

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Waste Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 27 March 2018 in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 5.30 pm
Concluded 6.50 pm

Present – Councillors

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

NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Julia Pearson

Bradford Environment Forum

Observers: Councillors Ferriby and Ross-Shaw

Apologies: Councillor Mohammed, Councillor Gibbons, Councillor Senior and Nicola Hoggart

Councillor Love in the Chair

63. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

In respect of the item regarding the Air Quality Scrutiny Review – Draft Terms of Reference (minute 67) and in the interests of clarity, Councillor Ahmed disclosed that she was the Deputy Chair of Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In respect of the item regarding Energy Efficiency in the Private Rented Sector (minute 66) and in the interests of clarity, Councillor Love disclosed that his spouse was the landlord of a rented property.

During the course of the item in respect of the Air Quality Scrutiny Review – Draft

Terms of Reference (minute 67) and in the interests of quality, Councillor Berry disclosed an interest as his partner worked for Better Start Bradford.

ACTION: Interim City Solicitor

64. MINUTES

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2018 be signed as a correct record.

65. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

66. ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR IN THE BRADFORD DISTRICT

Previous Reference: Minute 76(2016/17)

The report of the Strategic Director Place (**Document “AF”**) provided an update for Members on energy efficiency in the private rented property sector in the District and included an update on the impact of legislative changes.

Members were advised that new regulations coming into force this April meant that all rented properties must have a minimum energy performance rating of “E”. They were also advised that consultations in respect of these regulations had very recently taken place which may mean that implementation of them could be delayed, however the current powers of enforcement under the Housing Act could still be used by officers during the period that any discrepancies between the guidance and regulations were being ironed out as the two pieces of legislation were intended to run in parallel. It was noted that fines under the new regulations would be discretionary so the Council would need to set its own levels of fine, working in co-operation with neighbouring authorities as some landlords would have properties in more than one District. Members were also advised that officers had an important role to play in responding to service requests, of which there were 1746 last year.

In response to questions from members about the consultation they were advised that there was a proposal that the maximum investment that a landlord should have to make to achieve the required energy rating should be £2500 but that this Council had participated in that consultation to press for the maximum to be set at £5000, the figure that was initially recommended when it was proposed that improvements would be paid for by the tenant accessing the old green deal scheme. It was noted that the maximum would apply nationally. Members were



also advised that organisations representing landlords had argued against landlords being forced to be responsible for funding these improvements to their properties and the proposed figure of £2500 may be seen as a compromise.

Landlords were being advised of their responsibilities under the new regulations via the “Stay Connected” service and through the landlord association press releases.

A Member noted that, although many landlords would be conscientious about their responsibilities, others would not and that many of the most vulnerable tenants would be housed in properties owned by the latter group. He considered that an enforcement strategy would be required and that resources should be targeted at those most vulnerable people. He considered that targeted intervention would also be beneficial to other parts of the public sector who had to pick up issues of health and well-being resulting from living in sub-standard homes.

He was advised that it was important to give tenants an opportunity to contact their landlord direct to resolve issues before the Council became involved. At the moment, a triage approach was being trialled to free up resources to concentrate on the most high risk cases. Members were also advised that West Yorkshire was at the forefront of the development of policies relating to enforcement and particularly the fine structure.

Members discussed the issue of landlords who undertook substandard work in their properties under the guise of improving energy efficiency but who left those properties in a poor state and agreed that this type of property should be a priority for improvement. They were advised that a combination of enforcement and improvement meant that approximately 950 properties per year were brought up to standard and that, therefore, the overall total of sub-standard properties was steadily reducing.

Members were advised that the Government had indicated that the intention was to require properties to achieve an EPC rating of “C” by 2030 (with an interim target of an EPC rating of “D” by 2025) but that the current requirement was an “E” rating.

Resolved –

That the report be noted and a further update on energy efficiency in the private rented sector be presented in twelve months time.

ACTION: Strategic Director, Place



67. AIR QUALITY SCRUTINY REVIEW - DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chair of the Committee presented a report (**Document “AG”**) which gave the draft terms of reference for the proposed air quality scrutiny review.

A Member in attendance as an observer noted that the correct portfolio should be Health and Wellbeing. The Overview and Scrutiny Lead undertook to make that correction.

A Member commented on the draft terms of reference noting that they picked up on the issues that Members had required. He stated that it was important to engage communities and build up awareness of the issue generally. He noted that a lot of good work had already been undertaken as part of the “Born in Bradford” study and suggested that parents of school age children be informed about this issue as it affected schools across the District.

The Overview and Scrutiny Lead reminded Members of their invitation to an event in Leeds on 20 April 2018 which was relevant to this issue.

Another Member recalled that early discussion on the issue had included the issue of “green walls”, which were walls that were covered by appropriate planting and asked that that be included in the key lines of enquiry.

Members concurred that encouraging greater awareness of small issues such as the environmental impact of parking near to school and leaving vehicle engines idling while waiting was crucial.

Resolved –

That the draft terms of reference be adopted.

ACTION: Overview and Scrutiny Lead

68. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved –

That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the item relating to the White Rose Energy Update because information would be disclosed which is considered to be exempt information within paragraph 3 (Financial or Business Affairs) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

It is considered that, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information as the report contains commercially sensitive information.

69. WHITE ROSE ENERGY UPDATE



The Strategic Director of Corporate Services presented a report (**Not for Publication Document “AI”**) which gave an update on White Rose Energy.

Resolved –

That the report be noted and a future update be provided in twelve months time.

ACTION: Strategic Director of Corporate Services

70. WORK PROGRAMME - 2017/18

Document “AH” presented the Committee’s work programme for 2017/18.

Resolved –

That a report on the Carbon Strategy be presented to the Committee in the new Municipal Year.

(Mustansir Butt – 01274 432574)

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

