



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION AND SKILLS)

**MEETING HELD AT THE BIRKDALE ROOM, TOWN HALL,
SOUTHPORT
ON TUESDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2018**

PRESENT: Councillor John Sayers (in the Chair)
Councillor Michael O'Brien (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Booth, Dowd, Killen, David Pullin, Roche
and Bill Welsh

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Atkinson

9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brough and Carragher.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal interests were received.

11. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That subject to Councillor Booth being included in the list of Members present at the meeting the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2018 be confirmed as a correct record.

12. WINTER SERVICE POLICY AND OPERATIONAL PLAN

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Locality Services – Commissioned that sought views and approval of the Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan for 2018/19.

The report indicated that the Council provided a Highway Winter Service to the Borough in accordance with the Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan; that officers monitored the weather conditions 24 hours a day throughout the winter season and enacted the plan when weather conditions dictated; that the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003 (section 111) had inserted an additional section 41(1A) to the Highways Act 1980 which placed a duty on Highway Authorities in respect of winter conditions, and stated 'In particular, a Highway Authority was under duty to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway was not endangered by snow or ice'; and that in addition, the Traffic Management Act 2004 placed a Statutory Network Management Duty on all local traffic authorities in England requiring authorities to do all

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION AND SKILLS) - TUESDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2018

that was reasonably practicable to manage the network effectively to keep traffic moving.

The report also indicated that the Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan was subject to an annual review, reassessment and consultation; that as part of this and in accordance with Cabinet Member's wishes, a consultation letter was sent to every Elected Member; and that Merseytravel had also been contacted and asked if there had been any revisions to their bus routes since last year.

The report concluded that the Policy was based on guidance provided by the Government in a document entitled 'Well Maintained Highways – Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management.'; that a new code of practice was published in 2016 entitled 'Well Managed Highway Infrastructure' which superseded all previous codes but that the section relating to Winter Service had been delayed a number of times and had yet to be released; and advised that:-

- all routes as advised by Merseytravel, will be gritted as part of the routine gritting operations. Merseytravel has confirmed that there are no amendments required to this year's routes and has reported no issues with last year's winter gritting operations
- a new tender has recently been awarded for the winter service operations and includes a number of enhancements for the forthcoming season including a new purpose-built winter service facility with a salt barn capable of holding 3500 tonnes of rocksalt
- a new gritting fleet was being provided by the contractor with the latest technology to allow for optimum salt spread rates and to meet the requirements of 'Good Coverage' as detailed in the code of practice
- a new weighbridge was in use to accurately monitor salt usage and new vehicle trackers to monitor real time activities more effectively
- there were no responses received as a result of the consultation with Elected Members

A copy of the latest version of the Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan for 2018/19 was circulated to Members at the meeting.

Members asked questions/raised issues on the following matters:-

- the sufficiency of 3500 tonnes of salt to last for the winter period and the contingency plans in place if the stocks were depleted due to severe weather, including the mitigation of financial pressures
- improvements to the winter service due to the ability for all gritting vehicles to be fitted with snowploughs
- operational difficulties experienced by snowploughs in areas with traffic calming/speed bumps

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan for 2018/19 be approved; and
- (2) the Head of Highways and Public Protection be requested to congratulate his staff for their management of the Winter Service budget and the efficient implementation of the Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan.

13. REFUSE COLLECTION, RECYCLING AND FOOD WASTE UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Locality Services – Provision that updated on refuse collection, recycling and food waste collections during the last financial year 2017/2018.

The report indicated that the waste collection operation within the Council's Cleansing Services Section effectively consisted of four strands of operation, namely:-

- Waste which cannot be recycled (collected via black sack or grey wheeled bin)
- Waste which can be recycled (collected via hessian sack or brown wheeled bin)
- Food waste (collected via a green caddy and compostable liner system)
- Green 'Garden' Waste (collected via green wheeled bin);

updated on the insourcing of the contract for dry recycling materials whereby the Council would undertake to deliver all dry recyclable material to the Merseyside Waste and Recycling Authority Materials Recycling Facility at Gilmoss and be a fully-fledged comingled Council in line with neighbouring Liverpool City Region Councils.

The report also indicated that the anticipated extra tonnages of recycled materials had not materialised and recycling performance across the Council had actually reduced since last year's update by 2% (from 40% in 2016/ 2017) and the figure was now 38%; that the tonnage of collected food waste had reduced from approximately 2,700 tonnes in 2016 per annum to around 1,250 tonnes in the last financial year, despite the availability of free compostable caddy liners and a free additional food waste storage bin if requested; that the Green (garden) waste service had continued its upward growth since the last report with the collected tonnage at 19,900 tonnes in the financial year 2017/2018; and that the total of household waste collected in 2017/2018 increased over the previous twelve months by approximately 900 tonnes. In 2017/18 the service collected just

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION AND SKILLS) - TUESDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2018

over 65,000 tonnes of household waste which was not sent for recycling or re-use or composting in total and the main explanation for this increase was the growth in house building which in the last year amounted to over 1,000 additional properties to be serviced/collected by the refuse crews.

The report concluded that in the years 2010 to date any reduction in budget across the service had effectively been found via efficiencies alone as the Council was still required to collect refuse or empty bins from every property across the Borough. As such, no services had ceased, but the service still operated with a much-reduced budget. This arrangement obviously could not continue ad infinitum, especially when compounded by the increasing pace of new-build houses, the development of properties across the Borough, the ever-worsening access issues into some roads caused by parked cars, and the general demands upon the refuse and recycling operation; that a range of new initiatives had been developed in recent years to mitigate the budgetary reductions and these included zonal arrangements, extended working week, reducing green collections to three weekly, vehicle and route optimisation and varying shift patterns. However, the cleansing refuse and recycling operation was at a critical stage in maintaining the required level of service against the backdrop of real time reducing budgetary provision. Accordingly, work was currently being undertaken to assess the likely future impact of expanding service requirements, and further details, including financial and operational requirements going forward would be considered in due course; and that Locality Services (Cleansing) would continue to seek ways to maximise its existing expenditure and would continue, wherever possible, to increase efficiencies across the Refuse Collection Service. As such, the service always welcomes any observations, comments and suggestions from any interested party, parties or stakeholders.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised matters on the following issues:-

- investigations into how other local authorities implement their black sack collection services to identify best practice and an example was provided of a service in operation in Holyhead
- an evaluation of the benefits of disposing of food waste by landfill, incineration or composting
- a forthcoming information campaign funded by the Merseyside Waste and Recycling Authority to alert the public of the benefits of recycling
- concerns associated with the additional pressures placed on the refuse collection service by new housing developments in the borough and the potential budgetary implications if new refuse collection vehicles need to be purchased

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION AND SKILLS) - TUESDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2018

- the potential impact on the green waste collection service if charges were imposed
- refuse collection difficulties due to highway problems and the introduction of

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report updating on refuse collection, recycling and food waste collections during 2017 / 2018 be noted;
- (2) the Head of Locality Services be requested to submit a further update report to the Committee in 2019/20; and
- (3) the Head of Locality Services and his staff be congratulated on the excellent performance regarding the refuse collection, recycling and food waste collection services.

14. UPDATE ON RECOMMENDATIONS AS OUTLINED IN THE PEER REVIEW WORKING GROUP FINAL REPORT MARCH 2017

The Committee considered the report of the Service Manager – Locality South that updated on recommendations as detailed in the Peer Review Working Group Final Report that was published in March 2017.

The table in paragraph 1 of the report detailed the progress made against each of the Working Group's recommendations.

Members asked questions/raised issues on the following matters:-

- The regional child exploitation pathway and the development of a referral mechanism
- Differences between dealing with registered social landlords and private landlords in work undertaken to disrupt serious organised crime
- The numbers of organised crime groups in the borough
- The intervention and prevention programme "Get Away and Get Safe (GANGs)"
- The information sharing agreement between partner agencies to combat serious organised crime and its compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations
- An elected Member training session to be held on 18 October 2018 concerning child sexual exploitation

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report updating on recommendations as detailed in the Peer Review Working Group Final Report that was published in March 2017 be noted; and

- (2) the potential to have Members' Briefing Session prior to Council be investigated on the intervention and prevention programme "Get Away and Get Safe (GANGs)"

15. EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL AUTHORITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES – GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO DCLG SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Regulation and Compliance that advised of the Government's response to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee report titled "Effectiveness of Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees"

The report indicated that the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Select Committee, on 24 January, 2017 launched an inquiry into overview and scrutiny in local government; as the CLG Committee wanted to consider whether overview and scrutiny arrangements in England were working effectively and whether local communities were able to contribute to and monitor the work of their councils; that the report of the Select Committee, titled "Effectiveness of Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees" was published by the House of Commons on 15 December 2017; and a copy of the published report was attached to the report as Appendix 1; and that the Government's response to the CLG report was published on 12 March 2018; and the 8 CLG recommendations and accompanying Government responses were set out in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.9. A full copy of the Government response was attached to the report as Appendix 2.

The report concluded that It had been established from a recent County/Unitary Scrutiny Network meeting that the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) were hoping to be commissioned to help the Government produce the updated statutory Scrutiny Guidance which was promised in the response to the CLG Select Committee's report on the Effectiveness of Local Authority Scrutiny. If so, CfPS would seek to obtain the views of a wide range of interested parties during the drafting stage and there may be the possibility for the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and Committees to contribute as part of the consultation phase.

Members asked questions /raised issues on the following matters:-

- The anticipated date of the Government's publication of the statutory scrutiny guidance
- Recommendation 7 of the CLG Select Committee as to how the Government would make clear how Local Enterprise Partnerships have democratic, and publicly visible, oversight

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted;

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION AND SKILLS) - TUESDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2018

- (2) a further update be submitted to the Committee once the Government have published updated guidance in respect of recommendations 1 (a) to (e) and 6 and further consideration has been given to recommendation 2;
- (3) if consultations are allowed to be undertaken as referred to in paragraph 4 then the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and individual Overview and Scrutiny Committees be obtained to their inclusion in the consultation process; and
- (4) the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer be requested to contact the Liverpool City Region to ascertain whether a short presentation could be made to a future meeting of the Committee on the beneficial impacts on Sefton arising from the Local Enterprise Partnership.

16. WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19, SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS AND KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2018

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer seeking the views of the Committee on the Work Programme for 2018/19, the identification of potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by a Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee and the identification of any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan.

Paul Fraser, Senior Democratic Services Officer advised that he had been contacted by the Head of Locality Services regarding the submission of the report on the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) to the meeting on 6 November 2018. The PFRA was a requirement under the Flood Risk Regulations, 2009. And was a strategic assessment of areas at significant flood risk. The PRFA was reviewed on a 6 year cycle and a review was undertaken in 2017 and considered by this Committee for comment prior to submission. The next review was due in 2023. A summary of the PFRA would be noted in the Flood Risk Annual Report which would be considered by this Committee on 6 November 2018. Accordingly, it was recommended that the a report on PFRA be no longer submitted to the next meeting.

Members asked questions/raised issues on the following matter:-

- The effectiveness of the Council's enforcement activities , for example in relation to fly-tipping, planning and Public Space Protection Orders, and the associated byelaws and regulations

RESOLVED: That

- (1) subject to the deletion the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment report, the Work Programme for 2018/19, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION AND SKILLS) - TUESDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2018

- (2) the reports updating on the implementation of recommendations arising from the Shale Gas Working Group and United Utilities – Update on Increase in Charges be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 6 November 2018;
- (3) Career Connect be requested to submit a presentation to the next meeting of the Committee on the impact in Sefton of their contract, due to end in March 2019, to deliver support for NEET young people in vulnerable groups;
- (4) approval be given to the establishment of a Joint Working Group with Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) to examine post-19 provision for Special Educational Needs and Disability, in order to improve conditions for this vulnerable group of young people;
- (5) Councillors Dowd and Michael O'Brien be appointed to serve on the Joint Working Group referred to in (4) above;
- (6) the establishment of the Apprenticeships Working Group as agreed by Minute No. 7 (2) of 3 July 2018 be no longer pursued;
- (7) a Working Group be established to review the topic of the effectiveness of the Council's enforcement activities; and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer be requested to contact members of the Committee to seek their willingness to serve on the Working Group.

17. CABINET MEMBER REPORTS – JULY 2018 TO SEPTEMBER 2018

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that included the most recent report from the Cabinet Members for Communities and Housing; Health and Wellbeing (Green Sefton), Locality Services; Planning and Building Control; and Regeneration and Skills.

Members of the Committee asked questions/made comments on the following issue:-

- That the Cabinet Member reports provided an interesting overview of the work undertaken by Cabinet Members across the borough

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the update report from the Cabinet Members for Communities and Housing; Health and Wellbeing (Green Sefton), Locality Services; Planning and Building Control; and Regeneration and Skills be noted; and

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION AND SKILLS) - TUESDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2018

- (2) Councillor Atkinson, Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Skills be thanked for her attendance and contribution at the meeting.