

# Bristol City Council

## Minutes of the Communities Scrutiny Commission

21 February 2022 at 3.00 pm



### Members Present:-

**Councillors:** Martin Fodor (Chair), Amirah Cole, James Scott, Emma Edwards and Gary Hopkins

### Also in attendance:

- Councillor Nicola Beech, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Climate, Ecology, Waste and Energy
- Sarah Parker - Director - Childrens Services
- Clare Simms - Safer Communities Manager
- Ken Lawson - Waste Strategic Client Manager
- Richard Ennion - Horticultural Service Manager
- Darin Hedges - Contact Centre Manager
- Kate Cole - Strategic Intelligence & Performance Advisor
- Ben Hooper - Risk & Insurance Office

## 17 Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

## 18 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr Henry Michallat – Commission Member
- Cllr Barry Parsons – Commission Member. Cllr David Wilcox attended as a substitute.
- Councillor Ellie King - Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health, Communities and Bristol One City for comment
- Hugh Evans - Director - Adult Social Care
- Patsy Mellor - Director: Management of Place
- Richard Fletcher - Parks Services Manager
- Rizwan Tariq - Head of Citizens Services



## 19 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

## 20 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.

## 21 Chair's Business

There was none on this occasion.

## 22 Public Forum

A Public Forum statement was received from David Redgewell about safety issues on the city region's bus, coach and network railway services. Members noted the Statement.

The full statement can be found here: [Public Forum](#)

## 23 Performance Report - Quarter 2

The Strategic Intelligence & Performance Advisor introduced the report and provided an overview of the progress made against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Quarter 2.

The significant issues in the report were:

- 57% were on or above target
- 65% were performing the same or better than at the same time last year

The following points were then discussed:

- BPC540 Reduce percentage of people who feel that street litter is a problem in their neighbourhood (QoL): A Member inquired about the Quality of Life survey results and asked if they could see the report highlighted in the performance report. Officers said the report had been published on the Councils website and an email had been sent to Members directing them to the report in January. Performance measures informed by the QoL survey and related to the remit of the Commission will be included as part of the the Q3 performance report. However, they would also provide a link for Members in the meantime. **Action: Officers to provide Members with a link to where this information can be found on the Councils website.**
- BBC541 Increase the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and Composting: A Member asked about the current system of access to the recycling centres only on certain days, based on people's vehicle number plates. When would this system be discontinued? The Waste - Strategic Client Manager said they would be reviewing access to the centres soon with a view to relaxing the current rules. They had also been considering systems that other local authorities had



in place and may need to implement a different booking service. However, the aim was to offer an improved service in future.

- Members asked why the key performance indicators (KPIs) about victims of crime did not appear in the performance report now. In their view this was the is only real measurement of crime. Officers said they would look into this and if possible include this information in the Quarter 3 report but it would depend on whether that question had been asked in the original survey.

**Action: Officers to enquire if the information about victims of crime can be provided to as an additional note to the Quarter 3 Performance Report.**

## 24 Corporate Risk Report Quarter 2

The Risk & Insurance Officer introduced the Quarter 2 Corporate Risk Report to Members and outlined the key points in the report.

A Member asked about Risk CRR41: Long Term Major Capital Projects and said there was now a reduced risk rating but information was the same as the previous quarter, so could further information be provided about this? Officers said they would take this question away and report back to Members after the meeting. **Action: Officers to provide further information about the CRR41: Long Term Major Capital Projects risk rating.**

## 25 Bristol Community Safety Partnership Overview

As requested by the Chair, Officers provided a brief overview of the report contents.

A Member asked for more details about who now sat the Executive Board now and which agencies were involved. Officers said this was a now a partnership between the Children's Safeguarding Board, the Bristol Adult Safeguarding Board, and the Bristol Community Safety Partnership (BCSP) together under one Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Executive Board. There were now also four delivery groups. However, they could provide a list of the people who sat on the Board after the meeting. **Action: Officers to provide a list of all those now on the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Executive Board.**

An officer clarified that the Executive Board was three Boards coming together to work better together and that included community safety, NHS, probation services, police and the Council which included the Head of Children's Services.

A Member commented on the police data and survey conducted by the Bristol@Night Board on page 7 of the report and said that without any previous data to compare the figures against it was difficult to know whether trends were improving or not.



The Member commented about the information on page 8 of the report regarding recorded crimes and asked for more information and details. Officers said they could provide the Harbourside Report to Members if it would be helpful. **Action: Officers to provide the Harbourside Report.**

A Member asked what type of 'licensed' venue in Figure 1- Police ASB incidents by ASB Type graph on page 10 of report it referred to? Officers said they would need to check that point after the meeting and come back with a reply. **Action: Offers to report back on what type of 'licensed' venue the graph on page 10 of report referred to.**

A member commented that the figures on page 11 of the report under paragraph 7.16 didn't seem to make sense. Officers said that they would look into the figures but the point of the information was to emphasise that the figures were relatively high.

A Member asked for clarification on page 5 of the report where Public Health (PH) was mentioned and asked what their involvement was with this. Officers said that they were priorities that they wanted address and where preventative measures were being put in place. That particular reference to PH was a new drug and alcohol board that was being set up.

## 26 Waste Up-date Report

The Waste Strategic Client Manager introduced the paper to Members which focussed on the following areas:

- Update on Commercial Waste Standard
- Update on Flats Recycling Project
- Update on Non-Standard Collections

The following points were then discussed:

A Member said they had concerns about recycling rates slipping back and asked for more clarity about the reasons for this. Officers said they shared the same concerns and it was likely to related to residents spending more time at home and consuming more at home as there had also been an increase in residual waste. They were currently analysing the data to understand what had caused behavioural changes to find out why this was the case as there were still some unanswered questions. It was said that Bristol did still have higher levels of recycling than most other core cities. Members agreed that more analysis was needed so that fuller explanations could be provided.

The Chair thanked the Waste Strategic Client Manager for the presentation and said it was very helpful. He then asked about recycling in flats and the results of a trial that had taken place on Chandos Road. He also asked if having different services across city and therefore not one consistent message. Did that make communication more difficult? The officer said they were looking to provide equity of service across the City. The method of collection may be slightly different but the message was still the same. With regards to the trial on Chandos Road they had removed the bins from the street but residents had



left bags and boxes out instead. He said communication did now need to be more targeted yes but there was also a need for people to take greater ownership of their waste as well.

It was asked if 'mingled' recycling might mean less quality and cause problems? The officer said it was a potential solution but yes it could have unforeseen circumstances

A Member asked about the enforcement approach of the New Commercial Waste Standard and how that might encourage businesses to reduce current types of waste such as polystyrene boxes that are often still used by some outlets. Officers said businesses would be allowed 3 months to engage but now they have to take more responsibility for their waste and do things differently in future. Officers said they were also looking into a potential use and reuse charter for local businesses which could be part of the Going for Gold - Sustainable Food City status. This new standard could help to prompt an improvement in standards.

The Chair encouraged officers work with Ward Councillors on these changes. It was said that some areas of the City were very different from each other and Councillors could help by providing information their local areas.

The increase in levels of fly-tipping in some areas of the City was raised as problem. Members asked what could be done to improve the situation. Officers said they were working with Neighbourhood Enforcement officers and the Bristol Waste Company to identify 'hot spots' and improving how information was captured to enable action to be taken and to help dissuade fly-tippers.

The Chair asked about the Old City and said he understood there were some concerns from traders about how the new system works. Officers said there were 2 windows of opportunity i.e. am and pm and they would capture and analyse the data about who was using which window. It was added that some companies also offered a concierge service so that they have key and can go in and get bins if needed.

A Members said in previous years private operators had not wanted to provide intel to local authorities and he asked if the situation was still the same now? Officers said yes this was still a national problem. Operators were not forthcoming with information or data because it was seen as 'commercially sensitive'. The Council was however said to be working well with Bristol Waste Company and had made requests for tonnage data. The Council also wanted to engage with more local operators where possible in future.

A Member asked about the two slots and whether there any planned flexibility on these times? Officers said the new system would be reviewed after a period of time. There are solutions that meant businesses didn't need to be there or be open.

It was asked if officers thought the noise at 5am would be problem? They said they hadn't received any complaints.



The Waste Strategic Client Manager said that in the near future the new system would be expanded into the Clean Air Zone (CAZ) and they would then certainly be looking to engage with Ward Councillors as part of that process.

Members thanked the Waste Strategic Client Manager for the information and his time.

## 27 Citizens Services Report

The Citizen Services Manager introduced the report and highlighted the key information to Members.

- Increased opening hours in some areas to where there is high demand for services and support.
- High and increasing numbers of vulnerable citizens presenting at the Customer Service Points (CSP)
- Difficulties in recruitment.
- Introduction of new technology such as chat bots and more online self-serve options to help more people.

The following points were then discussed:

- What provision was there for non-English speakers? Interpreters can be arranged and this can be done via conference call or in-person.
- Members were interested in seeing call times and idle times data. Officers said they could provide that data to Members but on average each call was 10 minutes. **Action: Officers to provide further data after the meeting.**
- It was asked if officers monitored whether situations had been dealt with satisfactorily or if people were okay after they had left the system. Officers said the calls would currently need to go through a different platform to do that as they were not all currently integrated. Members said it would be useful to see what percentage of situations were resolved after contacting the CSPs.
- A Member commented that they had previously been sceptical when officers informed them that a considerable number of people wished to make contact online rather than in person or on the telephone and asked did they still think that was the case? Officers said yes but the Council wasn't currently able to provide as many services as they would like to online. They had been working with other local authorities and had benchmarked the services against others, some of which have 80% of their services online.
- Officers were then asked about the percentage of face-to-face visits over the last 2 years. It was said that the number of face-to-face appointments had dropped especially during lockdown when it had been absolutely necessary. However, they were now starting to increase again and for many of those visiting now it was because of financial hardship reasons.
- A Member asked about the average call time of 6.5 minutes and whether officers thought they would be able to reduce that time? Officers said that due to the very complex nature of some calls it would require some additional technology, training and development to help improve home working for some colleagues. Members asked if the 2-minute target in the report was



actually realistic. Officers said it would be a big achievement in the current climate but yes that was the aim and with new technology it was a realistic aim.

- It was suggested that a Members Briefing should take place once everything was in place so that Members could direct people to the right channels of support.

## 28 Trees Scrutiny Working Group Report

The Chair of the Scrutiny Commission and also Chair of the Trees Scrutiny Working Group, Councillor Martin Fodor introduced the Report and briefly explained the purpose and aims of the Group's work. He thanked the other Members who took part, the Officers that supported the Group and the Cabinet Members and external stakeholders that also positively engaged in the Working Group. He added that the Council had now agreed to develop a Tree Strategy and Tree Planting Plan which was a very positive development.

The Chair invited the Representative of The Tree Forum who was in attendance if they would like to add any comments. The Tree Forum representative said that he agreed on the importance of a Tree Strategy and was very grateful for and endorsed the Working Group Tree Report. He also added his views on the importance of the next iterations of the Local Plan and suggested that a key part of that should be the integration of the Tree Strategy.

The Chair then invited Members of the Commission and Councillor Nicola Beech, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Climate, Ecology, Waste and Energy if they would like to comment on the report.

A Member commented that it was difficult to disagree with the recommendations report but he thought it was rather open ended and suggested that Members receive a future up-date on what preventative work and progress had taken place. The Chair also agreed that a future report should come to scrutiny to measure outcomes.

The Cabinet Member in attendance welcomed the report and said she thought it was very constructive. However, and as Chair of the Local Plan Member Working Group, she added that there were also some complex issues involved such as where the Tree Strategy sat with regards to the Local Plan i.e. along-side it or part of it, because the Local Plan was about land use.

The Chair commented that there were also some planning issues that weren't just about land use. He then went on to say that a tree protection order (TPO) didn't really mean that it won't get cut down. But it can help protect it. The Cabinet Member agreed and said that was sort of the point she was making, in that trees and planning often get pegged against one another. She said if too much emphasis was placed on the planning context then some wards would get overlooked. It was also important to consider there are different types of land and land use. The strategy therefore needed to be considered at from a City-wide perspective and therefore it would be better for the Tree Strategy to stand-alone and for the two to Plans to complement one another.





Members were generally very positive about the report and recommendations.. It was suggested that regular monitoring of the situation was important and that up-dates on what progress was made should be reported back to the Commission.

A Member added that it was not just planning but also highways where there were existing and ongoing issues with regards to existing street trees. It was said there was almost no communication and before anyone knew what was happening trees were felled. Many trees were said to be lost in this way every year.

**The Commission resolved to:**

- Approve the report and recommendations.
- Send the report to Councillor Ellie King; Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health, Communities and Bristol One City for comment.
- Add the request for an up-date on the recommendations to a future Commission meeting

The Commission expressed their thanks to everyone who had engaged in the Working Group.

## **29 Work Programme**

Members noted the Work Programme.

Meeting ended at 16.46

