the Shale Gas (Fracking) Working Group, along with Councillors Lappin, McGuire and Weavers;
- (5) the scoping document of the Shale Gas (Fracking) Working Group, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be approved; and
- (6) the programme of work for the Municipal Year 2014/15, as set out in Appendix C to the report, be approved.