

**MINUTES OF THE GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT 7PM ON  
WEDNESDAY, 10 JULY 2019  
BOURGES / VIERSEN ROOM, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

**Committee Members Present:** Councillors C. Harper (Committee Chairman), K. Aitken, C. Burbage, D. Fower, J. Goodwin, J Howard, H. Skibsted, C. Wiggin, I. Yasin

Councillor Judy Fox – Chairman of the Task and Finish Group to Review Fly-Tipping and Waste Policy

**Officers Present:** Steve Cox – Executive Director, Place and Economy  
Richard Pearn – Head of Waste, Resources and Energy  
James Collingridge – Head of Environmental Partnerships  
Clair George – Acting Head of Service, Prevention and Enforcement  
Andy Tatt – Head of Peterborough Highway Services  
Adam Payton – PES Senior Officer  
Adrian Chapman – Service Director, Communities and Partnerships  
David Beauchamp – Democratic Services Officer

**Also Present:** Councillor John Fox – Representing the Group Leader of the Werrington First Group

Members of the Task and Finish Review Fly-tipping and Waste Policy not on this Committee:

Councillors C. Hogg, Councillor A Joseph, Parish Councillor Neil Boyce

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Casey (Vice-Chairman), Councillor R Brown, Councillor J Lillis and Parish Councillor K. Lievesley

Councillor J. Goodwin was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Casey. Councillor C. Wiggin was in attendance as a substitute for Councillor J Lillis.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING DECLARATIONS**

No declarations of interest were received.

**3. MINUTES OF THE GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 MARCH 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**4. CALL IN OF ANY CABINET, CABINET MEMBER OR KEY OFFICER DECISIONS**

There were no requests for call-in to consider.

**5. APPOINTEMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS**

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which recommended that the Committee appoint Parish Councillor Keith Lievesley as a non-voting co-opted member to represent the rural communities. This nomination had been put forward by the Parish Council Liaison forum.

A number of queries were raised:

- Members asked why the Committee was only co-opting one member. The Chairman responded that up to four co-opted members could be appointed and committee members would be welcome to suggest additional co-optees.
- Members asked for information regarding the remuneration of co-opted members. The Democratic Services Officer responded that co-opted members receive an allowance of £250 per annum.
- Members suggested that a representative of Opportunity Peterborough could be appointed to the Committee as a Co-opted Member. The Democratic Services suggested that it would not necessarily be advisable to appoint a represent of an organisation the Committee were responsible for scrutinising due to the possibility of creating a conflict of interest.
- The Democratic Services Officer stated that any member could make a proposal for additional co-opted members at any point during the municipal year.
- The Committee **UNANIMOUSLY** agreed to appoint Parish Councillor Keith Lievesley as a co-opted member of the Committee.

**ACTIONS AGREED:**

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to appoint Parish Councillor Keith Lievesley as a non-voting co-opted member to represent the rural areas for the municipal year 2019/20. Appointment to be reviewed annually at the beginning of the next municipal year.

**6. REPORT OF THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP TO REVIEW FLY TIPPING AND WASTE POLCY – PHASE 2**

The report was presented by the Members of the Task and Finish Group to Review Fly Tipping and Waste Policy (Cllrs. Judy Fox, A. Joseph, C. Hogg, Parish Cllr N. Boyce) accompanied by the Head of Environmental Partnerships, Head of Waste, Resources and Energy and the Acting Head of Service, Prevention and Enforcement. The report sought the Committee's endorsement for the group's Phase 2 recommendations for submission to Cabinet on 15 July 2019

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members congratulated the Task and Finish Group on their report.
- The My Peterborough app was being retired in favour of FixMyStreet because My Peterborough was not fully integrated with the Council's systems and created considerable duplication with reports having to be logged on multiple systems. FixMyStreet was already being used by residents and could integrate with the Council's back office systems.
- The development of the new reporting system was at an early stage.
- Publicising the new system was important and this would take place via social media, parish councils and leaflets.
- Some members felt that greater prosecution of offenders was the only way to stop people fly-tipping and suggested that the Council needed to work with magistrates and highlight the seriousness of the issue. Some members felt that a small fine would be 'worth it' for some perpetrators of fly-tipping. Officers agreed and stated that the Council shared intelligence with Cambridgeshire County Council via the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP). Discussions were underway with magistrates.
- Members expressed disappointment that the press were not present at the meeting.
- Members referred to page 33 of the agenda pack; noting that this was the first mention of Education in the report, and that this was essential if fly-tipping was to be reduced in long-term. Fly-tipping rates had reduced in Towns where an education programme had been implemented. Aragon were considered operating a 'recycling roadshow' and it was suggested that officers could provide Councillors with information to share on their Facebook pages. Officers responded that there was a communication plan to support the report which would include education programmes in schools and launching a 'Scrap Fly-tipping campaign'. This campaign would be 'soft-launched' via Social media.
- Members stated that residents were concerned over the time taken to deal with reports of fly-tipping and asked what the average response time was and the anticipated impact of the new reporting system. Officer responded that hazardous fly-tipping must be cleared within 24 hours and non-hazardous waste must be dealt with within 24 hours, once these reports were received from Peterborough Direct. These requirements were monitored as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- The Committee requested that the Head of Environmental Partnerships provided the Committee with information on how long it took Peterborough Direct to respond to and process reports of fly-tipping.
- Members asked if performance had improved since Aragon Direct Services started operating the service. Officers responded that Amey rarely failed to achieve their Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and neither had Aragon.
- Schools had been made aware of the Recycling Roadshow that was due to take place and engagement with schools was ongoing. Some schools were more proactive than others at engaging with this.
- Signage to discourage fly-tipping had been installed in the areas with CCTV with variable results. Members raised the possibility of translating the signage into other languages. Peterborough City Council had signed up to Keep Britain Tidy who had good examples of posters that could be used. Officers would look to deploy many forms of signage in different areas and provide information to the public via the RECAP scheme.
- The MyPeterborough app would be replaced by a system based on FixMyStreet. FixMyStreet Pro is an add-on sold to Councils to enable them to process reports

directly. This would be web-based rather than app based. A Peterborough-specific reporting system could be considered in the future as well as Fix My Street.

- Members of the task and finish group advised that the cost of FixMyStreet was approximately the same as MyPeterborough
- The committee requested that the Head of Environmental Partnerships provides the Committee with information from Serco on the cost to the Council of the new FixMyStreet based system compared with the former MyPeterborough app.
- A report of fly-tipping submitted via FixMyStreet would go via Peterborough Direct to be logged with Aragon Direct Services.
- The Committee requested that the Head of Environmental Partnerships provides the Committee with information from Serco on the cost to the Council of the new FixMyStreet based system compared with the former MyPeterborough app.
- Members of the Task and Finish Group felt that people may feel that fly-tipping is acceptable if dumped waste is collected too quickly, hence the recommendation of the group to use police tape in these areas. The use of the tape sometimes meant fly-tipping is removed before needing to be collected by the Council.
- The cost of removing fly-tipping in the previous year was £200,000. This was a fixed fee paid to Aragon Direct and could be renegotiated if the prevalence of fly-tipping reduced.
- Members expressed support for increasing the prosecution rate of the perpetrators of fly-tipping. Any prosecutions would be publicised and ward councillors made aware.
- All meetings of the Task and Finish Group were held in either the Members Lounge or the Forli Room in the town hall. There were approximately 8 meetings prior to the first report and three prior to the second.
- The approximate annual cost to the Council of being a Member of Keep Britain tidy was £2000. This was paid for via a grant. Key benefits of becoming a member were that the organisation had resources that were proven to work elsewhere.
- Members raised the example of a washing machine engineer, whose only vehicle was a work van, needing to dispose of a mattress and how this would be dealt with. Officers responded that an electronic permit system had been proposed. The system would be mobile friendly and allow 12 visits per year for commercial vehicles with domestic waste. One visit would be allowed before having to apply for a permit. Members felt that publicising this service was particularly important.
- Some members felt that it would be difficult to change the behaviour of the worst offenders.
- Members asked if Aragon Direct Services would deploy police tape as a default response to fly tipping. Officers responded that the standard KPI collection times would be used at first. However, if an area was a known hotspot for fly-tipping, it could be worth cancelling the KPI and using the tape instead. Tape would not be universally used in every instance of fly-tipping.
- Members asked if Councillors would each receive a reel of tape to deploy on instances of fly-tipping while still sticking to the 48-hour KPI response time, as they are often the first to receive reports. It was noted that use of police tape had already been approved by Cabinet following the Task and Finish Group's Phase 1 report.
- Refuse collection trucks could not pick up fly-tipping due to possible damage to the trucks and limits on operative's time. Operatives could report fly-tipping using an in-cab system called Bartec.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to endorse the report and recommendations for submission to Cabinet.

### **ACTIONS AGREED**

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Consider the and comment on the Task and Finish Group report at Appendix 1
2. Request that the Head of Environmental Partnerships provides the Committee with information on how long it takes Peterborough Direct to respond to and process reports of fly-tipping.
3. Request that the Head of Environmental Partnerships provides the Committee with information from Serco on the cost to the Council of the new FixMyStreet based system compared with the former MyPeterborough app.

### **7. VERGE PARKING POLICY**

The report was introduced by the Acting Head of Service, Prevention and Enforcement, the PES Senior Officer and the Head of Peterborough Highway Services, which updated committee members as to the work, progress and impact of the Verge and Pavement Parking Policy.

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members emphasised that it was against the law to block a pavement and that it was not acceptable for people to be forced into the road, especially those with prams or the disabled.
- Some members felt that additional enforcement was required in order to send a message to people that verge parking was not acceptable, in a similar manner to drink-driving and the use of seatbelts. Members noted a considerable change in people's behaviour on Bridge Street after the commencement of Prevention and Enforcement work.
- Officers stated that the criminal offence of obstructing a pavement had not been decriminalised and was still the responsibility of the Police with no way for the Council to enforce this at present. The Council could only prohibit pavement parking completely (including one wheel on a kerb for example) or not at all. The Department for Transport were currently investigating this issue.
- Members expressed concern about the lack of enforcement of pavement obstruction despite how clear-cut and prevalent the offence could be while acknowledging that police resources were stretched. Members felt that the Council needed to look at ways to stop this behaviour.
- The Hamptons were known for a high prevalence of verge parking due to the design of the roads which had been intended to discourage car use. The growth in the number of Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) has exacerbated the issue. Enforcement was limited although the Parish Council funded Prevention and Enforcement Officer did a good job in this area. Members felt that the current policy would not be effective as residents parking on the verge were not going to want this to apply to themselves.

- The Verge Parking Policy could potentially be used to prevent advertising vans parking on parkway bridges and had been used to do so as an initial response for looking at Highways Act responses.
- There had been no requests for activation from emergency services or highways inspectors (section 6.4). Highways inspectors and the Neighbourhood Policing Manager had been made aware of the scheme however.
- Some members felt that there was a high number of unsuccessful applications for verge parking schemes and asked about the impact of these on staff resources. Officers responded that the impact was minimal. Consultation letters were sent out which were received and reviewed. Forms were completed online to minimise administration and overtime was paid from the budget.
- Some members felt that money spent on establishing verge parking schemes would be better spent on enforcement officers.
- Members commented that attitudes towards verge parking varied depending on the area. Many people did not wish to live in HMOs and car ownership was expensive and some people would be unable to pay fines.
- The Department for Transport were currently conducting an enquiry into pavement parking. Local authorities were being consulted as part of this. The most supported solution to the issue was to decriminalise verge parking. Levels of enforcement by the Council could not be decided until this was done.
- The law on verge parking was different in London and Wales.
- There had been 77 individual requests for the verge parking scheme including those submitted by councillors. Once received applicants were asked to demonstrate additional support for the scheme being applied, hence why only 12 proposals went to consultation.
- Members felt that there were more roads that would benefit from the scheme in Hampton than the number of applications and asked if councillors were doing enough to support these applications to get to the consultation stage.
- It was noted that the proposals that successfully made it through to consultation were all supported by a ward councillor led petition.
- Members commented that the enforcement budget seemed too low. Officers responded that the scheme was enforced by existing officers who were already enforcing other offences in an areas so there was no burden on resources.
- Enforcement outside schools did place additional demands on resources however as the problems were limited to specific times of the day.
- Members felt that it was particularly important for residents to be put at the heart of scheme and asked if there was an evaluation process to check their levels of satisfaction with the scheme. Officers responded that there was no formal feedback process. Emails were frequently received if there was a breach of the scheme. Officers had received many emails praising the scheme and noting its success. Officers were identifying the number of tickets issued vs. number of enforcement visits in a particular area to judge levels of compliance.
- If Councillors identified issues relating to the free movement of emergency vehicles, these should be reported to the Councils Prevention and Enforcement Team. The team had a good relationship with the Fire Authority. Once reported, the fire service could conduct an access check and remove vehicles if they were causing an obstruction.
- Members asked if the verge parking policy could be enforced in situations where emergency service vehicles were blocked by parked cars. Officers

responded that if they received such a complaint from the fire service, the scheme could be activated, and the consultation process bypassed.

- The Fire Service would be more concerned about the blockage of roads rather than pavements or verges. Pavement parking could cause safety concerns for emergency vehicles near junctions, however.
- It was difficult to build sufficient evidence to prosecute and fine repeat offenders who caused damage to pavements even if they were well known for doing so. Surveillance work was needed to build sufficient evidence to prosecute.
- People who observed an offence of damaging a verge by parking or crossing it (a different offence) should contact the highway authority. Highways inspectors would assess the safety of damaged verge and make it safe if necessary. Aragon Direct Services would clean up slippery mud on pavements
- Some members felt that residents of the areas most affected by verge parking would be unlikely to request enforcement as they themselves were the offenders.

#### **ACTIONS AGREED:**

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the progress of the Verge and Pavement Parking Policy so far since its launch in 2018
2. Note the impact this policy has had in responding to resident complaints and queries surrounding verge parking.

#### **8. LIBRARIES FUTURE MODEL – CIVIC PROGRAMME**

The report was introduced by the Service Director, Communities and Partnerships which informed the Committee about the City Council's partnership work with Civic to develop proposals for a future model for libraries, in partnership with Vivacity and Cambridgeshire County Council.

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members praised the fact that libraries were open and thriving despite limited resources.
- Members mentioned that Werrington Library had a very active library which was due to relocate and suggested that it could be used as pilot for Civic's work.
- Members sought reassurance that libraries would continue to be supported, especially those in rural areas. This could include the use of mobile libraries. Members commended any attempts by the Council to do so.
- Some members felt that similar ideas for reinvigorating libraries had been proposed in the past, focussing on turning libraries into community hubs that could be used for a wide variety of purposes.
- Members asked if the financial support offered via Civic was the factor that differentiated Civic's approach from these previous approaches. Officers encouraged members to visit the Civic.co website. The organisation worked

on projects internationally, including in impoverished and war-stricken areas of the world as well as Cambridgeshire and operated as a social enterprise.

- Officers added that partnership work with Civic was still at an early stage and there was a possibility it would not be pursued. There was however a sense of optimism and confidence about what could be achieved.
- Members noted that there appeared to be no financial cost to the Council of this project and asked how this was possible. Members also requested greater clarity on the meaning of the phrase 'different commercial models for libraries to ensure the sustainability of library services' and whether this meant privatisation.
- Officers responded that there was no financial relationship with Civic. It was possible in the future however that the Council would part-finance a project with Civic and this would go through the Council's normal budget process. Officers emphasised the importance of verifying the origin of any funding from Civic and this requirement would be written into any agreement with them.
- Officers stated that the library service would remain in the public sector and emphasised the importance of acting ethically. The desire was to generate income via services offered at libraries to support the library service without resorting to draconian measures such as privatisation. Officers expressed caution about any proposals to work with certain large technology companies.
- Members criticised the language of the report, feeling that it failed the 'plain English' test and offered a similar critique of Civic's website.
- Members expressed concern about the financial aspect to the partnership with Civic, stating that it was implausible for the Council to get cost-free benefits without downsides. Members felt that due diligence should be conducted to identify Civic's funding sources prior to entering into a partnership agreement with them and be clear on any future costs of such an agreement to the Council.
- Officers responded that they had had similar concerns prior to Civic's work with Cambridgeshire County Council. Cambridgeshire had therefore already conducted due diligence into Civic including a credit check and director check so many of these concerns have already been answered and it was felt that the organisation was credible. The risks of Peterborough being unsuccessful in pursuing this partnership would primarily be reputational, not financial.
- It was noted that Civic were already working with Cambridgeshire on the County's library service.
- Members asked what the way forward for Peterborough's library service would be if the partnership with Civic was not pursued. Officers responded that the Service Director for Communities and Safety had taken on responsibility for the Vivacity contract and libraries in Cambridgeshire in Autumn 2018. Discussions had therefore already started with Vivacity regarding the development of the library service in Peterborough. These discussions included how to use utilise the upper floor of Central Library. The closure of Bayard Place meant that Central Library was in a challenging location. Officers had investigated opportunities to pursue partnership working with other organisations to bring different services into the library to address this issue. There were no plans for any closures.
- The risk of not pursuing the partnership with Civic would be that any investment in the library service would all have to come from the City Council, rather than seeing if alternative avenues of funding could be explored.
- Officers acknowledged that there had been an element of stagnation in the library service and discussions had therefore been underway about how to grow the service and what the future direction of travel would be.

- Members felt that the Committee's approval for the pilot programme should be conditional on receiving information on the due Diligence already undertaken on Civic by Cambridgeshire County Council as well as receiving an update on progress made during the pilot period to include information on the results of Peterborough City Council's own due diligence checks. This was **UNANIMIOUSLY** agreed.

**ACTIONS AGREED:**

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to

1. Note the work to date and the partnership between Vivacity, Peterborough City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and Civic to develop a pilot transformation programme for the City's libraries.
2. Support Thorney Library and Central Library being the two prototype libraries for the pilot **SUBJECT TO:**
  - a. Receiving a progress update during the pilot period which also allows the Committee to scrutinise the results of the due diligence completed on Civic by Peterborough City Council.
  - b. Receiving a Briefing Note from the Service Director, Communities and Partnerships containing details of the due diligence already undertaken on Civic by Cambridgeshire County Council.
3. Receive progress updates as required.

**9. REVIEW OF 2018/19 AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2019/20**

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which considered the 2018/19 year in review and looked at the work programme for the new municipal year 2019/20 to determine the Committee's priorities. The report asked the committee to consider if further monitoring of recommendations made during 2018/19 was required.

There were no further comments made.

**ACTIONS AGREED:**

The Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to

1. Consider items presented to the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee during 2018/2019 and makes recommendations on the future monitoring of these items where necessary.
2. Determine its priorities, and approves the draft work programme for 2019/2020 attached at Appendix 1.
3. Note the Recommendations Monitoring Report attached at Appendix 2 and considers if further monitoring of the recommendations made during the 2018/2019 municipal year is required. 4
4. Note the Terms of Reference for this Committee as set out in Part 3, Section 4, Overview and Scrutiny Functions and in particular paragraph 2.1 item 4 Growth,

Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee and paragraph 3.8 Flood Risk Management as attached at Appendix 3.

**10. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

The Democratic Services officer introduced the report which invited Members to consider the most recent version of the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions and identify any relevant items for inclusion within the Committee's work programme or to request further information.

There were no further comments made.

**ACTIONS AGREED:**

The Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to consider the current Forward Plan of Executive Decisions.

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

4 September 2019.

Chairman  
7pm– 8.37pm