

Minutes of the Meeting of the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14 December 2017 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Cathy Kent (Vice-Chair), Russell Cherry and Gary Collins

Apologies: Councillor Roy Jones (Chair)

In attendance: Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways
Claire Harvey, Environment Frontline Services Manager
Jim Nicolson, Community Protection Manager
Beau Stanford-Francis, Environmental Protection and Contracted Services Manager
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.

20. Minutes

The minutes of the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 12 October 2017 were approved as a correct record.

The minutes of the Extraordinary Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 15 November 2017 were approved as a correct record.

21. Items of Urgent Business

No matters of urgent business were received.

22. Declaration of Interests

Councillor Cherry declared a non-pecuniary interest with regard to Item 5 "Strategy to Tackle Violence against Women and Girls in Thurrock, 2017/20" as he worked for Essex Police.

23. Strategy to Tackle Violence against Women and Girls in Thurrock, 2017/20

Jim Nicolson presented the report and stated that in line with national government the Thurrock's Community Safety Partnership had adopted a number of years ago the Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) agenda to replace the previous definition of domestic abuse. That the VAWG dealt with domestic violence and abuse, honour based abuse, modern day slavery, human trafficking, sexual violence and children sexual exploitation. That the

updated strategy would be essential to maintain the progress made in Thurrock to ensure these crimes were tackled. That the direction of travel was correct; the progress of the strategy had been achieved and that the support and engagement with Members was vital going forward to assist with any new initiatives.

Jim Nicolson briefed Members on some specific items from the strategy and action plan:

- That the strategy and action plan now fully recognised and addressed the needs of men.
- That SERICC had played a major part in the support of the strategy and the action plan.
- That “16 Days of Action” workshops, on a number of topics, including Forced Marriage, had been undertaken to train staff on what would be expected of them and how to offer their knowledge and help.
- That 87 front line staff had been trained on J9, a Domestic Abuse Initiative named in memory of Janine Mundy, who was killed by her estranged husband while he was on Police bail.
- That a great deal of work had been undertaken locally and nationally working with victims and that work with perpetrators would commence in partnership with Essex and Southend Council having received a £450,000 government funding for a three year programme to develop the appropriate pathways for perpetrators.
- That on average two women a week were killed by their partners.
- That reviews of domestic homicides had been set up and had identified 27 cases in Essex since these were introduced with no reported incidents in Thurrock.
- That the quality of service available for men had been limited but this was fast improving.
- That a campaign on Elder Abuse had been launched, a hidden crime focusing on domestic abuse on people aged 55 or over.
- Posters were tabled for Members to comment on which presented the situation more positively.

Councillor Collins thanked Officers for the fantastic work put into this good report and was pleased with the direction of travel. Councillor Collins also stated he was happy that the strategy now fully recognised and addressed the needs of men.

Councillors Collins asked for some clarification on Witchcraft. Jim Nicolson stated that he had limited knowledge on this subject but would explore more to see how best to engage and to ensure that services are available and how people can access these.

Julie Rogers informed Members that this was Jim Nicolson last committee as he was retiring next week and that he would be leaving on a high following such a fantastic report and thanked him for all the hard work he had undertaken in Thurrock.

Councillor Cherry stated the examples of posters tabled were upbeat and positive. Jim Nicolson stated that these would be advertised on the Essex Police website.

Councillor Collins questioned that now the strategy recognised the needs of men how this would be advertised. Jim Nicolson stated that work would continue within the community keeping people alert and aware and how these crimes could be reported and how people can self-refer.

Councillor Kent stated that the strategy was good but questioned what work was being undertaken to educate people that this type of behaviour was not acceptable. Jim Nicolson stated that the Risk Avert Programme had been introduced into Thurrock which was being led by Essex Council with Thurrock as a contributor. This was an innovative intervention programme focusing on educating young people on healthy relationships and avoiding engagement in risk-taking behaviours. That Universities and Schools were being contacted to address these issues.

Members agreed that this report should be added to the 2018/19 municipal year work programme to be presented in 12 months' time.

The Vice Chair thanked Jim Nicolson for his hard work and wished him a long, happy and healthy retirement.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members endorsed the direction of travel as contained within the Strategy.**
- 2. That the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members identified how they wish to be updated on progress.**
- 3. That the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members identify the initiatives with which they may wish to be more closely involved to engage community support and harness subsequent partnership-led activity.**
- 4. That a report "Strategy to Tackle Violence against Women and Girls in Thurrock, 2017/20" be added to the 2018/19 municipal year work programme to be presented in 12 months' time.**

24. Fees & Charges Pricing Strategy 2018/19

Beau Stanford-Francis, Environmental Protection and Contracted Services Manager, presented the report that had set out the charges in relation to the services within the remit of the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee with any new charges taking effect from the 1 April 2018 subject to approval from Cabinet. The report highlighted the key questions

that had to be measured when considering the pricing strategy for 2018-19 and the target of £1.905 million that had to be secured through the increased fees and charges in 2018-19 for the cleaner, greener and safer services. Members were also referred to recommendation 1.2 that delegated authority would be sought through Cabinet.

Members were also referred to Appendices A and B to the report that highlighted the proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 and the fees and charges no longer applicable.

Councillor Collins questioned the Outdoor Sports and the Commercial Hire of Open Spaces as to whether there was any pressure to set up events to generate more income. Beau Stanford-Francis stated that applications for hiring spaces are received which included pitch-hire and music events and that each application would be considered on its own merits taking into account the objectives and meeting the needs of both the organiser and the Council.

Councillor Kent stated that the Appendices were too small and unreadable and would therefore not be able to agree to the recommendations as she had not had the opportunity to view the documents.

Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways, apologised for this and would resolve this for next year's report.

Councillor Collins asked what the time limit would be for Members to comment on the report and appendices. Julie Rogers stated that the final report would be presented to Council in February and that Members were being asked at this meeting to comment and agree the report.

RESOLVED

- 1. That Councillors Cherry and Collins agreed to note the revised fees, including those no longer applicable, and that Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members comment on the proposals currently being considered within the remit of this committee.**
- 2. That Councillors Cherry and Collins agreed to note that director delegated authority will be sought via Cabinet to allow Fees & Charges to be varied within a financial year in response to legal, regulatory or commercial requirements.**

25. Waste Service Route Optimisation - 6 Month Update

Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways, presented the report that provided an update on performance and challenges from the first seven months of implementation of the new service and the forward look in relation to the ongoing service provision. The report provided an overview of domestic waste collections following the implementation in May 2017, on the new

methodology of a sweep system and new waste collection rounds which had impacted 79% of residents across the borough. Julie Rogers stated that the new service had seen greatest challenge and impact on Friday collections, any operational issues that occurred during the week had a rolling effect toward the latter part of the week. She also advised that there needed to be some clarity for residents in relation to responsibility of communal bin stores, in particular landlord and Council responsibility where there was misuse of the store or contamination identified. Julie Rogers confirmed that these issues and concerns were being addressed as outlined in the report. Julie Rogers referred Members to Appendix A which focused on Recycling and addressing contamination and blocked access issues, this reflected the work being undertaken within the service and the communications team in relation to promotion, advertising and educating residents on how best to recycle.

Julie Rogers introduced Claire Harvey, Environment Frontline Service Manager, to her first Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Cherry noted a mistake in the report that the waste collection operation would sweep across the borough from West to East when in fact the service would sweep from East to West. Julie Rogers apologised for the error.

Councillor Collins questioned the blocked access on a number of roads and how these were being resolved. Julie Rogers stated that this is an ongoing challenge encouraging residents to park more considerately, to enable the waste vehicles to access and complete collections. In some cases the Council had written to residents, knocked on doors asking residents to move vehicles and consider where they were parking. If a waste vehicle could not access the road, it is likely a fire engine would not either. She advised that referral were also being made to Highways colleagues to consider traffic management of these areas and to look at how best these issues could be addressed.

Councillor Cherry asked whether there was any evidence of any fuel costs savings. Julie Rogers stated that due to the fluctuation of fuel costs this was hard to evidence at this time but with new service vehicles being introduced in February 2018 these should make some difference on fuel savings.

Councillors Collins asked what would happen to the old service vehicles. Julie Rogers stated that four of the fleet vehicles had new engines installed and would be used for resilience. Otherwise the vehicles would likely be auctioned.

Councillor Kent questioned whether with the increase of new properties in the borough had the targets been met to try and provide the service more effectively. Julie Rogers stated that the route optimisation now covered 300 additional new properties which resulted in an increase of 900 collections, she also advised that due to the excellent sales work in relation to trade waste there had been a significant increase in collections for this stream, there

would also be an ongoing need to increase capacity as the growth and proposed circa 30,000 new properties were built in the borough.

RESOLVED

That the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members considered and noted the report.

26. Work Programme

The Vice Chair asked Members if there were any items to be added or discussed for the work programme for the 2017-18 municipal year.

Members agreed that an update report on “Strategy to Tackle Violence against Women and Girls in Thurrock, 2017/20” be presented in 12 months’ time and should be added to the 2018/19 municipal year work programme.

RESOLVED

That a report “Strategy to Tackle Violence against Women and Girls in Thurrock, 2017/20” be added to the 2018/19 municipal year work programme to be presented in 12 months’ time.

The Vice Chair wished Members and Officers a very Merry Christmas and thanked them for all their hard work.

The meeting finished at 7.46 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**