

Meeting	Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	30 July 2014
Present	Councillors Douglas (Chair), Orrell (Vice-Chair), Healey, Hodgson, King, Warters and Fitzpatrick (Substitute for Councillor Fraser)
Apologies	Councillor Fraser
In Attendance	Councillor Watson

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## 7. **Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have had in the business on the agenda.

No interests were declared.

## 8. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting on 4 June 2014 be approved and signed as a correct record subject to;

Minute Item 4 (Scrutiny Topics for review)- Commercial Waste.

*The Committee noted that the Leader and Cabinet Members felt that discretionary charges would be a more worthwhile topic.*

## 9. **Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

## 10. **Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Planning and Sustainability**

The Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Planning and Sustainability attended the meeting to discuss his priorities and challenges for the municipal year.

He reported that his two priorities for the year were around tackling the budget and sustainability issues.

He confirmed there was a need to examine discretionary waste charges due to the reduction in the Local Government grant. He reported that £2.3 million of the budget was spent on disposal and collection of waste and street cleansing.

It was reported that the budget in Environmental Services, Planning and Sustainability needed to be reduced by £2.5 million over the next two years.

The Cabinet Member felt that in order to achieve this target efficiencies on the delivery of services, additional income could be raised through discretionary charges in waste management and selling specific services (such as assistance at Pre Application stage for applicants applying for planning permission).

Questions from Members to the Cabinet Member included;

- Were there plans to increase recycling in the city?
- Was there a trend of losing recycling sites?
- What could be done to encourage residents who lived in flats to recycle?
- How would staff costs be reduced?
- Why was reducing the city's Carbon Footprint one his priorities?
- What evidence had come to light for the Administration to increase the number of new houses within the Local Plan?

In regards to plans to increase recycling, Members were told of a number of two pilot schemes to recycle plastic that had taken place around the city. The Cabinet Member informed the Committee that some of the recycling sites would continue to operate where they are economically viable and where there is the agreement of landowners.

Some Members wished for the Council to be more proactive in providing recycling boxes to those who lived in flats, particularly as owners had to pay a service charge to a private management company.

In response to a Member's question about staff redundancies it was noted that management staff in the City and Environmental Services department had reduced by a third and there had also been a 40% reduction in backroom staff over the last three years. The Council had sought to avoid compulsory redundancies and had used temporary staff before changes had been made to services.

The Cabinet Member informed the Committee that he felt that focusing on reduction of the Carbon Footprint was important as it would reduce costs. He spoke about a number of sustainable transport developments such as the increase in electric buses, which would help with York's Air Quality levels.

In relation to the question about the increase in the number of new houses in the Local Plan, the Cabinet Member informed the Committee that changes had been made due to a result of changes to planning legislation (the Article 4 direction) and government housing projects.

*Members were advised to refrain from asking further questions on the Local Plan, as this was not within the Committee's remit. [as amended at meeting of 3 September 2014]*

Members felt that a written report from the Cabinet Member would have been helpful.

Resolved: That the Cabinet Member's verbal report be noted.

Reason: So that Members are kept aware of the priorities within the Cabinet Member's portfolio.

## **11. Safer York Partnership Bi-Annual Report**

Members received the Safer York Partnership Bi-Annual Performance Report on the Community Safety Plan 2011-14.

Officers highlighted that;

- There had been a reduction in violent crime figures due to partnership working and methods taken to control alcohol in the city.
- However, there had not been a reduction in domestic violence incidents.
- That the police had prioritised their approach to hate crime to give the highest quality response.

Comments and questions from Members included;

- The White Ribbon status that the city had recently achieved was not worth it if the level of domestic violence had not reduced in the city.
- How did the Police define “youth” in relation to incidents of crime?
- Why did persistent shoplifting offenders have to be aged over 18 before action could be taken by the Police to impose Exclusion Orders?

Officers reported that the level of domestic violence had neither increased nor decreased but had levelled out. It was also noted that a domestic violence related murder had not been reported for five years.

It was reported that in relation to the definition of “youth”, this came from police call handlers, who often had to make quick judgments on analysing the details of the reported incident.

Members were informed that the rules for imposing Exclusion Orders for shoplifters had been determined by York Business Against Crime (YBAC). Officers believed that YBAC had chosen other more long term methods of dealing with under 18s who shoplifted. Officers stated that they would investigate the reasons for YBAC’s decision over enforcement tickets. It was also confirmed that Officer’s felt that the APEX Night-safe radio could be extended to York Shopmobility.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: So that Members are kept informed of the performance of the plan.

**12. 2013/14 Outturn Finance and Performance Monitor for Environmental Services and Public Protection**

Members received a report which updated them on financial performance, service plan improvement actions and performance measures for Environmental Services and Public Protection.

Some Members asked about the Penalty Charge Notice income that had been received from the new 'spy car'. Officers confirmed that they would send Members more information on this issue.<sup>1</sup>

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: So that the Committee are informed of the latest finance and performance position.

Action Required

1. Provide Members with information.

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**13. Scoping Report on Proposed "Discretionary Charges in Waste Management" Scrutiny Review**

Members received a report which provided them with information in support of the proposed scrutiny review of Discretionary Charges in Waste Management. Members were asked to agree a remit and methodology for the review and agree a timeframe for its completion.

Officers gave an overview of the report and when asked by Members, confirmed that Local Authorities are responsible for providing free refuse collection of general household waste, and that the frequency of those waste collections were a matter for the Cabinet to decide and not an issue for scrutiny as part of the proposed review.

Members discussed the framework for the review as suggested by Officers in the report, and agreed it should form the basis of the review remit, which should also include understanding the impact of the introduction of discretionary charges and looking at possible concessions for particular groups e.g. charities.

~~One Member~~ *Councillor Warters* confirmed that he did not want to be on the Task Group as he did not wish to be party to the introduction of discretionary waste charges. *[as amended at meeting of 3 September 2014]*

The Chair suggested that the remit of the Task Group should reflect Officer's suggestions.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That a Task Group be formed to conduct a review on Discretionary Waste Charges.

(iii) That the Task Group be composed of the following Members;

- Councillor Douglas
- Councillor Healey
- Councillor Hodgson

(iv) That the remit of the review be in line with Officer's suggestions and also assess the impact of the introduction of discretionary charges and possible concessions.

Reason: To progress the review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

#### **14. Work Plan**

Consideration was given to the Committee's draft work plan for 2014-15.

The Scrutiny Officer informed Members of the ongoing work to refresh the Single Equality Scheme, and of some recurring and emerging priorities which had been identified. She confirmed that CSMC had requested that each Overview & Scrutiny Committee be notified of the priorities relevant to their individual terms of reference, and that they monitor the progress made on them as part of their future quarterly finance and performance monitoring reports. It was suggested therefore that an item, on the work, be added to the work plan for the Committee's next meeting:

Resolved: That the work plan be approved subject to the following amendments;

- The deletion of both the CCTV Overview Report and the Commercial Waste Overview Briefing from the September meeting.
- The addition of a report on the priorities emerging from the Equalities Scheme for consideration at the September meeting.
- The attendance of the Cabinet Member for Homes & Safer Communities be added to the November 2014 meeting.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee has a planned programme of work in place.

## **15. Urgent Business**

### **15a) Annual Report 2013-14 Cabinet Member for Homes and Safer Communities to Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee received the Cabinet Member for Homes & Safer Communities Annual Report.

The Chair suggested that as the Cabinet Member could not attend the meeting that if Members had any individual questions in regards to the report they contact the Cabinet Member via email.

Others suggested that the Scrutiny Officer collate Members' questions and that they be answered by the Cabinet Member when she was due to attend next.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

- (ii) That Members send questions for the Cabinet Member to the Scrutiny Officer ahead of the next scheduled attendance in November.

Reason: (i) In order for Members to be kept informed of the work being carried out by the Cabinet Member in her portfolio area.

(ii) In order to share Members' concerns with the Cabinet Member.

Councillor H Douglas, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.40 pm].