

REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 3 December 2014

Present: Councillor M Sullivan (Chair)

Councillors KJ Williams A Leech
D Mitchell S Niblock
S Williams D Realey
J Crabtree J Stapleton
M Daniel J Hale
R Gregson T Pilgrim

Deputies: Councillors T Anderson (for A Hodson)
B Berry (for G Ellis)

31 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/PARTY WHIP

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

Members were reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

No such declarations were made.

32 MINUTES

Councillor Anita Leech requested that minute 30 be amended to state that it had been herself that had reported upon the meeting of the Liverpool City Region Scrutiny Panel and not the Chair, as was specified in the minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November be approved, subject to the above amendment.

33 DWP WORK PROGRAMME

A Report by the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment provided Members with information on the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Work Programme launched throughout Great Britain in June 2011. The report set out the latest performance data for delivery in Wirral as published by DWP and sought to provide comparators where available. The Report indicated that the most recent DWP worklessness data for May 2014 shows that Wirral has 28,750 people claiming an out of work benefit, this is 14.6% of the working age population. Paragraph 5.3 of the report set out Job Outcomes and it was reported that there had been 1,790 job outcomes in Wirral since June 2011.

A Member sought clarification on the definition of 'JSA Early Entrant.' The Head of Regeneration informed Members that he would contact Members with this information following the meeting.

A Member enquired as to whether there are figures available to break down the data by Ward or Constituency.

It was explained that the DWP have covered a very large geographical area, therefore, at this stage it is difficult to obtain specific information for Constituencies or Wards.

The Chair thanked Officers for the update and recommended that the report be noted.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

34 **DANGEROUS DOGS**

A report by the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment updated Members on the current legal framework, current powers, resources available and recent incidents regarding Dangerous Dogs. The Report was constructed following a question raised at the full meeting of the Council (20th October) by Councillor Stuart Kelly.

Colin Clayton, Senior Manager, Environmental Health outlined the report to Members and gave details of further powers under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to control dangerous dogs or irresponsible dog ownership through the implementation of a number of measures. Members heard, powers would now include:

- **Community Protection Notices (CPNs)** – A low level formal power for dealing with dog problems such as irresponsible ownership, that do not meet higher thresholds, but which pose concern for local residents and the authorities.
- **Civil Injunctions**- These have replaced ASBOs and are formal court orders.

- **Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs)** – This allows authorities to deal with the most serious and persistent offenders where their behaviour has brought them before a criminal court.
- **Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO)** – The purpose of the PSPO is to empower local authorities to deal with anti – social behaviour that adversely affects other people using the same open space.

The Senior Environmental Health Officer informed Members that the total number of complaints about dangerous dogs received by the Council's Animal Control and Welfare Service was 345. The number of complaints had been fairly constant between 2009 and 2012 with a noticeable reduction in 2013. The year to date figures were indicative that the number of complaints for 2014 could be lower again.

A Member enquired as to whether there was any legislation in place to limit numbers of dogs to any one dog walker.

The Senior Environmental Health Officer responded by stating that there is no specific legislation to cover this, however, it only has to be proven that behaviour is having an adverse effect upon the community for powers to be served.

A Member queried paragraph 11.2 of the report stating how authorisation had been given to a wide range of suitable Officers who can enforce CPN's or PSPO. Clarification was sought as to who these Officers should be.

It was reported that such Officers would include members of the ASBO team, Officers from Parks and Countryside. Officers from Street Scene and Community Patrol would also receive training. The possibility of extending powers to PCSO's had also been discussed.

A Member sought clarification as to whether the powers would be extended to residential streets.

The Legal Advisor advised that the legislation applies to all open spaces, including residential streets.

A discussion was had regarding the possibility of powers being extended to PSCO and it was suggested that Officers explore this option.

It was then moved by Councillor D Mitchell and seconded by Councillor R Gregson and

Resolved: - That Officers explore the possibility of extending powers and working alongside PSCO's in tackling the issues of dangerous dogs

Members thanked Officers for work undertaken in constructing the report and welcomed all new powers. It was suggested that an update report be brought back to a meeting after six months to inform Members of progress.

Resolved –

- (1) That Officers explore the possibility of extending powers and working alongside PSCO's in tackling the issues of dangerous dogs**
- (2) That the report be noted**

35 **INVESTING IN WIRRAL'S INFRASTRUCTURE**

A Report by the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment set out the Directorate's response to the matters raised regarding investment in Wirral's highways infrastructure in the Notice of Motion to Council in July 2014 (Minute 33 refers).A report had been brought to the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee on 22 September whereby the Committee had requested that a further report be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

The Head of Environment and Regulation set out the report and reiterated to Members that the highway network is the Council's most valuable asset. Members heard that the value of the replacement of the highway network is presently £1, 911 Billion.

The Report set out to Members recent investment and capital expenditure budgets for roads and footways. Members heard that Wirral compare favourably against nationally published data to other authorities in terms of overall condition of network.

Members heard how in Wirral there is a 90% repudiation rate. It was reported that Wirral adopt strong approaches and inspect networks on a regular basis and ensure work is carried out efficiently The Head of Environment and Regulation referred to an extract from the Council's Maintenance Policy detailing Highway, Carriageway and Footway inspection and assessment policy.

Members were informed that the DfT had provided feedback on the Pothole Fund Application submitted by the Council and had advised that the Council's application was ranked 60th out of the 148 eligible. It was explained that elements of the bid were ranked higher than others, and the Council scored strongly (ranked 43rd) in its work on embracing the latest innovations through the national Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP).

The Head of Environment and Regulation informed Members that despite positive outcomes, Officers would not become complacent. The importance of long term strategic principles were stressed and Members heard how a long term programme is already underway with a Capital Bid for three years being proposed.

The Committee then viewed an explanatory video on 'Durapatch', described as an innovative product designed to remove pot holes and to seal the wider area, reducing further deterioration. The video had been filmed in Martins Lane, Wallasey an area that had trailed the new method.

Officers responded to questions from Members regarding the durability of the new product with reference to freezing conditions and cost effectiveness.

Members heard how the new treatment is expected to last between 10 and 15 years and in terms of life cycle costings, protecting the network in this manner would be a lot more cost effective. The Officer expressed his confidence that the repairs will last, even in freezing conditions Members then heard, how, in comparison to surface treatments, durapatch is around 1/8 of the cost, therefore, it has a large cost advantage.

A Member identified to Officers some poor treatment in Fountain Road whereby the work had not been completed up to the kerb.

A Highways Officer explained that there had been a need for drainage, therefore pot hole treatment could not be extended to the kerb.

A Member then raised concerns with utility companies causing damage to highways throughout the Borough. Some discussion was had regarding the possibility of Wirral becoming a Permitt Authority whereby the Authority could manage and charge utility companies. Members heard that a report would be bought to a future meeting of the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee.

The Liberal Democrat Spokesperson commended Officers for the report and video and commented that the history of the issue explained in the video had proved to be very interesting.

Resolved: That the Committee: –

- (1) endorse the contents of this report, and the good progress made by the service.**
- (2) endorse the implementation of a long-term maintenance strategy that is based on sound asset management principles and recognised best practice.**

- (3) recommend to Cabinet that long-term maintenance strategies should form the basis for development of future structural maintenance programmes for highway infrastructure.**

36 LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY - SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor Anita Leech, Combined Authority Scrutiny Link, addressed the Committee to provide Members with a progress report

A Report by Councillor Mike Sullivan updated Members and provided notes on the Liverpool City Region Scrutiny Board (LCRSB) development day.

In addition to the report, Councillor Leech informed Member that further meeting dates would be:

- **8th July 2015**
- **28th October 2015**
- **14th January 2016**
- **8th April 2016**

Resolved – That the report be noted.

37 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

A report by the Chair of the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee updated Members on the current position regarding the Work Programme, which aligned with the corporate priorities of the Council and was made up of a variety of scrutiny reviews, standing items and requested officer reports, providing the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

Resolved – That the Work Programme for 2014/2015 be approved.

38 HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC REPRESENTATION PANEL MINUTES-FRIDAY 21ST NOVEMBER

Councillor Steve Williams, Chair of the Highways and Traffic Representation Panel presented the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2014. The Panel had considered a proposal to introduce a resident parking scheme on roads to the rear of the Floral Pavilion, New Brighton.

Resolved – That the Committee recommend to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport that the proposed resident parking scheme on roads to the rear of the Floral Pavilion be approved.
