

## **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MEETING, 16<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER, 2012

Present – Councillors I. Ibrahim (Chairman), Kell (Vice-Chairman), Allen, C. Burrows, Challender, Critchley, S. Harkin, Pickup, Radlett, Shaw (as deputy for Councillor A. S. Walsh), Silvester, Spencer and Wild.

### Lay Members

- |              |         |
|--------------|---------|
| Ms. B. Berry | - BATRA |
| Ms. J. Horan | - BATRA |

### Also in Attendance

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Councillor Peel     | - The Executive Cabinet Member for Environment, Regulatory Services and Skills |
| Councillor J Byrne  | - Cabinet Member, Economy, Housing and Skills                                  |
| Councillor Chadwick | - Cabinet Member, Highways and Transport                                       |
| Mr. M. Cox          | - Director of Environmental Services   |
| Mr. K. Davies       | - Director of Development and Regeneration.                                    |
| Mr. S. Young        | - Assistant Director Highways and Business Development                         |
| Ms. M. Horrocks     | - Housing Strategy Unit Manager  |

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Mr. T. Hill	- Chief Planning and Housing Officer
Mr. S. Godley	- Development Manager (Planning Strategy)
Mr. M. Atherton	- Senior Engineering Manager (Highway Operations)
Mr. P. Worthington	- Principal Officer (Street Lighting Design)
Mr. R. Jeffery	- Director of Business Growth
Mr. I. D. Mulholland	- Principal Democratic Services Officer

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor A. S. Walsh.

Councillor I. Ibrahim in the Chair.

## **14. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20th August, 2012 were submitted.

Resolved –That the minutes be received and signed as a correct record, subject to the deletion of £21,432 in minute 10, Environmental Services Financial and Performance Monitoring Report, 2011/12, paragraph two and the insertion therefor of £21,432,000.

## **15. THE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Deputy Chief Executive Submitted a report which set out details of the updated work programme for this Committee.

Resolved- That approval be given to the updated work programme, as outlined in the report.

## **16. GM BUSINESS GROWTH HUB**

Mr. Richard Jeffrey, Director of Business Growth, from the Business Growth Hub gave a presentation on matters around the Growth Hub network.

By way of background information, the Committee was advised that HM Government policy was focused on a narrow range of businesses for a 20% growth with a focus on fewer tools. In response the North West LEP's were developing hubs to stimulate business growth and employment across the north west and act as a magnet for growth businesses. Furthermore, typical clients were senior decision makers and owners of businesses and those looking to make a step change.

The presentation went on to outline matters around the following –

- engagement routes, market stimulation and identification of businesses with growth potential;
- Business Growth Hub progress to date;
- Core hub activities;
- working with the national programmes;
- financing for business growth;
- resource efficiency / low carbon;
- the start up offer;
- Hub funding; and
- matters around the next steps.

Members in their deliberations referred to –

- the use of funding and accessibility to funds by businesses;
- lending by banks;
- success measurement; and
- how Bolton compared with other Greater Manchester partners.

Resolved- (i) That Mr. Jeffery be thanked for his presentation.

(ii) That Members be notified of how Bolton compared with other Greater Manchester partners in relation to the involvement of businesses in the Business Growth Hub.

## **17. STREET LIGHTING AND CARBON MANAGEMENT**

Mr. Mark Atherton, Senior Engineering Manager (Highways Operations) gave a presentation updating the Committee on the issue of Street Lighting and Carbon Management.

The presentation focused on the following key areas –

- the approach taken and what Bolton was doing;
- the progress to date with carbon management system installations;
- design, process, planning and asset management; and
- future opportunities and emerging technology.

Members were reminded that the Implementation Strategy was approved in 2011 to deliver energy efficiency efforts focused over a prolonged period and which would allow for flexibility of new and emerging technology.

Details of the Implementation Programme delivered to date was referred to.

Members in their discussions referred to –

- matters around the actual savings made;
- the dimming of street lights and there being no evidence of any negative effects;
- the pruning of some trees to enable street lights to have the full effect; and
- issues around light inspections.

Resolved – (i) That Mr Atherton be thanked for his informative presentation.

(ii) That the Committee be notified of matters around the arrangements for the inspection of street lamps together with matters associated with the identification and pruning of trees which reduced the effectiveness of lighting.

## **18. PROGRESS ON ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY**

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report which updated the Committee on the progress that the Council was making in improving environmental sustainability.

By way of background information, the report explained that the Council's approach was set out in two key policy documents. These were, Bolton- Our vision, 2012 -2015 and the Cleaner, Greener and Sustainable Strategy, 2012-2015. The Council also had the Carbon Management Plan but actions contained in this had largely been implemented.

The Bolton – Our Vision document set out a priority of reducing the environmental impact on the Borough and the Cleaner and Greener Strategy defined six sustainability impact priorities for 2012 – 2015.

The Council's approach to environmental sustainability also had to be seen in the wider context. The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) launched its pioneering Climate Change Strategy in July, 2011 setting out how it would build a greener, more sustainable region.

The report also explained about recent changes to the way the Council reported its environmental performance.

The report also set out in detail a summary of the actions that the Council was already taking.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

**19. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT : DELIVERY OF THE COUNCIL'S OFFER TO TENANTS, 2011-2012.**

(Councillor Challender declared a non- pecuniary interest in relation to the following item as a Member of the Bolton at Home Board)

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report which advised the Committee of the progress being made by Bolton at Home on the delivery of the, Offer Document, promises made by the Council.

By way of background information, the report reminded Members that the Council transferred its housing stock to Bolton at Home in March, 2011. The transfer would see around £124m being invested in homes and estates over the next five years. The detail of the improvements was set out in the formal, Offer Document .

The report went onto advise the Committee of the progress that had been made to date against the agreed, Offer Document.

Resolved – That the position be noted.

**20. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT, QUARTER ONE, 2012/13**

The Director of Environmental Services submitted a report which outlined the financial and performance quarter one position in respect of the Environmental Services portfolio for the 2012/13 financial year.

In terms of revenue expenditure, the report advised that this was underspent against the budget by £142,000 after planned reserve movements. With regard to capital expenditure, the projected figure for the year was currently shown at the full programme of £19.785m.

In terms of reserves, the Department had a projected general reserve of £214,000 for the end of the year.

In conclusion, it was indicated that all planned efficiencies were expected to be achieved.

Members in their discussions referred to matters around the income from trade waste and the sickness absence targets.

Resolved - That the financial and performance position be noted.

## **21. DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT, QUARTER ONE, 2012/13**

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report which outlined the financial and performance position of the Department as at quarter one in 2012/13.

In terms of revenue expenditure, the report explained that the projected outturn position which included housing services was an underspend of £225,000 after reserve movements.

With regard to capital expenditure, this was projected to be £9,641,000 against a budget of £13,508,000.

The Department had a projected total general reserve of - £644,084.

In conclusion the report advised that the budgeted efficiency savings for the Department were projected to be achieved.

Resolved - That the financial and performance position be noted.

## **22. MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

The Committee considered a Members Question in accordance with Standing Order 36, which had been submitted by Councillor Radlett, viz-

**Q.**

How many properties were included in the Queen's Park Renewal Area; how many of these were in Halliwell Ward and how many were in Smithills Ward?

What had been the total expenditure in each ward for each financial year since the area was declared?"

**A.**

The answer to the question was prepared by the Director of Development and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy, Housing and Skills and the Executive Cabinet Member for Environment, Regulatory Services and Skills.

### **Private Sector Renewal – Queens Park Area**

#### **Rationale**

The Renewal area was formally in place from 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2003 for a period of 10 years. The general aim of the declaration was to improve the physical conditions of properties and the environment, whilst at the same time looking at solutions for wider social and economic issues that affected the area.

The area included approximately 2000 domestic properties with the vast majority being pre 1919 terraces. In order to work in a programmed manner the area was split into 3 phases of approximately 700 properties. The phases were based on social and economic issues but the main consideration was information from Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Surveys which clearly showed properties in and around Russell Street being the worst.



### **Make-up of the area**

The renewal area had 2286 dwellings contained within it, and of those 1702 were terraced properties. Of the 1702 there were 1257 within Halliwell and 445 in Smithills.

Phase 1 was a triangular area from the junction of Chorley Old and Chorley New Road up to Beverley Road and all the terraces in this area were offered either Group Repair or Environmental Schemes depending on their condition. The approach for delivery was across 3 phases, which was based on the poorest properties first and these were in Halliwell (449 terraced properties).

Phase 2 was a block from Beverley Road, Lonsdale Road, Hastings Road and Chorley New Road – this was the phase that was being worked in when the funding from Government was removed and approximately half of the terraces had been approached and offered either Group Repair or Environmental Schemes. This consisted of 271 terraced properties in Halliwell and 445 in Smithills.

Phase 3 was the remainder of the area below Chorley New Road (Halliwell – 537 terraced properties) and no activity had been carried out there.

### **Types of work carried out**

The main types of work carried out to private sector housing, was Group Repair Schemes (external refurbishment of a terrace block), Environmental Schemes (renewal of front and rear boundary walls) and Energy Saving Schemes (cavity and loft insulation work).

The work carried out to each terrace was dependant on the overall condition of that terrace i.e. some terraces had significant structural issues and these were targeted for Group Repair work, others were in an overall better condition and had

Environmental Works which benefited the neighbourhood as a whole as well as the individual.

All the properties that were engaged with were offered energy improvements. All the schemes had varying conditions and requirements attached to them for an owner to take part, ultimately it was their choice and not all owners participated.

The number of terraced properties that had been consulted with and offered assistance were:

Halliwell – 720

Smithills – 165

This equated to 57% of Halliwell terraces being offered assistance and 37% in Smithills, however there was a higher number of properties in Halliwell in the poorest condition.

## **Funding**

The funding was based on assumptions of HM Government allocations for private sector housing regeneration (although these were always only allocated on a year by year basis). In addition there were links to various other allocations such as NRF (Neighbourhood Renewal Funds), Housing Corporation Funding (links to support from Housing Providers), private investment from business, developers, individual owners/landlords.

Other public sector investment was around trying to target mainstream services e.g. environmental services, housing and public health, educational support etc. The main element was the Regional Housing Investment Pot from central government (in essence allowing the Authority to borrow) and the initial outline was based on approximately £1.5M per year for the 10 years.

The overall amount made available was based on the HM Government allocation plus the separate DFG allocation (the

only remaining direct funding still provided) and supplemented by other resources or capital receipts that could be utilised for private sector renewal. The funding was spilt across the three renewal areas, in Tonge, Queens Park and Great Lever, as well as Borough wide schemes such as Affordable Warmth, Home Repair Assistance, Outside Area assistance and Landlord Action.

The first initial reduction came in 2008/09 when there was a change in emphasis from renewal to new build, following this there were also changes in how the allocation was distributed across the region which reduced the amount for Bolton and finally the process was removed completely following the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2010. The only funding available after this time was that allocated by the Council from capital resources.

The funding available for private sector renewal from 2004/05 (first full year Queens Park Renewal Area in operation) was as follows:

Year	Overall Total (inc Disabled Facility Grant)	Amount for Queens Park Renewal Area
2004/05	£8090K	£1468K
2005/06	£8015K	£1500K
2006/07	£8215K	£1700K
2007/08	£8223K	£1525K
2008/09	£7084K	£1240K
2009/10	£7029K (+ one off £600K)	£1310K

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2010/11	£5435K	£885K
2011/12	£3919K	£250K

Unfortunately a breakdown as to the total expenditure in each ward was unavailable as the area was looked at as a whole. Any underspend in each year's budget was rolled into the next. All resources had been committed.

A commitment of £188k had been made for 2012/13 to carry out environmental improvements (boundary walls) to properties on Mornington Road.

Members in their discussions referred to matters around HM Government Policy on Private Sector Renewal.

The Committee also received extracts of other meetings of the Council relevant to the remit of this Committee:-

- (a) Executive Cabinet Member for Environment, Regulatory Services and Skills held on 6<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September and 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2012.
- (b) The Cabinet held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2012.
- (c) Waste, Recycling, Highways and Transport Policy Development group held on 22<sup>nd</sup> August and 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2012.
- (d) Economy, Housing and Skills Policy Development Group held on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2012.

Resolved – (i) That the Members question and the answer provided be noted.

(ii) That the minutes of the various meetings be noted.

(The meeting started at 5.00 p.m. and finished at 6.30pm)

E13

**NOTES**