

BOROUGH SERVICES POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

Meeting held on Monday, 8th February, 2016 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 p.m.

Voting Members

Cr. Barbara Hurst (Chairman)
Cr. A.R. Newell (Vice-Chairman)

Cr. T.D. Bridgeman
Cr. D.E. Clifford
a Cr. A.M. Ferrier

Cr. C.P. Grattan

Cr. S.J. Masterson
Cr. M.J. Roberts
Cr. D.M. Welch

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Cr. A. M. Ferrier.

15. **MINUTES –**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th November, 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

16. **ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL AND POLLUTION UPDATE –**

The Panel welcomed Miss Helen Lolley, Environmental Health Manager who attended the meeting to update the Panel on a number of aspects relating to the service, including, air quality, mobile home sites, the Hart and Rushmoor Joint CCTV Service and the work of the Community Patrol Team.

- **Air Quality** – The Panel noted that there was a strategy in place to manage local air quality with a requirement to regularly review and assess air quality to ensure objectives were achieved. There were seven key pollutants, of which nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) was the foremost concern for Rushmoor, the main source of which was emissions from traffic. It was advised that air quality was monitored at 22 sites in Rushmoor and the results were used to inform annual reports, which were submitted to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to demonstrate compliance in meeting air quality objectives. In addition to the monitoring work, the service reviewed planned developments and monitored Part B processes including, petrol stations, vehicle sprayers, small waste oil burners and dry cleaners to ensure there were no negative impacts on air quality.

It was advised that in 2000 and 2004 two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) had been declared relating to the M3. Since this time air quality had shown a steady improvement and was deemed good across the Borough.

The Panel discussed the arrangements for monitoring air quality and it was advised that TAG monitored air quality in relation to Farnborough Airport. New developments within the Borough, that met a certain criteria, with regard to activity and impact on the number of vehicle movements were required to carry out air quality assessments. A discussion was held, in particular, around the location of monitoring equipment and if some of these should be re-located to perceived “hotspots”. A suggestion was made to engage schools in the monitoring process.

A further discussion was held which focussed on electric cars and their use by services within the Council. It was suggested that an electric pool car could be acquired for use by Officers and that consideration should be given to replacing obsolete vehicles with electric versions in the future.

It was **AGREED** that a more detailed map of the monitoring sites would be provided with details of emission levels in those areas. The issues raised would then be discussed further at the next mid cycle meeting.

- **Mobile Home Sites** – The Panel noted that there were four mobile home sites within the Borough: Brookside Park, Chiltern Farm Park, Hill Corner Park and Martin’s Park. All the parks were relatively small and were inspected annually to ensure compliance with licenced conditions. All had the benefit of a permanent licence under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, 1960. In 2013, the Mobile Home Act had been enacted. The aim of the Act was to give greater rights to the residents of the sites. It was advised that each site had registered its site rules, which was a requirement of the Act, with the Council. The rules for each site were available to view on the council’s website. A number of changes had been introduced as part of the Act, which gave new powers to local authorities, including charging an annual fee for site licences and the introduction of compliance notices. It was advised that neither of these had been implemented to date as it was felt the annual fee costs would be passed to residents and, in cases where site conditions were not being complied with, the team endeavoured to work with the site owners to seek a resolution. However, it was noted that these powers would be used if necessary.

Future changes were also planned as part of the Act, including the provision of a “fit and proper person” appointed as manager of individual sites, increases in fines for offences under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act and offences by companies. The date these provisions might come into force was yet to be determined.

It was advised that the Environmental Health Team’s role had been to inspect sites on an annual basis to ensure compliance with the licence conditions, to respond to complaints and to signpost residents for advice.

In response to a query it was advised that the “fit and proper person” would need to undergo such checks as a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check, which would identify any criminal convictions and cautions for offences. It was also noted that complaints were generally dealt with within 3 - 5 working days although, this was dependant on the nature of the complaint and current workloads.

The Panel discussed the legislation, especially the issue that it had not been implemented in full from the start, and the repercussions this might have had on residents. It was suggested that the Government could be lobbied to implement the legislation in full. In addition, it was proposed that a task and finish group could be set up to look at the issues around mobile homes. However, it was felt that the Settled and Safe Initiative already covered mobile homes and this could result in a duplication of resources. Further discussions would be held on the issues raised at the next mid cycle meeting.

- **Hart and Rushmoor CCTV Service** - The Panel noted that the Hart and Rushmoor joint service was launched in May, 2013 and was hosted at Rushmoor Borough Council Offices. A Joint Governance Group had been established, membership of the group consisted of Cabinet Members, Heads of Service and Environmental Health Managers from both sides, and the group met at key times, as required, to review budgets and performance reports. Furthermore, a three year maintenance agreement with Baydale Control Systems had been secured; this had since been extended for a further two years and would end on 31st December, 2017. The agreement established between Hart and Rushmoor had set the expectations and arrangements for the service and in addition a Hart and Rushmoor CCTV code of practice had been drawn up in October, 2014.

The team consisted of the Environmental Health Manager, a team leader, four full time and one part time CCTV operators. The service was manned between 7:00 a.m. - 1:00 a.m. Sunday to Wednesday and 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 a.m. Thursday to Saturday. The team monitored 116 cameras, 47 in Hart and 79 in Rushmoor, cameras recorded 24 hours a day and recordings were held for one calendar month and then written over. Requests for footage could be made during this time. It was noted that four cameras were positioned in the reception area at Rushmoor to protect both internal staff and others working within the building. A panic button was also located in the Customer Services Unit. The team also filtered the out of hours emergency calls for both councils and provided lone worker support for Rushmoor staff working out of hours.

The service worked with a number of partners, in particular the police, by providing and reviewing footage for evidence, monitoring incidents as they happened and alerting the police to on-going and developing crimes. The aim in the future was to provide a link to Netley Police Headquarters although, technical difficulties were preventing this from happening at present. Other partners included Shopwatch, Pubwatch,

other Council services and insurance companies working on behalf of members of the public.

The Panel discussed the CCTV service and commented on the number of cameras and their location in certain areas, it was advised that to move a camera to a new location would cost in the region of £12-13,000. A suggestion was made to provide body cameras for lone working staff, and it was advised that this was something that could be considered going forward. Further discussions were held around the correlation between private and council owned cameras and the need to identify blackspots across the Borough, and what others' protocols were for storing footage with the aim to create a common profile.

In response to a query, it was advised that some of Rushmoor's cameras would need to be replaced in the near future as they were getting old and the quality of the images would generally deteriorate, it was noted that Hart were currently in the process of updating all their cameras.

- **Community Patrol Team** – The purpose of the Community Patrol Team (CPT) was to “provide a reassuring presence on the streets and in public places – to ensure a Safe and Clean Environment”. They aimed to do this by dealing with issues related to environmental crime, by working closely with residents, local groups, neighbourhood watch and ward councillors.

The Panel noted that the team had reduced to four members since 2008 and was led by Richard Apsey, Senior Community Patrol Officer. Work covered by the CPT included:

- environmental crime – which covered a number of areas including: abandoned and untaxed vehicles, fly posting, fly tipping, graffiti and nuisance vehicle sales/repair
- park and playground inspection – this involved the daily inspection of the ten main playgrounds and 2-3 times a week inspections of the remaining 31 playgrounds, carrying out minor repairs and litter and graffiti removal
- stray dogs and dog related complaints in public areas – including the collection and/or return of stray animals, dog fouling patrols, advice, guidance and animal welfare
- support at events such as the Farnborough Donkey Derby, Rushmoor Fireworks and Victoria Day

The Panel was advised of activity between July, 2014 and July, 2015 when 7,267 separate activities had been noted. Fly tipping incidents were dealt with as soon as possible to try and identify who had been responsible, although this was not always possible. Abandoned trollies

accounted for 613 of the activities noted, it was advised that the majority of the larger supermarkets had joined the “Trolley Wise” scheme, where an independent company collected abandoned trolley’s on the supermarkets’ behalf. With regard to graffiti, it was noted that any offensive or racist graffiti would be removed within 24 hours where possible, and other types removed as soon as possible. It was noted that if graffiti appeared on private land permission was required from the owner before any removal could take place.

It was reported that new regulations on dog chipping would be coming into force as of 6th April, 2016 where all dogs over ten weeks of age would be required to be chipped and registered with a licensed company. Other new legislation around the Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime and Policing Act, 2014 would enable the team to have additional powers to serve community protection notices. There was also an increasing emphasis on littering through the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) litter strategy, as part of this the fine for littering was likely to increase to £150. It was also noted that a new improved system to record activities/incidents remotely was being trialled, the system was called “Confirm Connect”.

The Panel discussed the issue around abandoned trolley’s and the “Trolley Wise” scheme, it was suggested that charges could be made to the supermarkets for any trolleys returned by the Community Patrol Team, this matter would be discussed further with the Contracts Manager, James Duggin.

The Chairman thanked Miss Lolley for the presentation.

17. **WORK PROGRAMME –**

The Panel noted the current work programme.

The Meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.

BARBARA HURST
CHAIRMAN