

MEETING:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
DATE:	Tuesday, 6 October 2015
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

Present

Councillors Ennis (Chair), P. Birkinshaw, Brook, G. Carr, Cave, Clarke, Franklin, Hand-Davis, Hayward, Johnson, Makinson, Pourali, Sheard, Sixsmith MBE, Spence, Tattersall, Unsworth, Worton, Ms P. Gould, Ms J. Whittaker and Mr J. Winter together with co-opted members Ms P. Gould, Ms J. Whittaker and Mr J. Winter

12 Apologies for Absence - Parent Governor Representatives

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Kate Morritt in accordance with Regulation 7 (6) of the Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001.

13 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non Pecuniary Interest

There were declarations from Councillors Ennis, Franklin and Pourali as Directors on Berneslai Homes' Board. Also Cllr Unsworth declared an interest as a Governor at Barnsley Hospital.

14 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 1st September 2015 were approved as a true and accurate record.

15 Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) - District Heating

(Note: The above item was accepted by the Chairman as an urgent item in view of the need to ensure that the Call for Action received in respect of 'District Heating systems in Council properties' was considered as soon as possible, before the onset of the winter).

Due to Councillor Ennis' declaration of interest, Councillor Sixsmith chaired this item and welcomed the witnesses to the meeting which included:

- Stephen Davis, Director of Assets Regeneration and Construction Berneslai Homes (BH)
- Phillip Spurr, Service Director, Culture, Housing and Regeneration, Barnsley Council
- Councillor Roy Miller, Cabinet Spokesperson for Place

Councillor Hand-Davis gave an introduction following the 'Councillor Calls for Action' on District Heating that he had asked to be discussed at this meeting.

Councillor Hand-Davis explained, although his concerns over district heating are a borough wide issue, this was also of personal interest to him. Following his son leaving the army, he had moved to a bungalow, which has a ground source heat pump. His son's initial concern was the potential cost of heating the property, which led to him not using the heating during the coldest months of the year. This then resulted in mould developing in the property. Councillor Hand-Davis described the same situation occurring with other residents within the immediate area of where his son was living advising that some residents were using blankets to keep warm. Councillor Hand-Davis also highlighted that the report from BH demonstrates there is under-use of the systems.

Councillor Hand-Davis described the costs of the system and enquired how residents who were in receipt of benefits could be expected to pay such heating costs, particularly when they were purely for heating as washing is done off-site and the other fixtures in the home require electricity. He highlighted that when the systems are on; the temperature is not very warm due to heat loss from the pipes and stated that the schemes do not give good output. Councillor Hand-Davis stated that residents had been advised by an engineer that due to the characteristics of a ground source heat pump, the system needs to be left on to ensure a constant supply of heat, however there is uncertainty over costs. He also expressed concerns whether a boiler temperature of 50°C was sufficient to kill the Legionella bacteria, which can cause Legionnaires' disease as the systems aren't getting hot enough.

Councillor Hand-Davis stated that he feels that Barnsley Council and Berneslai Homes are better than this, there are Borough-wide issues which are evidenced in the report, therefore what is going to be done about this?

Councillor Miller responded by providing the committee with further information about the district heating within the borough, explaining there are 24 different heating schemes, which represent good value for money, as residents only pay for what they use. At a unit charge of £0.11 per kWh, this means an average yearly cost of £458.00. In March 2015 we were advised of a reduction in gas and electricity when we were going to put the price of District Heating up, however we have now reduced this to 9.5p. The costs are charged to run the whole scheme and this is equally divided amongst tenants.

Councillor Miller also advised that of the 24 different schemes, 8 are Biomass (with gas back up), 6 are ground source heat pumps and 10 are gas supplied. Varying temperatures dependant on the fuel type are pumped through the system. Due to the way the heating systems operate those like ground source heat pumps, which operate at a lower distribution temperature are both more effective and efficient if the systems remain on all the time.

Steve Davis advised that ground source heat pumps do run at a lower temperature; however they are sealed systems so legionella is not a problem. As the systems are run at a lower temperature the most efficient way to use them is to leave them on, however you still only pay for what you use. We take tenants through an induction when they have one of these systems about how to use them.

The witnesses proceeded to answer the following questions raised by Councillor Hand Davis in the CCfA:

- 1) Can Councillors have sight of /or details of the District Heating Review commissioned by Berneslai Homes?

The committee were advised that this has been distributed to committee members as part of this meeting's papers.

- 2) Is our green energy partner of the right quality and sufficiently sympathetic towards our residents?

The group were advised that there is no specific green energy provider regarding District Heating. BH is working with Energise Barnsley; however this is only regarding a new scheme to install solar panels on council owned houses.

- 3) The proposed reduction of £0.01 off the kilowatt hour charge is totally inadequate.

The committee were advised the unit charge was £0.11, this has been in place since April 2014; from the 1st October 2015 this has been reduced by £0.01 to £0.10, representing a saving of 9% or £41.00 per year.

A further £0.05 reduction will be implemented on the 1st November 2015 reducing the charge down to £0.095 which will reduce an average yearly bill from £458.00 to £396.00.

- 4) An average cost of £1000.00 per year is too expensive for those on benefits.

The group were advised this was incorrect and that the average cost for 2014/15 was £458.00.

- 5) Can we reverse the green energy scheme and replace with Gas Combi Boilers?

The Members were advised that there would be a substantial cost in doing this, and also the average yearly gas bill is substantially higher at £794.00 compared with the average District Heating charge of £458.00.

- 6) Can we subsidise the kilowatt hour price?

The committee were advised it is not advisable to subsidise this price as tenants pay for what they use and if this was to be subsidised it would have to come from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is essentially money from other tenants' rents.

- 7) Are our tenants' homes sufficiently well insulated to compensate for the low heat output of green schemes?

The group were advised that properties managed by BH are well insulated as this has been invested in over the last 12 years. The average SAP (Standard

Assessment Procedure) rating for a BH property is 84, whereas it is 57 in the private rented sector.

- 8) The scheme I know most about (Ground Source Heat Pumps) is arguably two thirds as efficient and three times the cost of a Gas Combi boiler.

The committee were advised this source of heating results in lower fuel bills after the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) Payments which continue for 20 years are received from the Government. Also, modern ground source heat pumps are very efficient and represent a fuel saving of 17.4% or £17,000 compared to the previous fuel type. This is in addition to RHI funding.

- 9) Are we prepared, as a caring Council to have people wrapped in blankets, frightened to turn the heating on because of the cost?

The group were advised that the Council's priorities are to have high quality homes that are well-insulated with effective, value for money heating. We are aware that there are challenges for tenants to meet bills; however the reduction in price should help our tenants.

Members of the committee proceeded to ask the following questions.

- I. There are elderly residents in the Dodworth ward who are struggling to keep warm, despite spending £40.00 per week and this only keeps them reasonably warm, not even hot. Bungalows at the end of the systems are particularly struggling to keep warm. Some bungalows have solar panels which are helpful but this is still not good enough. On some of the bungalows with solar panels, they found the cables underground were not adequate to take the energy, therefore the panels were removed. BH have then recently sent them letters wanting to do another survey regarding them having solar panels, please can you explain this?

The group were advised the problems with this solar panel scheme relates to 2/3 years ago. A small number of panels had to be removed as there wasn't sufficient capacity within the mains operated by Northern Power Grid. It is possible things have changed therefore as part of the Energise Barnsley Scheme the panels may be able to be re-installed.

- II. Why are tenants who are using pre payment meters having to pay more than those who are paying by direct debit?

The committee were advised pre payment meters are the only option available for district heating, as it allows tenants to remain in control of their heating costs, also there are no additional costs in paying by this method.

- III. In looking to reduce the unit cost of heating, which could include apportioning maintenance costs to another budget and reducing the number of weekly site visits from 5 to 3 on the Biomass schemes; could these suggestions be considered?

Members were advised that service and repair maintenance costs are already funded from a different budget (the repairs budget), which is separate to that of the district heating; this was an error made by the consultants. If we can find other ways to reduce costs we will and we keep this under review.

- IV. Although the statistics are impressive, if you go to a vulnerable person's house they don't want to hear that the system is statistically working. Residents at Hudson Haven, which is sheltered accommodation, are unhappy with their heating system, therefore are there plans for there to be a new system or different system installed?

The group was advised that this is an older biomass scheme with gas back up but it is kept under review. Our RHI funding means it's more efficient to have biomass schemes. If this scheme becomes no longer efficient then we'll consider other fuel types as we do on all replacements; however we all have to try to burn less fossil fuels which is both a BH and BMBC policy.

- V. With reference to page 30 of the report, which advises of the heat pump installation at Sunrise Manor and its supply of hot water at 48°C; with this being lower than the recommended 60°C, will this prevent the Legionella bacteria or potentially be a threat to public health?

The committee were advised that electric showers work on the mains pressure cold only, meaning they are not drawing their supply from a hot water tank. Also, the heating system is checked annually for the Legionella bacteria, and the findings from any report would be acted upon. BH advised that they would check this and return the facts in relation to this to Councillor Unsworth.

- VI. The photographic evidence within the report suggests repairs have been neglected, resulting in exposed pipework and poor insulation. What is being done to resolve this?

The group were advised the report had been commissioned to both look at the heating systems as well as highlighting any areas of concern, which will subsequently be addressed. Generally the schemes are well insulated but there are some specific areas need addressing.

- VII. References were made to the following excerpts from the report:

- i) 3.2.1 Glebe Court '... heat consumption has also dropped by 36% over the last three years'.
- ii) 3.2.5 Marston Crescent '... metered energy use for this site has decreased by over 30% between 2012/13 and 2014/15'.
- iii) 3.2.6 Heather Court '... heat consumption dropped by 18% between 2013/14 and 2014/15'.

Do the above figures suggest that there has been a continual reduction in how long residents are using their heating?

The committee was advised with Glebe Court there is a large communal area, and residents benefit from the secondary heating from this, therefore don't need to turn

their heating on Also, a considerable number of residents have credits on their meters, due to paying for more heating than they are actually using.

- VIII. Has this report only been made available, because of the Councillor Calls for Action and why have we not received something sooner as it was requested in March this year?

Members were advised this report was shared with BMBC. Not all reports are circulated as they are technical, of which this one is an example. It was explained that the report was commissioned in March 2015 but BH had to go through a tender exercise for this which took 6 weeks. The report was completed at the end of August 2015.

- IX. What is being done about the private sector and those in houses in cold, damp conditions?

The committee were advised within the Housing and Energy Team colleagues work to support home owners. There are huge challenges across the Borough with people living in poor housing. The BH stock is good compared to other stock and largely there is provision of high quality housing.

- X. If residents are paying heating costs of £40.00 per week why has the report not been passed to the Directors at BH?

The group were advised that a summary report was taken to BH Board. Also, there are no residents who are paying the equivalent of £2000.00 per year for District Heating.

- XI. How many tenants have sufficient credit on their meters to warrant a refund?

The committee was advised that many tenants pay more over the summer months to allow for the winter period when they will be using their heating more and this is a good way to budget.

- XII. Why is our unit charge higher than other local authorities?

Members were advised there was some uncertainty over the information provided by other authorities as to whether their unit costs were inclusive of recovering the cost of their heating systems. Also, their method of charging could differ from BH, for example they may have a large standing charge but then lower unit costs.

- XIII. What was the reduction with the previous subsidy that was in place?

The committee was advised that previously the district heating scheme was subsidised, but now it is a self financing scheme.

- XIV. Have the residents at Maltas Court sheltered accommodation experienced difficulties in using their boilers?

The group were advised that the residents at this accommodation had been fitted with heat meters; initially there were problems, but as residents have become more familiar with using them, things have improved.

XV. Would visiting residents in their own home, be helpful in ensuring they are knowledgeable in the use of equipment that has been installed?

The committee were advised that whenever there is a roll out of new meters, there is an induction process for residents, to ensure they are familiar in using the equipment; however, some people will forget and might require a further visit. The committee were advised that John Dowell at BH goes out to give this information and will attend any properties as required.

Councillor Sixsmith as Chair thanked the witnesses for their attendance and contribution to the meeting and Councillor Ennis returned as Chair of the meeting.

16 Corporate Plan Performance Report - Quarter 1: 2015/16: Customer Feedback & Complaints

The Chair welcomed the witnesses to the meeting which included:

- Ann O' Flynn, Service Director of Customer Services, Communities Directorate
- Claire Dobby, Customer Feedback and Improvement Manager, Communities Directorate

Ann O'Flynn gave an introduction to the group, explaining the service is fulfilling a new role and this is the first instance of the data being included in the Corporate Plan Performance Report in this way. The service's other functions include acknowledging compliments that are received, responding to requests under the Freedom of Information Act and tell us once enquiries. The service has recently piloted a scheme with the Highways department to deal with Member enquiries.

The department covers a broad range of services and is only just getting to its full structure.

Members proceeded to ask the following questions:

- I. As the service is providing a new function within the Council, what timescale is being given to review whether this has been successful?

The committee were advised it is six months since the service began and is currently still being embedded. A lot of learning is taking both corporately and within the team, therefore we are continuously developing.

- II. Are internal candidates being shortlisted and interviewed to fill the vacant posts within the structure?

The group were advised that all the vacancies have been advertised internally, and the service is in the final stages of filling the remaining vacant posts; all the candidates are internal to the Council.

- III. Will information be available on which services have received complaints and are procedures being put in place to prevent similar incidents occurring again?

The Members were advised an annual report will be produced identifying the reasons for the complaints, also whether any trends are developing. Feedback will then be given to individual services to hopefully minimise the risk of any reoccurrence.

- IV. Could a quarterly report be produced, to provide the information as detailed in the response to 'question 3'?

The committee were advised it will be possible for the service to provide this information.

- V. How are the public and Members being made aware of the new corporate complaints procedure; could this be cascaded to both Area Councils and Ward Alliances?

The group were advised that a representative from the service would be able to attend the Member meetings. Also, information has been put in the Open House publication and information is available on the Home Page of the Council's website.

- VI. How successful has the Highways department pilot scheme been with Members?

The committee were advised Members have been using the facility. The pilot ran for a few months, however uptake has been low therefore from next week it is going to be available to all Members.

Hazel Shaw, Head of Service for Customer Support & Development, is to hold an All Member Briefing on Tuesday 13th October 2015, which Members are encouraged to attend as how to use the scheme and the benefits will be explained.

- VII. The report identifies in quarter 1, the total percentage number of complaints meeting their agreed timescale was 68% which is below the expected target of 90%, do you think this figure will improve? Also, at paragraph 5.1 it says 68% of the complaints were completed in the timescales whereas 34% were not which does not add up to 100%, please can you explain?

Members of the group were advised as the service develops and all posts within the structure are filled, the percentage of complaints resolved within timescale will improve. The service apologised for the error in the report and advised that they would review the figures mentioned.

17 Commissioner Working Together Programme

The Chair welcomed the following witness to the meeting:

- Lesley Smith, Chief Officer, Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

Lesley Smith gave an update to the committee on the progress of the Commissioner Working Together Programme, initially explaining our neighbouring authorities are experiencing similar changes to Barnsley. People are living longer, there are continual advances in new technology, but there is a shortage of both doctors and nurses in some hospital services.

To address the requirements for the provision of hospital services, it is necessary to look at the current and future challenges, standards and problems regarding care. Early findings indicate there are obvious cases for change in Stroke Services and Children's Surgery and Anaesthetics.

Members proceeded to ask the following questions:

- I. How will this programme help in reducing admissions to Accident and Emergency (A&E)?

The committee were advised that it is not possible to quantify A&E attendance with regards to acute admissions. Attendance at A&E is high, however this does not relate to an incorrect number of admissions. We have high numbers of older people with respiratory problems who need admitting.

- II. What have you learnt from the engagement you have undertaken so far?

Members were advised the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) needs to look at co-designing services with patients and consultants. It is also important that doctors own the agreed standards across the country. The next stage will be for the service to undertake clinical engagement as well as with Healthwatch Barnsley. The committee were advised that the model has not been designed yet therefore the CCG wants to take comments from Councillors also regarding how we can do things better.

- III. How will the improvements be measured?

The group was advised there are national standards that need to be maintained including staffing levels and expertise. We need to look at service sustainability including quality and standards, particularly as this is against a background of limited staff. Currently, the service is relying on a number of locums.

- IV. Do we have a comprehensive paediatric commissioning strategy in place in Barnsley?

Members were advised that this is the case and it reflects the local work for Barnsley. It is based on the Working Together Programme and we will have to re-fresh it early next year as we are into the 1 year operational plan as part of a 5 years strategy.

- V. Under the Right Care programme, how have the admissions to A&E been affected and if people are not using this service where are they going for treatment? Also, if someone has an appointment with a GP in another area who will fund this?

The committee were advised that the Right Care programme was introduced 6 months ago and is working well as it provides a single point of access. Someone requiring service can contact Right Care who can then assess where they as a patient should go, for example they may need support at home or a specialist residential care bed. It is still early days to clearly assess the impact this service has had on admissions, however we need to ensure we are investing in the community end of the spectrum.

If a Barnsley resident attends a GP surgery in another area, then this would be funded by Barnsley CCG.

VI. Are there a sufficient number of intermediate care beds?

The group were advised this is a hugely challenging area. The CCG undertook a full review and this found we needed 69 beds in Barnsley, therefore there are 49 at Mount Vernon and 21 that are community based, which was previously 30.

VII. It is not always a bed that people need, as they may only need this for 2 days and then they are discharged and can be cared for at homes. £350K has been set aside if Right Care Barnsley needed to spot purchase a bed for someone in need. Will this group become a super-commissioner and lose the clear differences between regional and sub-regional specialities, also there is variation in compliance regarding national standards therefore please explain why there is a need to come together?

The Members were advised Barnsley CCG is responsible for the provision of safe and effective services for the people of Barnsley including at the hospitals. Patients have choice over services and a significant number choose treatments not in their locality. We are aware of the issues of differences in standards but it would be difficult to resolve these operating in isolation therefore we're working with partners and Vanguard sites where it makes sense to do so.

VIII. How will you work with the local Health and Wellbeing Board and ensure work is aligned. Also is the working together programme taking place in other regions and are you sharing learning?

The group were advised the CCG are members of the Health and Wellbeing Board, therefore their commissioning strategies reflect those of the board and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. We're looking at how we can better integrate services and deliver across boundaries so that patients don't notice for example the difference between South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SWYPFT) services, the hospital etc.

Other regions are also looking at the Working Together programme such as the Healthy Futures partnership in West Yorkshire. We have a border with them; therefore anything they do has an impact on our work. We share intelligence to ensure the sustainability of services and we learn from services in other regions where we can.

- IX. Can we have a list of the services you're looking to commission, also how will you know if they are cost effective and improved, for example there are currently a number of problems with mental health services?

The committee was advised the CCG has a commissioning strategy, of which the Working Together Programme only covers a limited number. Those picked are listed in the attached report and they have been chosen as we know there is variation in standards across the region.

Mental Health services are not currently under this work-stream, however a review of mental health commissioning is currently taking place and the strategy is being updated.

- X. GPs are leaving Barnsley to being overloaded with work, how are you going to ensure services work properly?

The group was advised that the problem with GP services is recognised nationally. In Barnsley there are a low number of GPs per head of population and a high number of patients. Work is being done with Healthcare Assistants and training is being done with pharmacists to ensure we are utilising their skills. The CCG and SWYPFT are working to have GP fellowships where GPs have time to work in both primary care and specialist services to improve our offer.

There is also a GP Federation in Barnsley which received money from the Prime Minister's Challenge Fund which is enabling us to launch 2 primary care hubs which will be open till 10pm. Patients can go in person, ring or go online.

- XI. How is the work that you have undertaken progression, are you on schedule and will you be reporting back to the committee?

The group was advised that the work is progressing well. A joint scrutiny committee is due to be formed regarding this work with all those across the region represented. We have been talking to key stakeholders regarding a blueprint for stroke services and are hoping to go out to consultation on this in May 2016, therefore we can bring this back to the committee then.

- XII. Why are there difficulties in getting specialists to work in Barnsley?

The committee were advised there have been difficulties in recruiting specialist medical personnel, it is important Barnsley is promoted as a place to come and live and work, which the Chronicle could help with.

- XIII. How has the pioneer status that was awarded to Barnsley CCG benefited the services it can provide?

The Members were advised this was awarded in 2013 for the Stronger Barnsley Together programme, regarding the work of the Council, CCG and other health and social care services, which will result in improving both the quality of the services that are provided and experience for the residents of Barnsley. The original idea was the prevention agenda, self-management of conditions and universal access to information for people to help themselves. Nationally, some of this emphasis has

changed, for example the NHS 5 year forward plan identifies Vanguard sites and new models of care delivered through pathways, not organisational boundaries. We are therefore currently looking at a pathway in relation to COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) and how patients could utilise community and hospital services.

The Chair thanked the witness and all attendees for their contribution and declared the meeting closed.

Action Points

- 1) BH to provide information to Councillor Unsworth regarding the temperatures and work done to prevent problems with Legionella bacteria?
- 2) BH to ensure programme of works highlighted in the attached report are completed prior to the end of December 2015.
- 3) BH to ensure support is provided to tenants with District Heating regarding how to use it efficiently.
- 4) Customer Feedback and Complaints Service to provide a quarterly statistical report on the number of complaints received detailing which services they relate to.
- 5) Members to attend the All Member Information Brief on Customer Services on Tuesday 13th October 2015 at 2pm.
- 6) Customer Feedback and Complaints Service to review the figures mentioned in paragraph 5.1 of their report and amend as appropriate.
- 7) Barnsley CCG to provide an update to the committee regarding stroke services and the consultation.