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SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 20 January 2011

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	J Hale (Chair)	
	Councillors	S Whittingham (In place of H Smith) T Anderson A Brighthouse D McCubbin AR McLachlan	D Mitchell R Wilkins KJ Williams S Williams
<u>In attendance:</u>	Councillors	G Gardiner (Cabinet Member – Environment) L Rennie (Cabinet Member – Streetscene)	
<u>Apologies</u>	Councillors	H Smith	

102 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/PARTY WHIP**

Members were asked to consider whether they had personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

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.

103 **MINUTES**

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management submitted the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November, 2010.

Councillor Mitchell referred to his concerns regarding the need for and promotion of free access to hospital car parks for people visiting seriously ill patients (minute 18 Arrowe Park Hospital Travel Plan) and asked the Director of Technical Services to pursue this matter with the Wirral University Teaching Hospital Trust and report back to the next meeting.

The Chair referred to recent publicity regarding the low number of Wirral prosecutions for dog fouling compared to Liverpool City Council's prosecutions for such offences and asked the Director to pursue this matter and report back to the next meeting.

Resolved –

(1) That the minutes be received.

(2) That the Director report back to the next meeting regarding the issues raised by members.

104 **ENVIRONMENTAL STREETSCENE SERVICES CONTRACT - FOURTH ANNUAL REVIEW**

The Director of Technical Services submitted an update report on the current position with the Environmental Streetscene Services Contract and the development of the service, and invited Members to recommend 2011/12 work stream priorities.

He set out the contract management framework and reported upon progress in relation to the five partnership work streams agreed by the Waste Partnering Board for implementation in 2010/11:-

- Street Cleansing: Improving Environmental Quality with particular focus on Litter and Detritus
- Compaction & Contamination of Collected Co-mingled Recycling – Risk Reduction including Waste Reduction
- CRM Springboard Integration
- Review of the Severe Weather Contingency Plan
- Biffa Environmental Policy/ Sustainability Plan

Other key achievements and improvements to the collection infrastructure that were addressed during 2010 included background preparation for the assessment and implementation of a ‘kerbside’ recycling collection service to those multi occupancy properties on bulk bins and hard to reach properties on black bags, who currently do not receive a service, and continued roll out of recycling collections to all Council offices (further details of these initiatives were contained in agenda item 6 “Recycling and Waste Minimisation Action Plan Update”).

He provided a full list of contractor performance indicator results for 2010 (Appendix 1) indicating that all performance figures had shown improvements when compared with the corresponding figures for 2009.

As part of the Gateway review process, the benefits from the procurement of the new waste contract were determined and subsequently monitored by the partnership. An updated benefits realisation report was detailed in Appendix 2.

Following discussions at the Partnering Board, the following work streams were proposed as the focus of areas of improvement/progress in 2011:

- Street cleansing (including fly tipping) (continued from 2010).
- Springboard phase 2 integration – bin deliveries, fly tipping (including other non-scheduled cleansing), street cleansing and bulky waste collections (continued from 2010).
- Compaction and contamination risk reduction – further Future Jobs Fund initiatives and vehicle overweight/compaction initiatives amended from 2010.

- Continued development of Severe Weather Contingency Plan (continued from 2010).
- Biffa Environmental Policy/ Sustainability Plan (continued from 2010).

Members were invited to put forward suggestions for any new or additional partnership work streams, in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Environmental Streetscene Services Contract.

The Director introduced Roger Edwards, Chris Halfpenny, and Mark Hodgkinson, from Biffa's senior management team who gave a presentation on progress and key achievements. The presentation covered a review of the contract over the last year, progress on the individual work streams, health and safety issues, and bad weather disruption.

Mr Edwards responded to questions from Members concerning the issues raised in his presentation.

The Chair referred to complaints received from his constituents regarding the bad weather disruption to bin collection services. He pointed out that some neighbouring authorities had maintained their bin collection services during the bad weather and he could not remember any previous disruption to Wirral's bin collections on this scale. He emphasised the need to develop contingency bad weather plans and provide a far better service.

There was general discussion during which members endorsed the Chair's comments and identified problems associated with missed bin collections within their wards during the periods of bad weather. Members also highlighted the need for improved communications between officers and contractors to deal with referrals for the clearance of leaf mold and blocked drains e.g. the Rings Road/Heath Road area, Bebington, and Eastham Village.

Resolved – That the Committee:

- (1) Note the progress of the contract during the past year outlined in the report;
- (2) Approve the work stream topics outlined in section 7.1 of the Director's report for inclusion in the development programme for 2011/12

105 **SCOTTISH POWER NETWORK SERVICES**

Further to minute 77(14/9/2010) the Director of Technical Services submitted a report outlining the current situation regarding the provision of street lighting service works by Scottish Power Network Services and the contestable connection works carried out by the Council's Maintenance Contractor. The report included the following performance related information:

- Appendix A – Contestable Connection Works
- Appendix B – List of Outstanding Work
- Appendix C – Details of Scottish Power's Performance

Resolved - That the Committee note the report and require that a further report be prepared in Autumn 2011 providing an update on the performance of Scottish Power covering the remainder of 2010/11 and the first half of 2011/12.

106 LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY (LEQ) PROJECT PLAN UPDATE

The Director of Technical Services submitted a progress report on the Local Environmental Quality (LEQ) delivery plan for 2010/11, which was co-ordinated and monitored by the Living and Working Environment Partnership. The work of the Partnership was intrinsically linked to the second Corporate Objective “to create a clean, pleasant, safe and sustainable environment,” and its core aims were to:

- Maintain and improve the standard of the local environment for residents and businesses through effective partnership working between key agencies and organisations
- Monitor, review, report and take corrective action for the improvement plans relating to the Living and Working Environment Partnership that set out to achieve the SCS and LAA Improvement Priorities
- Optimise the use of available partner resources to achieve Living and Working Environment objectives through effective working and communication between partner organisations and use of performance/ management information
- Promote effective engagement and consultation with local communities and neighbourhoods to facilitate in particular the community and voluntary sector for the achievement of Living and Working Environment objectives.

The Director gave a brief update of the actions /projects detailed in the delivery plan including:

- recent performance indicator results (NI195) and the combined scores for litter detritus, graffiti, and fly-posting;
- the Beechwood Ballantyne Community Charter Launch - development of a Neighbourhood Environment Agreement setting out service standards for those agencies responsible for environmental issue in the area;
- the operation of the Graffiti and Flyposting Contract;
- activities planned for the Merseyside Month of the Environment in March 2011
- new projects developed in partnership with Biffa including the first residents’ street cleansing focus group and Street Cleansing Forums.

The LEQ action plan currently contained 15 activities, all of which currently had a green status with the exception of one classed as amber (KS2 education pack tackling the issue of litter).

The Director responded to questions from members regarding:

- removal of graffiti from mobile telephone operator’s equipment;
- recovery of costs for the removal of fly posters;
- removal of graffiti from electricity sub-stations

Resolved – That the Committee note and endorse the progress made in delivering the LEQ Project Plan for 2010/11.

107 **RECYCLING AND WASTE MINIMISATION ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The Director of Technical Services submitted a progress report on the Local Area Agreement Recycling and Waste Minimisation Action Plan for 2009/10 (detailed in the Appendix).

He reported that continuous improvements had resulted in a three-fold increase in the Council's recycling rate since 2005/06 and whilst performance had remained relatively static for the past two years, the indications were that this current year's performance was predicted to show a marked increase and achieve the current target of 37%.

Projects detailed in the Action Plan were grouped around the following initiatives, aimed at increasing levels of recycling and decreasing the amount of waste being sent to landfill:

- Improving the Quality of Materials Collected – (i) awareness training for collection crews to identify and log contaminated bins; (ii) employment of Assistant Recycling Project Officers working with crews to identify and sticker contaminated bins, and; (iii) refuse vehicle signage educating residents to reduce levels of contamination within grey recycling bins.
- Improvements to the Collection Infrastructure – (i) roll out of a recycling collection service to 367 properties that currently have a general rubbish bag collection ; (ii) provision of additional on street recycle bins, and: (iii) Council Office Recycling Service.
- Home Composting – new scheme will distribute 200 home compost bins this financial year
- Review of Merseyside Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy – to ensure that it reflects the views of residents and key stakeholders.
- Kitchen Waste Recycling - study and options produced by consultants for the implementation of a kitchen waste recycling service.

The Director responded to questions from members regarding:

- the achievements of the Assistant Recycling Project Officers and continuation of this role after the third and final batch of intakes from March, 2011
- street cleaning operations
- the home composting scheme
- initiatives to improve the quality of recyclates.

It was moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor McCubbin that:

“The Committee note and endorse the progress being made in delivering the Recycling and Waste Minimisation Action Plan for 2010/11.”

It was moved as an amendment by Councillor McLachlan and seconded by Councillor Whittingham that:

“ The Committee is concerned to note that the scheme for the employment of the Assistant Recycling Project Officers will not be extended beyond March this year and request that the Director report to the next meeting on ways of funding the continuation of this critical role.”

The amendment was put and lost (3:7)

The motion was put and carried (10:0)

Resolved (10:0) - That the Committee note and endorse the progress being made in delivering the Recycling and Waste Minimisation Action Plan for 2010/11.

108 HEPSE GATEWAY 5

The Director of Technical Services reported that a package of proposals had been presented to the contractor and a response was expected shortly. A full report would be presented to the next meeting of this Committee.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

109 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee had been invited to review the Forward Plan prior to the meeting in order for it to consider, having regard to the Committee’s work programme, whether scrutiny should take place of any items contained within the Plan and, if so, how it could be done within relevant timescales and resources.

Resolved – That the Forward Plan be noted.

110 UPDATED WORK PROGRAMME 2010/11

The Committee received an update on its work programme including reports to be scheduled for the next meeting.

Resolved – That the work programme be noted.

111 SITE VISITS

Further to minute 29 (17/11/2010) members’ views were requested concerning this matter.

Resolved – That the Committee note that arrangements will be made for site visits as and when requested by members.

112 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair reported that he had agreed to accept the following item of urgent business.

113 **WIRRAL FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP - STRATEGY AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Director of Technical Services submitted a report outlining the main purpose of the Wirral Flood and Water Management Partnership in seeking to achieve, through joint working, an effective response to flooding and coastal erosion incidents on Wirral; to take such collective measures in order to minimise the potential impact of such incidents; and to seek the implementation of more permanent and sustainable solutions to the mitigation or alleviation of flooding and coastal erosion. This partnership had been developed to provide the Wirral response to the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 and ensure that the strategy development for flood and coastal erosion risk management on Wirral was coordinated and integrated. The report set out the membership of the Partnership, its aims and objectives, and meeting arrangements.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

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