

Minutes of a meeting of the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held remotely on Wednesday, 25 November 2020.

Commenced 5.30 pm
Concluded 6.26 pm

Present – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT	GREEN
Kamran Hussain (Chair) Berry Dodds Lintern Mohammed	Heseltine Herd	Stubbs	Love

Observers: Councillor Ferriby as portfolio holder for Healthy People and Places.

Apologies: Councillor Riaz Ahmed

Councillor Kamran Hussain in the Chair

14. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (Standing Order 34)

Apologies were received from Councillor Ahmed – Councillor Stubbs present as alternate.

15. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest received in matters under consideration.

16. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted to review decisions to restrict documents.

17. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no referrals to the Committee.

18. WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY REVIEW - PROGRESS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Interim Strategic Director, Place submitted a report to update the Committee

on the progress made to date against recommendations from a Water Management scrutiny review which was endorsed in 2017. The District wide review has been undertaken following the major flood events which occurred in 2015 affecting over 1000 homes and businesses in the Bradford District and costing an estimated £34 million.

The progress on the twenty six recommendations has been reviewed yearly and in October 2019, it was again resolved to bring a further progress update report to this committee.

Following the presentation of the report, a question and answer session took place, details of which are as follows:

- A Member asked about the Council's commitment to maintain SUDS retention ponds and whether the cost would be met by council tax payers or by the people requiring the retention. The same Member also highlighted the absence of Castle Fields or Old Main Street as projects in the Aire and Wharfe catchment scheme as detailed in recommendation 5.
 - In response, it was advised that three SUDS ponds had been adopted and would be maintained throughout their lifetime with funding which had been secured to do so. In relation to Flood risk management, all options were being considered for flood mitigation and the Council was working with the Environment Agency (EA) to this end.
- The same Member asked about the timescales involved to deliver completed schemes or would it be a rolling project.
 - In response, it was advised that an optimistic view on timescales would be 2 to 4 years and that the schemes were relatively expensive as the number of properties involved was small. The possibility of flood resilience within communities was also being considered but it would be at least 4 years to deliver on 'hard' schemes such as walls etc.
- One Member asked if the district was in a better position now than 5 years ago and if not, what should the Council be doing about it?
 - In response, it was advised that the possible type of schemes was being looked at and what could be delivered. Again, flood resilience by residents was being considered as more work could be done. Natural Flood Management was being implemented which reduce flows but there had been some improvement in flood resilience.
- A guest speaker who was present at the meeting was given the opportunity to address the Committee by the Chair and wished to raise awareness of flooding and the type of flooding that had occurred. He also stated the desire to get residents to sign up to receive alerts from the EA. Some funding had been secured for a year to raise community awareness but the lack of funding limited what could be done. He also made a request for advice and guidance as there were issues which still needed addressing.

Resolved –

That a further report monitoring progress against the recommendations contained within the Water Management Scrutiny Review be presented to the Committee before the end of October 2021.

ACTION: Interim Strategic Director, Place

19. BRADFORD CLEAN AIR PLAN - CLEAN AIR ZONE INFRASTRUCTURE PROCUREMENT

The report of the Interim Strategic Director, Place was submitted to the Committee to advise Members of the intention to undertake procurement of Automatic Number Plate Recognition Camera (ANPR) plus associated network connectivity infrastructure as part of the implementation of a Clean Air Zone. The scheme is in response to a requirement from Government to tackle roadside Nitrogen Dioxide levels at the roadside in line with EU Limit values in as quick a timescale as possible.

The full business case was submitted to Government on 30 September 2020 and the procurement value would be in excess of £2 million. Funding would not be confirmed until a procurement exercise was completed and the intention was to implement a clean air zone from January 2022.

A question and answer session followed and is detailed below:

- A Member asked why this was being done so quickly and should the Council not be studying traffic patterns, especially in light of the changes due to the COVID-19 lockdown?
 - In response, Officers advised that there had been a large amount of work carried out at the time of the first lockdown to see if there was any drop in pollutants, but levels did not go below the EU Limit Value even then, indicating that there was still a problem. Traffic levels had not yet peaked following lockdown 2.
- The issue of cars without registered keepers was raised and whether other unidentified vehicles would be targeted. It was also asked whether the new system would be integrated with existing systems.
 - In response, Officers advised that the new cameras would not be purely ANPR but would make better use of data to capture vehicle and pedestrian movements and for the purposes of crime and disorder. The discussions around the possibility of sharing information with West Yorkshire Police was already underway in relation to tracing, identifying and carrying out enforcement work for registered keepers and would be more comprehensive than just for clean air zone use. In terms of integrating with existing systems, the new one would complement them as the existing ones were older technology with information from the Council's cameras coming into its own data centre.
- A Member asked about rules for infrastructure installation to ascertain that there would be for example, no compromise to pedestrian safety on

pavements.

- Officers advised that equipment would be installed by Council staff using existing poles wherever possible. Cabinets would be appropriately placed and cameras were small in size being slightly larger than existing CCTV cameras.
- It was stated that the pollution levels had not reduced as it had been hoped for during lockdown with particular schools whose children were being exposed to high levels of particulates and Ward Councillors were working on strategies to involve and engage communities and welcomed this. Bradford's topography also presents its own issues being bowl shaped.
- Clarification was sought on the EU clean air threshold levels for nitrogen dioxide and what target was being aimed for.
 - Officers confirmed that the limit was 40 micrograms per cubic metre. A small level for small particles. The target was to get below 40 micrograms per cubic metre but this would vary in different areas.
- Members sought to ascertain how the cameras would help
 - It was confirmed by Officers that cameras would control vehicles that polluted more when they came into the district and would encourage fleet managers to upgrade or update their fleets with incentives being offered to do so.
- The use of cars was rising and income had reduced for public transport and taxis etc., had this been factored in and was any help available for those trying to earn a living?
 - It was advised that there were discussions underway with the Government and any decisions around grants would come from them.
- One Member stated that the scheme needed to be expedited and asked how non-compliant vehicles would be charged.
 - The scheme was a national one and clean air zone payments were controlled by Government. There was a clean air zone checker on the Gov.uk website which would tell a driver whether a charge was applicable and give time to make a payment. The balance of which would be given to the Council. If no payment was received then the details would be passed to the Council to issue a fixed penalty notice.
- A question regarding the provision of adequate signage was also asked.
 - It was confirmed that signage would be placed so that drivers would know in advance that they were entering a clean air zone.
- A Member asked how frequently charges would be applied.
 - It was confirmed that charging would be on a daily basis but did not limit how many times in the day the clean air zone could be accessed. The method and flexibility of payments would be decided by the Government.

Resolved –

That the contents of the report and the proposed timing of the procurement of Clean Air Zone infrastructure be noted.

ACTION: Interim Strategic Director, Place

20. THE COUNCIL'S INVOLVEMENT IN RESIDENTIAL HIGH RISE BUILDINGS FOLLOWING THE GRENFELL DISASTER

The report of the interim Strategic Director, Place was presented to the committee to provide an update to Members in relation to its involvement with high rise buildings which utilised aluminium composite materials (ACM) cladding. The committee had previously received a report in October 2019 and the report provided an update on the activity from that time to the present day.

Two buildings had been identified as being 'at risk'. Funding had been applied for by the building owners/managers but the work to replace the ACM cladding was not yet underway. However, work on the first building was due to start imminently. It was confirmed that no residents were at risk as the second building was not occupied.

Other buildings were being looked at to see if any further works may be needed and a new legislative framework would be in place in the new year (2021) to deal with the situation coherently.

A brief question and answer session followed as detailed below:

- Members asked what was being done to prompt the Government to provide funding and for them to urge building owners to get the work done and protect leaseholders.
 - Freeholders were being supported to make applications for remediation funding and agreements were ready to be signed. The Council had been proactive to get the cladding removed but had been required to go through due diligence.
- With regard to building safety regulations, how many buildings would be involved in the District and would it be a cost to the Council to have them inspected?
 - Officers confirmed that one hundred and eight had been looked at but the number would depend on height limits. The Council was still waiting for details on how building inspections would be funded.
- Members sought clarity on the number of dangerous buildings as two hundred had been quoted as having issues.
 - It was advised that none had been identified as being dangerous but there were issues to address, which would depend on criteria which was changing.

Resolved –

That the contents of the report be noted and a further update on the work relating to high rise residential buildings be presented in 12 months time.

ACTION: Interim Strategic Director, Place

21. WORK PROGRAMME

Resolved –

That the Work programme 2020-21 continues to be regularly reviewed during the year.

ACTION: Scrutiny Officer

(Caroline Coombes – 07970 413828)

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.