

Minutes of a meeting of the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 2 October 2018 in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced: 5.30 pm
Adjourned: 7.30 pm
Reconvened: 7.40 pm
Concluded: 8.50 pm

Present – Councillors

| CONSERVATIVE | LABOUR | LIBERAL DEMOCRAT | GREEN |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------|
| Heseltine Whitaker | Berry Jamil Dodds Mohammed | Stubbs | Love |

NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER

Nicola Hoggart, Bradford Environmental Forum

Observer: Councillor Ross-Shaw – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport

Apologies: Julia Pearson, Bradford Environmental Forum

Councillor in the Chair

21 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

In the interest of transparency Councillor Heseltine disclosed an interest in the item relating to Impact of Changes to the Library Service Over The Past Two Years and Role of Museums & Libraries In Bradford's Communities (Minute 27) as he was a member of a Friend's Community Group.

In the interest of transparency Councillor Dodds disclosed an interest in the item relating to update on the Council's Involvement in Residential High Rise Buildings following the Grenfell Tower Disaster (Minute 28) as she was a Member on the West Yorkshire Fire Authority.

ACTION: City Solicitor

22 MINUTES

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meetings held on 23 January and 13 April 2018 be signed as correct records.

23 INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

24 REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no referrals to the Committee.

25 IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING THROUGH GREEN SPACE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The report of the Strategic Director, Public Health and Wellbeing (**Document “L”**) provided an update on the use of green spaces in the District. This paper sought to outline the current position, opportunities and challenges across the District.

The Senior Public Health Manager with the Health & Well Being Programme Manager introduced the report to the Committee. This paper summarised evidence on the importance of green space to health and wellbeing, and health inequalities, building on previous Overview and Scrutiny reports. It also revisited the definitions of green space and green infrastructure and brought new information about work to map green spaces and assets in the District, and emerging evidence of how local communities made use of green space to maintain and improve health and wellbeing.

The synopsis succeeded with a PowerPoint presentation on the infrastructure of the subject item, which included information on outdoor spaces, access to Woodlands, a map on access to green space and deprivation, health benefits of access to green space, local research and local impact, achieving added value from green space, a role for green infrastructure and information on greener space for wellbeing.

Finally the report invited a discussion on how the service could seek to increase and improve green assets for the District, particularly in areas where inequalities existed.

A question and answer session ensued:

- Was there anything in particular that Councillors in their respective wards could do for the service in areas where there was a lack of green space?
 - There was on going detailed mapping at present and the service would welcome more community led actions for officers;
- Was there any partnership working with the voluntary sector due to the fact that it had access to various pots of funding?

- There were around 20 community friends groups in Bradford and in terms of bringing money in was about creativity and this was possible;
- There were concerns in the Bradford University area of City Ward on the levels of obesity amongst children and no green space were available due to safety concerns. What work had the Council planned to recognise this factor and bring in other partners within communities to undertake work on bringing to life unused green spaces?
 - It was about recognising this factor and tackling this concern through strong partnership working with community groups and the service would be pursuing various opportunities;
- In reference to an extract within the report, 3.3.6, how was the District's rural areas being provided further opportunities for public enjoyment of open space for physical and mental health benefits and recreational activity?
 - There were financial constraints at this present time and therefore only on-going discussions; and,
- More housing development resulted in the reduction of green space. How was green space being prioritised within large developments?
 - Housing was a much needed investment for Bradford and in terms of green space, it was about balancing priorities,
 - The master plan did not only entail housing but also health and wellbeing.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- It was paramount that the service also focused on engaging with communities;
- Success in moving forward would prevail by engaging with community because people will always do more by making them involved in their community space;
- During a meeting of Environment and Waste Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 years ago, it was established that a significant number of small green spaces existed in communities that people thought they were not allowed access. At that meeting the Committee was advised by officers that a list of such green space land would be drawn up. To this date, the list had not been drafted for Councillors information. Equally, no policy was in place for people to adhere to in order to establish whether they could access such spaces and therefore small lands in unknown areas were being abandoned;
 - In response to comment, it was stated that this would be looked into and reported back to this Committee next Municipal Year.
- It was not about spending money but on how to utilise more greener areas; and,
- 50% of children in poverty lived in 6-8 Wards in the Bradford District.

Resolved –

- (1) That a further progress report be presented in 12 months which focuses on engagement with communities in deprived areas relating to access to Green Space.**
- (2) That officers support Friends of Groups and other community**

groups in identifying sources of funding to develop patches of land into Green Space.

- (3) That officers explore “mean while” use of land be explored with partners, including but not limited to In-communities, health and schools.

ACTION: Strategic Director, Public Health and Wellbeing

26 **WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY REVIEW- PROGRESS OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Environment and Waste Management Overview Scrutiny Committee undertook a wider scrutiny review into water management across the District following the devastating winter 2015 floods. The Water Management Scrutiny Review was endorsed by the Environment and Waste Management Overview Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 4 July 2017 where it was recommended to be considered by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in their meeting on the 26 October 2017 where it was subsequently endorsed.

Following its adoption, The Water Management Scrutiny Review included 26 recommendations and it was resolved that a report would be made in twelve months which monitored progress against all the recommendations contained in the review.

The report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “M”**) briefly outlined the progress made and the status of each of the twenty-six recommendations.

The Assistant Director, Planning, Transportation & Highways and the Principal Engineer (Drainage) were present at the meeting. They jointly gave a synopsis of the report.

A question and answer session ensued:

- A synopsis was sought in relation to Recommendation 23?
 - The Council had been successful in a funding bid to the EU North Sea Interreg Vb programme project BEGIN (Blue / Green infrastructure through social innovation) which had been approved in early September 2016 to EU North Sea Region Secretariat. The Lead Partner being the Municipality of Dordrecht in the Netherlands. The scheme was progressing and half way through. The scheme would also help support the aspirations of the Council’s Green Infrastructure Study. The BEGIN projects also aimed to engage with communities to increase awareness of the Beck and its catchment;
- Updates were sought on Recommendations 14 and 15?
 - 14, was a legislative requirement to update the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) in line with the current six-year cycle for flood risk management. The LFRMS was up to date in accordance with current climate change guidelines but was a living document and would be reviewed accordingly.
 - 15, was a legislative requirement to update the LFRMS in line with the current six-year cycle for flood risk management. Specific

- actions (and examples of current working practice) within the LFRMS will be reviewed in the next update.
- 14 and 15, many projects and strategies were to be implemented with every level of progress made;
- In relation to Recommendations 1 and 16, had it been decided that a document for the district would not be produced?
 - Due to SD7 policy (policy setting out sites proposed for allocation for Mixed Use and Housing respectively) these would not be pursued;
- Recommendation 23 gave clarity on the prioritisation of Blue-Green infrastructure in managing flood risk across Bradford District. Where had funding been secured from?
 - The Council had been successful in a funding bid from the to the EU North Sea from the Water Management funds; and,
- Information was sought on Recommendation 21?
 - The Council was currently developing a 'Housing Design Guide' and 'Street Design Guide' that would emphasise the importance and specify the use of Blue Green Infrastructure and Green Street Initiatives within developments. These documents would be proposed for adoption as Supplementary Planning Documents in 2019;
 - In response to answer, therefore no assessment would be pursued?
 - This would not be undertaken at present but allowances for new development would be made.

Resolved –

- (1) That the information contained in Document “M” be noted.**
- (2) That a report be received before the end of October 2019 which monitors progress against the recommendations contained within the Water Management Scrutiny Review.**

ACTION: Strategic Director, Place

27 IMPACT OF CHANGES TO THE LIBRARY SERVICE OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS AND ROLE OF MUSEUMS & LIBRARIES IN BRADFORD'S COMMUNITIES

The Libraries, Museums and Galleries Manager was in attendance with the Assistant Director, Sport & Culture and the Principal Officer Operations. They jointly gave a synopsis of the report.

The report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “N”**) gave a description of changes to the operation of Bradford Museums & Libraries over recent years, with particular reference to community managed libraries.

The Libraries, Museums and Galleries Manager was in attendance with the Assistant Director, Sport & Culture and the Principal Officer Operations. They jointly gave a synopsis of the report. Over the past few years, libraries had been driven by budget savings and now the landscape for the Council was to move forward. The fundamental objective being, how libraries would play an

instrumental role in the district. There would be in the region of 400 volunteers to deliver the service of libraries to communities.

A question and answer session ensued:

- Had there been a reduction in the management structure and the lessening of financial spending?
 - Management level had been reduced and there were plans of merging roles and significantly spending less due to financial constraints;
- Had the service connected with volunteering organisations?
 - The library service supported the recruiting of volunteers and in the museum service, around 100 volunteers had been recruited;
- The country was 7 years into the austerity measures of the coalition government, why had the Council not been able to plan ahead and implement a more effective system to meet the needs of users and equally the financial environment of this Council?
 - It was about considering the libraries service more responsive to communities needs.
 - The 7 years austerity measures from the perspective of the Committee had been acknowledged but from an officer perspective, with 50% reduction of financial resources, the service has no choice but to implement significant changes to this service. An important factor being, officers ensured that the library service from within communities would not disappear but to hold firm of this Council service for communities in the Bradford district.
 - A future model was being designed and nearing an implementation stage;
- Was it at all possible to involve school 6th former students of local schools to become involved with delivering library services?
 - A library had already been developed with such students; and,
- Had there been any ASB in libraries?
 - The Council was aware of 25 incidents, hence door security had been implemented. Information on ASB had been shared with the Neighbourhood Youth Team. It was important that schools undertook responsibility of their own students, so the Council worked with schools and as a result the number of incidents had been reduced. Reports had been submitted to the Police and significant support had been given to libraries in communities.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- It was paramount that the library and museums function thrived for the sake of communities;
- Lessons had to be learned on how the services had been affected and how the Council intended to move forward;
- Libraries and museums were about culture and not only for businesses to invest but for local residents;
- Despite the low stock of books, the library in Holmewood had been operating a fantastic service;
- It was difficult times for libraries and the library in Great Horton had no choice but to reduce its hours of service;
- This process was about looking at all options and addressing actions to

strengthening libraries. Internet accessibility and WiFi signal would be provided;

- This report was slightly misleading on information due to Councillors receiving emails from local residents expressing concerns as to the significant reduction of service hours of libraries and not knowing the opening times. It was paramount that the library service was continuously promoted and equally notices of opening and closing hours be put on the doors of all libraries;
- Due to the reduction of budgets, the Council had still managed to operate the library service. The reduction in budget resulted in casualties and therefore some libraries had to reduce hours of operation due to staff shortages;
- Clarification on reduction of budget resulted on staff shortages but the Council should utilise good judgement in applying a balance throughout the libraries service by allocating staff at specific location to meet demand especially during peak times;
- It was paramount that officers presented options in front of the Committee to vision a way forward through Councillors experience;
- Libraries were also used by vulnerable people who had no other place to go;
 - In response to comment, a person could be homeless and also be a library ticket holder.
- The Heaton Library Hub in the Heaton Ward was a fantastic facility for the local community;
- There had been an increase of 30-40% visiting numbers at Cliffe Castle Museum. This was a fantastic achievement by the Council;
- The recognition of resilience of Council staff in difficult financial times was an important element to be acknowledged and appreciated by all Members of the Bradford district.

Resolved –

That a detailed report be presented to the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the end of January 2019 which specifically focuses on the future role of the Libraries and Museums Service including options for future service delivery.

ACTION: Strategic Director, Place

28 UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL'S INVOLVEMENT IN RESIDENTIAL HIGH RISE BUILDINGS FOLLOWING THE GRENFELL TOWER DISASTER

The report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “O”**) provided a further update for Members of the Council's involvement with high rise residential buildings following the Grenfell Tower disaster.

- Following a synopsis of the report by the Principal Building Control Surveyor, the following question and answer session ensued:
- Clarification was sought on buildings associated with the cladding material?

- Following a review of over 300 structures over 18 metres high, 36 high rise residential blocks were identified in the District. Subsequent investigations, had identified that 2 of the 36 buildings were partially clad with aluminium composite material (ACM);
- Were other fire hazard materials assessed in addition to investigating the cladding material?
 - Unfortunately due to lack of resources, other safety issues apart from cladding were not being assessed at this present time;
- How many stories was 18 metres?
 - 8 stories;
- Was the cost of making high rise buildings safe at the cost of the Council or Management companies?
 - At present, there were significant issues and therefore on-going discussions taking place between Council Inspectors, Building Inspectors, management company representatives.
 - Prior to the Grenfell Tower disaster, buildings were compliant to regulations; and,
- In regards to the future of new builds, what changes had been implemented?
 - With new high rise builds, and through Council's intervention would lead in the improvement of fire safety.

Resolved –

- (1) **That the detailed information contained in Document “O” be welcomed.**
- (2) **That an update report be presented to the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work relating to high rise residential buildings in 12 months time.**

ACTION: Strategic Director, Place

29 WASTE MANAGEMENT FINANCES

Following a referral from Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “P”**) set out the background to the budget pressures being faced within waste management, the current overspend projections, and the actions planned to address and recover the position.

The Assistant Director, Waste, Fleet and Transport Services with the Principal Waste Officer gave introduced the report to the Committee.

A question and answer session ensued:

- Had people come forward in communities and agreed to become Champions?
 - The Council had a total of 91 Champions. Champions gave the Council a great platform in assisting with working alongside the neighbourhood sector;
- Was the Council able to change behaviour on a face to face basis?
 - Ward Councillors were best advocates for the Council in

- communities and could assist considerably by promoting recycling in their respective wards;
- Was the correct model in place for collection services for cost effectiveness for the Council or was the Council fixed in a legal contract that had become worst?
 - The contract in place was for residual waste. The model that the Council desired was a very simple system for Bradford. In some cases, new bins to be installed that would undertake own recycling through sensors located inside of them and therefore the controlling the quality of waste disposal. The present model works but the only concern being that Bradford not processing recycling in a speedier rate;
 - Were residents acquainted with the recycling symbols to help decide whether particular waste was recyclable or not?
 - A vast amount of information was available from the Council such as videos and leaflets, internet and information could be shared on a face to face basis; and,
 - Was budget an issue for the service in this Municipal year, a reoccurring problem due to the speed of processing recycling waste?
 - Due to budget pressures, a financial pressure of £350,000 income from recyclates sales were lower than budgeted due to global pressures on recycling markets.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- There were many areas in the Bradford district that were challenging and were extremely slow in behaviour changes;
- It was about more engagement within communities on a face to face basis;
- It would be fantastic if people with a bilingual background were selected as Champions;
- The issues in some wards were that residents were not bothered about recycling and therefore a language barrier being irrelevant.
- It was about changing behaviour and 4 permanent advisers had been recruited to relay the recycling process message to the residents' of Bradford on a high level priority basis; and,
- Various information on recycling was available on the internet.

Resolved –

- (1) That the breadth and complexity of activities that go into delivering a comprehensive Waste Collection and Disposal Service to the Bradford District be welcomed.**
- (2) That the significant work that has been undertaken thus far to deliver and embed an Alternate Weekly collection Service for residual and recycled materials be welcomed.**
- (3) That the efforts of households within the district who recycle as much as possible of their household waste be recognised and urges all households to redouble their efforts in recycling.**
- (4) That the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny**

Committee recognises the contamination of recyclates is an area that must improve and officers be supported in undertaking all possible steps to support the public in recycling more whilst utilising appropriate enforcement where necessary.

- (5) That officers be supported in identifying and implementing options as quickly as possible to take the most cost effective control of the district's recyclates and reduce the pressures on the Council's Waste Budget.
- (6) That officers encourage the recruitment of recycling Ambassadors and representatives of communities.
- (7) That Richard Longcake, Principal Officer be thanked for his work with Councillors and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee over the years and wish him a happy retirement.

ACTION: Strategic Director, Place

30 REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROGRAMME 2018-19

The report of the Chair of Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee (**Document "Q"**) included the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2018/19.

Resolved –

That the 2018/19 Work Programme continues to be regularly reviewed during the year.

ACTION: Overview and Scrutiny Lead

Chair

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