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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 7.30 P.M.  
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, WEELEY**

**Present:** Councillors Griffiths (Chairman), Fowler, Hones, Miles, Pemberton, Skeels (Jnr) and Yallop

**Also Present:** Environment Portfolio Holder (Councillor Talbot)

**In Attendance:** Head of Customer & Commercial Services (Mark Westall), Technical Officer (Jonathan Hamlet) and Committee Services Officer (Janey Nice)

**15. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

An apology was submitted on behalf of Councillor V E Guglielmi.

**16. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on Monday 13 July 2016 were signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

**17. Declarations of Interest**

There were none declared.

**18. Dog Fouling and Bin Provision**

Councillor Talbot (Environment Portfolio Holder) introduced this item on the agenda by reminding Members that this particular subject had originally been raised by Councillor Ferguson when she had been a member of the Committee. He also said that a suggested special week's blitz of certain areas would have resource implications, particularly with regard to the back office involvement in issuing Penalty Notices.

A Member asked if there had been any improvement of incidents of dog fouling along the seafronts and the Technical Officer (Jonathan Hamlet) said there had been some improvement although not extensive.

Mr Hamlet informed Members that the Council had two designated dog wardens that covered the whole of the Tendring District and that they could issue a fixed penalty notice to any dog-fouling or littering offenders. He also mentioned that other authorised Officers, including himself, had the ability to issue Fixed Penalty Notices.

Councillor Talbot commented that Frinton beach could not be cleaned by the tides like other beaches as the sea did not reach the whole of the beach area. When asked by another Member about how often the seafront areas were cleaned Mr Hamlet said that the cleaning programme covered the seafront areas on a daily basis or even twice a day in the summer and during winter this would be less often. Mr Hamlet added that he considered the winter season ran from the start of October to Easter when the summer schedule would start.

Mr Hamlet informed the Committee that there were around 1,200 dog waste bins around the District and that wrapped or bagged dog waste could also be put in the normal black waste bins. He added that the small red dog waste bins were gradually being replaced by the larger black, floor standing bins as the smaller red dog waste bins were rusting and falling apart and all black bins would have signage indicating that bagged dog waste

could be put in them. When asked a question about the disposal of cat litter Mr Hamlet informed those present that wrapped/bagged cat litter could be put in the normal weekly collection black sacks or in the District waste bins.

Mr Hamlet said that the Dog Wardens also had a dog waste disposal machine called Faeces Intake Disposal Operation (FIDO) which could collect dog waste on grassed areas such as the Greensward and other grassed areas and playing fields. He added that it did not work on concreted areas as the vacuum brushes were only designed for grass.

When asked by a Member about Brightlingsea seafront and if offenders of leaving dog waste behind were being fined, Mr Hamlet informed the Committee that quite a number of people had been caught not collecting their dog's waste and that indeed fines had been issued. When asked about FIDO collecting dog waste in Brightlingsea, Mr Hamlet said that FIDO worked to a schedule and he would check to see when it was scheduled for that area and when asked said he could see no reason why FIDO's schedule could not be put on the Council's website. Mr Hamlet also informed the Committee that if a Dog Warden received a phone call about dog fouling they would attend the area in question. He said that the two Dog Wardens were continually patrolling all areas with one starting earlier in the day than the other so that all of the daylight hours were covered. He added that if a Dog Warden was informed or finding that there was dog waste in a certain area at a certain time of day on a regular basis, they would attend to try and catch an offender. He further added that it was difficult to catch offenders once it was dark.

Mr Hamlet said that the green wheelie bins along seafronts usually had signs on them informing the public that bagged dog waste could be placed in them but unfortunately the signs could, and did, fall off. He added that most members of the public knew it was acceptable to put the dog waste in the normal waste bins, however there were people who were not aware of that fact.

During the discussion on this matter it was commented that there was more dog waste in seafront areas during the holiday season which might suggest holidaymakers could be mainly responsible for the amount of dog mess left and there was also the problem that some people would pick up their dog's waste but would then throw it into a hedge or ditch rather than dispose of it in a bin or take home for disposal. It was also commented that more signs notifying the public that normal bins were available for dog waste were needed and when asked if the information was available on the website Mr Hamlet believed that was the case.

The Chairman suggested that it might be worth putting an information leaflet in with the Council Tax letters which go out on an annual basis and the Head of Customer and Commercial Services (Mark Westall) commented that as the printing of the Council Tax leaflets was being brought back 'in-house' for printing he could look at that possibility.

Councillor Talbot commented about the dangers dog waste could cause, especially to children, with the serious parasite toxocariasis which could be carried in dog faeces. He commented that children like to play and roll on grass and could get covered with dog mess then perhaps rub it into their eyes and then get infected with the serious illness which could cause blindness.

Councillor Talbot informed the Committee that while looking at the Council's budget for next year, cutting of the street sweeping service was a possible cost saving and added that FIDO was a fairly expensive operation that had been cut back several years ago. Concern was then raised by Members that if street sweeping was cut it would cause a backlash from the public as a last straw in the cutting of services.

Members continued to discuss the issue of dog waste and waste bin provision and various comments were made from the Committee which included this Council to perhaps liaise with Essex County Council (ECC) on grass cutting, as it appeared that one Council cut the grass one day with the other Council doing a neighbouring area the next day, perhaps it could be suggested to ECC that they do the work and charge Tendring District Council for the undertaken done in their area.

The Chairman commented on the way that Brightlingsea Town Council worked as an example of best practice after Councillor Yallop commented on the way the Town Council tackled various issues. The Chairman suggested that perhaps once a year it would be an idea to meet up with the Parish and Town Councils with a representative from each, to discuss various ways of working together and sharing responsibilities. During discussion of this item it was suggested whether the Council could still maintain the Town and Parish Council precepts and it might be worth looking into that.

The Chairman suggested an Information Forum where this Council could discuss various matters, this would show there was no hidden agenda of cuts, just a matter of working closer with others. He added that dog fouling and bin provision could be the main items along with street sweeping.

A Member who was also a Town Councillor thought it was a good idea for all Parish and Town Councils to send a representative to a forum and mentioned there were maps on the ECC website to see who had the responsibility for the maintenance of various sites and areas of grounds and gave an example of where this had been useful.

Mr Westall asked Mr Hamlet that if enough Fixed Penalty Notices for dog fouling were given out would it be enough to create another post to help with dog fouling? Mr Hamlet commented that he thought there would not be enough funds even if all of the fines were paid in full. When asked by a Member about the rate of fines not being paid, Mr Hamlet said that the rate of unpaid fines was very high.

It was suggested that when Fixed Penalty Notices had been issued that this should be publicised on the Council's website as it would make the public more aware that the Council was serious about fining offenders for leaving dog waste behind and Mr Hamlet agreed that it was all about getting the message out to the public the seriousness of dog fouling.

Mr Hamlet then informed the Committee of the feedback from a meeting of the Committee he attended last year and said that the bins along the promenades would now have signage on them informing the public that bagged dog waste could be placed in them, a lot of the small red dog waste bins had now been replaced with larger general waste bins, the green wheelie bins would remain along with the seasonal waste bins and between Walton Pier and Holland there were 22 seasonal waste bins along the lower promenade. He added that the area between Walton and the golf course was not Council maintained so there were no waste bins there. A Member asked if a record was kept of the Fixed Penalty Notices issued and Mr Hamlet confirmed that was so and they were recorded on controlled stationery, that this was a new initiative and would also indicate the worse areas for dog fouling which would be very useful for the Dog Wardens

Mr Hamlet said that By-Laws were in place for fenced-off play areas and football pitches and that a Public Space Protection Order would make it a lot easier to enforce the By-Laws and protect sensitive areas such as children's play areas. He added that the Council was currently looking at expanding the By-Laws to cover other areas.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hamlet for his excellent and informative presentation and also thanked Councillor Talbot for attending in his role as Portfolio Holder. Councillor Talbot

responded by saying that the Committee was very constructive and a lot had been achieved by it.

The Committee **RESOLVED** that:

**CABINET NOTED** the **RECOMMENDATIONS** of the Service Development and Delivery Committee:

- (a) That the relevant Officers work with the Council's Communications Manager to compose a press release reminding residents of the number of litter bins the Council provided and that they could be used for bagged dog waste and that the press release should include details of the number of Fixed Penalty Notices that had been issued regarding dog fouling;
- (b) That the relevant Officers produce a schedule for the Faeces Intake Disposal Operation (FIDO) which would state when and where FIDO would be in operation and that the schedule should be placed on the Council's website;
- (c) That an information sharing forum be created to include Members from the Council, County Council and Town and Parish Councils, to discuss topics affecting them, such as street sweeping, dog fouling and waste bin provision, in order to promote the co-ordination of activities and promote best practice; and
- (d) That the relevant group look at incorporating dog fouling within the new Open Space Public By-law.

**19. Work Programme 2016/17**

The Chairman informed the Committee that Councillor Turner (Portfolio Holder for Commercialisation) would be invited to the next meeting of the Committee scheduled for 10 October 2016 to update the Committee on Public Conveniences as the Council had been let down twice by the toilet cleaning contractor and that the service was now coming back 'in-house' to the Council. He also raised concern whether the Council was properly monitoring Contractors as the current situation had cost the Council an extra £24,000.

The Chairman added that he would like to see lone worker working arrangements discussed at a meeting with the attendance of Human Resources as he was concerned that perhaps a lone worker could get into difficulties possibly including Anti-Social Behaviour.

The Chairman said that Spendalls House and Honeycroft would be discussed at the 23 November 2016 meeting and Councillor Miles said that she would like to be involved with the Officers in putting together the Feasibility Study, concerning Spendalls House, and that to date the Officers had not involved her at all. The Chairman agreed and asked Mr Westall to ensure that Ward Members would be involved along with the appropriate ECC Councillors. He added that he would like to see a report before the Feasibility Study was published and said that he wanted a site visit arranged so that the members of the Committee could see the sheltered accommodation for themselves.

Councillor Miles reminded the Committee that she had been involved with Spendalls House for a long time and did not want the Committee to be the last opportunity to have a say on the Feasibility Study. The Chairman confirmed that he had requested that input from the local Ward Members and appropriate County Councillors were consulted. He added that he would be happy for the appropriate Town Council to also be involved. Councillor Miles added that she wanted to be more proactive as she tended to hear one voice from the residents and others from Officers and the Chairman commented it might

be a good idea for a resident to be in attendance when the Committee made its site visit to Spendalls and Honeycroft.

The Chairman said perhaps this could be added to the 10 October agenda to discuss Spendalls House and Honeycroft sheltered accommodations with the appropriate Portfolio Holder being invited. He added that after that meeting he would meet with Mr Westall and Mrs Nice to discuss further ways forward which might involve having a special meeting before the end of this year.

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman confirmed that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee was to be held on Monday 10 October 2016.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.47 p.m.

Chairman