

Minutes of the Meeting of the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22 February 2018 at 7.00 pm

Present:	Councillors Roy Jones (Chair), Cathy Kent (Vice-Chair), Gary Collins and Terry Piccolo
Apologies:	None
In attendance:	Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways Gavin Dennett, Environmental Health and Trading Standards Manager Beau Stanford-Francis, Environmental Protection and Contracted Services Manager Marcelle Puttergill, Project Manager, Environment Emma Harrington, Development Manager, Thames21 Steve Catchpole, Grays Beachcombers Mark Kennor, Keep Britain Tidy Thomas Elghozi, Keep Britain Tidy Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

27. Minutes

The minutes of the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 14 December 2017 were approved as a correct record.

28. Items of Urgent Business

No matters of urgent business were received.

29. Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

30. Thames21 - Presentation

Emma Harrington, Development Manager Thames21, and Steve Catchpole, Grays Beachcombers, provided Members with a history of Thames21 and how it was formed in 1998 to strengthen partnership working and to create collective responsibility for River Side Cleans undertaken in the borough. That now in 2018 there were 34 members of staff with a £1.5 million turnover. The four operational portfolios of projects are volunteering and community engagement, river improvements, education and training and public affairs.

Emma Harrington informed Members of the events undertaken since 2015 and how these had increased over the years. That working on the education of school children on how the water cycle worked and what damage pollution did to the borough's rivers was vital. Steve Catchpole updated Members on the events being held by the Grays Beachcombers and how these were organised. That the Great British Spring Clean scheduled for 2 and 3 March 2018 relied heavily on volunteers and encouraged local residents to get involved. That work had been undertaken by DP World to remove graffiti in the West Thurrock area and the issue of more bins for dog walkers were required in the Tilbury area. Emma Harrington thanked Members for giving Thames21 the opportunity to present and was keen to continue working with Thurrock and be involved in other projects.

Councillor Jones thanked Emma Harrington and Steve Catchpole for their presentation and on behalf of the Council and residents thanked them for their hard work and commitment.

Councillor Jones asked whether it was a challenge to find volunteers. Emma Harrington stated that although there were a lot of volunteers the concern was notifying them of the events. That posters on future events were now being displayed in 6 different languages and was proving effective. That it was not everyone's choice to pick up litter and stated that neither residents nor Thames21 were responsible for this rubbish, it was rubbish coming up from the Thames.

Councillor Collins echoed Councillor Jones appreciation of the work undertaken and had Thames21 contacted the Council with regard to getting more bins. Emma Harrington stated that contact had been made with the Council and that for sites in Tilbury there had been issues with land ownership. Julie Rogers asked Emma Harrington to contact her outside the meeting to discuss further and come to an agreement on the way forward.

Councillor Piccolo asked whether a money generated income could be made from the cans and bottles collected. Emma Harrington stated that Thames21 was more of a scheme that concentrated on education, training, recycling and reduction of landfill than income generation.

Councillor C Kent thanked Thames21 for their presentation and asked what the age range of school children were being targeted on the education of litter and plastic bottles. Emma Harrington stated that the school scheme concentrated on the open water cycle and how plastics could be recycled. That Thames21 would be keen to work with schools and development modules that could be used to talk and develop the knowledge of school children.

Councillor Jones asked how many events had been scheduled and how were these planned. Emma Harrington stated that the Grays Beachcombers set monthly dates, normally the first Sunday in the month, following conversations

with volunteers on where best to meet and what resources were available. Consideration on times would also be reliant on the times of the tides.

Councillor Jones thanked Thames21 and Grays Beachcombers for their hard work and asked that this was fed back to all volunteers.

31. Keep Britain Tidy - Presentation

Mark Kennor, Keep Britain Tidy, presented to Members the methodology of Local Environmental Surveys and how these were undertaken. The three aims of Keep Britain Tidy were to reduce litter, improve local places and prevent waste. Mark Kennor briefed Members on the following:

- How the development of the Cleaning Monitoring and Local Environmental Quality Surveys had started in the 1990s and had evolved over time.
- That Monitoring provided an informed assessment of standards and led to recommendations for improvements.
- Monitoring had become more flexible with local authorities being able to compare scores.
- That the Standard Survey Structure allowed direct comparisons of standards across a borough.
- That Random Sampling Survey selected sites within a ward by using GIS software.
- That there are 10 land use classifications ranging from Main Commercial Areas to Recreation Areas.
- That a Transect was an area of relevant land that would be used as part of a sample.
- That Grading and Intermediate Grading detailed in the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse would be used.
- Headline indicators of a survey are litter, detritus, graffiti and fly-posting and that recent leaf and blossom fall, weed growth, staining, dog fouling, fly-tipping and waste placed out are additional indicators used.
- That grading would also be used for these headline indicators.

Councillor Jones thanked Mark Kennor for the presentation and applauded him on his passion about Keep Britain Tidy.

Councillor Collins questioned what score Thurrock was given following their survey. Mark Kennor stated that there had been a general improvement between Tranche 1 and Tranche 2.

Councillor Piccolo questioned whether a sign that had large cable ties would be graded as fly-posting. Mark Kennor stated that this would probably be a health and safety matter and be reported as such.

Councillor Jones asked whether the final score annually was the accumulation scores of all three inspections throughout the year. Mark Kennor stated that all three individual scores made up the final annual score.

Councillor Jones asked how Thurrock rated with fly-tipping in comparison with other boroughs. Mark Kennor stated that overall Thurrock was a typical fairly average borough with nothing out the ordinary to report in comparison to other boroughs.

Councillor Jones thanked Mark Kennor again for the very impressive presentation.

Emma Harrington left the committee room at 7.55pm.

32. Fly Tipping of Alleys

Gavin Dennett, the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Manager, introduced the report that focussed on the findings of the Fly-Tipping Review of private alleys within the borough. The Review Panel had consisted of Officers and Councillor C Kent with suggestions and recommendations received being incorporated into the report.

Councillor Jones questioned whether the Community Environment Development Funding process be made easier for residents to apply. Gavin Dennett stated that was the intention of the report and assistance for residents would be made available by providing a standard document template and guidance notes on how best to complete them.

Councillor Jones questioned whether Thurrock had looked at other Local Authorities on what their approach was on this subject. Gavin Dennett stated that APSE members had been contacted but no responses had been received.

Councillor Collins asked how straightforward the gating of alleyways would be to undertake. Gavin Dennett stated that the Community Environment Development Funding would benefit a collective of local people with the help of the Council to get private alley ways gated. Consideration would need to be given to access available and that the Fire Brigade would need to be consulted in some instances.

Councillor Piccolo stated that specific arrangements would still need to be put in place for those alley ways that were not gated.

Councillor Piccolo stated that Option D to install additional CCTV should be considered as a further means of gathering evidence on those offenders that dumped litter on a regularly basis. Gavin Dennett stated that CCTV was already being used but RIPA regulations had to be adhered to as to what level of surveillance could be used. Gavin Dennett reemphasised that the report tonight was to address fly-tipping in private alley ways.

Councillor Piccolo asked whether a list of companies that would collect local waste be added to the Council's web site. Gavin Dennett said that he would need to check the legalities of publishing company details on-line and that the publicity campaign could be used to advertise these services. Julie Rogers

stated company licences would need to be vetted and checked and that Thurrock Council could not rely on the Environment Agency vetting process.

Beau Stanford-Francis stated that the benefit of the Community Environment Development Fund meant that local people had to come together to apply for the scheme which would encourage buy in for the scheme. By putting in a small amount of money it would demonstrate their commitment to solve the fly-tipping problem in their area. The scheme could also encourage residents to report any incidents and provide witness statements that could be used to prosecute offenders.

Councillor C Kent questioned how those residents not in registered forums, groups or charities could apply for the funding. Beau Stanford-Francis stated that these were the details that residents could be advised and assisted on so that groups or forums could be formed or apply through existing organisations.

Councillor C Kent stated she was not in favour of recommendation v. and would be voting against it.

Councillor Piccolo stated that recommendation ii. should be looked into to understand if it would be feasible otherwise the recommendations would be pointless.

Julie Rogers stated that the Community Environment Development Fund process would provide advice and assistance to residents completing the application form, details of which are due to be published on Thurrocks website.

Councillor Piccolo stated that there were concerns on how local forums, charities or registered community groups could apply for the funding and until these were addressed the system would not work.

Julie Rogers stated that the Fly-Tipping of Alleys report would be presented at Cabinet in June 2018, so there was plenty of time to liaise with the Community Engagement Team and address any concerns that Members had. The Community Environment Development Fund was soon to be launched. Post Meeting Note: Julie Rogers has liaised with the Community Development Team and they have advised that funds must be paid to a constituted group. This does not have to be a registered charity. Groups of residents can apply through an existing group such as a local community forum, or through an umbrella group such as CVS. If residents wish to apply for the fund they have the opportunity to attend workshops, details of which will be on our website and issued through a press release, where information will be provided and further guidance and support offered.

In response to why the report only addressed fly-tipping in alley ways, Julie Rogers reminded Members that this report was responding to the Council Motion which solely focused on fly-tipping of private alley ways but that the Council took fly-tipping very seriously.

Councillor C Kent stated that the motion presented at Full Council in June 2017 focused on fly-tipping of private alley ways and not general fly-tipping in the borough, but recognised that this was also an issue in the borough.

Councillor Jones thanked Officers and Councillor C Kent for the work undertaken.

RESOLVED

That the Cleaner Greener Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend to Cabinet the following policy approach for dealing with the issue of fly-tipping in private alleyways:

- i. That the Council launch a communications campaign to raise awareness of the responsibilities of all parties in relation to the clearance of alleys and providing information to facilitate resident organisation of and participation in community initiatives to combat fly tipped alleys.**

That in instance where fly tipping in alley ways is identified, officers follow the following sequential approach:

- ii. Signposting of concerned residents to the Community Environment Development Fund, to assist in target hardening or other measures such as gating to reduce the incidence of fly tipping in alleyways.**
- iii. Formally request that the occupiers of adjacent premises clear up their alleyway if concerns about non-hazardous alleyway accumulations persist.**
- iv. Offer a paid service to clean up alleyway accumulations on a cost recovery basis where the steps above do not result in the fly tipping being removed.**
- v. As a last resort, pursue enforcement action to ensure the removal of potentially hazardous accumulations against the occupiers of adjacent properties and to charge occupiers accordingly.**

33. Work Programme

The Chair informed Members that no reports were scheduled for the 19 April 2018 Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee and proposed that this committee be cancelled.

RESOLVED

That the 19 April 2018 Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee be cancelled due to insufficient business.

Councillor Jones thanked all Members and Officers for their support and contributions to the Cleaner Greener and Safer committees for this municipal year.

The meeting finished at 8.30 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**