

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

Thursday 28 March, 2013 at 6.00 pm in a Conference Room at the Council House

Panel Members Present: Councillor V. Woodruff (Chair)
Councillor C. Creaney (Vice-Chair)
Councillor I. Azam
Councillor B. Douglas-Maul
Councillor G. Illmann-Walker

Officers in Attendance: Jamie Morris - Executive Director (Neighbourhoods)
David Elrington - Area Manager - Environmental Health
Dave Roberts - Service Manager (Operations)
Cath Boneham - Health and Inequalities Programme
Manager
Craig Goodall - Committee Business and Governance
Manager

62/13 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K. Hussain and Councillor L. Rattigan.

63/13 Substitutions

There were no substitutions for the duration of the meeting.

64/13 Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

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

65/13 Minutes

Item 58/13 "Devolution through Area Partnerships" - a Member requested that the minutes include reference to the importance of ensuring an equality impact assessment took place.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2013, as amended, copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

66/13 Recycling and Contamination

Members were updated on progress with the campaign to reduce contamination in recycling following consideration of the issue in November, 2012.

Members were informed of:

- The tonnage of waste being sent to recycling;
- The tonnage of waste sent to landfill;
- The percentage of rejected recycling material left on the street;
- The percentage of material rejected by the Council's contractors;
- Alterations to the promotion campaign regarding the disposal of batteries;
- Activity taking place regarding contact in the carers network to promote the recycling scheme;
- A visit to Casepak.

The Service Manager (Operations) explained that contamination levels had reduced by 50% since the beginning of the education and enforcement campaign. Contamination levels for the week beginning 18 March, 2013 were 7.58%. This was a pleasing result but further work was required to reduce the contamination rates. This reflected on recent negative publicity of 50,000 uncollected recycling bins and noted that this represented 2.5% of all recycling bins in the Borough as during the same period, 2.3 million recycling bins had been collected.

Further information on the data contained in the report was requested dating back to February, 2012. In addition to this, Members requested that Ward breakdowns for residual waste and recycling be provided to all Members.

Following a question from Members, it was confirmed that Street Pride undertook pro-active engagement with schools across the Borough. Members suggested that the schools in areas where problems were occurring should be targeted for visits.

Members were pleased with progress with reducing contamination, efforts to work with the carers network and plans to amend the communications campaign for the disposal of batteries.

Resolved

That:

- (1) a further report on progress with the campaign to reduce contamination in recycling be received in six months;**
- (2) schools in areas where there are problems with contaminated recycling be targeted for an educational visit from Street Pride;**
- (3) a Ward breakdown of residual waste and recycling rates be provided to all Members;**
- (4) a breakdown of Boroughwide residual waste and recycling rates from February, 2012 to March, 2013 be provided to Panel Members;**

and;

(5) Members be contacted to ascertain interest in a visit to Casepak.

67/13 The Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Walsall 2013 - 2016

The Panel considered the draft joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (HWS) for Walsall.

The Health Inequalities and Wellbeing Programme Manager introduced the strategy and highlighted a number of sections to Members. She explained that it was important that the impact on the health of Walsall citizens was considered in every policy and service area as public health was “everybody’s business” and everyone was needed to take action to improve health and wellbeing in Walsall. She used the ‘Make Every Contact Count (MECC)’ initiative as an example of the part that everyone can play, including Councillors.

The Executive Director (Neighbourhoods) highlighted that all services within the remit of the Panel had an impact on the health of local residents, therefore, it was important to think how they could contribute to improving public health.

The following were the principle points from the ensuing discussion:

- The HWS emphasised that physical activity was not required to take place in a venue such as a leisure centre as it could happen in any location. The importance of green space for leisure and exercise was discussed;
- The HWS should reflect the need to prevent and reduce malnutrition;
- The HWS should include the need for sex education;
- The HWS should contain reference to sustainable methods of transport such as cycling;
- Reducing the proliferation of fast food and alcohol retailers was one method which the Council could use to assist in influencing local health;
- It was important to note that alcohol is an issue in affluent areas of the borough as well as deprived areas and more is needed to ensure residents are fully aware of the dangers of abusing alcohol and what is considered ‘safe’ use;
- It was vital that the messages in the HWS were communicated widely with professionals and the community;
- Volunteering was one avenue that could be used to improve the wellbeing of residents. Volunteering can help people to feel needed, learn new skills and, in turn, improve their employability prospects;
- It was important to engage small and medium enterprises on the importance of the health and wellbeing of their employees;
- The HWS would be implemented through a support network of identified sub-groups who would be responsible for specific sections and priorities within the plan. Each sub-group would develop an action plan that would be approved and monitored via the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- Work was ongoing with Centro to ensure links with public transport priorities;

- The recommendation of the School Catering Working Group and the school catering service to be in the public health section would be considered once Public Health was fully embedded in the Council.

Resolved

That:

- (1) the Health and Wellbeing Strategy should reference the following issues:-**
 - (a) preventing malnutrition;**
 - (b) sex education;**
 - (c) engagement with small and medium enterprises regarding the health of their employees;**
 - (d) developing sustainable methods of transport such as cycling;**
- (2) all Councillors be trained to be able to deliver the “Making Every Contact Count” initiative to assist with their Ward responsibilities;**
- (3) Members be advised of the definition of an overcrowded property;**
and;
- (4) the Health Inequalities and Wellbeing Programme Manager arrange a meeting with Councillor Illmann-Walker to discuss further issues with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.**

68/13 Tackling Environmental Crime

(a) Litter Action Plan and actions taken to tackle Environmental Crime

The Area Manager - Environmental Health took Members through the Action Plan that had been drafted following the recommendations of the Litter Working Group.

He highlighted progress to date with the body cams trial and test cases taking place with Litter Control Notices. The restructure with Park Rangers was explained as, in actual fact, 23 posts would be reduced to 21 rather than 10 as mentioned in the report. Park Rangers would now undertake multi-functional roles in a single static location.

(b) Annual Report into actions taken to combat Environmental Crime

The Area Manager - Environmental Health took the Panel through the annual report produced by the Environmental Health Team that detailed their achievements and plans for the year ahead.

Following a question, it was explained that early investigations were taking place to enter into a partnership agreement with a private sector company to add extra capacity with litter enforcement. Investigations were also taking place regarding the possibility of greater integrated working with the many enforcement staff employed by the Council and its partners.

Members requested details of Fixed Penalty Notices and warnings issued for litter offences over a longer term period to enable trends to be identified.

Walsall was leading on a voluntary regional registration scheme for scrap metal dealers.

Members were informed of the rigorous process that was required to gain evidence to ensure successful prosecutions for fly tipping. Some Members felt that fly tipping could be reduced if there were less stringent checks and balances at household waste and recycling centres. Members were informed that problems with fly tipping were mainly caused by commercial waste which could not be accepted at household waste and recycling centres.

Resolved

- (1) That residents be encouraged to take identification with them to household waste and recycling centres;**
- (2) Members be informed on progress to date with the development of a regional approach to managing scrap metal dealing;**
and;
- (3) Members be provided with figures on the number of Fixed Penalty Notices and warnings issued for littering over a long term period.**

69/13 Work Programme 2012/13 and Forward Plan

Resolved

That:

- (1) the following items be considered at the 22 April, 2013 meeting of the Panel:**
 - (a) Police and Crime Commissioner;**
 - (b) Devolution through Area Partnerships;**
 - (c) Sports and Leisure;****and;**
- (2) the Forward Plan be noted.**

70/13 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the date of the next meeting was 6.00 p.m. on 22 April, 2013.

The meeting closed at 7.44 p.m.

Signed:

Date: