

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE 5th January 2023

REPORT OF Assistant Chief Executive (Statutory Scrutiny Officer)

SUBJECT Tracking the recommendations of the Communities Scrutiny Panel

STATUS Open

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The scrutiny panels act as a reviewing mechanism for decisions made relating to the strategic policy, performance and resources required to deliver the ambitions of the council and the strategic partnership. The aim of the scrutiny process is to make sure decision making is robust by providing constructive challenge. This contributes to the Council being effective and efficient, and therefore it is integral to the delivery of the Council Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each scrutiny panel monitors the progress made on their recommendations through a tracking table, which is included as an appendix of this report.

MATTER(S) FOR CONSIDERATION

Members are asked to look at the progress against the recommendations and agree to sign off any recommendations that have been completed or are no longer considered to be an efficient use of resources or where priorities have changed.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

Each scrutiny panel has a standard agenda item so that they can check progress against the recommendations they have previously made.

Members are asked to look at the progress against the recommendations and agree to sign off any recommendations that have been completed, so that they can be removed from the table. It would also be effective to sign off any recommendations that have not been completed but which are no longer considered to be an efficient use of resources, or where priorities have changed.

Appendix A lists progress on tracked items within the terms of reference of this new panel.

Appendix B lists the remaining recommendations from a review of environmental street scene.

Appendix C lists the nine recommendations from the enforcement scrutiny working group.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Risk assessments will already have been carried out on the reports that these recommendations have come from.

Any actions which the council may undertake as a result of recommendations made by scrutiny will be the subject of further reports, which will include risk assessment(s) by the author(s) concerned.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not applicable to this report.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

The panel's tracking report demonstrates that the panel monitors progress on its recommendations and required actions. This report further demonstrates the breadth of matters considered by scrutiny.

5. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

There are no impacts on Children and young people as a direct result of this report. The reports that these tracked items have come have been assessed for impact on children and young people.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial considerations included within this report, beyond scrutiny's enhanced role in monitoring delivery of the council's budget and medium term financial plan.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no impacts on climate change and the environment as a direct result of this report. The reports that these tracked items have come from will have been assessed for impact.

Any actions which the council may undertake as a result of recommendations made by scrutiny will be the subject of further reports, which will include climate change and environmental implications by the author(s) concerned.

8. MONITORING COMMENTS

In the opinion of the author, this report does not contain recommended changes to policy or resources (people, finance or physical assets). As a result no monitoring comments have been sought from the Council's Monitoring Officer (legal), Section 151 Officer (finance) or Strategic Workforce Lead (human resources).

9. WARD IMPLICATIONS

Potentially impacts on all wards.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Minutes from the Communities Scrutiny Panel -
<http://www.nelincs.gov.uk/committees/>

11. CONTACT OFFICER

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TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS – COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE	RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSIBLE	PROGRESS/COMMENTS
16.9.21	<p><u>SPC.22 Registered Housing Provider</u></p> <p>A report be brought back to a future panel meeting on the progress of registering to become a housing provider.</p>	Assistant Director Housing, Highways and Planning	<p>Update on 3.11.22</p> <p>This project is to progress Q3/Q4 this year and Homes England are satisfied that we are making progress.</p>
8.09.22	<p><u>SPC.22 Council Plan Performance Report 2022/23 Q1</u></p> <p>That members are provided with an update on what action was being taken to reduce the number of empty properties across the borough.</p>	Assistant Director Policy Strategy & Resources	<p>Update on 3.11.22</p> <p>It was noted that under the contract, EQUANS had an Empty Homes Officer that focussed on working with owners/landlords of properties that had been empty for more than 2 years or less depending on factors such as the situation, property type, location and condition. The Council also employed and worked to an Empty Property Strategy.</p>
8.09.22	<p><u>SPC.25 Renewal of the ASB & Dog Control PSPO</u></p> <p>A workshop be set up to review the anti-social behaviour PSPO's.</p>	Assistant Director Safer & Partnerships	Completed: Workshop set up for Thursday 8 th December at 10:30am in the Municipal Offices.
03.11.22	<p><u>SPC. 33. Tracking the Recommendations of Scrutiny</u></p> <p>That a breakdown of figures of empty homes per ward be provided to members of this panel.</p>		Completed: on 09.11.22: Briefing Paper circulated to Panel Members

APPENDIX B ENVIRONMENTAL STREET SCENE

Summary of recommendations and outcomes from a special meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Panel held on 5th December 2019. The meeting was called to consider a 12 month update on progress made following the recommendations of a select committee looking at the quality of the local street scene in North East Lincolnshire. Only unresolved/work in progress/ new recommendations are listed

Reference	Recommendation	Updated 13 th January 2022
2.2.2	That the use of wild flowers in parks, open spaces and grass verges, in consultation with Ward Councillors and communities, be supported.	RESOLVED – That recommendation 2.2.2 to retain current wild flower schemes with additional steps taken to speed up progress by grass removal where required. Including to review the prospect of further schemes on a ward to ward basis in consultation with ward, town and parish councillors using lessons learnt.
2.2.3	To note the petition requesting improvements to grass cutting in Cleethorpes had been addressed within the review of the grounds maintenance service	RESOLVED – That with regard to recommendation 2.2.4; further work is required in the areas of weed control and an increased focus on the gateways to the borough.
2.2.4	That the review of the grounds maintenance service be endorsed, subject to consideration of long term financial viability.	RESOLVED – That with regard to recommendation 2.2.4; further work is required in the areas of weed control and an increased focus on the gateways to the borough
3.2.3	That all legal options and best practice be explored in order to pursue enforcement, particularly in respect of fly-tipping.	RESOLVED – That recommendations 3.2.3 and 3.2.4 continue to be monitored subject to the findings and recommendations of the Enforcement Scrutiny Working Group.
3.2.4	That there be improved co-ordination between all stakeholders, leading to more robust enforcement processes and higher profile action.	RESOLVED – That recommendations 3.2.3 and 3.2.4 continue to be monitored subject to the findings and recommendations of the Enforcement Scrutiny Working Group
4.2.1	That the positive feedback on the Skip It Campaign be noted, and the scheme be reviewed following evaluation of the pilot.	RESOLVED - That support is given to continue Skip-It initiatives in partnership with LHP and community groups as far as financially sustainable without affecting core service offer.
4.2.3	That the offer of support towards any future Skip It! events be noted, and that officers engage with Lincolnshire Housing Partnership when making future arrangements.	RESOLVED - That support is given to continue Skip-It initiatives in partnership with LHP and community groups as far as financially sustainable without affecting core service offer.
5.2.1	That communications to the public and Members on guidance about service areas be reviewed and improved.	RESOLVED - That the proposed format for communication to the public and members is agreed and steps taken to circulate

		this to all ward councillors, community groups and parish councils on a quarterly basis.
5.2.3	That enhanced ward based information on street scene activity and enforcement to be provided to Elected Members on a quarterly basis.	RESOLVED - That the proposed format for communication to the public and members is agreed and steps taken to circulate this to all ward councillors, community groups and parish councils on a quarterly basis.

APPENDIX C - ENFORCEMENT SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP

Summary of nine recommendations from the Enforcement Scrutiny Working Group of the Communities Scrutiny Panel. Final recommendations were ratified by the panel on 4th June 2020 and adopted by Cabinet at its meeting of 8th July 2020. The Director of Growth and Economy was authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities, to implement such recommendations subject to internal governance and controls. (DN.138 refers)

Reference	Recommendation	Update as of 13th January 2022.
1	That commercial regulatory enforcement teams, currently situated at Estuary House and building control (planning condition enforcement) currently located at New Oxford House should remain separate and grouped by the legislation they enforce.	<p>Rationale: The specialist and technical nature of this enforcement work would not add value to other enforcement teams. Integration with other enforcement teams would reduce the effectiveness and efficiency of these teams and not ensure best use of resource or give value for money.</p> <p>Progress: This recommendation has been fully implemented and these teams will continue to deliver specialist enforcement in agreed settings.</p>

2	<p>That future integration/generic working of street scene based enforcement activities be considered. Future integration of environmental crime and housing enforcement be explored.</p>	<p>Rationale: Whilst the group appreciate the current contractual obligations around litter, dog and PSPO enforcement, the group strongly feel that street scene-based enforcement officers including CEOs and LAs operatives are the eyes and ears of NELC. These officers should be enabled to work together. Combining resources has potential to increase capacity, increase visibility and increase value for money.</p> <p>Progress:</p> <p>Work has been completed to increase communication between Council and Equans managed services in relation to Parking, CCTV and Environmental Crime enforcement. The procurement of a joint penalty processing software has been completed and is implemented, A trial is ongoing, using LA Support, who are providing additional capacity by issuing PCNs for parking contraventions while they are undertaking their primary function of environmental enforcement.</p>
3	<p>That administration and back office support be developed in line with the amount of enforcement activity.</p>	<p>Rationale: Increasing the amount of enforcement volume and activity without equal regard to administration systems, legal and back office support would have an effect on the ability of the council to process FPNs and PCNs. This would be</p>

		<p>detrimental to the intended deterrent, anticipated income from charges and success of associated court proceedings with negative reputational impact.</p> <p>Progress: Recognition that enforcement requires an effective network of back-office functions has been integrated in any new projects delivery or service re-design taking place. Examples include the expansion of the Port Health Function and procurement of new enforcement software, which both includes consideration of administrative support needs.</p>
4	That a single point of access for reporting to enforcement teams be developed, combined with a triage approach and referral to appropriate teams. Longer term there should be a move to improved software allowing more joined up working between disciplines.	<p>Rationale: A single point of access and a triage approach has the potential to improve referral response times and ensure referrals are right first time. Duplication would also be avoided. A culture of 'ownership and responsibility' would be developed. Longer term, compatible/shared software would help teams work even more effectively. There may be efficiencies from software, contracts and license fees. Generic and shared standards of customer care and response times would ensure residents and members are clear about expected responses and levels of services.</p>

		<p>Progress: A cabinet decision to support procurement of joint enforcement software between Council and Engie Teams was taken in December 2020. The project is currently at the premarket consultation stage and is expected to deliver both better working and some efficiencies. Other part of this recommendation form part of the corporate Customer Portal and Digital Review, which is in progress.</p>
5	<p>That elected member training be developed relating to the reporting of complaints, referrals and requests for service. This to be implemented following the findings of the customer portal review.</p>	<p>Rationale (notwithstanding recommendation 4 above) the outcome of the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources' review of the customer portal is an essential element of members' and the public's access to (enforcement) services.</p> <p>Progress: Digital training has been available to elected members during the last year. The Customer Service portal is effectively used by many elected members.</p>
6	<p>That during the municipal year 2020/21 the Communities Scrutiny Panel receive a report on the work of the NELC Officers' enforcement working group.</p>	<p>Rationale: Scrutiny panels review and report on issues that affect the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of local people. This includes ensuring that enforcement teams work closely with other council teams and partners. Enforcement work is complex and</p>

		<p>affected by, but not limited to; legislation, the council's policy framework, decisions around customer access, CCTV provision, location of teams and court processes.</p> <p>Progress: Regular reports have been provided in respect to service delivery and recovery planning during the Covid-19 pandemic. More detailed reports of progress of service transformation can be provided to Scrutiny once all service area have returned to normal service delivery.</p>
7	<p>That investment in moving vehicle number plate recognition (NPR) technology and utilising road rule enforcement cameras to increase the positive impact of civil enforcement around highways and parking enforcement should be actively explored.</p>	<p>Rationale: New developments in NPR and mobile devices are changing how councils can best tackle civil enforcement on the highway. Whilst the group are keen to retain the CEOs currently operating in NEL. And appreciating that CEOs would be required to ratify CCTV evidence of offences. The group can see cost effective advantages of this approach. There may also be opportunities to share costs with neighbouring authorities to further improve value for money.</p> <p>Progress: A large-scale project to modernise the Council CCTV infra structure is progressing to agreed time scales. Procurement of a new modern software for processing car parking fines is also in progress. Completion of these project will enable further investment in camera</p>

		<p>enforcement on the highway as well as more effective fly tipping CCTV cameras. A survey has been completed at 10 schools across the borough to establish what measures are required to enable the NPR cameras to be introduced. Cameras have been introduced at Sighills Academy and Old Clee school. The next phase will see the cameras rotate to other schools in the Borough at Easter 2023. A programme for rotation has been developed and agreed with the PfH and a review of TROs is progressing.</p>
8	<p>That future procurement of enforcement technology hardware and software, CCTV systems / rapid deployment cameras /. Number plate recognition software / IT systems / case management system / data sharing networks etc. should allow fluency between teams, partners and systems.</p>	<p>Rationale: Subject to all appropriate legislation (GDPR and RIPA) the ability to share evidence, casework and information between partners should be enabled wherever possible and practical.</p> <p>Progress: A CCTV Operational Group is now in place which meets bi-monthly enabling information sharing between teams, partners and systems. A Data Protection Impact assessment has taken place to support the 'Caught on camera' initiative, which is now operational.</p>
9	<p>That, subject to Cabinet approval of a proposed CCTV strategy, the CCTV Strategic Group to provide an annual report (or more frequent if required) to the Communities</p>	<p>Rationale: Communities scrutiny panel considered a draft CCTV strategy and a</p>

	<p>Scrutiny Panel to inform of progress and performance around the effectiveness and outcomes of the CCTV Strategy and multi-agency working.</p>	<p>proposed CCTV capital investment option. The panel welcomed and fully endorsed the report at its meeting on 6th February 2020. Considering a regular report will provide an opportunity to raise awareness of the effectiveness of the CCTV strategy and give scrutiny an opportunity to provide appropriate challenge where necessary.</p> <p>Progress:</p> <p>A separate and more detailed update on CCTV was provided to the Communities Scrutiny Panel on 1st April 2021. Work is expected to be completed by the end of 2022. A further update will be provided to this panel in January 2023 including a visit to the CCTV control room.</p>
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End.