

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

Monday, 1 September, 2014 at 6.00 p.m. in a Conference Room at the Council House

Members in Attendance: Councillor C. Creaney (Vice-Chair)
Councillor D. Hazell
Councillor J. Murray
Councillor A. Nawaz
Councillor G. Sohal

Officers in Attendance: Jamie Morris - Executive Director (Neighbourhoods)
Keith Stone - Assistant Director (Neighbourhoods)
Chris Holliday - Head of Leisure and Community Health
Jackie Groves - Catering Service Manager
Steven Jones - Service Manager (Strategy)
Steve Gittins - Deputy Community Safety Officer
Craig Goodall - Committee Business and Governance Manager

178/14 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D. Barker.

179/14 Substitutions

There were no substitutions for the duration of the meeting.

180/14 Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

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

181/14 Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting which took place on 30 June, 2014, a copy having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

182/14 Delivery of Universal Key Stage 1 Free School Meals

The Panel considered how the Council's Catering Service (CCS) was preparing to deliver Universal Free School Meals (FSM) to infant school pupils.

The Head of Leisure and Community Health introduced the report and explained that FSM were to be made universally available for all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes in the Borough. CCS provided school meals at 33 of the Borough's primary schools. 32 would

be serving a hot meal each day and one school would be providing packed lunches. Both hot and cold meals would be nutritionally balanced. The report focussed on preparations made for these schools. The remaining schools either provided meals in-house or through an external provider. It was not possible to comment on the state of readiness of schools that did not use the CCS, however, the Council was not aware of any problems at the current time.

The Catering Services Manager explained that the CCS had employed 28 new staff on temporary contracts to implement the new policy. £130,000 of additional sales to school were anticipated. A number of schools had required an investment in new kitchen equipment. A Government grant of £691,000 had been provided for kitchen equipment for all schools across the Borough. The Council had been responsible for distributing the awards to schools and CSS had advised the Council's Finance service on this. Each school should also receive a revenue grant in their funding allocation to pay for the cost of meals. Whilst the details of this part of the scheme are unknown, nationally a £1bn fund has been earmarked for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

Following questions from Members, it was confirmed that schools would receive 100% of the universal FSM grant directly. There was no clawback mechanism if take up of meals was low. It was also noted that it would no longer be possible to use FSM as a proxy for deprivation. Schools would have to register students for the pupil premium separately. Revenue funding for FSM was available for 2 years (2014/15 and 2015/16). It was noted that the Deputy Prime Minister wished to extend the provision to all primary school aged children.

Resolved:

That:-

- (1) a list of all primary schools and their catering providers be sent to Panel Members;**
- and;**
- (2) the report be noted.**

183/14 Recycling and Contamination

Members were informed on the latest position with regard to reducing the levels of contaminated recycling in Walsall.

The Service Manager (Strategy) informed Members on the:-

- Tonnes of waste sent for recycling;
- Tonnage of residual waste;
- The percentage of material rejected as non-recyclable by the Council's contractor at the Material Recovery Facility. This was consistently between 9 - 11% which was above the contractual target of 5%;
- Textiles and food waste were the main contaminate items;
- Number of bins not emptied due to contamination;

- Small trial looking at doing things differently to help residents recycle correctly. This involved a same day return visit to collect bins that had been rejected for containing contaminated materials during the morning collection. The same day revisit gave residents an opportunity to sort their waste and make it suitable for collection rather than having to wait until the next collection round.

The following are the principle points from the ensuing discussion:-

- Members questioned the role of registered providers such as WHG played in encouraging their tenants to recycle. The Panel were assured that the Council was working with WHG on this matter. WHG visited the depot and assisted with delivering key messages;
- The Council's recycling provider Casepak sorted loads at their depot. Contaminated waste was removed during an initial sift, the remaining load was then processed. Some pre-sorting took place in Walsall at household waste and recycling centres only;
- It was noted that the level of residual waste was rising over time. The Panel speculated on the reasons for this noting housing growth and increases in packaging for food and other products. It was also noted that the levels of residual waste fluctuated greatly from month to month. This was usually related to seasonal patterns such as Christmas, Easter and school holidays;
- Fly tipping was not increasing as a direct result of rejecting contaminated bins. Fly tipping was consistently discarded commercial waste;
- "Doing things differently" pilot was having a positive effect on the levels of contaminated bins and was well received by residents. The number of phone calls complaining about unemptied bins was reducing as a result of the pilot;
- Education through schools on the value and importance of recycling was continuing.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

184/14 Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act, 2014

The Panel were provided with a broad overview of the key provisions contained within the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act, 2014 (ASBCP Act).

The Deputy Community Safety Manager explained that the new legislation was replacing 19 current ASB powers with 6 powers that appeared to be stronger and easier to implement. He provided Members with details of the new provisions in the ASBCP Act and what powers they replaced.

Following the presentation on the Act, Members of the Panel discussed the following issues:-

- A Public Spaces Protection Order would not be the best tool to tackle problems at local pubs. It would be better for issues to be referred to the Licensing Team;

- With regard to the “community trigger” it was anticipated that the threshold would be the same across the entire West Midlands. The Panel asked to be informed what the threshold was going to be;
- It was noted that Operation Be Safe where high visibility police patrols took place in the Town Centre during weekend evenings had ceased. The police still had a presence in the town but operated an intelligence led patrol model as an alternative practice.

In closing the item, the Vice-Chair welcomed the new Act. He noted that it was important that all Members were made aware of the changes and suggested that briefing sessions were organised to update Members.

Resolved:

That:-

- (1) **briefing sessions be arranged for all Members to learn about the changes to tackling anti-social behaviour brought about by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act, 2014;**
- (2) **Panel Members be informed of the threshold for a community trigger;**
and;
- (3) **the report be noted.**

185/14 Work Programme 2014/15 and Forward Plan

The Panel considered their work programme and the latest version of the Forward Plan.

The Executive Director highlighted the proposed decision and benefits regarding converting street lighting lanterns to use LED bulbs.

Resolved:

That:-

- (1) **the following items be added to the Panel’s work programme:-**
 - (a) **“delivering differently” at Walsall Adult and Community College;**
 - (b) **winter service plan;****and;**
- (2) **the Forward Plan be noted.**

186/14 **Date of next meeting**

It was noted that the date of the next meeting was 6.00 p.m. on Monday, 13 October, 2014.

The meeting closed at 7.15 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: