

## Minutes

### RESIDENTS, EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

5 November 2018

Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre,  
High Street, Uxbridge



	<p><b>Committee Members Present:</b> Councillors Wayne Bridges (Chairman), Michael Markham (Vice-Chairman), Vanessa Hurhangee, Allan Kauffman, Heena Makwana, Stuart Mathers, Paula Rodrigues, Jan Sweeting and Steve Tuckwell</p> <p><b>LBH Officers Present:</b> Bill Hickson (Anti-social Behaviour and Environment (ASBET) Manager), Paul Richards (Head of Green Spaces, Sport &amp; Culture), Annette Reeves (Finance Manager, Control Accounting) and Neil Fraser (Democratic Services Officer)</p>
37.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Tony Little.</p>
38.	<p><b>DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING</b> (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
39.	<p><b>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</b> (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items were marked as Part I, and would therefore be considered in public.</p>
40.	<p><b>TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b> (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record.</p>
41.	<p><b>FLY TIPPING INFORMATION UPDATE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>Bill Hickson, Anti-social Behaviour and Environment (ASBET) Manager, introduced a report updating the Committee on Fly Tipping within the Borough.</p> <p>The report was summarised and it was confirmed that fly tipping was a criminal offense that, upon conviction, carried the potential for a fine, imprisonment, or both.</p> <p>The investigation process was detailed, and the Committee was informed that the number of reports received for investigation had been seen to have declined over the past 5 years. However, the issue of fly tipping remained a problem, often due to residents putting out refuse for collection too early, or leaving refuse in the wrong</p>

location with the expectation that it would be collected.

Heat maps showing the frequency of reports received by ASBET by ward, set out in the meeting papers, showed that the issue was more common in the south of the Borough, but certain wards in the North also had high instances of fly tipping. The number of successful prosecutions was accepted as being too low, and a number of current and proposed actions to address this were detailed. These included:

- Over recent years, ASBET had focussed on issuing fixed penalty notices for littering and other anti-social behaviour covered under the Community Protection Notices.
- ASBET has introduced targeted waste carrier operations, conducted with the assistance of the local Police. These operations included stopping vehicles that were carrying waste, to check that the drivers or companies held the appropriate licences and permits. Failure to hold the appropriate licences and permits could result in a fixed penalty notice.
- Inspection of businesses or premises were carried out to ensure traders were storing and disposing of waste correctly.
- Since November 2017, officers had been working with colleagues from Waste Services to inspect regular fly tipping hot spot areas. Deposited waste was searched for evidence of perpetrators. The inspections were showing a reduction of repeat perpetrators and that personal information, such as names addresses, were being removed from domestic waste (likely to be due to anti-fraud awareness.)

It was considered that the proactive work detailed was a contributing factor to the reduction in the number of reports received.

Ongoing developments included:

- The potential introduction of a new fixed penalty notice for lower level fly tipping offences;
- Working with the Corporate Communication team to develop a publicity campaign aimed at residents and businesses, to highlight the issue of fly tipping;
- Continue and increase current 'waste carrier' operations being undertaken in partnership with local Police services;
- Extend the number of 'waste management' inspections of business premises.
- Reinforce a zero tolerance approach to all offenses relating to the management of waste;
- Build closer working relationships with the Environment Agency in terms of the larger scale of fly tipping that they have a duty to enforce; and
- Continue and increase the current 'cage van' operations being undertaken in partnership with Waste Services during which evidence is sought from small to medium scale fly tipping that occurs mainly on the public highway.

It was confirmed that there were no staffing or cost implications to the above.

The Committee asked a number of questions, including:

**Would the team consider labelling bins to better spread awareness of how**

### **domestic waste was to be managed?**

Yes, this could be considered.

### **Residents often complained that the Borough's two waste management sites cause unpleasant smells, especially during the recent hot summer. What was being done about this?**

The sites were permitted under the remit of the Environment Agency. Council officers were required to ensure the sites held the correct permits, and would report to the Environment Agency should there be breaches in licence conditions or if there were problems such as smells.

### **Was CCTV effective in combating fly tipping?**

CCTV was a useful tool, however, although cameras had a wide angle, they were fixed in place. It was therefore often difficult to obtain a clear image of the offender actually perpetrating the offense. It was also difficult to identify where the waste had originated. Although the cameras were felt to be an effective deterrent, they also led to a long process which included officers going door to door asking residents whether they knew the identify of the individual captured in the recording.

### **Were the figures included within the table on page 11 of the report a reflection of all instances of fly tipping?**

The figures within the table were all instances of fly tipping reported to ASBET. Other instances of fly tipping that had not been witnessed or reported were not included. Often such issues were seen and acted upon directly, by Refuse Services. Waste Services could be asked to provide further detail on the number of fly tipping instances committed versus reported.

### **With reference to the potential new fixed penalties for lower level offenses, what sort of offenses would be considered low level?**

Low level offenses include littering, dog fouling, and other forms of antisocial behaviour. Community Protection notices covered a wide range of activities, and covered the street scene as well as parks and green spaces. Over three bags of refuse would constitute low level fly tipping, for which a £400 fine could be issued.

It was requested that details of fixed penalty notices for antisocial behaviour, by ward, be forwarded to the Committee.

Councillor Sweeting stated that the experience of Ward Councillors, particularly in the south of the Borough, was that instances of fly tipping were increasing, not decreasing. The cost of fly tipping in 2013/14, was stated to be circa £73k, while the cost in 2017/18 was £856k. The number of Member Enquires relating to fly tipping was also extensive. It was agreed that Councillor Sweeting would request further detail on the specific sites of frequent fly tipping hot spots, within each Ward, on behalf of the Committee.

### **Dagenham had introduced a computer system which 'named and shamed' fly tipping offenders who had been caught on CCTV. Had such a system been considered within Hillingdon?**

Such a system had been considered, though concerns over its introduction had been raised by the Council's Legal team. However, the matter could be re-considered,

though the success of the system would rely on obtaining good quality images from CCTV cameras of both the offender and the crime/deposit.

### **Why was the number of convictions for fly tipping so low?**

Instances of fly tipping were often on private land, for which legal notices were issued. In addition, residents were often unwilling to give evidence against offenders. Convictions could be increased if residents were empowered to give evidence confidentially, or the number of CCTV cameras at fly tipping hotspots was increased.

It was agreed that Councillor Sweeting would submit a request for the Committee to be provided with the details by ward, location and type, of the locations of the permanent and mobile CCTV cameras provided by the Council around the Borough.

### **How was the publicity campaign, referred to within the report, progressing?**

The campaign was currently in its formative stages. The campaign would make use of the Hillingdon People newsletter, the Council website, and libraries, as well as messaging on litter bins and refuse vehicles. In addition, noticeboards in Council flats and estates could be used, as well as social media and potentially local radio.

It was suggested that a report on the campaign could be considered at a future meeting of the Committee.

### **RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the report be noted;**
- 2. That the ‘ongoing developments’ proposed within the report be endorsed;**
- 3. That further detail on the number of fly tipping instances being committed versus being reported be forwarded to the Committee; and**
- 4. That the details of fixed penalty notices for antisocial behaviour, by ward, to be forwarded to the Committee.**

## **42. WITNESS SESSION FOR REVIEW INTO PAYMENT MODERNISATION ACROSS KEY RESIDENT SERVICES (Agenda Item 6)**

Annette Reeves – Finance Manager, Control Accounting, and Paul Richards –Head of Green Spaces, Sport & Culture, provided evidence as part of the Committee’s review into payment modernisation across key resident services, focussing on the ways that residents and customers currently pay for services within Hillingdon.

Alongside the report set out in the committee papers, Ms Reeves tabled additional documents which included an updated Appendix A, which set out payment details for the libraries within Hillingdon, as well as the Battle of Britain Bunker. In addition, the tabled document included details of emerging technologies such as a Capita Smart Mobile app and Electronic Point of Sale (EPoS) service, alongside a case study of Enfield Council’s use of a Public Service Virtual Agent. It was pointed out that Enfield were not yet able to use the virtual agent to take payments.

It was highlighted that the Council was currently using an income management system provided by Capita, which processed all income. The contract with Capita was due to expire in April 2020. At that point, officers would review potential alternate providers.

However, it was highlighted that the current maintenance cost of £16k per annum under the existing contract was small in comparison to the more costly initial set up. There would therefore likely be a significant cost and time implication to the introducing a new provider.

Mr Richards updated the Committee on how areas under his remit took payments.

It was confirmed that sites such as the adult learning centres or Breakspear Crematorium had a computer based point of sale system that was linked to the Capita income management system. In addition, sites such as golf courses allowed for payments to be made through electronic tills with pre-programmed buttons, alongside card payments via chip and pin.

Golf courses did not provide residents with the ability to pay by cheque, and cash was often preferred, particularly for pay and play green fees. In addition to the playing fees, the three Council-run courses had small shops on site, which sold golf equipment, as well as snacks and drinks.

At the Council's garden centres, cash was the most popular payment method, though paying through card readers was available.

The Crematorium functioned as a hub for payments from cemeteries, and for burial and grave monuments, and allowed for payment by cheque from funeral directors and the public at large.

Library payments were currently cash only. Payments included library fines, refreshments, stationary, reading glasses, and room hire. New electronic point of sale technology, previously trialled within the Registrars department, was to be introduced to libraries. The new system would be able to sync with the existing library management system, and talks were ongoing with the relevant IT departments on how to progress the matter.

IT colleagues were also reviewing the feasibility of introducing payments via PayPal, though officers were mindful that a cash option should be retained.

The Committee asked a number of questions, including:

**Were cash payments the most expensive payment option for the Council to process?**

Broadly, cash payments were most time intensive and therefore expensive for officers to process. This included the time taken to collect cash from the various sites. Card payments were comparatively quicker and cheaper to process, though it was recognised that some card providers charged more premium processing charges.

**Regarding the Enfield case study, how long did it take to achieve good results?**

The exact timeframe was unknown, but from the pilot to correctly determining 98% of resident user requests was approximately 1 year.

**Were there any systems or changes processes that officers recommended be considering in the future?**

A single payment service provider such as Capita, that covered the processing of all income, was felt to be easier for both residents and Council staff. However Capita

could not provide every solution Systems such as Pay.Net were felt to be cumbersome and therefore not recommended. Electronic Point of Sale systems were now available and were felt to be very good. Suggestions by central government for payment modernisation were felt to be too late, and still required agreement with payment providers.

It was agreed that Cllr Mathers would submit a Member Enquiry requesting detail of the implementation cost of purchasing the CAPITA modules in 2010, as referenced on page 21 of the committee agenda.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

43. **CABINET FORWARD PLAN** (*Agenda Item 7*)

**RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Forward Plan be noted.**

44. **MULTI-YEAR WORK PROGRAMME** (*Agenda Item 8*)

Members suggested that the Work Programme be amended to better accommodate forthcoming items across future meetings. It was agreed that an updated programme would be drafted, in consultation with the Chairman and Labour Lead.

**RESOLVED: That an amended Work Programme be drafted in consultation with the Chairman and Labour Lead.**

The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 8.00 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Neil Fraser on 01895 250692. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.