

AGENDA 10, Enc vii)

Minutes of the Enhanced Neighbourhood Services Partnership Board, held on Tuesday 20th June 2023, commencing at 2:00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, 65 Station Road, Ashington

Councillors present:

Cllr Matthew Cuthbert, Cllr Glyn Davies.

Also, in Attendance

Sarah Eden – ATC Executive Officer/RFO, Stephen Humphrey – ATC Assets & Facilities Manager, Stephen Wardle – NCC Divisional Manager Neighbourhood Services, Ray Wealleans – NCC Area Manager, Peter Bowman – NCC Senior Team Leader Neighbourhood Services, Robin Wallace – NCC Team Leader

1. UPDATE ON MEMBERS AND ELECTION OF CHAIR

In accordance with point 9.1 and 11.8 of the Neighbourhood Services Partnership Agreement 2019-2025, the record was formally updated to name Cllrs Matthew Cuthbert, Glyn Davies and John Tully as members of the Partnership Board, reducing the numbers on ATC side from seven to three.

It was AGREED to APPOINT Cllr Matthew Cuthbert as Chair.

2. WELCOME BY THE CHAIR

Following the initial formalities, Cllr Matthew Cuthbert welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were given for Cllr John Tully.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

None received.

5. DISPENSATIONS

None.

6. PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) Report of Previous Meeting

Stephen Wardle and Peter Bowman, who were the only members present at the previous meeting held on 21st March, put forward **agreement** that they were a true record.

b) Update on actions agreed and progress

Updates were given on the following actions:

i. Dedicated Mobile Number/Email address

Still to be progressed.

ii. Street Sweeper

Peter Bowman updated that the revised schedule was being operated and was working well.

iii. Hirst Clearance

Peter Bowman updated that required cutting back and clearance work has been ordered, to be carried out by Straughans, the details of which have been shared with Sarah. Since then, NCC Highways have written to householders in the affected lanes asking that they

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cut back their hedges. The letter sent out has also been shared with Sarah. Commercial cutting back cannot be carried out until after nesting season, by which time it is hoped some householders will have acted. During this time NCC operatives would do what they could by hand.

Sarah advised that the highways letter would be sent to all following the meeting.

iv. Play Areas

Sarah updated on the progress made in respect of the legal ownership of play areas. It was discussed that this was a significant piece of work, with more work ahead.

Sarah highlighted that presently both ATC and NCC were carrying out tasks and taking responsibility for six play areas that are legally nothing to do with either authority, and remain with the developer/landowner.

Each play area has a different landowner and ongoing negotiations will be tailored to each.

v. Empty Homes

There has been no previous FOI request on this to Northumberland County Council. If members wish to pursue this, it will need to be added to a meeting of the Council.

vi. Visit to Suez Plant

Sarah thanked Stephen Wardle for securing an earlier visit that was very much enjoyed and proved to be very informative. Cllrs Louis Brown, Marjorie Chambers, Pauline Thompson and Caroline Ball attended, and all were impressed with the visit, and the educational value of attending.

Sarah highlighted that she still believed there was an opportunity to film a creative educational video to get the message across about the need to properly recycle and cut down on contaminated recycling bins.

vii. Meeting of Negotiating Committee

Sarah asked if a date could be confirmed with Greg Gavin asap.

7. PARTNERSHIP BUDGET

a) 2022/23

Ray Wealleans updated members on the reasons for the overspend in 2022/23 which in the main was due to backdated salaries. Although the overspend was expected to be £7.5k this was reduced to £4,204 by the final calculation.

Sarah advised that the £4,202 overspend in 2022/23 would be paid using the held over underspend from 2021/22 (£7,792). It was highlighted that the work agreed to be carried out with the underspend available, i.e. Hirst Clearance, was within the remaining figure, any average would be covered by NCC.

It was AGREED to pay the invoice of £4204.

b) 2023/24

Ray Wealleans advised that updated budget figures for 2023/24 were not available yet but would be shared as soon as available.

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8. INSPECTIONS

NCC described their own Local Environmental Quality (LEQ) and Quality Assurance (QA) inspections which are carried out twice a week and have now been included on the data sent to Sarah.

The inspections are random but will generally take place in those areas that have just been visited. No issues have been raised.

Sarah and Stephen are also conducting inspections according to the zone routes shared, with before and after visits.

9. ENHANCED SERVICES PERFORMANCE

a) Clerk's Summary

It was **AGREED** to **RECEIVE** the following report:

Overview

The information presented is broken down into the following. There are other areas but only the areas included in the Partnership Agreement have been included:

1. Mechanical Sweepers, for each of the 4 zones.
2. Bin emptying and cleansing, for each of the 4 zones.
3. Staffing for both Core and Partnership resource.
4. Street Cleansing LEQ Inspections

Previously the meeting has been updated with fly-tipping according to each ward. This was time consuming to produce and has not been discussed in any detail. In view of this, the information is not included this time, and reports will be amended to coincide with the priorities of new members.

Street Cleansing

There have been no exceptions to the cleansing schedule in the period 1st April – 9th June, other than the Bank Holidays.

It is helpful to compare the average collection over the period, with the collection from each zone. In total approximately 66,340kg collected over the period, an average 16,585kg for each zone. A weekly average of 1,659kg.

- Zone 1 – 2,060kg overall (av 2,060kg/wk) Same period last year av 2,152kg/wk
- Zone 2 – 17,540kg overall (av 1,754kg/wk) Same period last year av 1,672kg/wk
- Zone 3 – 13,740kg overall (av 1,374kg/wk) Same period last year av 1,304kg/wk
- Zone 4 – 13,000kg overall (av 1,300kg/wk) Same period last year av 540kg/wk

The weekly average kg collections in each zone are very similar to the same time last year, excluding zone 4 where a different vehicle was used due to operational needs.

One black bin bag is approximately 10kg in weight, so that is over 6,634 black bin bags collected throughout the town over the period, about 660 each week. This is in addition to household waste.

We have approximately 421 town bins that are on the schedule. In view that most are sized to take a black bin bag, we could that around 239 black bags each week are being

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collected from the ground as part of cleansing, which includes that collected by volunteer litter pickers. When making any assumption we need to consider that dog bags weigh more; 10kg is an estimate to inform discussion.

During the period there have been 0 reports from ATC to NCC regarding overflowing bins.

Street Sweeper

During the first two weeks of the period the street sweeper operated according to the schedule, but in the remaining weeks was noted on reports as being absent due to illness.

Resourcing

There has been a period of high levels of sickness across the teams, that Peter can update further on.

Rapid Response

Over the period there have been 369 fly-tips removed via Rapid Response (424 in the same period last year), that is an average of 37 each week (42/week in the same period last year), approximately 7 each day (8/day in the same period last year). The weight of collections over the period is 21,400 (24,500kg in the same period last year).

I have not broken down the type of fly-tip from the data presented, which I did previously, but it has consistently been over 65% household waste (toys, mattresses, furniture, etc.) in the past. This will be viewed and where there are significant changes, it will be reported.

Inspections

Eight detailed inspections have been carried out by Peter and Robin, as per agenda 8.

Sarah and Stephen have carried out sight inspections of environmental quality in regards street cleansing, according to zones for the last three weeks. Using the framework below, a rating was given before and after a scheduled cleanse. We will change to the same system as NCC once access to total mobile is sorted.

- Grade A (will become 4) – no litter and refuse.
- Grade B (will become 3) – predominantly free of litter and refuse.
- Grade C (will become 2) – widespread distribution of litter and refuse with some accumulations.
- Grade D (will become 1) - heavily littered with significant accumulations of litter and refuse.

The data collected will be presented at the next meeting when we are more confident in our approach and recording methods.

In the meantime, the following observations were made, the specifics of which were passed onto Peter and Robin.

- Some zones were notably graded B before and after were A or B.
- On two occasions where the area was predominantly free of litter, there was the same litter left over after cleansing.
- On one occasion, an area on the daily route had the same litter at the end of the day as at the start of the day.
- Overall, those areas visited were an A or B, and it is clear cleansing is being carried out to a good standard, except the isolated incidents above.

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- The gateways into the town are graded D, but some are not on the zonal cleansing route.

The above points have been highlighted and the following discussed and agreed:

- ✓ Teams moved around to mitigate complacency where areas are less untidy, and fatigue where areas are very untidy. Quality of cleansing reiterated.
- ✓ An operative has been assigned to Gateways on a daily route.
- ✓ Where an area is finished ahead of schedule, plan B tasks will be assigned.
- ✓ If ahead, operatives may move onto the following days' zone, which can throw out the schedule in regards inspections.

b) Rapid Response

Peter Bowman reported 405 fly-tipping incidents since April, with 23 tonnes of rubbish. Fly-tipping in communal bin areas continue to be a problem. These have recently been disinfected and cleared and the results have been shared via images with Sarah. The contractor for the new bin areas will be agreed soon, this is hoped to alleviate some of the problems.

c) Weed control

Maps of weed spraying are difficult to share, but updates have been shared with Sarah and communicated to all members. Operatives prefer the 12litre over 20litre knapsacks for weed spraying, and a further 3 operatives have been trained on quad bikes.

d) Street cleansing

Peter Bowman reported that there has been a period of prolonged sickness, as well as two operatives on l/t sick. A new member of staff has joined the team and they are working along the routes well.

10. Love Where You Live

It was discussed that initiatives in addition to simple messaging and leafletting posed a problem for NCC as they contradict the message of personal responsibility for disposing of waste. Additionally, the sheer volume of waste that could be generated was another concern.

It was AGREED to defer this and go back to the drawing board.

11. Next meeting

It was AGREED the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 19th September 2023.