

## **ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL**

Tuesday 9 March 2010 at 6.00pm

### **Panel Members Present**

Councillor D Anson (Acting Chair)  
Councillor L Beeley  
Councillor C Bott  
Councillor R Carpenter  
Councillor B Douglas-Maul  
Councillor D Shires  
Councillor M Yasin

### **Portfolio Holders Present**

Councillor T Ansell – Transport

### **Officers Present**

Nick Alamanos	Programmes and Performance Officer
Tracey Evans	Lead Accountant
Heather Growcott	Senior Policy Officer
Mark Holden	Head of Street Pride
Jamie Morris	Executive Director (Neighbourhood Services)
Steve Pretty	Head of Engineering and Transportation
Keith Stone	Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)
Angela Walker	Performance and Scrutiny Officer

### **66/09 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors M Flower and B Tweddle

### **67/09 SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were no substitutions for the duration of the meeting

### **68/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

There were no declarations of interest or party whip for the duration of the meeting

### **69/09 MINUTES**

### **RESOLVED**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2010, copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record**

### **70/09 LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT QUARTER 3 MONITORING REPORT**

The Programmes and Partnerships Officer summarised the report, which detailed progress towards Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets for the period ending 31 December 2009. The Panel noted the report and the progress towards targets that fell within the Panel's remit.

### **71/09 QUARTER 3 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

The Lead Accountant presented the report and summarised the predicted revenue and

capital out-turn position for 2009/10 based on the performance for Quarter 3 for services within the remit of the Panel.

In response to a Member's question, the Lead Accountant explained that the year to date variance for waste management was an under spend of £108,850. This under spend was due to the decrease in waste disposal.

The Executive Director (Neighbourhoods) highlighted to Members that the financial position of the services within the Panel's remit was favourable when compared with the overall corporate position. Wherever possible, expenditure had been reduced and non-essential spend had been ceased.

## **72/09 NEW WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE**

The Head of Street Pride introduced the report which highlighted issues that had arisen and lessons learnt, during the implementation of the new waste collection service in March 2009. The new service encouraged residents to recycle more and as a result, recycling performance had exceeded expectations and resident satisfaction had increased.

Members discussed the success of the service and felt that even through the recent inclement weather a good level of service was provided. Members asked that the service ensure that high rise flats and apartments were included in the recycling scheme to provide a consistent service to all residents in the borough. Members agreed that the leaflet distributed which explained what could be put into which bin was good but that other methods of communicating these messages should be considered such as through community groups.

In response to a Member's question, the Head of Street Pride stated that a mechanism to enable recycling of small electrical items such as kettles and toasters was not currently available and was improbable within the current budget. The Panel were assured that there was no conflict between maximising recycling and ensuring residents receive the level of service they require.

The Executive Director (Neighbourhood Services) explained that a review of the Council's Waste Strategy was due to take place later in the year and that there would be the opportunity for Member involvement as well as public consultation. It was expected that an initial report could be presented to the Panel in early Summer.

Members were keen to ensure that enforcement action could be taken against residents who persistently left their bins on the pavement. Members were informed that enforcement powers were available to the authority and that a refresh of the existing arrangements was going to take place. Scrutiny involvement would be welcomed in the development of these arrangements.

The Head of Street Pride agreed to investigate the possibility of leaving a card for owners of bins that were 'lost' during emptying into a lorry.

The Portfolio Holder for Transport concluded the discussion and stated that the service was generally very good, but there was still more that could be done to ensure the service continued to meet the standards residents expect.

**RESOLVED:**

**That:**

- 1. The Environment Scrutiny and Performance Panel be involved in the review of the Waste Strategy during the 2010-11 municipal year;**
- 2. The Environment Scrutiny and Performance Panel be consulted and involved in the review of arrangements for enforcement of bins left on pavements;**

**And:**

- 3. The Panel request that officers investigate the possibility of leaving a note for residents if their bin is 'lost' during emptying**

**73/09 UPDATE FROM INTEGRATED TRANSPORT WORKING GROUP**

The Chair gave a verbal update on the latest meeting of the Integrated Transport Working Group and a briefing note was tabled for Member's reference (annexed). Pete Bond had attended as a representative of Centro and had answered Members questions on a range of issues related to the work of the group.

The Head of Engineering and Transportation informed the Panel that the car parking signs for the town centre would be installed shortly after Easter.

**74/09 WORK PROGRAMME – POSSIBLE AREAS OF WORK FOR THE PANEL RELATING TO ROAD SAFETY, TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND POLLUTION CONTROL**

The Head of Engineering and Transportation presented the report to the Panel which outlined a number of areas of work within road safety, traffic congestion and pollution control, from which the Panel were asked to consider areas of interest for the new municipal year.

A Member expressed concern that there were still issues to resolve from the Street Cleansing Working Group and that these should be resolved before moving on to new pieces of work. Members were reminded that a report would be presented to the next meeting of the Panel detailing progress to date with the action plan for implementing the group's recommendations. The issue with the rubbish found in the River Tame near Bradford Place was problematic as the land was privately owned and therefore the authority did not have enforcement powers to remove it unless it was food waste. Members requested more information on a planned briefing session on enforcement powers.

Members agreed that the three key issues they were keen to pursue at the start of the 2010/11 municipal year were as follows:

- Air Quality Action Plan – this would be included on the first agenda of the new municipal year
- Safer Routes to School, to include Safety Cameras and the impact they have on safety
- Setting Local Speed Limits

**RESOLVED:**

**That:**

- 1. Members be invited to the planned briefing session on enforcement powers;**

**And**

- 2. The Environment Scrutiny and Performance Panel will focus on three key work**

**streams at the start of the 2010-11 municipal year, these being:**

- a. Air Quality Action Plan**
- b. Safer Routes to School, to include Safety Cameras**
- c. Setting Local Speed Limits**

## **75/09 WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN**

The latest Forward Plan was tabled for Members reference (annexed). Members noted the work programme and forward plan.

The next item on the agenda was to be heard in private session, therefore the following resolution was passed

### **RESOLVED:**

**That this item requires the exclusion of the public and press under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Act**

The member of the press in attendance left the meeting at this point (7.25pm)

## **76/09 PROJECT W2R**

*Although this item was held in private session, the minutes do not contain any exempt information and therefore the full record is given below.*

The Assistant Director (Neighbourhoods) introduced the report outlining the proposed arrangements for a planned residual waste treatment facility in Staffordshire, which was being led by Staffordshire County Council. The facility would convert residual waste from four authorities – Staffordshire, Walsall, Sandwell and Warwickshire – into electricity. It was expected that the contract would be awarded in Spring 2010 and Walsall would be required to send waste to the plant for a minimum of 25 years once it was open which was currently scheduled for 2013.

The Executive Director (Neighbourhoods) stated that through participating in this project, Walsall would benefit from the economies of scale of working with three other authorities.

A discussion around the impact of the facility on the surrounding area took place. Members were informed that although stringent European air quality policies would need to be adhered to, there was the risk that local resident's perception would be different and could raise objections, which had the potential to delay planning permission. The attraction of the proposed facility was that 98% of the waste would be converted and the majority of ash would be recovered and used in the production of aggregates. The plant itself would be located on a large industrial estate and would be in scale with existing facilities on the estate. Members requested that more information, in particular on the scale and design of the plant, be provided in the new municipal year, once the contract had been awarded.

Upon conclusion of the item, the Chair brought the meeting back into public session.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Environment Scrutiny and Performance Panel receive more detail on the scale and design of the plant, in the 2010-11 municipal year, once the contract is awarded**

**77/09 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 27 April 2010

*The meeting terminated at 7.55pm*

DRAFT