

# **Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Waste Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 26 September 2017 at Committee Room 4 - City Hall, Bradford**

Commenced 5.30 pm  
Concluded 7.20 pm

## **Present – Councillors**

LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT	GREEN
A Ahmed Berry Mohammed Watson	Stubbs	Love Warnes

## NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Nicola Hoggart  
Julia Pearson

Environment Agency  
Bradford Environmental Forum

Observers: Councillor S Ferriby

Apologies: Councillor Mike Gibbons and Councillor Andrew Senior

## **Councillor Warnes in the Chair**

### **15. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

### **16. MINUTES**

**Resolved –**

**That the minutes of the meetings held on 2 May; 4 July and 25 July 2017 be signed as a correct record.**

### **17. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

## 18. BRADFORD ENVIRONMENT FORUM ANNUAL REPORT

The Strategic Director, Place, presented, Document “E”, which was a report of the Bradford Environment Forum outlining the role of the organisation and providing a summary of some of the current and recent projects to illustrate the types of contribution that the voluntary and community sector contributed to life in Bradford and to support the District’s priorities. The report also provided a summary of commissioned environmental initiatives.

It was explained that Bradford Environment Forum (BEF) brought together third sector organisations and groups which were involved in environmental activity in the Bradford District. BEF sought to provide representation in strategic discussions and provide communication tools to enable groups to work together to maximise positive environmental activity in the Bradford District.

The report highlighted, as examples of their work, three current projects being delivered in the district and emphasised the importance of support received from the Council through the Environmental Commissioning Fund (ECF).

Representatives of the Forest of Bradford; Bradford Environmental Education Service (BEES) and the Bradford Community Environment Project (BCEP) were in attendance at the meeting to talk about their projects.

- **Bradford Community Environment Project (BCEP)**

The representative from BCEP explained that since the time of report writing, the organisation had ceased to operate as they were unable to continue in the current financial climate. Because of the very recent events representatives were still considering the next steps although it was hoped to continue with partners working with recyclable paint.

- **Forest of Bradford**

The representative of the Forest of Bradford reported that the scheme had been set up in 1998 with the aim of establishing 480 hectares of native woodland, equivalent to one million trees. It was explained that, to date, the project had planted 465,000 native trees / shrubs at over 350 different sites.

Challenges, in terms of financing its core work, were presented and that the Environment Commissioning Fund (ECF) from the Council continued to play a crucial role in supporting core work and leveraging in outside sources of funding was emphasised.

The successful level of public engagement developed in delivering the project’s work was reported. A tree planting session involving Members of the Sant Nirankari Mission and 25 volunteers from the Forest of Bradford was discussed.



- **Bradford Environmental Education Service (BEES)**

It was explained that in the current financial climate capacity had massively reduced and without core funding it was impossible to secure other outside grants. The core services funded by the ECF were reported and included the following:-

- The Conservation Volunteer Group, engaging a wide range of volunteers to make positive environmental change in their neighbourhoods.
- A programme of Wildlife Field Visits offering a shared learning experience; lifelong learning and a valuable resource of species recording for sites in the district and beyond.
- Community Orchard providing local food and events. Details of an Apple Day being held on Sunday 15 October 2017 were circulated.

Feedback from participants illustrating how the BEES services was addressing the environmental outputs such as habitat management and also providing a chance for residents' personal development and a framework for support was provided.

Following those presentations Members expressed concern about the long term sustainability of the work of BCEP and questioned how much of their work could be continued. It was explained that the Repair Project was self financing and it was hoped that other elements of the project would continue through a new organisation, Bradford Organic Composting Service (BOCS).

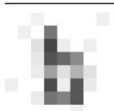
A Member paid tribute to the work of BCEP, a lot of which had been undertaken in the Wibsey Ward, and expressed his dismay that a project which was so greatly needed in the city had been wound up. He believed that a lack of 'joined up' thinking was short sighted. He referred to Bradford's national reputation in Forest Schools and was worried that the expertise could be lost.

The sustainability of the Forest of Bradford was discussed and assurances were provided that the project was continually attempting to secure and generate funding. The project was a delivery agent for White Rose Planting and for the previous five years had carried out work out of the district to support the work in Bradford.

It was questioned if funds allocated to BCEP could be transferred to other organisations and officers were urged to ensure that those funds were utilised in the environment arena.

**Resolved –**

- 1. That the achievements of the Bradford Environment Forum with the Council Grant be acknowledged.**
- 2. That the work of the Voluntary and Community Sector partners in the Bradford Environment Forum continues to be supported.**



3. That the collapse of the Bradford Community Environmental Project (BCEP) be noted with regret; that the staff be thanked for the tremendous achievements the project has accomplished and it be hoped that as much of the work as possible continues in the months ahead.
4. That the Strategic Director, Place, be requested to endeavour to ensure that the remaining BCEP funding be made available for environmental projects in the Bradford District.
5. That a view that there is a role for a continuing strategic environmental social enterprise/charity in the Bradford area be expressed.
6. That a further report be provided to update the Committee on the work undertaken in 2017-18.

*ACTION: Strategic Director Place*

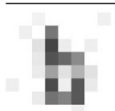
## 19. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY ANNUAL REPORT

The Co-opted Member from the Environment Agency presented **Document “F”** updating Members on the work and environmental outcomes achieved by the Environment Agency within the District throughout 2016-17. She explained major changes which had taken place during the previous six months including her taking up the role of Senior Advisor – Partnership & Strategic Overview linking to all flood risk activity in the area.

A summary of the role of the Environment Agency, acting to protect the environment included:-

- Acting to reduce the impacts of a changing climate on people and wildlife.
- Reducing the risks to people, properties and businesses from flooding and coastal erosion. The Agency were committed to supporting more than 1,500 flood alleviation schemes throughout the country, which would better protect more than 300,000 homes by 2021.
- Protecting and improving the quality of water, making sure there was enough for people, businesses, agriculture and the environment. Their work helped to ensure people could enjoy the water environment through angling and navigation.
- Looking after land quality, promote sustainable land management and helping to protect and enhance wildlife habitats. Working closely with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations.

It was stressed that the Environment Agency could not do their work alone. They



worked with government, local councils, businesses, civil society groups and communities to make the environment a better place for people and wildlife.

The report detailed work conducted towards Flood Risk Management; Industry and Waste Regulation and Tackling Illegal Waste Sites; Water Quality and Incident Management.

Members welcomed the positive cross agency work detailed in the report.

It was questioned if a focus on flood management had diverted resources away from the more traditional business of the agency and if there were enough resources to maintain a high standard of environmental stewardship. In response Members were assured that the agency worked to a six year programme and that the programme was reviewed annually and funding sources monitored.

The relationship between the agency and businesses where the agency were both friend and regulator were questioned and it was confirmed that partner organisations were aware that the agency were also there to regulate business. The role of the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat) was also reported.

The report highlighted 600 cases of illegal waste and it was questioned if the culprits were deterred by the penalties they could incur. It was explained that there were persistent offenders and organised crime and the Environment Crime Team was involved in such cases. They shared intelligence with other agencies to strengthen their investigations.

#### **Resolved –**

- 1. That the report be and its contents be welcomed and it be trusted that the Council will continue to work in close partnership with the Environmental Agency.**
- 2. That the vital need for continued multi-agency approaches to managing our environmental responsibilities be noted.**
- 3. That a progress report be provided in 12 months time.**

ACTION: Co-opted Member Environment Agency

#### **20. AIR QUALITY AND THE FRACTION OF MORTALITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO PARTICULATE AIR POLLUTION ACROSS THE BRADFORD DISTRICT**

In December 2016 a report had been presented to the Committee to provide an update on air quality across the Bradford District. At that time Members had requested a further update and the report of the Strategic Director, Health and Wellbeing, **Document “G”**, provided that update including information on



the health impacts of air quality on the residents of Bradford, an update on the national context, the results of the routine monitoring carried out and the steps which were being put in place to tackle that problem.

The update reported on four key issues including the Health Impact of Poor Air Quality; the National Air Quality Plan for Nitrogen Dioxide; Bradford Council Air Quality Monitoring Data and tangible actions being taken to Improve Air Quality in Bradford.

Document "G" revealed that air quality monitoring was undertaken at a number of locations across the district. The varying trends which had been seen were discussed including that the levels of Nitrogen Dioxide and particulates at Thornton Road had halved and had remained static at Shipley Airedale Road. It was explained that the variation in trends was due to a great deal of variability at various times of the day and year and also because of variable weather conditions. It was questioned if the data was robust and sufficiently reliable to guide policy decisions and it was explained that only a small level of data contained in the report was utilised for that purpose. Officers relied on data from over 60 stations in the area and this was supplemented by Government data.

A Member raised the issue of poor air quality in parts of the Wibsey Ward. He was concerned that children were walking to school and playing in areas where they were suffering the consequences of peoples' vehicle choice. He referred to the cleaner bus fleet operating in the Leeds area and questioned what was being done to address the air pollution in his ward. He stressed that efforts must be made to change the vehicles that people were driving and the nature in which they were driven. He was concerned that children living in the areas of highest deprivation were being subjected to the worst air quality resulting in life limiting illness.

In response it was explained that Leeds had been identified as an area requiring action on air quality and the cleaner bus fleet would, therefore, go to that area. The Department for Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) were aware of air quality issues and there was some funding available for the retrofit of buses. Children were being advised to play in areas further away from polluted roads and to avoid walking to school on busy main roads. It was acknowledged that the Born in Bradford Project had done a lot of research on effects of air quality and it was agreed that the results of their research should be widely publicised.

It was explained that, following a draft National Air Quality Plan for Nitrogen Dioxide, Defra had indicated that a Clean Air Zone would be required in Bradford to tackle the high levels of nitrogen dioxide and named Bradford as requiring action. The final plan, however, had stated that Bradford was not required to carry out a feasibility study or implement measures over and above those already planned. A Member questioned if that would impact on funding for Bradford. In response it was confirmed that it was the case that the 23 Local Authorities 'requiring action' would be a priority for Government



funding, however, tangible action to Improve Air Quality in Bradford included a successful bid for taxis to install EV infrastructure; locations surveyed for town centre rapid-charging stations and a bid made to the Clean Bus Technology Fund 2017-2019 which had £30m available over a two year scheme. The deadline for bids was 17th November 2017.

It was confirmed that the Council had signed up to the West Yorkshire Low Emissions Strategy and that Defra would continue to monitor further air quality areas in the future. It was also explained that the operation of buses to cleaner standards in the Leeds area would also help to improve air quality in the Bradford district.

A Member questioned progress on the gas refuel station. Although it was believed that this would be part of a new depot currently in the planning stage it was agreed to provide further information to that Member.

Communication with residents to encourage them to look after the environment was questioned. In response it was explained that a number of public awareness events were organised in the area. Information on air quality statistics were also available to residents. It was believed that people were getting the message that diesel cars were not as environmentally friendly as petrol and it was agreed to raise the issue with Public Health England for them to promote that message. Work undertaken with Development Control Officers was reported and that the adoption of the Low Emissions Strategy had now been promoted to other areas was confirmed.

In summary a concern was expressed that Neighbourhood Forums promoted walk to school initiatives in areas where there could be high concentrations of toxicity.

#### **Resolved –**

- 1. That the content of the report be noted and officers be fully supported in their continued measures to tackle poor air quality across the District.**
- 2. That the continuing and severe pollution created by the operation of diesel vehicles and bus fleets in Bradford be noted.**
- 3. That the disproportionate impact of poor air quality on the poorer parts of our District be noted and officers encouraged to continue to seek to raise public awareness of actions which residents can take to improve poor air quality in their communities.**
- 4. That the Strategic Director, Health and Wellbeing, be requested to continue to review the options for declared Air Quality Management Areas across the District.**





**5. That a progress report be provided in 12 months time.**

*ACTION: Strategic Director, Health and Wellbeing.*

**21. UTILISATION OF OUTDOOR SPACES FOR HEALTH REASONS**

Good quality outdoor spaces created opportunities for health and wellbeing. The report of the Strategic Director, Health and Wellbeing, Document “H” sought to outline the opportunities and challenges across the District and to highlight how utilisation of outdoor spaces was contributing to the District strategic priorities.

A presentation included two maps revealing accessible and natural green space, and standards, across the Bradford District. A definition of outdoor space was provided together with the benefits of using outdoor space for health; the impact of green space on health and social inequalities and motivations and barriers regarding the use of outdoor space.

Members were concerned that it appeared that the poorest residents in the district were less able to access open green space.

The Yorkshire Wildlife Project being undertaken with Leeds and Bradford Council’s was discussed and it was suggested that it would be useful for contact to be made with the project.

The ‘greening’ of inner city urban areas was suggested to improve the District and reduce the cost of maintenance. It was agreed that many parts of the district could be cleared, planted and made available for growing and fruiting.

**Resolved –**

- 1. That the report, its contents and the impressive range of projects encouraging access to outdoor spaces be noted and welcomed and officers thanked for their hard work.**
- 2. That the concern of Members about the continuing socio-economic inequality of access to green spaces in Bradford be noted.**
- 3. That a progress report be provided in 12 months time.**

*ACTION: Strategic Director, Health and Wellbeing.*

**22. WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18**

The Chair of the Committee presented **Document “I”** which gave details of the Committee’s work programme for 2017-18.





A Member referred to a previous request for Asset Management to be added to the programme and it was agreed to progress that request.

Following a Member request at the meeting on 25 July 2017 a review of Biodiversity was to be added to the work programme. The scope of that review and terms of reference would be considered at the next meeting.

At the meeting schedule for 19 December 2017 a report would be presented on the Role of Council Wardens and it was suggested that Members consider if there was a need to undertake a review of those roles.

The possibility of a review of Air Quality was raised following concerns raised earlier in the meeting on the impact on children's health. It was suggested that this review could be done in conjunction with the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and would be added to the work programme.

Members were reminded that there would be a joint meeting of the Corporate, Regeneration and Economy and Environment and Waste Management Overview and Scrutiny Committees on 10 October 2017.

**Resolved –**

**That the work programme 2017-18 continues to be reviewed regularly during the year.**

*ACTION: Overview and Scrutiny Lead*

**23. CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS**

The Chair and Members of the Committee expressed their deepest sympathies to Councillor Gibbons on the sad loss of his mother.

Councillor Warnes reported his intention to stand down from his role as Chair at the Council meeting on 17 October 2017. He thanked his elected Member colleagues and officers for their support during his tenure.

Chair

**Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Environment and Waste Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee.**

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER

