

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING, 24TH JUNE, 2009

Present – Councillors Higson (Chairman), A.S. Walsh (Vice-Chairman), Connell, Hollick, Iqbal, Lord, Mistry, J. Rothwell, J. Walsh, D.A. Wilkinson and Woodward.

Also in Attendance

Ms S. Johnson	Deputy Director of Corporate Resources and Committee Chief Officer Support
Mr I.D. Mulholland	Scrutiny Team Leader
Councillor Bashir-Ismael	Executive Member for Cleaner, Greener, Safer
Councillor Ibrahim	Executive Member for Environmental Services
Mr. M. Cox	Director of Environmental Services
Mr. P. Molyneux	Assistant Director (Highways and Engineering)
Ms. D. Ball	Assistant Director Waste and Fleet Management
Mrs. G. Hughes	Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy Manager
Mr. M. Hoban	Assistant Head of Division, Environmental Care
Ms. D. Wesenberg	Recycling Officer
Ms. J. Pollard	Policy Accountant

Councillor Higson in the Chair.

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Committee held on 15th April, 2009 were submitted.

Further to minute 82, Liaison with United Utilities Members discussed the ongoing issue of the problem of carriageway break up and rocking manhole covers.

The Committee was advised that the Department would examine the powers it had in relation to ensuring such works were adequately undertaken.

Resolved – (i) That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

(ii) That an update be factored into the next meeting in terms of the Council's powers regarding adequate carriageway and manhole cover repairs by United Utilities.

2. MONITORING OF DECISIONS

The Committee was advised that the Monitoring Schedule was currently up to date.

Resolved – That the position be noted.

3. COMMITTEE REMIT

The Director of the Chief Executive's Department submitted a report which set out the powers and duties of the Committee for the 2009/10 Municipal Year.

Whilst discussing the remit of the Committee Members referred to the following salient points:-

- the condition of the paving stones around the town hall in terms of the cracking problem and cleanliness.
- the apparent lack of consultation regarding the huge increase in commercial tipping charges in relation to the GM Waste Contract.
- the recent withdrawal of the Multi Use Games Area at a park in Westhoughton.

Resolved – (i) That the remit be noted.

(ii) That a position statement be provided to the Committee at the next meeting on the issue of the condition of the paving stones in the vicinity of the town hall.

(iii) That this committee be apprised at the next meeting of details of the consultation arrangements that were in place for the establishment of the new commercial tipping charges and whether this will result in an increase in fly tipping in the Borough.

(iv) That in due course this committee be informed of the background to the decision to remove the multi use Games Area from a park in Westhoughton.

4. WORK PROGRAMME

The Director of the Chief Executive's Department submitted a report which set out details of the draft Committee Work Programme for the 2009/10 Municipal Year.

The report explained that an informal Committee Work Programme event had been held on Friday 12th June, 2009 at which Members had received a presentation on the key issues relating to the remit of this Committee. Furthermore, a substantial debate ensued in order to try to set a robust programme which would potentially have outcomes which would make a difference.

The committee was also advised that the Winter Gritting Scrutiny Panel had now met twice in this new Municipal Year and the information being collated from various questionnaires seemed to be providing good evidence towards the final report that would be available for this Scrutiny Committee on 19th August 2009.

Information had been sought from a wide range of people, including the general public and those who gritted the roads themselves.

Following a meeting earlier today, the final report was now in preparation.

Members went on to discuss the draft work programme.

Resolved – (i) That the work programme as now set out be approved.

(ii) That a presentation be given at the next meeting on the Community Safety Services issues, as this is a new addition to the remit of this committee, to include performance areas where a Scrutiny investigation could make a difference and funding issues.

5. CCTV STRATEGY UPDATE

The Director of Environmental Services submitted a report which updated the Committee on the progress towards the CCTV Strategy and NCP Control Room.

By way of background information, the report indicated that Members would be aware of the recent Management Agreement between NCP and the Council regarding the management of surface level car parks, and build of new Multi Storey Car Parks. Furthermore, Members had previously been made aware of proposals to build a new CCTV Control Room at the new Topp Way Multi Storey Car Park. The existing Control Room in the Town Hall was 18 years old with much of the equipment nearing obsolescence.

The Committee advised that contractors were now on site at Topp Way and NCP would procure and manage the building and fitout the Control Room.

Approval had previously been given to fund up to £770,000 for the build and fit-out of the new Control Room from corporate budgets. Annual maintenance, support and financing would also be funded from corporate budgets at a cost of £190,000. Furthermore, Environmental Services would seek to contribute £40,000 towards the fibre optic cabling maintenance costs and IT support.

In terms of the way forward, the report explained that Environmental Services were continuing detailed strategy work to ensure that the new Control Room:-

- was fit for purpose and future proof;
- improved efficiency; and
- promoted a more co-ordinated approach to CCTV in Bolton.

It was envisaged that the Multi Storey Car Park at Topp Way would open in January, 2010. Given the detailed strategy work required, it was possible that the Control Room at Topp Way would open some months after the car park.

On completion of this strategy work a report would be taken to the Leader's Executive to update Members on the Bolton CCTV Strategy, final costs of the technological fit-out of the Control Room, running costs and management arrangements.

Resolved – That the progress and policy be supported.

6. WASTE MODERNISATION UPDATE

The Director of Environmental Services submitted a report and gave a presentation updating Members on the modernisation process of the Waste and Recycling Services.

By way of background information, the report explained that following the appointment of a new Assistant Director for Waste and Fleet Management and a review of the ways in which the Service worked, it became clear that a modernisation of the Waste and Recycling Service was much needed.

The Service had experienced some disruption in October, 2008 due to work to rule and it had been some time since the Waste Service from an operational and technical perspective was looked at in any great detail and the ways of working examined. A Waste and Recycling Development Group was established with the Director of Environmental Services, Assistant Chief Executive, Assistant Director of Waste and Fleet with both Regional and Local Union representatives

present at the meetings with staff representatives.

Two further operational and technical working groups consisting of the Assistant Director of Waste and Fleet, managers, staff and Trade Unions were also established in order to consult and agree on a way forward for modernising the Waste and Recycling Service, the Executive Member closely monitored the developments and was updated almost weekly on progress.

The two working groups established were Group Task and Finish Working Group, whose aim was to introduce a new way of team working within the Waste Service and to draw to a close the individual team tasks and finish culture which led to unfair allocation of time and workload across the service, and also a Round Redesign Group, which was established to look at how the 42 collection rounds in Bolton, performing almost 13 million bin collections per year in the Authority, could be rationalised to become more fuel and time efficient.

The report went on to explain that representatives from the workforce were elected onto the working groups and had played a vital part in designing the way forward for their own service, this had enabled greater ownership and reduced the risk of the modernisation process being rejected and worked against at a later stage.

The two groups, working with management, worked together to agree a series of proposals for modernising the traditional refuse collection service. Due to changes in legislation and the potential impact of Bolton Council receiving Landfill Allowance Tax penalties, there was need to move towards a recycling led waste management service. A key element of modernising the Service was the redesign of the refuse and recycling rounds, which were now considered to be inefficient and imbalanced. This course of action also meant the redesign of the job descriptions for refuse and recycling operational staff.

Members were advised that as new properties had come on stream within the Bolton boundaries, these had historically simply been tagged on to certain rounds that had the capacity

to deal with them, this did not specifically take into account the carbon footprint of the round in terms of fuel use, or consider that some rounds were becoming quite heavy. To address this problem, using advanced technology a redesign requirement was identified in order to improve matters.

The benefits of addressing round redesign through advanced technology had, for other Authorities, been shown to include optimal utilisation of vehicles and crews, avoiding new spend and reduced risk through the ability to model and compare scenarios and plan for increasing participation, whilst also reducing the miles travelled and risk of cross over as crews passed each other, rather than work in a more efficient and co-ordinated manner.

The round re-design would potentially provide significant efficiency for the Authority, the initial results of which would be known in July.

The report went on to go into detail concerning:-

- the recycling challenges ahead;
- round redesign;
- job design;
- communication; and
- staffing.

Members particularly honed in on the need for communication to be properly managed in relation to these changes. They also referred to:-

- the health and safety issues regarding the re design of collection routes;
- the significant changes being faced by working crews;
- time management on collection rounds including the education issue of cross contaminated recycling containers.

Resolved – (i) That a position statement be provided at the next meeting on the progress and management of the communication issue.

(ii) That an update on the waste modernisation programme be factored into the December, 2009 Committee programme,

7. MEMBERS' BUSINESS

The Committee received the extract of minutes of other Meetings of the Council relevant to the remit of this Committee:

-

- a) Cleaner, Greener, Safer Policy Development Group held on 28th April, 2009.
- b) Executive Member for Cleaner, Greener, Safer held on 1st July, 2009.

Resolved – That the minutes of various meetings be noted.

(The Meeting started at 6.00 p.m. and finished at 7.28 p.m.)