

MEETING:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
DATE:	Tuesday, 5 June 2018
TIME:	1.00 pm
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

Present

Councillors Ennis (Chair), Bowler, G. Carr, Frost, Gollick, Hampson, W. Johnson, Makinson, Pourali, Sheard, Tattersall and Williams together with co-opted members Ms P. Gould and Ms K. Morritt.

1 Apologies for Absence - Parent Governor Representatives

No apologies for absence were received in accordance with Regulation 7(6) of the Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001.

2 Appreciation

The Chair wished to place on record his thanks for work Cllr W Johnson had undertaken in chairing the Committee for the previous year.

3 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th April, 2018 were approved as a true and accurate record.

5 Waste Collection Service Review

The following witnesses were welcomed to the meeting:-

Councillor Roy Miller – Cabinet Spokesperson, Place
Paul Castle – Service Director, Environment and Transport
Jeanette Jones – Waste Collection Manager, Environment and Transport
Rachel Tyas – Head of Transformation, Environment and Transport

The Service Director, Environment and Transport introduced the item, reminding Members that this was one of four reviews being undertaken which also included Neighbourhood Services; Highways; and Fleet Services. This formed part of work to modernise the service. Some service improvement had already been undertaken and the service was generally performing well, however it was recognised that there were some areas for improvement as highlighted in the report. Questions were then invited from Members and the ensuing discussion included the following points:-

- Cabinet had recently agreed the combining of household waste and cardboard, however this was yet to become operational. The ability to do so related to a new facility becoming available and a new contractor being in

place. Members were made aware that it was expected that this would go live in August, with appropriate communications to make the public aware.

- With regards to replacement bins Members were made aware of the policy; if the bin was damaged by staff then this would be reported and replaced directly. If damaged prior to it being emptied by staff, then the responsibility for replacement lay with the resident.
- Members discussed the issue of bins being left inappropriately after being emptied, and were encouraged to report any specific issues directly to the service. This would help to ensure that these were dealt with appropriately.
- In relation to the review, Members questioned how stakeholders were engaged in the process and in response they were made aware that a wide range of business partners and staff had been engaged at all levels. Members had also been engaged at Area Council and Ward Alliance levels. Assurance was given that further engagement would happen where appropriate; recognising that local intelligence from Members through Area Councils and Ward Alliances was important and closer working could be beneficial. It was noted that the Everybody Think campaign had been extended to include litter and recycling and that a representative from the Communities Directorate was now on the group.
- With approximately 110,000 households with up to 4 bins each, Members noted the significant number in circulation, and that current usage rates were not known. However a business case is currently being developed in relation to adopting in-cab technology. The technology would help to measure put out rates and weights in order to plan rounds and maximise efficiency. It was noted that this technology was being used by other authorities such as Rotherham and Bradford.
- The high collection rates were noted, and the policy recently adopted of issuing additional pink sacks by post for residents where bins had unfortunately been missed was noted.
- The process for applying for assisted bin collection, or for residents changing their address for the service was discussed as feedback from residents suggested this was onerous. Work had been undertaken to simplify the process, and a GP letter was no longer required. However, it was recognised that relevant checks were undertaken to ensure that resources were utilised for those who required the service. Members heard that the process had a target of 4 weeks to conclude.
- Questions were asked in relation to the use of Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) data, and why the service had declined to submit information to APSE as part of the benchmarking club. In response Members heard how, in a time of making efficiency savings, the decision had been taken previously to withdraw from the benchmarking club, however more recently the situation had been reconsidered and it was recommended that the service reengage with APSE.
- The committee discussed current performance, noting that changes to measurements, such as pre and post treatment to remove water, had meant it difficult to make accurate comparisons. Assurances were given that, due to the BDR facility, over 95% of the waste in Barnsley diverted from landfill.
- In relation to commercial waste, it was noted that the service had around 1,900 customers, and worked collaboratively with other providers. Over the past four years both turnover and profitability had increased, and customers were provided with assurances about where their waste went. However, in

growing this element of the service, it was recognised that the Council had to be mindful of the boundaries in relation to the private sector.

- The issues of waste produced by Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) was mentioned, with many producing the waste of many families, but with Council tax levied on the property itself. The challenge this presented was acknowledged, and it was noted that this was an issue nationally as HMOs were treated as a private dwelling and not as a business. It was suggested that Members ought to lobby where possible to raise the importance of this issue with central government.
- Questions were asked in relation to flies around sites at Stairfoot and Manvers, and Members were made aware of the strict plans in place to deal with this issue. This included doing fly counts to ascertain the severity of the issue and then deal with it accordingly. Members heard how a recent investigation into flies in the vicinity found them to be emanating from a local pig farm.
- When discussing good practice Members heard how the South Yorkshire Waste Strategy prioritises the dependability and predictability of the service, as this was of paramount importance to residents. This which was echoed in Barnsley. Though there were many variables which could provide disruptions, where possible contingencies were in place to ensure the impact of these was minimised.
- Members discussed what could currently be recycled and it was noted that work to ensure the public was aware of this through education campaigns was ongoing. Twice a year waste arisings were analysed to understand where further recycling could be targeted. In-cab technology could provide further information, which would aid the targeting of communications. In addition the bottom ash at the end of the processes used at Manvers and Ferrybridge could be used to make aggregate used in roads. Further investigation was being undertaken regarding the use of recyclables such as plastics in roads.
- The age profile of staff in the service was discussed, and it was noted that whenever vacancies were advertised the response was very positive. Witnesses recognised the need to invest in areas such as apprenticeships and this was part of the business plan for the service.
- The issue of an increased demand on the service through the building of houses was mentioned, and Members were made aware that increases in income from Council tax did feed into increased finance for the service.
- The meeting discussed the effectiveness of the permit system for the use of Household Waste Recycling Centres, and it was noted that around 25,000 permits had been issued with the system working well to assist Barnsley avoiding processing the household waste from other boroughs. In addition the service was looking at how to deal with the issue of commercial or semi commercial waste that residents brought into the sites.
- The issue of refrigerators being left on pavements was discussed, with some being left out to be collected by the bulky collections service, and some being fly-tipped. It was noted that there was a market in the motors within the fridge, and often they were stripped at the kerbside or picked up, stripped, and subsequently fly-tipped. Work with the enforcement team was ongoing to address the issue, and work to align the service provided by the fly-tipping and bulky collection teams was also underway.
- Members noted that waste carriers licences were administered by the Environment Agency, and were relatively easy to obtain, but that the Council

worked in partnership for the Agency to revoke these where these had been abused in order to fly-tip. Also noted was the responsibility now placed on householders when gaining planning permission to ensure that licenced waste carriers were used.

- Members questioned the frequency of litter picking in the town centre and in response Members heard how operatives were in place every day including weekends.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the witnesses be thanked for their attendance;
- (ii) That thanks be given to all staff involved in delivering a high performing service, which is subject to continuing challenges;
- (iii) That the content of the report be noted.

6 Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19

The Scrutiny Officer introduced the item, reminding the committee of the recent workshop session which had discussed potential items for inclusion in the work plan. In addition Members had been asked to email any ideas so that they could also be incorporated.

The attention of Members was drawn to the draft plan, which included dates where consideration could be given to quarterly performance reports. The committee noted that both annual reports from the Barnsley Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children's Board would be considered as part of an All Members Scrutiny Session.

Also noted were the themes suggested for the Task and Finish Groups: Adult Mental Health Services; Substance Misuse (which would include associated Anti-Social Behaviour); and Social Housing.

With regards to the review of hospital services, it was suggested that this could be part of the scope of the session to consider Integrated/Accountable Care System Progress if appropriate.

The Committee discussed attendance at the Committee, and the Chair remarked that this was an issue already in consideration. A review of the arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny was already in train, and that any changes necessary could be made to be effective from the start of the next municipal year.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny draft work programme for 2018/19 be endorsed by the committee, recognising the need for this to be flexible in order to remain responsive.