

HEALTHY, SAFE, CLEAN AND GREEN COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Healthy, Safe, Clean and Green Communities Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, the Arc, Clowne, on Tuesday 19th December 2017 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:- Councillors J.E. Bennett, Mrs P.A. Cooper, H.J. Gilmour, C.R. Moesby, T. Munro, K.F. Walker and D.S. Watson.

Officers:- K. Shillitto (Principal Solicitor), L. Cheong (Acting Scrutiny Officer) and A. Bluff (Governance Officer).

Councillor S. Peake in the Chair

0480. APOLOGY

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor T. Cannon.

0481. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

0482. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

0483. MINUTES – 14TH NOVEMBER 2017

Moved by Councillor T. Munro and seconded by Councillor C. Moesby

RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Healthy, Safe, Clean and Green Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 14th November 2017 be approved as a correct record.

0484. LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE.

Committee considered the List of Key Decisions and items to be considered in private document.

Moved by Councillor H.J. Gilmour and seconded by Councillor C.R. Moesby

RESOLVED that the List of Key Decisions and items to be considered in private document be noted.

HEALTHY, SAFE, CLEAN AND GREEN COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

0485. TAXI POLICY REVIEW

Committee considered a report in relation to a recent review of the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy for drivers, vehicles and operators.

In 2013 the Council approved a policy for the licensing of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles and in accordance with the Council's standard practice the policy had now been subject to a review.

As part of the review work, the policy had been split into three separate policy documents; drivers, vehicles and operators. A fourth document in relation to enforcement was being put together although there were no substantive changes made from the original policy.

The contents of the report summarised the key changes made to the policy and Members were asked to consider these and provide comments for consideration by the Licensing Committee who would approve the final draft version before it was subject to public consultation.

Committee was asked to note that the most significant change in the policy was the introduction of a new approach to the consideration of a driver's background. There would now be much more rigorous guidance for officers and Members on how to treat convictions which reflected the county-wide minimum standards that were currently being looked at across Derbyshire as part of the review led by the Chief Executive Officer.

A Member queried if the Council could implement a limit on the number of hours a driver worked and this be included in the policy. The Principal Solicitor replied that the Council could not legally do this, however, the Operators' Policy requested that operators monitored the amount of hours their drivers worked. Ultimately, it was a driver's responsibility to ensure that he/she did not work until they were unsafe to drive. The Principal Solicitor added that the Council as a whole could lobby the Government for a change in the law and he would also raise Members concerns with the Chief Executive Officer.

With regard to driving offences, drivers were currently relied upon to notify the Council of any changes to their licence. In the revised policy, drivers would be required to sign up to the DBS Update Service at cost of around £13 per year. This meant that a driver would be nominating the Council to be notified immediately by the DBS of any changes or convictions to their licence and if necessary the driver could be called to Committee much sooner.

A Member queried why the revised policy did not include mandatory CCTV in vehicles. The Principal Solicitor replied that the Information Commissioner had stated that there must be evidence of a significant problem such as safeguarding concerns to justify imposing mandatory CCTV on vehicle proprietors - as there was currently no evidence of this in the District, introducing CCTV as mandatory could not be justified. However, if there was a potential problem in the future, this would be revisited.

Committee was asked to note that a significant change to the Operators policy was that in future the Council would no longer licence operators outside the District boundary.

HEALTHY, SAFE, CLEAN AND GREEN COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

With regard to enforcement, better guidance had been set out for Members of the Licensing Committee with starting points for licence holders who commit offences during the course of their licence and have to attend Licensing Committee.

In response to a Member's query regarding the frequency of enforcement checks carried out, the Principal Solicitor noted that once the Licensing service returned to being fully staffed and the transformation programme was complete it should enable enforcement to be more proactive. A Member requested that this issue be raised with the Executive.

Moved by Councillor K. Walker and seconded by Councillor T. Munro

RESOLVED that (1) the revised policy documents for drivers, vehicles and operators be noted,

(2) Scrutiny Members comments from this meeting be considered by the Licensing Committee.

(Principal Solicitor/Governance Manager (Acting))

The Principal Solicitor left the meeting.

0486. LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY SURVEYS (LEQs) – NI195; DISTRICT CLEANLINESS MONITORING

Committee considered information on the National Performance Indicator 195 - Local Environmental Quality Surveys.

NI195 was measured by four elements: litter, detritus, weeds and dog fouling. Sites were graded A to D and split into different uses; Grade A – None of element, Grade B – Predominantly free, Grade C – Minor accumulations and Grade D – Heavy accumulations.

Sites were graded B+ if the standard fell between Grade A and B. Graded B if they fell between B and C and graded C if they fell between C and D. Grade D was that conditions where very poor.

Members noted the information.

0487. WORK PLAN 2017/18

Committee considered their work plan for 2017/18.

It was noted that preparation for the annual review of the Community Safety Partnership would start in January 2018. The Acting Scrutiny Officer would send the set of questions from the last annual review to Members of the Committee to see if they needed refreshing / adding to before the questions were put the Head of Community Safety.

The Chair and Vice Chair wished everyone a happy Christmas and New Year.

The meeting concluded at 1150 hours.