

Minutes of a meeting of the Keighley Area Committee held on Thursday, 15 December 2022 at 6.00 pm in Council Chamber - Keighley Town Hall

Commenced 6.00 pm
Concluded 7.30 pm

Present – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	GREEN
Hussain Lintern Firth	Brown Ali Herd Loy	Whitaker

Councillor Brown in the Chair

Apologies: Councillor Peter Clarke

20. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

21. MINUTES

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2022 be signed as a correct record.

Action; Director of Legal and Governance

22. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

23. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the provision at Part 3B, Paragraph 6 of the Council's Constitution the following public question, received from a local resident, was presented:

What is the Council's response to the following statement: "The residents of Scott

Lane, Riddlesden, have become increasingly concerned about speeding along the road in recent months? The road is one of the wider and straighter roads in the village and many drivers seem to see this as an opportunity to increase their speed to dangerous levels.

Scott Lane has a pavement only on one side which means that pedestrians often have to walk in the road. There are several vulnerable elderly residents and young families living on the road. It is a walking route to the local primary school and children frequently attend events at the local Institute and church located at the eastern end of the road. The church also has many elderly visitors.

The residents would like the Council as Highway Authority to bring into operation as quickly as possible a reduced speed limit, traffic calming measures and speed reducing signage. Several other villages in the area, such as East Morton and Laycock, have had 20 mph limits implemented and the residents of Scott Lane feel that a limit of 20 mph would greatly improve the safety and quality of life of the residents and of the many visitors to the church, institute and tennis club.”?

In response it was explained that the Council would carry out the necessary feasibility study in the new year together with costs and if a scheme was found to be viable, a draft design would be produced and be put through the requisite governance process.

The questioner requested if it would be possible to have temporary road signs to request that traffic slowdown in the area prior to the conclusion of the feasibility study and a Ward Councillor agreed to investigate the feasibility of that request.

In accordance with provision at Part 3B, Paragraph 6 of the Council’s Constitution in addition to the oral response the Chair advised that a written response to the question would also be provided after the meeting.

Resolved –

That the Director, Legal and Governance, be requested to provide a written response to the public question submitted.

ACTION: Director, Legal and Governance

24. NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

The report of the Interim Strategic Director, Place, (**Document “I”**) provided information on the work of the Neighbourhood Wardens and Environmental Enforcement Officers in the Keighley Area.

Following a detailed presentation, the team were thanked for their work in the area and believed that their efforts were much greater than documented in Document “I”.

It was questioned if all of service requests detailed received enforcement actions and it was explained that the requests were triaged, the Neighbourhood Wardens

could be very persuasive and issues could often be handled without the need for enforcement action. The assistance provided by the Neighbourhood Wardens allowed the Enforcement Officers to carry out more essential enforcement action.

Members reported that residents were often angry when they could identify where fly tipping was originating and asked how it was decided which cases to pursue. It was explained that if the perpetrators denied the offence it was very difficult, without solid evidence, to pursue such cases. The use, and nature, of deployable CCTV cameras was explained and it was agreed to provide statistics for the Keighley constituency after the meeting.

The report revealed, in addition to the investment in environmental enforcement, a number of projects to identify sustainable solutions to waste-related problems such as litter and fly tipping. Members were aware that the funding for the Task Force was ending and it was explained that a tool kit pack was to be produced for use in problem areas. It was not clear if that had already been produced and it was agreed to investigate and advise Members of progress. It was also agreed to check if the Clean Street Funding available last year would be accessible again.

A Member referred to issues with Japanese Knotweed in certain areas and a perceived resistance from the Council to tackle that issue. It was reported that the Environmental Pollution Team would deal with those issues and agreed to discuss the issue further outside of the meeting.

The report revealed the highest number of service requests was from the Keighley Central Ward and a Ward Member believed this was because his colleagues were hard working and reported many issues. It was questioned if all complaints were recorded and explained that to be captured the service requests should be sent via the Council Contact Centre.

Issues in the Cavendish Street area were highlighted. It was acknowledged that this was an education issue and officers were working with Ward Members to resolve matters. There had been good cooperation and a number of enforcement notices had been served.

The hard work undertaken was acknowledged and the cutting of trees to increase visibility was welcomed. It was reported that the Wardens checked the areas daily and CCTV cameras were monitored. Due to the high turnover of tenants some areas had to be repeatedly cleared. Task force and landlord training was being developed and would be implemented shortly and the service would try alternative methods to solve those issues.

The report revealed there were 60 fixed cameras deployed across the district and it was explained that the Task Force and Environmental Enforcement Officers considered which areas were hotspots and endeavoured to deploy cameras in those locations.

In response to questions about the level of service requests in the Keighley Central ward it was explained that ward had two wardens deployed to reflect the work load.

Following a suggestion that the use of CCTV cameras be publicised to residents

in was agreed that promoting the location would likely result in perpetrators targeting other areas and evading capture.

A Member questioned action taken on Ilkley riverside during periods of hot weather and he was advised that enhanced co-ordination would be in place with the police and Anti-Social Behaviour Officers next year. A lot of education and advisory work was undertaken, however, drunken groups were often not responsive to advice and police and warden back up was required. The number of wardens deployed would be increased during hot days.

In response to questions about the recruitment of additional wardens it was agreed that Members would be advised of any appointments made in the new year.

Resolved –

- 1. That the progress of the Environmental Enforcement Neighbourhood Warden Service, since the last report in December 2021, be welcomed and the hard work and efficiency of the service be acknowledged.**
- 2. That the Interim Strategic Director, Place, be requested to provide a further report detailing the progress of the Environmental Enforcement and Neighbourhood Warden Service to the Area Committee in 12 months' time.**
- 3. That, as the work of the Task Force concludes, the hard work carried out and the difference that those efforts have made in the community be commended.**

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: Corporate **Action: Interim Strategic Director, Place**

25. STREET CLEANSING SERVICE IN THE KEIGHLEY AREA

The Interim Strategic Director, Place, presented a report (**Document “J”**) report which provided an update on the current situation of the Street Cleansing Service in the Keighley Area and showed trends of the numbers of fly tipping and cleansing cases reported to the Council.

The report revealed the staffing resources in the Keighley area and, in response to questions about mechanical issues with the road sweeper it was explained that replacement sweepers were not readily available and were expensive to hire. Following discussions about holiday and sickness cover for the small team it was reported that those arrangements worked well.

A Member raised an issue with a resident reporting fly tipping through a website called Clean Waste and, as discussed earlier in the meantime it was suggested he be encouraged to use the Council's Contact Centre.

Further development of prescriptive working in the area was discussed and it was questioned if those arrangements would make street cleansing less responsive

and more operational. It was suggested that an update be provided more speedily than the recommended annual report.

The impact of the cessation of the Task Force on snicket clearing was questioned and it was explained that snicket clearing was not part of the cleansing service. A budget of £4,000 was available for such measures but once that was spent no more could be done. In response to questions about how that budget was deployed it was explained that the budget was rotated over six years. Areas were also sprayed annually to keep the snickets clear of weeds.

Following questions about the numbers of service requests and proactive street cleansing it was confirmed that there was an assumption that all requests, if recorded, had been actioned.

In response to a suggestion that additional mechanical sweepers were required to clear the volume of leaves on the streets to prevent gullies becoming blocked Members were advised that there was no budget for the purchase or running costs required.

Following reports that the Skipton Road area was full of leaves it was explained that the area had been cleared eight or nine times during the year and that the leaves were still falling. It was noted that the Keighley constituency was the largest by area but least resourced and produced more tonnage than the rest of the district in total. Work was undertaken with the Ward Officers and if residents bagged the leaves they would be collected. In addition, refuse staff had been sweeping and collecting by hand. A Member suggested that more attention be paid to flood areas.

In response to suggestions around the sharing of resources with other constituencies it was reported that this was requested when sweepers were off the road but that other areas had similar problems with limited resources.

The type of pesticides and weed spraying undertaken was questioned and it was reported that herbicides not pesticides were utilised. The highways were sprayed by a private contractor using a glyphosate based product. The Parks Service treated parks and recreation grounds and targeted any areas the private contractor did not. All areas were sprayed each spring and chemical usage in the Keighley area had reduced by 50%. Members were informed that a report to weed spraying was being presented to the Environment and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2023.

A Member questioned the Ilkley Town Centre Ambassador Role and was advised that the additional post would operate an electric hoover, would be expected to work on the bin route and undertaken duties others did not have the capacity to fulfil. It was explained that there were more bins in the Ilkley ward than other elsewhere, however, the budget had been reduced so only 50% of previous years could be purchased. Interestingly it had been found that the removal of some litter bins had reduced the amount of rubbish in the area.

Members questioned the organisation of days of action by Cleansing Staff and it was reported that these were organised by Ward Officers. Where these were

identified as 'across' wards it meant that they straddled two or more wards.

Members discussed cover arrangements for operation of the mechanical sweeper. It was explained that other personnel could cover that role and the team did upskill colleagues in the team. Staff were provided with the opportunity to take driving tests but this was not always taken up. There was a spare mechanical sweeper driver position within the team but that person was required to have an HGV and Sweeper Driver Licence. In response to questions about increases in salary if additional responsibility was undertaken Members were assured that the mechanical sweeper operatives received higher rates of pay. It was explained that the team were an aging workforce and did not always wish to take on additional responsibility.

Resolved –

- 1. That the update on the current situation of the Street Cleansing Service in the Keighley Area as set out in Document “J” be welcomed and the hard work and efficiency of the service be acknowledged.**
- 2. That the Keighley Area Co-ordinator be requested to present an update report regarding the situation of the Street Cleansing Service in the Keighley Area in 12 months' time.**
- 3. That to enable consideration of the effectiveness of the further development and refinement of the prescriptive working arrangements being implemented from April 2023, and detailed on Document “J”, the Keighley Area Co-ordinator be requested to provide a briefing note to the Committee six months after implementation.**
- 4. That the Interim Strategic Director, Place, be requested to consider the purchase of an additional mechanical sweeper for use in the Keighley constituency.**

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: Healthy People & Places
Action: Interim Strategic Director, Place

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Keighley Area Committee.