

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Thursday, 19th July, 2018 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr M.D. Smith (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr J.B. Canty (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr T.D. Bridgeman
Cllr M.S. Choudhary
Cllr R.M. Cooper
Cllr K. Dibble
Cllr Veronica Graham-Green
Cllr B. Jones
Cllr Nadia Martin

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr B.A. Thomas

5. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th June, 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

6. REVIEW OF REGISTERED PROVIDERS - 2017/18

The Committee welcomed Sue Thornett, Strategy and Enabling Officer, who attended the meeting to give a report on the 2017/18 Review of Registered Providers.

The purpose of the review was to gain a better understanding, build partnership working, review performance and address any issues/problems that might emerge with the registered providers operating within Rushmoor. Members had met initially to determine which providers would be reviewed; once decided, site visits had been organised and information packs requested. When the information had been reviewed, a set of questions were prepared addressing the key issues and the review meetings with the providers arranged. Registered providers that had been reviewed in 2017/18 had been the Mears Group, Accent South, Stonewater Housing and Grainger Trust.

The Committee was given an update on the findings from the reviews. It was noted that, in general, tenants were happy with their homes and the service provided. Following a staff structure review at Stonewater, improvements had been made to frontline customer services. New maintenance contracts and redecorating to improve the appearance of the Mears and Accent South properties was noted at the site visits.

It was advised that VIVID, as the largest provider of social housing in the Borough, had historically been dealt with separately. However, going forward, VIVID would be incorporated into the registered providers review process, which would help to ensure a fairer and more consistent process for all providers operating in Rushmoor.

In conclusion, the review process allowed Members and Officers to gain a better understanding of the working arrangements of providers and of issues affecting residents, provided a platform for open conversation and allowed for improved accountability and partnership working.

The Committee was then advised of issues at Alexander House, Aldershot, which was operated by Accent South. The Committee agreed a request from Cllr. A.H. Crawford to join the meeting to draw attention to ongoing concerns related service charges to leaseholders to cover major repair costs from 2015/16 when some emergency repair work was required. It was noted that a number of meetings had been arranged between residents and Accent South but no solution had yet been agreed. The Accent finance department continued to request the outstanding amount from residents. Cllr. Crawford felt that a further review should be undertaken with Accent South to address these concerns.

Action to be taken	By whom	When
Organise a meeting of the Registered Providers Task and Finish Group to discuss the issues raised by Members with Accent South.	Sue Thornett, Strategy and Enabling Officer	September, 2018

The Committee discussed the report and concerns raised. In response to a query, it was noted that, at the beginning of the process, a general email outlining the process and providers to be reviewed was circulated to all Members for comment. Full packs were only sent to Members of the Review Group. Ward Members were consulted if a property was situated within their ward.

The Committee **NOTED** the report and **AGREED** the process for the Registered Providers Task and Finish Group going forward. A programme of meetings would be circulated to Members of the Group shortly.

7. **WASTE CONTRACT UPDATE**

The Committee welcomed Mr. James Duggin, Contracts Manager, who attended the meeting to give an update on the Environmental Services Contract. Mr. Duggin outlined the procurement process for letting the contract, which had commenced in 2015 and was awarded to SERCO in 2017.

The Committee was apprised of the different elements of the contract, which included, grounds maintenance, street cleansing and waste management. The street cleansing element had changed most significantly, the service had gone back to a basic approach with manual operatives cleansing the streets. The Borough had been divided into thirteen zones with an operative allocated to each zone. Operatives had

a barrow and tools to carry out the majority of the work and were supported by mobile teams and mechanical sweepers when necessary. The waste management service had been enhanced, with the service also being provided on certain bank holidays, small WEEE (waste electrical and electronic equipment) collections, a bulky waste scheme and on-board technology providing real time information on the vehicles. Other elements included commercial services to help subsidise the cost of the household service and social value through the employment of apprentices, work with voluntary groups and community champions. Added value through the contract was also highlighted, with SERCO offering extra weed control services, edging up on grassed areas, awareness raising on recyclable materials and a commitment to keep costs in the lower quartile.

Through the on-board technology, realtime information could be viewed for each vehicle. Vehicles could be tracked at all times to assess progress of rounds and an electronic tool was available to log exceptions, such as missed bins by address and road blocks. Vehicles were also fitted with cameras to help keep operatives safe. The data collected from this realtime information was used to monitor performance. Key performance indicators were identified within the contract, these included: the number of missed bins; street cleansing inspection targets; grounds maintenance compliance with specification targets; and, public satisfaction targets. Since the contract had begun a number of inspections had been carried out, missed bin data had been collated and customer satisfaction surveys had taken place – all showed that the SERCO contract had been mobilised effectively and overall standards were good.

The Committee discussed the presentation and raised a number of issues around littering, it was noted that SERCO were keen to engage with schools and colleges but to date had been unsuccessful in engaging with the Sixth Form College where there was reported to be a particular issue with littering. It was suggested that contact could be made with fast food outlets to help address the littering issue from waste fast food packaging across the Borough. In response to a query regarding the community champions, it was advised that there was at least one from each ward and in some cases two. A list of champions would be circulated to Members in September. The monitoring of recyclable waste was raised, this was identified as a Hampshire County Council and Rushmoor Borough Council issue and was not compared within environmental services contracts, all benchmarking was carried out against other similar local authorities.

It was suggested that a task and finish group could be established to consider, in more detail, certain elements of the contract. This would be discussed further at the next meeting of the Progress Group.

8. ALDERSHOT CENTRE FOR HEALTH CAR PARKING - UPDATE

Ms. Kirsty Hosey, Parking Manager, attended the meeting to give an update on the current situation with car parking at Aldershot Centre for Health. It was noted that there had been a number of issues with the car park for many patients and the NHS had approached the Council for support in addressing the issues. It had been agreed

that the Council would operate the car park on behalf of the NHS on a temporary basis from August 2018 whilst a new contractor was appointed.

Following consultation, it was agreed that the car park would be incorporated into the Council's current Off Street Parking Order and the Council was currently in the process of implementing a pay and display system on the site. New signage would be installed and existing pay and display machines replaced with five Council owned machines. Payment for tickets would be in coins only and the existing charging structure would remain, with blue badge holders parking for free.

It was noted that there would be no period for vehicles to park for free, although, the free drop off facility would remain in place. The Council's Civil Enforcement Officers would patrol the public and staff car parks to ensure all customers and staff were parking correctly and penalty charge notices would be issued to those not complying with the new parking controls.

The Committee discussed the new arrangements and in response to a query regarding the free 15 minute period of parking, which had been available under the old scheme, it was advised that it had not been possible to retain this option with the pay and display machines that were being used. Members felt it was important to advertise clearly the changes to the free period and the blue badge holders on the notices that would be erected in the car park. It was noted that the scheme would be reviewed in three months' time.

9. **WORK PLAN**

The Committee noted the current work plan and a request was made to discuss how the Council deals with the issue of travellers at a meeting of the Progress Group.

The meeting closed at 9.14 pm.

CLLR M.D. SMITH (CHAIRMAN)
