

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING

Monday, 20 June 2016

PRESENT: Councillor P Dillon (Chair)

Councillor(s): T Graham, L Caffrey, P Craig, D Davidson, S Dickie, K Dodds, D Duggan, J Graham, M Hood, H Hughes, K McCartney, J McClurey, C McHugh, J Simpson, J Turnbull and A Wheeler

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor(s): K Ferdinand and N Weatherley

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): B Clelland

CPL1 CONSTITUTION

The Committee received a report outlining the constitution of the Committee and the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair as approved by Council for the 2016/17 municipal year.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

CPL2 ROLE AND REMIT

The Committee considered a report that informed of the remit and terms of reference of the Committee as agreed by Cabinet and Council.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

CPL3 MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held 18 April 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

CPL4 ODOUR ISSUES EMANATING FROM LANDFILL SITES IN THE WEST OF THE BOROUGH

The Committee considered a report that provided an update on the issues arising from landfill sites in the west of the Borough.

Representatives from the Environment Agency were present at the meeting.

Blaydon Quarry

The Committee were informed that a Planning Contravention Notice has been served in respect of information required for the discharge of planning conditions. This information has now been received and officers are looking at the detail.

The annual Blaydon Quarry liaison meeting has been held and was attended by six residents and no new concerns were raised. The Committee were informed that gas is now being taken from the landfill and used in electricity generators on site.

Blaydon Quarry is currently half way through its permitted use and tipping over the next two to three years will continue within Cell 7. It was highlighted that as this progresses, levels within the cell will increase and become visible.

Path Head

The Committee were informed that the operator has carried out consultation with local residents regarding the restoration scheme. Details for the scheme are yet to be submitted but it is hoped the scheme will be complete by January 2018.

It was acknowledged that odour problems at the site had required the operator to undertake remedial works, which were completed by the end of April / early May. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of complaints regarding odour from the site.

At present, tipping is taking place at an exposed part of the site but this is the last area to be filled. Permanent capping of the site is expected soon.

The Committee advised that whilst there has been some improvement regarding odour from Path Head, this remains an issue for local people. Councillors have also received a range of complaints regarding Blaydon Quarry, including litter and that lorries are arriving early and causing issues on the highway.

The Committee were informed that whilst it is taking longer than anticipated, formal investigations are ongoing regarding litter. There had been a similar scenario at Path Head where enforcement notices had been served with the possibility of further enforcement action being taken. It was stressed that a robust approach was being taken with Suez.

It was noted that where there was a specific issue of litter leaving the site, this was on a day when it was very windy and clean up works were undertaken.

The Environment Agency confirmed that they are unable to take action regarding traffic on the highway. Currently, there are approximately 4 – 5 lorries arriving at Blaydon and therefore this should not create problems of vehicles backing up however, the Environment Agency would continue to follow up on incidents which are reported.

The Committee queried if the monitoring of odour took place on an evening/early morning. The Committee were informed that at Path Head there are frequent late night/early morning checks for methane and that a fixed monitoring machine has been installed which gives continuous readings.

The Committee queried what costs had been incurred by the Council when litter had escaped from the site and whether not any costs had been re-charged to the operator.

The Committee were informed that works to tidy the surrounding area of the site were undertaken by volunteers at little cost to the Council, and the site operator also assisted with this.

The Committee requested that the information relating to the cost of the clean-up be clarified and circulated.

- RESOLVED -
- i) Monitoring of the sites within the west of the borough continue
 - ii) Planning conditions for the permissions at landfill sites continued to be monitored and enforcement action be progressed where necessary
 - iii) Regular updates be provided

CPL5 OSC REVIEW - IMPACT OF GAMBLING ON THE BOROUGH - SCOPING REPORT

The Committee considered a report which set out the scope for the agreed review topic – the impact of gambling on the borough.

The Committee were informed that the review will draw upon local and national evidence and will focus on:

- **Gambling in Gateshead** – the distribution, types and number of premises licensed for gambling and how this has changed over time; the types of gambling taking place in the borough
- **The legal framework for regulation of gambling and the role of the regulators** – the Gambling Act 2005 and the respective roles of the Gambling Commission and Gateshead Licensing Authority; the impact of other regulatory regimes on gambling activity
- **Local and national concerns about gambling** – evidence and observations from local and national regulators, operators, trade bodies, treatment providers, charities and public agencies
- **Developing research evidence on gambling related harm** – a review of recent developments and bet practice and how it can be used in Gateshead to minimise gambling related harm

The Committee welcomed the review. The Committee suggested that as part of the evidence gathering sessions, the following, if appropriate, be considered:

- Are there opportunities to limit the number of gambling premises, through planning controls, particularly in high density areas
- Where premises are selling National Lottery products, are the Council able to enforce that information be displayed in respect of the possibility of the chances of success
- As there are a number of cross cutting issues that will come from the review there are opportunities for these to be looked at in conjunction with Health and Wellbeing Board, Credit Unions, Citizen Advice Bureau etc
- The need to educate young people on the issues of gambling and the importance of education through schools
- The impact on social clubs

RESOLVED – That the scope and focus of the review be agreed.

CPL6 THE COUNCIL PLAN - YEAR END ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY 2015 - 16

The Committee received a report that provided the year end assessment of performance for 2015/16 and also provided an update on the performance and delivery of the Council Plan 2015-2020.

It was highlighted that:

There has been a reduction in the participation of sport, based on Sport England's Active People Survey, since 2014. The Committee were informed that the information collated for this target is only focussed on formal sporting measures via a very targeted survey. Due to the type of information used, it was noted this does not accurately reflect the actual levels of participation across the borough.

There is a positive increase in indicators relating to the proportion of adults with learning disabilities who are in paid employment .

Where there have been reductions in the amount of recycling, this is due to the introduction of garden waste charging in 2015 and less tonnage collected at kerbside.

Street and Environmental cleanliness targets (with the exception of graffiti) have been met. The Council are working with the British Transport Police, Nexus and Network Rail to target graffiti hotspots.

Where targets for decent homes have not been met it was advised that this is a direct result of the reduction of capital.

Reference was made to financial inclusion and the increase in the number of people seeking advice. It was noted that this increase is linked to changes in the welfare system and the Committee suggested that this information needs to be captured, linked with information for homelessness and thought given as to how this information can be used in order to help local communities that are suffering.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the activities undertaken at year end 2015/16 are achieving the desired outcomes in the Council Plan 2015-2020. Where targets have not been met, the reasons for this were noted.
 - ii) That the report be referred to Cabinet on 12 July 2016.

CPL7 CORPORATE STRATEGIC TRACKER AND TARGET INDICATORS - 2020

The Committee received a report outlining the proposed service targets for the period up to 2020.

It is proposed that the strategic indicators be split into 'tracker' or 'target' indicators; 'target indicators' are those issues where there is direct control by the Council and its partners, targets can be set and improvements measured regularly. For these indicators a fixed 2020 target will be set and progress towards this target will be reported on. 'Tracker indicators' are those targets that the Council and its partners have no direct influence to make changes quickly, these indicators will be tracked and benchmarked and the longer term trend will be monitored.

The indicators set for 2020 within the report were highlighted.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the Committee noted the proposed 2020 targets set for the corporate strategic indicators and the available benchmarked performance to ensure the Council's performance is continuously improving to contribute to the delivery of Vision 2030 and the Council Plan.
 - ii) That the Committee agreed that the report be submitted to Cabinet for approval