

**Minutes of the Neighbourhood Services Committee
9 September 2021**

Present:

Councillor A. Brar (Chairman)
Councillor V. Siva (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

R.D. Dunn	V.J. Leighton	B.B. Spoor
S.A. Dunn	S.C. Mooney	

Substitutions: There were none.

Apologies: There were none.

In Attendance: Councillors C. Bateson and M. Beecher

326/21 Apologies and Substitutes

No apologies had been received.

327/21 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

328/21 Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

329/21 Questions from members of the public

There were none.

330/21 Ward Issues

There were none.

331/21 Review of Community Safety

The Chair advised that the Borough Commander, Maxine Cilia, was unable to attend the meeting and gave apologies for her absence.

The Community Safety Officers presented the report on a review of Community Safety.

The Community Safety Officer outlined the priorities and obligations for the Safer Stronger Partnership and highlighted multi-agency partnerships it participates in, the significant issues they focus on, and how those issues were being addressed. He explained the challenges the police had faced in the past year, particularly due to staffing issues and the pandemic. They acknowledged community engagement had been an issue during the pandemic, but through the use of social media and work with local community groups, they had been able to help residents.

The Committee requested more information as to how councillors could help members of the public report concerns in their area, to which the Community Safety Officer provided options for reporting and providing substantial evidence. He further explained the actions used to address instances related to social landlords and fly tipping, clarified the information regarding instances of domestic violence, and acknowledged the work of the Neighbourhood Watch and how councillors could access reports to specific incidents in their wards. The Committee noted the rise in instances of anti-social behaviour and the Community Safety officer explained that lockdown breaches were included in this number. The Chairman noted a request for more detail around domestic abuse to be included in the Community Safety report in future.

The Committee thanked the Community Safety Officers for the report.

The Committee **resolved** to note the actions of the Spelthorne Safer Stronger Partnership in 2021/22 and future plans for 2021/22.

332/21 Household Waste Duty of Care - Key Decision

The Committee considered a report on the adoption of fixed penalty notices in regard to household waste.

The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services explained that incidents of fly tipping had risen since 2015, particularly in the last year, and that introducing a household waste duty of care Fixed Penalty Notice would help deter those considering illegally disposing of their household waste. She clarified the difference between litter and fly tipping and their associated penalties, and informed the Committee how fly tipping was investigated and pursued. She further explained that a communications campaign would be done to inform

individuals of their duty to dispose their own waste properly, and that new anti-littering posters had already started to go up in the borough.

A member requested clarification on some wording in the report in relation to paragraphs 1.1 and 1.9. The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services agreed that the word “not” should be added to 1.1 in the report to read: “It is accepted that some of this increase may be due to the issues related to the pandemic and the waste transfer station being closed but are **not** an excuse for anyone to fly tip their own waste or allow others to do so on their behalf.” She explained in relation to 1.9, “Where an individual is found to have transferred their household waste to an authorised person at a site that does not have a permit or exemption,” that this refers to where an individual transfers their household waste to a waste site other than a Community Recycling centre that is not licensed by the Environment Agency to receive and dispose of controlled waste.

Alternative options considered and rejected by the Committee:

- 1) Do nothing.
- 2) Set an alternative level of fine and/or a discount for early payment.

The Committee **resolved** to:

1. Agree that Spelthorne Officers will use additional enforcement powers granted under the amended Environmental Protection Act 1990, to issue Fixed Penalty Notices to individuals where there is evidence that they have breached their duty of care for disposal of household waste, at a level of £200 without discount for early payment.
2. Delegate authority to the Group Head of Neighbourhood Services to authorise appropriate officers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices under section 34(2)(a) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to persons whom the officer has reason to believe has failed to comply with their duty of care in the disposal of controlled waste.

333/21 Rules & Regulations for Cemeteries & Burial Grounds - Key Decision

The Committee considered a report on a change of rules and regulations for cemeteries and burial grounds.

The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services presented the report and explained the language in the rules and regulations had been updated for clarity, and wording in Paragraph 1.5 of the Regulations concerning access by dogs had changed to allow dogs to accompany their owners through cemeteries and burial grounds, provided they were leashed.

Other options considered and rejected by the Committee:

- 1) Do nothing.

2) To agree the wording changes but do not make changes to the relevant section in the new Rules and Regulations document at 1.5 and as detailed in 1.8 of the report.

The Committee **resolved** to agree the updated rules and regulations as set out in Appendix B of the report.

334/21 Revenue Monitoring Report (Qtr. 1 April - June)

The Committee received a revenue monitoring report related to Neighbourhood Services for quarter one of the financial year.

The Chief Accountant confirmed there were no further figures to update since the report had been published. He explained that variances of over £20k had been reported, and highlighted that most variances in the report were due to the under recovery of income.

The Committee **resolved** to note the forecast outturn for 2021/22 as at 30 June 2021 and the full variances by cost centre reported in appendix A of the report.

335/21 Knowle Green Reception Opening Arrangements - Verbal Item

The Chairman proposed the Committee hear this item before item 6 due to officer availability, and the Committee agreed.

The Group Head of Commissioning and Transformation explained that the Council was seven weeks into a three-month trial of limited opening hours for reception at the Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines-upon-Thames. She explained appointments were being offered for clients which had been well received, but that many attending the offices had done so to drop off documents which could also be done outside opening hours.

The Committee acknowledged the limited opening hours were a trial and though clients were happy to see reception open, there was a hope for a return to normal business hours in the future. The Group Head of Commissioning and Transformation explained the Council's priority was to keep residents and staff safe, and the trial was being monitored to inform future opening hours.

The Committee **resolved** to agree that the limited opening hours for reception at the Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines-upon-Thames should continue through to the end of the three-month trial.

336/21 Forward Plan

The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services provided the Committee with a summary of the work programme for the Committee at future meetings.

The Committee **resolved** to note the forward plan.