

**FOR: COUNCIL MEETING**  
**14<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2015**  
**AGENDA ITEM 6**  
**(YELLOW ENCLOSURE)**

**REPORT OF CHAIRMAN OF, LEISURE, PARKS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT  
(OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE**

**PRESENT:**

Councillors Mrs Tranter (Chairman), Mynott (Vice-Chairman), Tittley (Vice-Chairman, Awty, Mrs Constable, Evans, Isaacs, and Pearce.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** were received from Councillors Bacon, Mrs Boyle Mrs Hancocks, Mosson and Yeates.

(In accordance with Council Procedure No. 17 Councillors Eadie and A. Smith also attended the meeting)

At the meeting of the Leisure, Parks and Waste Management (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015 the following matters were considered:

<b>1. GRASS CUTTING ON BROMFORD HOUSING LAND</b>
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- 1.1 The Committee received a report on questions raised by Members regarding the approach to grounds maintenance Bromford Housing took on land they owned. It was reported that Bromford Housing had been invited to attend the meeting and also requested further information on the possible lines of enquiry from the Committee. It was then reported that the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen had met and discussed these and identified three questions for scrutiny around the programme of works, service charges to tenants and complaint processes. It was noted that Bromford Housing declined the invitation to attend the meeting but gave written responses to the three questions.
- 1.2 The Committee discussed the responses received from Bromford Housing. It was noted that complaints had been received by Tenants and this had only begun after Bromford Housing made the decision to take their grounds maintenance in-house and no longer contract the work out to the District Council.
- 1.3 Members also felt there had been a lot of confusion in the beginning regarding land ownership and that Bromford were not sure what land they owned and responsible for the maintenance of.
- 1.4 Members did feel that Bromford Housing was very quick in responding to complaints and matters were rectified swiftly. However Members did also believe that Bromford acted primarily in this retrospective manner and were not pro-active enough.
- 1.5 Members wished for more information from Bromford as to why all tenants were being charged the same amount of maintenance service charge but experiencing a reduction in grounds maintenance service. Members felt that a possible meeting between the Cabinet Member for Community, Housing and Health and Bromford could be advantageous.

- 1.6 It was agreed to refer this item to the Overview & Scrutiny Coordinating Group as it crossed the remit of the Community, Housing and Health (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee.
- 1.7 The information received was noted and it was agreed that the item be referred to the Overview & Scrutiny Coordinating Group.

## **2. ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2015/16**

- 2.1 Members received a report regarding the proposed activity and performance indicators for the Leisure & Parks directorate and for the Joint Waste Service that would be reported to the Committee on a biannual basis.
- 2.2 It was reported that performance indicators had been reintroduced to have regard to the Directorate Top 10s and Service Plans with data collected monthly.
- 2.3 Members felt that when reporting performance data, as much detail should be included as possible especially regarding previous years to be able to consider the impact of reduced capacity objectively. It was noted that the Committee could request further detailed reports on specific indicators if they wished.
- 2.4 Members then asked questions on specific indicators including whether mental health conditions were included in concessionary leisure criteria and it was reported that this would be investigated and reported back to the Committee. Members then asked if the leisure department supported the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and it was reported that the department did not give much support as this had been carried out by the County Council's youth service. When asked, it was noted that there were defibrillators available on the leisure centre sites as well as the District Council house.
- 2.5 Members noted that as the Council participated in the Staffordshire Joint Waste Partnership, many of the waste performance indicators reflected this to allow benchmarking exercises to take place.
- 2.6 The report was noted.

## **3. FIT FOR THE FUTURE – PUBLIC CONVENIENCES UPDATE**

- 3.1 The Committee received a report giving an update on the current position of the public toilets following the decision in 2014 not to install the charge for entry system. It was reported work had been carried out during the past 12 months to try and reduce the costs of running the public toilets. It was reported that although there had not been much progress with a community scheme, there had been many changes to the cleaning and opening regimes with greater use of cross-department staff.
- 3.2 It was reported that the Council had received an offer to purchase the Swan Island facility in Burntwood however the Cabinet Member did not consider the sale a justified one as the cost of running it was minimal and announced that the offer would be declined. Members were pleased that the offer would be turned down as it was felt that the facility provided a service for those exiting buses as well as shoppers and elderly community.
- 3.3 It was also reported that the Bus Station facility would be lost when development of the Friarsgate scheme commenced and it was suggested that the newly appointed working group explore the introduction of a community scheme in greater detail.

When asked it was reported that it would be a surprise there would not be any public conveniences included as part of the Friarsgate development and would also expect a disabled facility. Members asked for the aims and objectives of the working group to be sent to the Committee.

3.4 Members asked why the disabled toilets in the City Centre were locked between 5-6pm as they felt it put disabled people off from visiting of an evening. It was reported that there had been issues with vandalism from people who had been able to acquire radar keys. It was agreed that the closing times would be looked at again by Officers.

3.5 The following was agreed

(1) That the report be noted; and

(2) That the views of the Committee on the proposals for future toilet provision and offering up the savings generated as a result, as part of the Fit for the Future programme, be noted.

#### **4. WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN**

4.1 Consideration was given to the Committee's Work Programme and Council's Forward Plan. It was noted that an item on the Garrick including their socio-economic study report would be on the agenda for the June meeting.

4.2 It was noted that the future of Overview & Scrutiny had been discussed at the recent Overview & Scrutiny Coordinating Group. Members felt that there was a potential and a need for work programmes to be designed in a different manner with the focus more on project management with included timescales. Members also felt there should be greater use of Briefing Papers, Task & Finish Groups along with greater Officer support and a specific Committee to purely monitor the Overview & Scrutiny function. It was requested that these views be sent to the Chief Executive and Leader along with the Strategic O&S Committee Member Group.

4.3 The work programme and Forward Plan was noted.

#### **5. VOTE OF THANKS**

5.1 It was proposed, duly seconded that the sincere thanks of the Committee be recorded to all the Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Officers for their work during the past year.

Mrs H. Tranter  
Chairman  
Leisure, Parks and Waste Management (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee