

Minutes

RESIDENTS' AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

22 January 2013

Meeting held at Committee Room 3 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Susan O'Brien (Chairman) Mary O'Connor (Vice-Chairman) Kuldeep Lakhmana Carol Melvin David Payne Michael White David Yarrow Beulah East</p> <p>Witnesses Present: Ed Shaylor - Community Safety and ASB Investigations Service Manager Paul Richards - Green Spaces, Sport and Leisure Senior Manger Shabeg Nagra - Public Protection Services Manager Colin Russell - Waste Division Manager</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Nigel Dicker, Deputy Director, Residents Services Andy Evans, Head of Finance, Residents Services Nadia Williams, Democratic Services</p>	
53.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies had been received from Cllr Lynne Allen and was substituted by Councillor Beulah East.</p>	
54.	<p>DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>There were no declarations of interests notified.</p>	
55.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT ALL ITEMS MARKED PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT ANY ITEMS MARKED PART 2 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items on the agenda marked as Part 1 would be considered in public.</p>	
56.	<p>TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2012 (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2012 were agreed as an accurate record and noted that the draft recommendations listed at</p>	

	<p>the bottom of page 2 would from part of the recommendations in the final report of the Committee's first Review of Regulations and Byelaws Relating to Cemeteries and Burial Grounds within Hillingdon.</p>	
57.	<p>REVIEW 2: A REVIEW OF LOCAL PEST CONTROL SERVICES AND THE IMPACT OF WASTE MANAGEMENT PROCESSES ON THESE - WITNESS SESSION 1 (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>The Chairman of the Committee welcomed Ed Shaylor – Community Safety and ASB Investigations Service Manager, Paul Richards - Green Spaces, Sport and Leisure Senior Manager, Shabeg Nagra - Public Protection Services Manager and Colin Russell - Waste Division Manager as witnesses to their second Review of Local Pest Control Services and the Impact of Waste Management Processes on these.</p> <p>In response to concerns raised about residents living in social housing, Ed Shaylor raised the points listed and responded to queries from members as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A free pest control service was available to tenants provided by Housing Repairs • Residents would be obliged to comply with their tenancy conditions with regard to managing waste properly. • All occupiers are obliged to take reasonable steps to keep their individual areas clean but some private tenants and tenants of social landlords are confused with regard to who is responsible for dealing with rats and mice. Tenants often believe that the landlord is responsible for eradicating rats and mice • Responsibility for management of waste would normally rest with the tenant but the landlord would be responsible for any repairs necessary to the property, eg hole in a wall or around pipes, provision of bin stores etc. Where the issue was related to the storage of waste, land lords would say that the responsibility lay with the occupier of the property. • Notices can be served by the Council on owners and occupiers giving 21 days to remove waste products such as soft materials and baiting to kill rats and mice. If this is not done and the Council does the work, payment for the removal of such products and for baiting would be required to be paid for by the householders. • It was noted that a concession for this service applied for residents over the age of 65 for whom it would be free after April 2013. • With regard to pests inside a property, such as fleas and bugs, the landlord would be informed by the Council and would be asked to assist and were usually sympathetic. There would be a dialogue to establish the cause of the infestation and a contractor would be engaged to fumigate or eradicate the pests. For Hillingdon Council tenants in a Council property, the service would be provided free. However, if the tenant was housed by a social landlord, the tenant would be responsible for payment. 	Action by

- It was highlighted that where the Council housed residents through social landlords, why the responsibility for payment lie with the tenants? Members were advised that although the Council accepted the duty to house, with regard to tenants placed in private property, the tenants had a tenancy agreement with the Council but not on Council land, where as Council tenants would have a tenancy agreement on Council land.
- Advised that where tenants were housed on land owned by the Council, the Council provided a free service due to its duty to keep its own land clear of rats and mice.
- Tenants housed in private properties were allowed some concessions.

The Committee raised the issue of cohesion between departments, as it was not clear to residents what the Council was responsible for and what aspects the residents were responsible for.

Officers explained that:

- If the problem was established as emanating from a neighbour's property, the neighbour would be liable.
- Where rats and mice were coming from a source then the liability for repairing the source would be established as quickly as possible.
- With regard to a broken sewer pipe, if it was within the boundary of the property, the occupier of the property would be served with a notice to repair (obliged under the Building Act 1984) within a time specified by the Council usually between 7 to 14 days. However, in an emergency, within 24 hours. If outside the property, Thames Water would deal with it.
- Calls would usually be taken by the Contact Centre where key issues would be identified. The Anti-Social Behaviour Investigations Team (ASBIT) would liaise with the Waste Division regarding investigations involving trade waste. Trade waste contracts would be inspected, as well as the licence for trade waste carriers.
- Most of the regulations required a notice to be served by ASBIT or Environmental Protection Unit (EPU) for a person to take necessary remedial action (eg Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949).
- The Waste Division did not routinely clear access roads that had not been adopted by the Local Authority; these were the responsibility of the houses served or adjacent to the road. The rubbish in these access roads was often dumped by other people and not by the residents with access to that road, so this was a sensitive issue and the ASBIT would investigate if those responsible for dumping rubbish could be identified. The Waste Division would collect rubbish that had been dumped and open the bags to find evidence of the culprit. Card board packaging with addresses would usually be sent to the ASBIT to follow-up with the identified owners.
- Environmental Protection Unit dealt with commercial premises and matters resulting in environment health issues, such as, pollution.

Members asked how people in commercial properties, as well as occupiers of flats above could be educated to handle their own wastes.

Colin Russell advised that:

- Leaflets were available for residents - *Your guide to Waste & recycling* for every collection day.
- There was also a leaflet called *Street Scene Enforcement Team Trade Waste* for businesses.
- The leaflets were posted to residents and properties when it was established that there were problems in an area and if it continued, then it was reported to the ASBIT to follow-up by sending an inspector in.
- The ASBIT and the Waste Division worked closely together.
- Both teams tried to encourage residents and businesses to properly manage their waste and gained more success by being proactive, such as having inspectors visit, rather than by using prosecution as a yardstick.
- Leaflet drops for issues such as, dumping in alleyways would serve no purpose as materials dumped were usually not just domestic rubbish but mattresses and sofas.
- There was also the issue of the quick turn around in occupancy and leaflet drop would serve little purpose due to the frequent change in tenancy.
- The two main issues with regard to waste management were highlighted as fly tipping and dumping in alleyways.

Members commented that:

- Residents associations should be encouraged to educate residents in their areas via their News letters.
- It should be stressed in the leaflets, the effects of pests to indicate that badly managed waste encouraged pests.
- The leaflets should be included on an annual basis in the Hillingdon People, the Council's free magazine delivered to all residents. To include a page on 'dos' and 'don't' of managing waste.
- There was a need to clearly define pests and charges levied and for which services.
- It should be noted that the Council did not provide treatment for all pests, only for rats and mice.
- It would be helpful to provide some information on the Council website about bees and wasp, including useful contact details, as it was likely that the initial step would be to contact the Council for advice/assistance

In response to queries raised, officers responded as follows:

- Enquires relating to pest control, for residents not in receipt of a concession, would be directed to a local contractor.
- No 'super' rats had been identified in Hillingdon, if bait was not taken by the rats or mice, a different type of poison would be used.
- Following a call out for rats and mice, the contractor would try and identify the source and put the bait down at the same time.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The free concession for the over 65 year olds was not means tested, but they must be in receipt of State Pension but this was not yet clearly stated on the Council's website. However, this would be initiated in the Hillingdon Homes contract. <p>It was noted that copies of the leaflets would be scanned and circulated to members of the Committee for information.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Committee thanked officers for attending the meeting and in assisting by providing evidence to the Committee.</p>	Nadia Williams
58.	<p>RESIDENTS SERVICES 2013/14 BUDGET PROPOSALS (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p> <p>Members indicated insufficient time had been given to consider the summary of the budget report (circulated prior to the meeting), which had been inadvertently omitted from the Residents Services 2013/2014 Budget Proposals papers that were included in the agenda for this meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that some Members had not had the opportunity to read the paper and agreed that officers would take Members through the report, to provide a briefing. Members would then submit any comments they may have by Friday 25 January 2013.</p> <p>The Committee also agreed that any comments submitted would be collated and sent to the Chairman to be agreed before putting forward to Corporate Services and Partnership Policy Overview Committee meeting on 6 February 2013 and subsequently submitted to Cabinet on 14 February 2013.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Committee welcomed Andy Evans, Head of Finance to the meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that the 2013/14 Residents Services Budget Proposals had been considered at the 20 December 2012 Cabinet meeting. The budget proposals, including comments received from Policy Overview Committees would then be considered at the Cabinet meeting being held on 14 February 2013.</p> <p>The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council had delivered approximately £60m of savings over the past three years and initial plans had been developed to deliver £12.8m savings required in 2013/2014. However the long-term outlook continued to be challenging. This would be the fifth successive year of a zero increase in Council tax. The delivery of savings within Residents Services was driven through the transformation and the HIP Business Improvement Delivery Programme. This included reorganisation and re-structure to remove duplication and examining alternative methods of service delivery. Alongside this opportunities have been taken to bid for external 	Action by

	<p>grants, and there continued to be a focus on procurement improvements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees and charges had been reviewed and there continued to be an emphasis on the differentiations between Hillingdon residents and non- resident charges. • The 2013/14 draft savings include £536.000 based on a new contract for dry recycling waste services, which had been facilitated by a successful application for DCLG grant funding to enhance facilities at New Years Green Lane Civic Amenity site. <p>The Committee was informed that much of the budget work had necessarily concentrated on savings. However on a more positive note members were asked to note the Priority Growth items set out in Appendix B. The following were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dedicated officer at Ruislip Lido • A Planning for Business Co-ordination • Provision of £108k for Community Safety projects and £65k for enhanced Litter Collection <p>In response to a question about the Planning Business Co-ordination post, Members were advised that the post holder would look at applications at the pre-application stage when businesses were looking to develop in the Borough. This was intended to encourage businesses to locate in the Borough, with the resulting economic growth having potential benefits for the council through the new business rate retention scheme.</p> <p>With regard to the gap shown in the proposed charges for non-residents in relation to exclusive rights of burial (Lawn section graves), it was noted that fees and charges proposals for this area were still being developed and these were yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>That the Committee notes the budget projections contained in the report and comments would be submitted by Members by 25 January 2013 to be agreed by the Chairman, before putting forward to Corporate Services and Partnership Policy Overview Committee meeting on 6 February 2013. These would then subsequently be submitted to Cabinet on 14 February 2013.</p>	<p>Nadia Williams</p>
59.	<p>FORWARD PLAN (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>The Committee agreed the Forward Plan.</p>	<p>Action by</p>
60.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13 (<i>Agenda Item 8</i>)</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>The Committee agreed the work programme and discussed possible witnesses for the forthcoming witness sessions.</p>	<p>Action by</p> <p>Nadia Williams</p>

	The meeting, which commenced at 5.30 pm, closed at 7.10 pm.
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These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Nadia Williams on 01895 277 655. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.