

**MINUTES of the meeting of Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 March 2012 at 7.00pm**

---

**Present:** Councillors James Halden (Chair), Wendy Curtis, Steve Liddiard., Michael Stone, Pauline Tolson and Tom Kelly (substituting for Joycelyn Redsell).

**Apologies:** Councillor Joycelyn Redsell

**In attendance:** Councillor Barry Palmer  
Councillor Simon Wootton  
A. Murphy - Head of Environment  
L. Magill - Head of Public Protection  
B. Newman – Director of Sustainable Communities  
M. Boulter – Principal Democratic Services Officer

---

**34 MINUTES**

The Minutes of Cleaner Greener Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on 19 December 2011 and 7 February 2012, were approved as a correct record.

With regards to the minutes of 7 February the Committee requested the following amendments:

- The recommendations relating to dog control reflect that a report was requested for the March meeting.
- With regards to green cars, the committee had requested a report for March's meeting, not a briefing note.

**35 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

a) Interests

No interests were declared.

b) Whipping

No interests were declared.

**36 STREETS ACTION PLAN**

It was explained to Members that the Council had a choice to either spend its budget on better co-ordinating the routine activities of street cleaning or it could focus resources on one geographical area to affect

a bigger impact. It was highlighted that this work overlapped with other Council initiatives such as the bid to rejuvenate Grays Town Centre.

The Committee requested that officers consider localism and resident's views when deciding how to deliver the service as they might have different views. Members also requested a rough timetable of environmental services work, such as grass cutting, so that they could inform residents. It was suggested a website that Members and residents could access might prove useful.

There was a brief discussion on the cleanliness of the A13 and it was clarified that the parts of the road the Council was responsible for was cleaned at least four times a year, if not more. It was a dangerous task and the road had to be closed, usually at night, to complete the cleaning. The Council had no powers to enforce nets on lorries but it did work closely with the Police and hauliers to ensure nets were used.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) **That a Working Group be established from the newly convened Committee next municipal year to further investigate whether tangible benefits can be derived and whether the changes proposed are practicable.**
- ii) **Officers carry out detailed work to prepare this issue for consideration at the first meeting of the next municipal year.**

**37 WORKING TOWARDS A CLEANER, GREENER AND SAFER THURROCK**

The report presented outlined how the relevant services had achieved the corporate objective. It represented a snapshot of the diverse work these services undertook.

During the conversation it was clarified that the Be Smart brand was no longer used by the Council but all the teams that operated under that name were still in existence and staff numbers had not changed.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Committee note the report.**

**38 DEVELOPMENT OF A GREEN CAR STRATEGY**

The Chair of the Committee introduced this report stating that governments and Council administrations of both political parties had attempted this issue but there had never been any synergy with the external factors, such as business. The Chair thanked Andrew Millard

and Councillors Stone and Liddiard for their help on the work. It was highlighted that the Council could help businesses signpost the benefits and support available from the Council and Government to use green cars.

Members discussed air quality in the borough and it was agreed that air quality varied across the borough and although personal and small business car usage was not the biggest contributor to poor quality, it was an issue the Council could usefully reduce. Officers highlighted that congestion was only one impact to air quality. It was added that the Council could not enforce the use of green vehicle resources on DP World and the forthcoming port as the planning consents had already been agreed. However, the placement of the port was designed to reduce pollution on a national scale, through reduced vehicle journeys albeit with a possible increase in Thurrock itself.

The Committee noted the use of maps by other councils to help businesses identify charging points for green cars and the distances they could travel using these, thus helping them plan their business. Members also stated examples of hauliers using biofuel and less harmful fuel as part of their business and felt some businesses were trying to help their environment.

Officers clarified during the debate that air quality was continually monitored by the Council and officers worked closely with DEFRA and other agencies to ensure a Thurrock air quality action plan was maintained.

Officers pointed out that any changes in relation to licensed vehicles would have to be made by licensing committee.

**RESOLVED:**

**That, in liaison with the relevant portfolio holders and shadow portfolio holders, officers investigate the feasibility of delivering the options listed in paragraph 3.20 of the report and work on putting together a draft strategy, which shall be reported back to the committee.**

**39 DOG CONTROL**

The Chair of the Committee outlined the work he and fellow committee members had undertaken in relation to this issue, which included meeting with those Members who had raised ward issues. It was agreed that Councillor Gaywood's concerns should be revisited when the consultation return.

Councillor Liddiard stated that there did not seem to be a dog problem in Tilbury. Councillor Palmer, conversely, outlined a number of dog

fouling issues at Coalhouse Fort and Gobion's Park, which he felt could be tackled with more signage and enforcement.

Officers confirmed that dog attacks were a police matter and although the Police worked closely with the Council, it was possible that not all dog attacks were known to the Council. With regards to dog fouling, there is no need for people to be warned before enforcement action can be taken.

The Committee discussed whether the Council could enforce dog control areas on land that they did not own, such as Forestry Commission land. Officers stated that any enforcement of an order would have to go through legal discussions and the status of the Council's powers on other agency's land would need to be clarified.

Councillor Stone requested that an addition be made to the table on page 43 of the agenda to request no dogs allowed in the children's play area in Elm Road open space. The Committee agreed.

The Committee discussed their desire to increase publicity over fining people who did not clean up their dog's mess. It was felt a day or a week could be used for enforcement officers to focus on dog fouling. It was debated whether this would have an impact and officers explained the process of fining and enforcing dog fouling penalties but also the challenges of catching people committing an offence. Officers stressed that targeted enforcement was the best use of resources and encouraged Members to specify places, times and days where they thought dog fouling occurred.

Members briefly discussed dog bins and it was confirmed that residents could dispose of their dog mess in any bin.

The Chair tabled amended recommendations following a discussion with the Council's legal services and the Head of Public Protection highlighted to the Committee that there were financial implications to the report in that any dog control orders and subsequent penalties or court action would incur a cost to the Council. Members learnt that the use of signs was obligatory within the laws relating to dog control and therefore they were not required to make a recommendation in relation to this.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Head of Public Protection in consultation with the Portfolio holder consider the following:**

- 1.1 The areas and actions listed in the 'Proposed Areas' section of the report as endorsed by committee are subject to consultation with the purposes of making a Dog Control Order. Such consultation to commence no later than 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012.**

**1.2 That in liaison with the Portfolio Holder for Community, Culture and Leisure and the Chair of this Committee, agree the Strategy around the formal consultation on the proposed orders.**

**1.3 Work in liaison with the Council's Communications Team to regularly issue communications in relation to enforcement and education actions carried out by Public Protection**

**1.4 That a report be brought back to committee which should be updated and sets out the consultation process undertaken and responses received no later than October 2012. Such a report (where practicable) to also review and consider any needed expansions of the proposed or other areas within the borough.**

**1.5 The Head of Public Protection liaise with Councillor Wendy Curtis to capture dog issues in her ward.**

**1.6 Look to action a targeted dog fouling enforcement day or period, publicising any enforcement action that arises.**

#### **40 THURROCK COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (TCSP) STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT 2011**

Officers highlighted the key priorities of the partnership, stressing that the full data was not publically available until July as it was still being verified:

- Reduce Anti-Social Behaviour
- Improve Community Safety through Education, Engagement and Prevention
- Reduce re-offending
- Reduce Crime
- Tackle Hate Crime

The partnership was hoping to focus on tackling acquisitive crime, which had increased recently. The partnership was also aware that the changes to the benefits system could mean more Londoners moving into Thurrock, which might bring different types of crime into the area. The partnership was also focussing on persistent offenders and ensuring those with drug problems did not re-offend. The Olympics would certainly change how the partnership worked over the next six months and there was also continuing work to tackle hate crime, violence against women and girls and loan sharks.

Officers confirmed good work was being done at Lakeside to with youth services and the youth offending team.

**RESOLVED that:**

**That members recommend that Thurrock Community Safety Partnership Board agree the following recommendations**

- i) Thurrock Community Safety Partnership continue to prioritise serious crime and anti-social behaviour and domestic burglary volume crime**
- ii) That the Thurrock Community Safety Partnership alcohol strategy is implemented as a priority to address the increasing violent crime.**
- iii) Distraction burglary, whilst being low volume, often goes un-reported and affects the most vulnerable in the community. It is recommended that TCSP continue to promote prevention in relation to this crime in order to prevent another increase in this crime.**
- iv) Integrated Offender management needs to be a priority to embed over the coming year to address re-offending**
- v) Locality Action Groups should continue to target offenders of ASB and safeguard our vulnerable people.**
- vi) Awareness raising in relation to hate crime, in particular around disability should continue.**
- vii) Violence against women needs to have a stronger focus, in particular ensuring that we link into the work in children's services which Professor Kelly is leading on and we need to look at how we commission our services aligning ourselves to the Council's process and working closer with Essex.**
- viii) Thurrock Community Safety Partnership continue to promote and work with the illegal money lending team to determine the extent of loan sharks in Thurrock and work to identify perpetrators and support victims of this crime.**
- ix) The Olympics and PREVENT agenda need to have a strong focus for the first 6 months of 12/13.**

**41 THURROCK COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (TCSP) VALUE FOR MONEY TASK AND FINISH GROUP UPDATE**

Councillor Wootton, as Chair of the Task and Finish Group, addressed the Committee stating that the report on the value for money of the TCSP was not ready to be presented. The Group had embarked on its work in early December 2011 with an aim to compare the Partnership's

expenditure and work against a framework recognised by the Audit Commission. By late January 2012 it became clear that this method would not work for all aspects of the partnership's activity and therefore, the Group's schedule had been set back a few months.

The Committee agreed that the work was very important and needed to be conducted properly and officers gave assurances that they would accelerate the work to ensure it was completed in an acceptable timeframe.

**RESOLVED That the report return to Committee when it is complete.**

**The meeting finished at 8.47pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIRMAN**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Matthew Boulter, telephone (01375) 652082,  
or alternatively e-mail [mboulter@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:mboulter@thurrock.gov.uk)**