

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Monday, 10th September, 2012.

Present:- Councillors Minhas (Chair), Bal, Dar, O'Connor, Plenty, Sohal and Wright (Vice-Chair), Morris and Conroy

Non-Voting Co-Opted Members Present: Darren Morris (Customer Senate) and Terry Conroy (Slough Federation of Tenants and Residents)

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Munawar

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Carter

PART 1

60. Declarations of Interest

1) Prior to consideration of minute no. 63, Councillor Dar declared a personal interest as he represents Slough Borough Council on the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. He remained in the room.

2) Prior to consideration of minute no. 63, Councillor Plenty declared a personal interest as he represents Slough Borough Council on the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. He remained in the room.

61. Minutes of the last meeting held on 21 June 2012

The minutes of the last meeting held on the 21 June 2012 were approved as a correct record.

62. Member Questions

Three questions were submitted by Councillor Plenty.

Yellow Lines

Cllr Plenty:

In the past, citing of new yellow no parking lines, together with the necessary legal action, has taken place every 6 months. This seems to have recently changed to yearly. What was the rationale behind the decision?

Response:

When we originally started the waiting restrictions request list, our aim was to cut off our request list every 6 month and undertake the statutory process to introduce the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders. However, we found that this 6 month window was not always long enough to complete the schemes, and often the reviews were overlapping each other, which did not leave us

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel - 10.09.12

any time to complete the other schemes on our scheme priority list. The Team Leader – Parking Enforcement and Development took the decision to undertake the review of these restrictions on a yearly basis to help manage the increased number of requests for waiting restrictions around the Borough.

Bus Station Improvements

Cllr Plenty:

Please list improvements that are in the pipeline for the bus station (such as additional toilets), together with expected dates of completion.

Response:

There are 63 outdoor seats available at the bus station – all of which are now covered; 6 seats have also recently been added to the bus shelters in Brunel Way, therefore making 69 covered outdoor seats in total at the bus station.

There are 20 seats provided inside the waiting area by the Cafe (making a total of 89 seats available to bus station users). It would have been possible to include a small number of extra seats in this area if the Cafe and Newsagent had been operated as one unit. Unfortunately this has not been possible to achieve through the letting process. The Cafe operator has provided some outdoor seating (approximately 8 seats) which is the only seating exclusively provided for patrons of the cafe. This seating is not covered.

We are still awaiting a sample of the material to be used for the cladding on the automatic toilet for the bus station. Once agreed there is a ten week lead-in time for manufacture of the unit itself.

The works to the fencing and automatic gate on the northern boundary wall are complete.

No other works are scheduled for the bus station at this stage.

Community Wardens

Cllr Plenty:

Please provide details of the allocation of Community Wardens to wards, listing the warden allocated to each ward, detailing whether they are full or part time employees, or provide such other information on allocations that the FTE provision allocated to each ward is transparent.

Please explain the rationale underpinning the allocation of warden time to electoral wards.

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel - 10.09.12

Response:

Ward	Warden Responsible for Ward
Baylis & Stoke	Jason Hodge
Britwell	Anthony Ollivierre
Central	Ali Abdul
Chalvey	Justyna Swiderska
Cippenham Green	Chris Spencer
Cippenham Meadows	Chris Spencer
Colnbrook & Poyle	Linda Corcoran
Farnham	Sylwia Pazdziorko-Tokarz
Foxborough	Linda Corcoran
Haymill	Dave Lee
Kederminster	Ron Dohil
Langley St Mary's	Ron Dohil
Upton	Dave Stride
Wexham Lea	Michelle Hewett

We currently have 11 community wardens, with 1 vacancy that has been recently filled.

Of the 12 community wardens 11 are full time and 1 is part time.

Wardens are given lead responsibility for mostly one ward, but occasionally two wards, and are responsible for: devising and implementing a ward action plan in that ward; attending community meetings; and the majority of service requests generated in that ward. Where there is excessive workload in a particular ward, or there is a particular initiative in a ward, other wardens from the team would be called upon to assist.

Whether a warden is responsible for one or two wards will depend largely on the number of wardens available to the Service (there are currently 12 posts for 14 wards); the workload for the ward; and the capability of the warden.

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel - 10.09.12

63. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service - Integrated Risk Management Plan Consultation

Paul Southern, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service outlined the proposals being consulted on under the RBFRS Integrated Risk Management Plan: Action Plan 2013/14.

Members noted the good preventative work that had been undertaken and was seen in the halving of call out figures, and discussed the issue of Beds in Sheds, and the difficulties for the RBFRS as they are not within the regulatory fire order and they therefore had no enforcement powers. Dealing with these would be a joint effort led by the Local Authority.

The Panel raised concerns about the proposed removal of the aerial ladder from Slough, and the potential impact on safety in Slough's high rise buildings. The RBFRS did not see this as an issue as the ladder had not been needed for a rescue in the previous 10 years. The relocation of the ladder to Reading meant it would be central to the county, and Slough would have the option of calling on similar devices from other in High Wycombe, Chertsey and Hayes, in addition to Reading, should it be required.

Finally the Panel sought reassurance on the proposals reorganise the allocation of firefighters between the Slough and Windsor stations.

Resolved:

- 1) to note the proposals in the RBFRS Integrated Risk Management Plan: Action Plan 2013/14; and
- 2) to request confirmation on the interim arrangements being put in place for use aerial ladders prior to formal arrangement being set up with neighbouring services.

(Note: Prior to consideration of minute no. 63, Councillor Dar declared a personal interest as he represents Slough Borough Council on the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. He remained in the room.)

(Note 2: Prior to consideration of minute no. 63, Councillor Plenty declared a personal interest as he represents Slough Borough Council on the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. He remained in the room.)

64. The Future of Housing Post Localism Act 2011

Neil Aves, Assistant Director Housing and Environment, outlined the impact of the Localism Act on the management of social housing by local authorities.

The Panel discussed the issue of linking allocation of housing with history of anti-social behaviour and raised concern over the potential impact of that on children whose parents have such a history. It was felt that this issue could not be generalised, and sought reassurance that housing would be provided

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel - 10.09.12

to meet our statutory responsibility. The Panel also considered the use of private sector housing and the possible difficulties should families be unable to transition from social housing into the private sector due to costs, and stressed the need for allocations to be sustainable.

The Panel then questioned the issue of reducing housing allowances, and in particular the potential impact on the elderly. Neil Aves stressed that work was being undertaken to ensure that all tenants understood the potential impact of this national reduction and the options open to them.

Resolved – to note the report.

65. Parks and Open Spaces Strategy

Ollie Kelly, Parks Project Officer and Gillian Ralphs, Assistant Director Enforcement and Regulatory Services, presented the proposals for the development of a Parks and Open Spaces Strategy to the Panel.

The Panel discussed the benefits of investment in the local parks and the increased usage as a result. Members discussed the importance of linking this resource to other issues such as asset management, green infrastructure, carbon reduction policies, sustainable drainage and disabled access strategies.

Resolved:

- 1) to endorse the designation of land at Herschel Park as a Local Nature Reserve; and
- 2) to note the proposals for the development of a Parks and Open Spaces Strategy outlined in the report.

66. Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel

The Panel received an information report on the establishment of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel.

Resolved – to note the report.

67. Forward Work Programme

The Panel noted its current work programme and requested the addition of the following agenda items:

- Housing Performance (November)
- Upton Court Park Residence Parking (November)

Resolved – That the report be noted.

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel - 10.09.12

68. Attendance Record

Resolved – that the Members attendance record be noted.

69. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 15 November 2012.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 9.10 pm)