

Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee

24 JULY 2018

PRESENT: Councillors S Jenkins, S Chapple, A Cole, S Cole, P Cooper, B Everitt, T Hunter-Watts and R King

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors P Irwin, Sir Beville Stanier Bt and M Winn

APOLOGIES: Councillors M Bateman, S Jarvis and M Rand

1. TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

The Committee was informed that Councillor Rand would be a permanent replacement for Councillor Winn.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Mrs Jenkins be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Everitt be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2018 be approved as a correct record.

5. ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) covered a wide range of terms which was generally accepted as conduct that caused, or was likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person. AVDC was a statutory member of the Aylesbury Vale Community Safety Partnership which involved working with the police and other agencies to reduce disorder and crime within Aylesbury Vale. AVDC also had a responsibility to tackle environmental ASB, which included noise nuisance, graffiti, litter and abandoned cars. In addition to an overview of ASB, Members heard details of national cases which highlighted failures of Local Authorities and the police in responding to individuals that were targets of ASB.

The Committee received a report which outlined a clearer process for staff and residents to follow when dealing with cases of ASB:

Hate crime (racial/homophobic/disablist incident) or suspected domestic violence

- Report the incident to Thames Valley Police on 101 or 999 in an emergency.

Excessive, persistent noise or public health issues (includes noise, artificial light, odour, smoke & animals) – Full instructions on this website: <https://www.aylesburyvalecd.gov.uk/section/nuisance>

The Policy contained contact details of social housing organisations so that landlords could be contacted by residents if their tenants were a cause of ASB.

Abandoned cars – there was an online form that needed to be filled out by the person reporting. The form, along with guidance and further information, was available at this website: <https://www.aylesburyvalecd.gov.uk/abandoned-vehicles>

Graffiti – AVDC could only remove graffiti that was on AVDC land; if it was on private property then AVDC would make the owner aware and request its removal. Reporting graffiti could be done online: https://eforms.aylesburyvalecd.gov.uk/ShowForm.asp?fm_fid=34

Report a concern about the safety of a child - contact Social Services on 01296 383999 or out of hours the Social Services Care Line on 0800 137915.

Report a concern about the safety of a vulnerable adult – contact Adult Social Care Services on 0800 137915

Domestic Violence – this included threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Help and advice for various forms of domestic violence, including telephone contact details, could be found on AVDC's website: <https://www.aylesburyvalecd.gov.uk/domestic-violence>

Members sought more information from officers and were advised that:-

- i. Early ASB intervention was proven to be an effective methodology. The policy offered different tools of low level intervention first; for instance a telephone call to find common ground between the parties. Interventional action could then be escalated as appropriate.
- ii. AVDC officers in Community Safety worked closely with Police Community Support Officers and made Safeguarding referrals to Social Services at Buckinghamshire County Council. The Community Safety team also worked in partnership with Housing Trusts.
- iii. Noise complaints from a House of Multiple Occupancy would initially be referred to Environmental Health for investigation.
- iv. There was merit in circulating the ASB process to Parishes for their reference once Cabinet had considered the item.
- v. Proportionate action to ASB problems was on a case by case basis with reference to a police risk matrix process.

The Committee felt that AVDC should have its own risk matrix process so that there was no gap in a case which had no police involvement. This would be added to the policy by officers ahead of Cabinet consideration.

RESOLVED –

That the Scrutiny Committee's comments be referred to Cabinet when they consider the item on 11 September 2018.

6. STREET AND HORTICULTURAL CONTRACT

The Committee received a report regarding the street cleansing and horticulture contract with Suez UK and John O'Connor which was due to end in January 2020. Work had been ongoing since January 2018 to determine how these services could be delivered upon the contract's expiry.

The outcome of a Member/Officer workshop in February 2018 indicated a preference of either an in-house delivery of the service or a re-procurement OJEU compliant tender process when the contract expired. The workshop considered the following options:

- a) Street and Horticultural Services (as is) either in-house or full procurement process of joint services
- b) Waste, Street and Horticultural Services either in-house service or full procurement of joint services
- c) Waste and Street Services either in-house service or full procurement process. Horticultural Services would be delivered separately, either in-house or contracted

Consideration was given on whether to include wider waste services in a procurement exercise. However this was discounted for numerous reasons which included the desire to build on the commercial and transformational successes of the Waste and Recycling Service.

A market survey was carried out by the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) to investigate what other Local Authorities did for their street and horticultural services. The survey found that of the Authorities that responded:-

- 88% delivered street cleansing in-house
- 73% delivered parks and horticulture services in-house
- 63% jointly managed and delivered both street cleansing and horticulture services

The Waste Transformation Board considered the options in May 2018 across various criteria which included: Agility, Capacity, Control, Cost, External Income Generation, Human Resource Resilience, Innovation and Value for Money. The Board felt that having control and flexibility of the service was a high priority and would allow for adaptation to changing circumstances. Members would also have the ability to determine how the services were discharged. The Board also felt that in terms of resources, AVDC were already delivering a successful in-house waste collection service which meant AVDC had internal knowledge and expertise in direct service provision. This would include the depot, workshops, fleet management, software systems, and health and safety. The report contained two high scoring options for the service delivery (Option 1.A and Option 3) with their risks outlined. Both options offered similar annual savings to the Council.

If there was a final unitary decision for Buckinghamshire then there was the option for the current contract to be extended for up to two years until January 2022. Although this was subject to the contractor agreeing the extension, it would mitigate the risk of non-service delivery during the transition period to a unitary authority.

Members sought more information from officers on various aspects of the report which included:-

- i. Management of current in-house waste collection workforce at Rabans Lane and vehicle waste transfer notes.

- ii. Central Bedfordshire's experience of becoming unitary in 2009 and the effect on their waste, horticultural and street cleansing services.
- iii. Current performance of the two suppliers.

The Committee appreciated the importance of the Street and Horticultural contract and noted the importance it had as a customer-facing service. After further discussion, Members of the Committee agreed with the recommendation that had been proposed to them.

RESOLVED –

That the Scrutiny Committee's comments be referred to Cabinet when they consider the item on 11 September 2018 and that the Committee were in support of Option 1.A in the report.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

Members were informed that the 'Bucks Home Choice Housing Allocations' would not be able to come to committee in September or December due to the consultation process. Therefore, an additional Scrutiny Committee meeting would be scheduled at the end of October for this item and any other items ready for Committee.

The Committee also heard that there would not be an 'Air Quality update' for the December 2018 meeting due to a lack of information to report on. As an additional meeting would be scheduled in October, Members were supportive of the formal meeting on 19 December being cancelled so that the Committee could visit the Energy from Waste plant in Greatmore. Details of this would follow in due course.

RESOLVED –

That the work programme, as discussed, be noted.

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED –

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Paragraph indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

9. STREET AND HORTICULTURAL CONTRACT

As part of the discussions on the Street and Horticultural contract, consideration was given to the confidential information published in the report.