

Minutes

RESIDENTS' AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

25 June 2015

Meeting held at Committee Room 4 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Michael White (Chairman), Teji Barnes (Vice-Chairman), Mohinder Birah, Peter Davis, Patricia Jackson, Jazz Dhillon (In place of Kuldeep Lakhmana), Judy Kelly, Brian Stead and Jas Dhot.</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Susan Pollitt, Residents Services, James Rodger, Residents Services, Ainsley Gilbert, Democratic Services.</p>
3.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Councillor Kuldeep Lakhmana had sent apologies for absence. Councillor Jazz Dhillon was present as her substitute.</p>
4.	<p>DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
5.	<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 would be considered in Part 1.</p>
6.	<p>TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 29 APRIL 2015 AND 14 MAY 2015 (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>Minutes The minutes of the meetings held on 29 April 2015 and 14 May 2015 were agreed to be accurate.</p> <p>Matters Arising Members confirmed that with regard to the management of rivers, they wished to know what was done by LB Hillingdon, what was done by other agencies, what else ought to be done, and what the various agencies were actually responsible for.</p>
7.	<p>UPDATE ON TRADING STANDARDS (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>Officers introduced the report explaining that it set out briefly the work of the Trading Standards team, outlined their intelligence based approach to working, including the team's priorities for the next year, and highlighted the successes the team had had over the previous year. The team had recently been praised for their work in</p>

intercepting unsafe goods entering the country at Heathrow Airport.

In response to questions from members, officers explained that:

- Days of action to tackle the problem of counterfeit and non-duty paid wine were planned for later in the year, as the issue had recently re-emerged.
- Proactive work was targeted based on both local and national trends.
- Prosecutions were brought where appropriate, depending on the nature of the offence.
- Internet shopping was a significant challenge for Trading Standards teams across the country.
- The Proceeds of Crime Act allowed the Council to take 37% of profits made by those caught breaking the rules, which might lead to more money being available to fund Trading Standards and other enforcement focussed teams.

8. **'BEDS IN SHEDS' - ENFORCEMENT AND IMPACT** (*Agenda Item 6*)

Officers introduced the report, explaining that there had been a previous review into 'Beds in Sheds' completed in 2010 and an update report to Cabinet in 2013. The recommendations of the previous review had been implemented, with the exception of the imposition of an Article 4 direction in some wards. There was now an interdepartmental working group which met on a fortnightly basis and had been successful in making the Council's work on 'Beds in Sheds' far more joined up, as well as regular joint raids with the Border Agency and frequent press releases designed to deter those thinking of renting outbuildings for residential use.

The recommendation relating to an Article 4 direction had not been implemented as it was thought unlikely that the Secretary of State would grant an Article 4 direction requiring planning permission for outbuildings, whilst preparing the application would take a very large amount of resource away from tackling the existing beds in sheds. There was also a requirement that the direction be advertised for 12 months and it was feared that this would lead to a large increase in the number of outbuildings erected during that year. It was also noted that it was the use of the outbuildings rather than the buildings themselves which caused harm. Officers highlighted a recent case whereby, because the residential use of the building had been concealed, the Council had been able to force demolition.

In response to questions from members, officers said that:

- Most of the Council's enforcement work was in reaction to complaints from residents, although where officers noted problems whilst out and about in the borough these would be investigated.
- The Fraud Team were now active in 'Beds in Sheds' cases.
- Contact between planning enforcement officers and the Council Tax department was now good.
- The publicity in Hillingdon People led to more people reporting 'Beds in Sheds', and so a separate mailshot about them was unlikely to represent good value for money.
- The number of other types of enforcement complaint had dropped allowing more resource to be deployed on tackling 'Beds in Sheds'.

Officers agreed to look into the Council's relationship with HMRC and report back to members whether information was or could be shared.

Members did not seek to take forward a review into 'Beds in Sheds'.

9.	<p>UPDATE ON THE 'USING OUR WATER - IMPROVING EFFICIENCY AND DEVELOPING LONG-TERM STRATEGIES' REVIEW (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>The Clerk explained that a further update would be brought on recommendations 1 and 2 later in the year. Members noted the report.</p>
10.	<p>FORWARD PLAN (<i>Agenda Item 8</i>)</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>
11.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME (<i>Agenda Item 9</i>)</p> <p>Councillors agreed to receive scoping reports on both the review of major developments in the Borough and the Council's approach to tackling hoarders whose activities were impacting on neighbours and the streetscene.</p> <p>The work programme was noted.</p>
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 5.30 pm, closed at 6.35 pm.</p>

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