

SCRUTINY ADVISORY BOARD - COMMUNITIES AND PLACE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Scrutiny Advisory Board - Communities and Place held on Thursday, 5 September 2019 at 10.00 am at Committee Room 1 - County Offices, Kendal, LA9 4RQ

PRESENT:

Mr SB Collins (Chair)

Mr F Cassidy
Mr D English
Mr D Gawne
Mr N Hughes
Mr KR Hamilton
Mr A Kennon

Mr J Lister (Vice-Chair)
Mr AJ Markley
Mr W McEwan
Mrs M Rae
Mrs H Wall

Also in Attendance:-

Mrs L Davis - Democratic Services Officer
Mr P Greenup - Acting Assistant Director for Highways and Transport
Ms C Killeen - Strategic Policy and Scrutiny Adviser
Ms C Tringham - Waste Operational Manager

PART 1 – ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr D Wilson.

13 MEMBERSHIP

Mr P Turner was substituting for Mr D Wilson for this meeting only.

14 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Mr F Cassidy, Mr K Hamilton, Mr W McEwan, Mr D Gawne and Mrs H Wall declared a non pecuniary interest in agenda item 6 – Waste and Third Sector Task and Finish Recommendations – Six Month Update Report (minute 17 refers) as they were members of Barrow Borough Council, who were the Waste Collection Authority.

15 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair confirmed that there were no items on the agenda which the press or public should be excluded.

16 MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

Further to Minute 8 – Section 106 Agreements (Planning Obligations), it was agreed that a report be received at the next meeting of the Board on other section agreements, for example sections 278 and 56.

17 WASTE AND THIRD SECTOR TASK AND FINISH RECOMMENDATIONS - SIX MONTH UPDATE REPORT

Members received a report from the Waste Operational Manager providing a six month update on the recommendations from the Waste and 3rd Sector Task and Finish Group. Six recommendations from the Group had been made to Cabinet, five of which had been wholly or partially accepted, and the officer outlined the progress made to date.

In discussion of the approach towards reuse at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCS), Members were informed that the Permit Line had recently been brought back in house and had allowed greater flexibility in ensuring waste was not automatically disposed of if it could be reused. The Council could provide a link between residents, who were for example downsizing, to sites such as Freecycle, Freegle and local charity shops. Benchmarking exercises would be carried out with other local authorities to have some form of reuse facility despite being bound by a long term waste disposal contract. Member were pleased to note that Renewi, the Council's contractor, had indicated they were open to discussion on this.

Members were informed that a project had commenced on the production of a third sector organisations map for Cumbria. The Waste Prevention Team were, in conjunction with Area Managers, attending local committees to give presentations on improving and communicating reuse. Joint county and district working was taking place via the Cumbria Strategic Waste Partnership and five out of the six districts had signed up to joint fund a Partnership Development Officer. The role would be pivotal to progress various local and national strategies. The Waste Prevention Team were working with third sector organisations to establish a Reuse Forum.

A Member suggested having a local shared operative for Portable Appliance Testing for the recycling of electrical items and the officer agreed to raise this at the Reuse Forum.

Members discussed local waste issues. The Barrow Members highlighted serious concerns around the Barrow in Furness HWRC. The site being closed to switch skips was causing traffic build up on the road outside. The Officer advised that a trial was underway on having an hours 'scheduled' closure so that residents would know when the site was closed rather than random daily closures. The results of the trial were unknown at this early stage. The site's closure and resulting traffic problems placed the onus of health and safety on to the County Council as the Highway Authority. A meeting with Highways, Barrow Borough Council and the County Council had been arranged to address this issue.

The Officer was thanked for the report.

RESOLVED, that the Board receive an update report in six month's time.

18 HIGHWAYS DIGITAL SERVICE REDESIGN - CUSTOMER AND MEMBER EXPERIENCE

Members received a presentation from the Acting Assistant Director Highways & Transport on the Highways Digital Service Redesign and improvements to the Customer and Member Experience. The presentation outlined the highways side of the customer programme overview, the council's vision, work undertaken to date and work going forward. The focus was to provide a digital online solution for the bulk of transactions enabling people with different IT skills to be able to access online services easily.

The Board raised their concerns regarding an elected member being unable to be transferred to an Officer of the Council via the Council's general switchboard. The Member said that some residents relied on telephone communication. The Officer replied saying a balance was needed as calls should be logged through the highways hotline number but elected members should be able to contact officers direct and would investigate this matter.

A Member raised the continuing problem of information not being provided to members of neighbouring divisional work. The Officer said it should be an integral part of officers' work and agreed to look into developing a decision matrix to address this.

The Vice Chair congratulated officers on the work undertaken at Dubmill Point and asked for an update on the issue of a damaged railway bridge in his division, raised at the last meeting of the Board (minute 6 refers). The Officer advised that a solution was being sought with the concerned parties.

It was noted that phase 1 of the online application for skips/scaffolding was completed and the Officer assured members that the team would be aware of any road closures.

The discussion led on to facebook and twitter as methods of communications and the increase in the number of twitter followers. The future of HIMs was discussed and the development of a Customer Relations Management system (CRM). The

Chair asked about the development of a business specification for IT systems and that members should have sight of it.

The Officer was thanked for the report.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

19 HIGHWAYS PERMITTING AND HIGHWAYS CONDITION AND INSPECTION SCHEMES

Members received a briefing note from the Acting Assistant Director Highways & Transport with additional information and an update on Highways Permitting and the Highways Condition and Inspection Schemes.

Members were informed that the inspection scheme was now in place and the permitting scheme implementation target date was January 2020.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

20 LOCAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY UPDATE

The Acting Assistant Director Highways & Transport gave a presentation to Members on the Local Industrial Strategy. The Local Industrial Strategy Matrix was appended to the presentation.

The Officer advised members that a further report would be presented to the Board in March as further detail from the government was needed.

The Officer agreed to supply a written answer to Mr Hughes on the green growth schemes and what was proposed for Cumbria (page 38), the tourism local offer and does it apply in Cumbria, a general update on Britain Energy Coast and the position of local railway lines (page 47). In discussion of the railways, the Chair suggested electrification, resilience and futureproofing be included as priority themes.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

21 BOARD BRIEFING

A report was given to Members on the Board's current work programme, together with the current forward plan of decisions.

Members were asked to consider the Board's work programme as set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report and consider the Forward Plan of Key Decisions 1 September 2019 – 31 October 2019.

The Chair asked for further items for the forward plan to be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Scrutiny Advisor.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Advisory Board – Communities and Place will be held on Monday 25 November 2019 at 10.00 am in Cumbria House, Carlisle.

The meeting ended at 11.40 am