



COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 12 September 2024 at 6.00 pm in Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG

Present: Councillors G L Offland (Vice-Chair), E Aston, S Handley and G Thomas

In Attendance: A Astley (Executive Director: Place), S Yarnall (Democracy Officer (Scrutiny)), R Phillips (Registrars, Public Protection, Legal & Democracy Service Delivery Manager), P Fenn (Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services Manager) and Dean Sargeant (Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services)

Apologies: Councillor E Davies and P J Scott

COMSC1 Declarations of Interest

None.

COMSC2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2024 be agreed and signed by the chair.

COMSC3 Terms of Reference 2024/25

The Service Delivery Manager: Registrars, Public Protection, Legal & Democracy presented the Terms of Reference for the 2024/25 municipal year. There was a requirement in the Council's Constitution that an annual review of the terms of reference took place at the first meeting following the Council's Annual General Meeting. There were no proposed changes from previous years.

RESOLVED – that the Terms of Reference for the 2024/25 municipal year as set out in Appendix A be approved.

COMSC4 Communities Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2024/25

The Service Delivery Manager: Registrars, Public Protection, Legal & Democracy presented the draft Communities Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for the 2024/25 municipal year. A two year work programme was implemented in the preceding year to allow for in-depth work to be completed



and the programme presented to Members at the time of the meeting marked the halfway point of the two year programme. Each scrutiny committee had delegated authority from Scrutiny Management Board to approve their individual work programmes.

Members commented on the work programme and asked if items were fixed and if items could be brought forward such as the item on affordable warmth. Officers noted the comments raised and confirmed that this would be considered following further consultation with the Chair.

RESOLVED – that the work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year be agreed.

COMSC5 Building Safer & Stronger Communities through tackling fly tipping

The Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services Manager presented the report which provided an overview of the work that the Council and the Committee had completed during the preceding year. The report outlined that reports of fly tipping in the Borough had increased following the COVID-19 pandemic and that between 2021/22 and 2022/23 there were over 4,300 individual reports of fly tipping in the Borough. During the 2023/24 period there had been 180 fixed penalty notices issued.

On 28 June 2023, the Committee received an update on fly tipping across the Borough. This included work with partners such as the Police, the Environment Agency and the National Farmers Union. Members were reminded that at the June 2023 meeting of the Committee, Officers had informed them of the intelligence based approaches used to tackle fly tipping.

These tactics included the use of social media campaigns to request information regarding recently captured CCTV footage of fly tipping, to help identify offenders. Officers were also working with 13 town and parish councils as part of the work of the Community Action Team to support with addressing the issue. The report also highlighted that Officers used live data through the PowerBi system to identify 'hot-spots' for fly tipping which could then be addressed accordingly. In the months that followed the June 2023 meeting, the Committee had worked with Officers in informal workshop sessions to devise a leaflet to support with engagement with the wider public on what was deemed as fly tipping and the penalties if offenders were caught.

Following the update, Members raised the following questions and comments.

What work had been done in the more rural areas of the Borough, especially those that bordered areas of Shropshire?



Members were assured that the team were already working in local areas to address rural fly tipping and recognised the concern. The action team were working to create an increased presence with patrols and CCTV coverage.

Members commented that the leaflet would be an informative way to get information regarding the issue to the public as well as illustrating bulk waste collection and information for refuse centres. The Neighbourhood and Enforcement Services Manager confirmed that this was the purpose of the leaflet which would allow elected Members to share the information in an accessible manner.

In previous meetings there had been discussions of concern with fly tipping on private land, had there been any progress to address this?

There were many actions that were used when there were instances of fly tipping on private land. The first was working with the land owner to dispose of the waste. If the landowner was not being co-operative, the Council would issue a fixed penalty notice and the planning enforcement team would investigate the matter further.

Members asked for clarity on the smaller A5 leaflet that was presented alongside the report. Officers clarified that this would be used along with community impact days that would utilise the use of an environmental crime scene and door knocking to engage with the public. The smaller leaflet would be delivered if there was no one present at their property to speak to Officers.

In previous discussions it was suggested to make the £1000 fine for fly tipping on the leaflet more prominent, has this been done and why were there multiple figures for fines on the leaflet?

Officers informed that this was the opportunity to clarify design changes with Members of the Committee. The reason for multiple figures on the leaflet was to showcase the various fines associated with different types of waste, not just fly tipping. The Service Deliver Manager: Registrars, Public Protection, Legal & Democracy provided context on the multiple figures and explained the legal position.

In the South of the Borough, where there were high levels of housing with multiple occupants and private landlords, were there more issues or accounts of fly tipping especially when tenants moved from their previous properties?

It was noted that whilst there had been some recorded issues, there were also accounts of positive work with tenants to ensure that there was minimal waste being left behind.



Members discussed the benefits of the leaflets in areas such as schools and community groups and illustrated a need for this to be looked at further. The Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services explained that there were opportunities such as the 'Crucial Crew' scheme where school children had two weeks between June and July to explore issues like this. It was suggested to use an environmental crime scene in this platform to illustrate the impact of fly tipping on the local community.

Following the discussion Members voted unanimously on the recommendations as noted within the report

RESOLVED – that:

- a. The growing local and national challenges associated with increasing reports of fly tipping be noted;
- b. The proactive approach that had been undertaken by the Council in tackling fly tipping be noted; and
- c. The focus of the Fly Tipping Task Force and the content of the report including the initiatives proposed in tackling fly tipping across the Borough while offering areas of further focus where required be endorsed and noted.

COMSC6 Chair's Update

None.

The meeting ended at 6.37 pm

Chairman:

Date: Thursday 21 November 2024