

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the Council Offices, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Tuesday, 8 January 2019 commencing at 4:30 pm

Present:

Chair	Councillor P W Awford
Vice Chair	Councillor R E Allen

and Councillors:

G J Bocking, K J Cromwell, J E Day, D T Foyle, P A Godwin, R M Hatton, H C McLain, T A Spencer, P D Surman, M G Sztymiak, H A E Turbyfield and M J Williams

OS.63 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 63.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was taken as read.
- 63.2 The Chair welcomed the Managing Director of Ubico to the meeting and indicated that he was present for Agenda Item 8 - Ubico Report.

OS.64 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

- 64.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P E Stokes. There were no substitutions for the meeting.

OS.65 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 65.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 26 June 2012 and took effect from 1 July 2012.
- 65.2 There were no declarations made on this occasion.

OS.66 MINUTES

- 66.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2018, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

OS.67 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

- 67.1 Attention was drawn to the Executive Committee Forward Plan, circulated at Pages No. 14-18. Members were asked to determine whether there were any questions for the relevant Lead Members and what support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could give to the work contained within the plan.
- 67.2 It was

RESOLVED That the Executive Committee Forward Plan be **NOTED**.

OS.68 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

- 68.1 Attention was drawn to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2018/19, circulated at Pages No. 19-25, which Members were asked to consider.
- 68.2 With regard to the pending items listed in the Work Programme, a Member indicated that the West Oxfordshire Visit/Presentation on Grounds Maintenance could be removed as a presentation had been received by the Grass Cutting Improvement Working Group at its first meeting. The Chair understood that the Working Group had made considerable progress in a short space of time and he looked forward to receiving its report and recommendations at the next meeting. The Member went on to question what progress had been made in respect of the Single Use Plastic Policy and the Deputy Chief Executive advised that he had asked Officers for an update and would be happy to share that with Members when it was received.

68.3 It was

RESOLVED That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2018/19 be **NOTED** and the West Oxfordshire Visit/Presentation on Grounds Maintenance be removed from the list of pending items.

OS.69 PLANNING KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 69.1 Attention was drawn to the report of the Head of Development Services, circulated at Pages No. 26-35, which asked Members to consider the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in relation to the planning service.
- 69.2 The Head of Development Services explained that the Development Services review had been approved at Council in April 2018 and progress against the supporting action plan had been reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October 2018 where Members had requested that a report on the KPIs for the planning service be brought to the Committee. The Business Transformation Manager advised that the proposed indicators focused on a number of themes, the first of which related to the validation of planning applications; this was important as it was often the first contact the customer had with the planning team. The complexity of the process depended upon whether an application was 'major' i.e. 10 or more dwellings or 1,000sqm or more, 'minor' i.e. one to nine dwellings or less than 1,000sqm, or 'other' which were predominantly householder applications but also included advertisement consent, listed building consent or change of use. Whilst the team was not where it wanted to be in terms of current performance and speed, there had been improvement and a whole suite of actions would ensure that continued. Page No. 30 related to the speed of decisions on applications which Members would be familiar with as they were presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis as part of the performance management report. It should be borne in mind that a national planning performance regime had been introduced in October 2013 in which the government had set minimum standards for the speed and quality of planning decisions on planning applications over a two year rolling period and a local planning authority could be "designated" as underperforming if it did not meet those standards. If a Council was designated, applicants could apply directly to the Planning Inspectorate for the category of development – major, non-major or both – for which the Council was underperforming. The threshold for speed of decisions was 60% for major development and 70% for non-major development; as Tewkesbury Borough Council was performing significantly above these thresholds it was recommended that the current local performance indicators - which were divided into major, minor and other - were retained.

- 69.3 The Business Transformation Manager explained that the purpose of planning was to achieve the right outcome at the right time and a KPI had been suggested in relation to the number of dwellings and affordable homes permitted which would demonstrate how the authority was contributing to the housing needs of the borough. In addition, an annual review of Planning Committee decisions was proposed to be undertaken to establish the number of decisions contrary to the Officer recommendation and what issues that might raise, for example, if there was a need for more training, better presentations etc. It was also proposed to consider the outcome of appeals in line with the requirements of the Protocol for Councillors and Officers Involved in the Planning Process. Page No. 32 of the report related to appeals and the quality of decision-making which was also part of the government's criteria for designation as a poorly performing planning authority. Quality was measured as a proportion of all applications which were refused planning permission but then allowed on appeal. As with speed of decision, the measures were applied separately to major and non-major applications over a two year rolling period. The target for decisions on major and non-major applications was for no more than 10% to be allowed on appeal and that was rolled forward each year. Performance was currently quite good but would need to be monitored going forward. In terms of applications for costs against the Council if an appeal was upheld, it was felt that the target should be zero as costs were only awarded for unreasonable behaviour.
- 69.4 In respect of planning enforcement, cases were classed as Category A, B, C or D and KPIs were proposed for each – Category A cases were those where, without prompt action, there was material risk of further harm; Category B cases were those where development was causing, or likely to cause, irreparable harm or damage; Category C cases were those where there was a risk of material harm to the environment or undue harm to residential amenity; and Category D cases were breaches causing limited disturbance to local residents or the environment. These had been based on what was set out within the Planning Enforcement Plan. The Business Transformation Manager explained that customer satisfaction within the planning service was often difficult to measure but it was felt that it would be helpful to carry out an annual review of corporate complaints about the service. In addition, a customer satisfaction survey had been prepared, which would initially be tested on customers of the pre-application service, so there would also be a KPI in relation to that. Members were advised that the pre-application service – which was discretionary - was being reviewed and additional KPIs would come forward as a result of that. It was also intended to carry out some work during the next financial year to establish the cost of delivering the planning service. Once that data had been captured and analysed, it would provide information which was likely to form the basis of further KPIs.
- 69.5 A Member raised concern that, due to the layout of the report, it was difficult to see at a glance how the Council was currently performing against each of the proposed KPIs. The Committee had previously agreed that a standard template should be used for performance reports with a smiley face system which he would have liked to see applied here. With regard to Page No. 28, Paragraphs 2.1.2-2.1.4 of the report, he questioned whether the targets were sensible and realistic – it was common to see improvement quickly from a few easy fixes but this was difficult to sustain in the long term. The Business Transformation Manager advised that the KPIs had been discussed at length by the team who had been surprised by some of the statistics and keen to improve. There had been a significant recruitment drive and the planning service was now fully staffed so, whilst challenging, the targets were thought to be achievable. She explained that the purpose of this report was to ensure that the proposed KPIs were at the right level and performance would be reported using the standard format going forward. A Member congratulated Officers on the excellent set of targets set out at Page No. 28 – the trajectory in terms of

validation of minor applications, from 16.5 days in 2017/18 to 11 days in 2018/19 and a target of seven days for 2019/20, was exactly what the Council should be striving to achieve.

- 69.6 A Member drew attention to Page No. 31 of the report and the annual review of Planning Committee overturns which he felt was aimed at Members and he questioned whether Case Officers would be considered to establish if there were any patterns in this regard. The Business Transformation Manager provided assurance that the review was intended to be a qualitative assessment to take stock of where the Committee was and there was a role for both Members and Officers in democratic accountability. She explained that decisions were quite often finely balanced which was the purpose of having a Planning Committee. Another Member expressed the view that there was also a need to look at situations where the Committee permitted an application against an Officer recommendation to refuse in order to look for trends and identify training needs. The Business Transformation Manager undertook to bring a template to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee before it was populated; it was intended to look at a whole financial year so this would be after April 2019.
- 69.7 A Member noted that a customer satisfaction questionnaire was being carried out in relation to the pre-application service and he felt it would be more appropriate to do this at the end of the planning process as customers may feel differently if they had followed pre-application advice but their application had subsequently been refused. It would also be important to know if the customer had submitted an application before or if this was their first experience of using the service. In response, the Business Transformation Manager clarified that the questionnaire was being tested on the pre-application service before being rolled out to all customers; a questionnaire had been drafted for customers who had already had a decision on their planning application which asked whether they had received pre-application advice.
- 69.8 With regard to the number of homes delivered, a Member noted that 2,157 dwellings had been granted outline planning permission in 2017/18 and he questioned how many of those had been on appeal. The Head of Development Services confirmed that this figure included those allowed on appeal and she undertook to find out how many were appeals following the meeting. Referring to the recent appeal decision where an Inspector had found that the Council was unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, a Member questioned how this impacted on other applications which had been refused on that basis. The Head of Development Services advised that the Council did not agree with the Inspector's methodology and calculations and was currently taking advice on how to proceed. In terms of how this would impact on applications that had been refused, she stressed that each application was considered on its own planning merits; the Council's position was that it was not engaging the paragraph in the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to the five year supply and the development plan being out of date. In a situation where the Council was forced to concede the issue there were a number of things that could be done in relation to boosting the supply of land through the planning process and making a case that some of the sites the Inspector felt were undeliverable could be delivered, and she clarified that the Planning Policy Team had been working on this already. In response to a query as to whether the Tewkesbury Borough Plan would now be brought forward as a matter of urgency, the Head of Development Services confirmed that it was always intended to bring the plan forward as soon as possible; however, 450 representations had been received during the consultation which Officers were working through. Some of the representations, particularly those from statutory consultees, were quite weighty and could potentially require additional work to be undertaken but she provided assurance this would be done as swiftly as possible via the Borough Plan Working Group. Notwithstanding this, she advised that it was likely to be some months before it became clear what the Plan would look like

bearing in mind the complexity of some of the issues. The Planning Policy Team was small but, if it became apparent there was a resource issue that would have a detrimental impact on the delivery of the plan, that would be flagged up to Members. She stressed that decisions on the borough plan needed to be made in the soundest way possible, taking on board all of the information and ensuring that statutory consultees were content. In response to a query regarding the significant amount of responses that had been received in relation to Cheltenham Borough Council's local plan consultation, Members were advised that this was no indication of the quality of the plan or public engagement, rather it was the content of the representation that was important - some would be one-line emails whereas others would raise technical matters relating to the National Planning Policy Framework which needed in-depth consideration.

69.9 Having considered the information provided, it was

RESOLVED That the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in relation to the planning service be **NOTED**.

OS.70 UBICO REPORT

70.1 The report of the Head of Community Services, circulated at Pages No. 36-83, provided an update on the performance of the Ubico contract for the waste, recycling, street cleansing and grounds maintenance services for the first six months of 2018/19. Members were asked to consider the report.

70.2 The Head of Community Services advised that the level of information provided to monitor the Ubico contract had increased significantly compared to previous years to allow greater oversight of services and he felt this was demonstrated by the openness and transparency of the Ubico performance report, attached at Appendix 1 to the report. He advised that the amount of residual household waste per household was very similar to the previous year and there had been a small increase in the percentage of household waste reused, recycled and composted from 54.07% to 55.57% which was positive. In terms of missed bin collections, the Key Performance Indicator had been revised significantly from 1% in previous years - meaning that Ubico would have been well within the target of 42,000 missed collections for the year – to 0.1% as part of the improvement plan and had since been further revised to a 0.05% stretch target. The graph at Page No. 50 of the report gave a visual representation of the pattern of missed bin collections between April and September 2018 and showed a drop between July and August with a slight increase in September. It was now possible to track missed bin collections per waste stream and the graph at Page No. 48 of the report showed that recycling and refuse was broadly within target but food caddies, which were often hidden behind large bins, were missed more frequently. The Managing Director of Ubico advised that a common question he was asked was how Ubico compared with other contractors. He had investigated the reporting profiles for the South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse District Councils - which had contracts with Biffa and were first and second in the country in terms of recycling with a rate of approximately 61% - and they had a missed bin rate of 0.11% in 2017 which was outside their stretch target of 0.04%. It was noted that the service was very similar to Tewkesbury Borough Council's with two weekly refuse and recycling collections, and the most interesting finding was the suggestion that the stretch target had not been attained because of additional food waste, which had been introduced mid-2017, and the fact that rounds were bigger therefore there was a higher level of human error. The Forest of Dean District Council, which had a kerbside sort service operated by Biffa, had a missed bin rate of 0.06% in the last quarter; the latest available data, for October and November 2017, showed that Tewkesbury Borough Council was comparable with a missed bin rate of 0.07% which was getting closer to its own stretch target. Biffa was recognised nationally as a good provider in

terms of its systems and internal processes, for instance, it used in-cab technology so was able to log addresses where bins had not been presented for collection etc. therefore he was content that Tewkesbury Borough Council's weekly missed bin collections were currently at 45-65 per week and that the target would deliver continuous improvement.

- 70.3 With regard to garden waste, the Head of Community Services indicated that garden waste subscriptions had continued to increase with over 2,200 since April. Requests for new bins remained high with an average of 117 refuse bins and 125 recycling bins requested per month and it was noted that the stock control system introduced by Ubico as part of the improvement plan had meant that stock had been maintained at an appropriate level. Bulky waste collections remained consistent with an average of 233 requests per month; there was currently a charge of £82 for this service, with a 50% discount for those in receipt of benefit, but this was being reviewed. Members were informed that the street cleansing review would be completed shortly; this had been delayed by the issues in relation to the Energy from Waste site at Javelin Park which had required a lot of resources from both the Council and Ubico. The graph on the left side of Page No. 62 of the report showed the number of street cleanliness complaints, for example, requests for litterbin and dog bin emptying, which had a target of two working days for completion; this was not currently being achieved and was an area that needed more work. It was noted that the graph on the right related to 'special circumstances', for example, requests for litter picking on an A road, which had a target of 14 working days for completion due to the more complex nature. Similarly, fly-tipping was not consistently achieving its two-day target which could be an issue with recording - for instance, multiple reports of the same fly-tip might be recorded separately - in addition, whilst all fly-tips were recorded, some were on private land and therefore not the responsibility of Ubico to collect. As such, this indicator needed to be reviewed in order to better reflect what was being collected and what Ubico was being monitored on.
- 70.4 The Head of Community Services indicated that he had been surprised to see an increase in the number of formal complaints about waste and recycling, with 68 in the first half of 2018/19 compared with 82 for the full year 2017/18, particularly considering the significant changes to the service in the last year. It was thought this could be attributed to complainants responding because of past service failures i.e. if a customer's bin had been missed five times in 2017/18, a single missed bin in the current year could prompt them to make a formal complaint. In terms of financial performance, the report set out that Ubico had forecast an overspend of £140,000; the latest data meant that had increased to £153,000. Whilst this was significant, it needed to be considered in the context of the £3.7M contract; nevertheless, assurance was provided that the Council was impressing on Ubico the need to bring the services within budget. The national driver shortage had been particularly challenging, and had resulted in an over-reliance on agency staff, as such, consideration was being given to increasing the current 5% market supplement in order to attract and retain drivers as well as using the apprenticeship levy to help Ubico to 'grow its own' drivers. The Head of Community Services recognised that Members had been frustrated with the lack of detail contained within previous reports so he hoped this report had helped to address that; he pointed out that this report was more in line with the level of information needed by Officers in order to monitor the Ubico contract in a meaningful way and he confirmed that all partners received broadly the same information so it could be more easily compared with other contracts as and when necessary.
- 70.5 A Member raised concern that some of the graphs contained within Appendix 1 to the report were difficult to understand, not least because of the use of similar colours. He felt that Members needed an indication of whether performance was good, bad or indifferent rather than just giving a percentage or a figure. Ubico had promised to provide economies of scale and he sought clarification on the likely

impact of Cheltenham Borough Council's decision to leave the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Committee. The Head of Community Services explained that the graphs used within the report did include targets so Members could see if they were being achieved, for example, Page No. 44 set out the number of missed recycling collections with the target clearly shown as a red line - anything below the line was within target and anything above the line was outside the target. He recognised that the Committee was used to seeing smiley faces to show performance but this report was of such importance he wanted to ensure that it was very clear what each indicator was; notwithstanding this, he would be happy to add a traffic light /speedometer system for future reports. He went on to confirm that Cheltenham Borough Council would remain in the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Committee until later in the year; it was unclear at this stage what would happen after that time but this was being considered by the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Committee and the Joint Waste Team. In the interim, Tewkesbury Borough Council was contributing towards the management of the Joint Waste Team which was costing approximately £1,000 until September 2019. He confirmed that Cheltenham Borough Council would still be part of the Ubico contract. The Managing Director of Ubico thanked the Member for the feedback on the report format and indicated that this was a learning process for the organisation as there had been no meaningful reporting until recently. Every effort was being made to improve transparency and openness given that Ubico was a teckal company, and therefore a shared endeavour. His overall view was that performance was good but there was work to do. In terms of governance, the partners were all equal shareholders, including Cheltenham Borough Council. Ubico now operated a number of contracts and liked to focus on the similarities between them rather than the differences - for example, two weekly refuse collections and two weekly garden waste collections - in order to begin to model what an integrated service might look like; it would be the Council's right as a stakeholder as to whether it took that option when the business plan was presented for approval.

- 70.6 With regard to the national driver shortage, a Member questioned whether drivers left employment with Ubico and returned as agency drivers as that was a way they could earn more money. The Managing Director of Ubico advised that drivers realised there were preferential deals available, and some would take whichever contract was more favourable; whilst it was not uncommon, he did not have exact figures for drivers who left and were subsequently re-employed. Recruitment was a genuine national problem; however, he was able to have open and honest conversations with the Head of Community Services around how this could be approached which meant that Tewkesbury Borough Council was in a good position to address this issue. A Member indicated that she was struggling to understand the graph at Page No. 76 of the report in respect of reasons for absence and clarification was provided that that particular indicator was a global one for the whole company rather than one which related solely to Tewkesbury Borough Council. A Member queried why there were two 'other' categories within the percentage spilt chart at Page No. 76 and the Managing Director of Ubico explained that it had been difficult to extract this data from the nurse-led absence system so this was a work in progress; however, he confirmed that one of the 'other' categories covered a whole host of individual reasons for absence which could not be mapped but added up to a significant amount.
- 70.7 A Member drew attention to Page No. 69 of the report which showed near miss reporting and he questioned what the reason was for the increase in the 'struck by moving vehicle' category in July, August and September. In response, the Managing Director of Ubico indicated that he would need to look back at the previous submissions but it could be that there was no particular reason – near miss reporting had historically been low as drivers tended to consider it as part of the job and they had to be sent constant reminders about reporting so it could be that they were more likely to report incidents if they had recently been prompted. The

Member indicated that it would have been helpful to have that commentary in the report and the Managing Director of Ubico thanked him for that feedback. In response to a query as to when the analysis of the vehicle fleet could be expected, the Head of Community Services confirmed that the fleet had just been valued which would give an indication of its condition and he undertook to ensure this was included in the annual report in future. The Managing Director of Ubico advised that the spend on maintenance and repair was also an indication of performance; that was likely to increase as the vehicles got older. A Member questioned whether vehicles were checked regularly, and the Head of Community Services confirmed that checks were undertaken on a daily basis in line with the scoring system set out at Page No. 82 of the report. The Managing Director of Ubico explained that the fleet compliance score was an assessment following a set of standards to satisfy the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) - should it carry out a spot-check - that vehicles were being maintained correctly and that drivers were compliant with the operator's licence; Ubico set itself a 90% benchmark in that regard. In response to a query as to whether drivers used the same vehicles, Members were informed that rounds were kept consistent, where possible, and drivers preferred to use the same vehicle.

70.8 A Member congratulated Ubico on a successful Christmas period in terms of bin collections as he understood that had gone very well from the feedback he had received. The Managing Director of Ubico advised that Ubico was always looking to make improvements but the fact that there had been no severe weather conditions had helped. Notwithstanding this, a lot of material had been collected during that period and there had been a couple of pinch points which would be subject to an internal review. A Member noted that there had been some concern regarding street cleansing and he sought clarification as to when the review would be concluded. In response, the Head of Community Services confirmed that it was in the Joint Waste Team business plan for 2018/19 but the review had been slightly delayed so it may not be delivered by March; he undertook to come back to Members with a fixed date following the meeting.

70.9 The Chair thanked the Head of Community Services and Managing Director of Ubico for their report and it was

RESOLVED That the Ubico performance report for the first six months of 2018/19 be **NOTED**.

OS.71 ENVIRO-CRIMES UPDATE

71.1 Attention was drawn to the report of the Head of Community Services, circulated at Pages No. 84-90, which set out the progress made in tackling enviro-crime across the borough.

71.2 The Head of Community Services advised that the report before Members was an interim report setting out the actions in respect of enviro-crimes between April and September 2018. The previous enviro-crimes action plan had been delivered and the team was now in the process of drawing up a new action plan for 2019/20 which would be brought to the Committee as part of the annual report in June 2019. The Environmental Health Manager drew attention to Page No. 86, Paragraph 2.1 of the report, which set out the metrics currently recorded and the figures for the first two quarters of 2018/19. With regard to littering, he advised that the number of complaints had been relatively consistent and was generally low; however, it was intended to engage other Officers and Members to act as 'eyes and ears' in order to broaden the Council's presence across the borough and to maximise the chances of catching people littering. In terms of dog fouling, a Public Space Protection Order had been put in place earlier in the year which increased the fine that could be imposed and required dog walkers to produce, on request, a means for picking up after their dog. In terms of the latter, he stressed

that it was not intended to take enforcement action straight away as it could be that people might have used the bags they had taken with them etc. but was intended to facilitate engagement, particularly with responsible dog owners. An advertisement had been included in the Tewkesbury Borough News which had received positive feedback and Members were advised that it was intended to target specific hotspots so any suggestions would be welcomed.

- 71.3 In terms of enforcement action, Members were informed that a case involving a number of waste offences had been taken to court in November 2018 but the individual had not attended, therefore this had not been resolved and a warrant had been issued for their arrest. A man had appeared in court in September 2018 in connection with a fly-tipping incident but, unfortunately, the Council had been unable to take this to trial as a key witness had no longer been available. It was difficult to track down individuals when it was not necessarily a high Police priority; however, the Council did have a very good working relationship with the Police and had carried out a joint operation on rural crime in November 2018 which was something the Environmental Health Manager would be looking to repeat. He went on to advise that a large number of the fixed penalties served in the first six months of the year related to incidents that occurred in and around the recycling centres at Morrison's in Tewkesbury and Tesco in Bishop's Cleeve. Discussions had taken place with the Store Manager of Morrison's as to whether CCTV could be installed but, due to budget and corporate restraints, he had taken the decision to restrict the recycling centre to textile banks only. The impact on the recycling centre at Spring Gardens was being monitored and the Head of Community Services advised that there had been a significant report of fly-tipping during the previous week, which he had gone out to investigate himself, and he confirmed that evidence of at least four companies had been found so enforcement action would be taken. The Environmental Health Manager explained that the problem at Tesco in Bishop's Cleeve seemed to be quite significant and signs had subsequently been erected to indicate that the area was being monitored which had reduced the number of issues. He noted that there had been a drop in the number of fixed penalty notices but pointed out that this was partly because there was a choice of pursuing a prosecution for fly-tipping rather than issuing a fixed penalty, and, depending on its nature and seriousness, that was often the preferred option.
- 71.4 Members were advised that community engagement activity had been carried out in respect of dog fouling and fly-tipping and, whilst there were limitations in terms of what could be done, if Officers were made aware of hotspots then there were measures that could be employed to target those areas. A range of complaints had been received by different partner agencies regarding issues in and around Coriander Drive, Churchdown and a multi-agency meeting had been held to develop a strategy for engaging with the local community and working with them to tackle anti-social issues. This was considered to be a much more robust approach and one which would help residents take pride in their area. The Head of Community Services indicated that, following the Community Services review, a new structure for Environmental Health was being introduced. The report stated that this had been done in November 2018 but he clarified that it was a work in progress; existing staff had moved into their new roles and new members of staff would be starting work over the coming weeks and further recruitment to the remaining vacant posts was ongoing.
- 71.5 A Member raised concern that dog fouling was as much of a problem as it had ever been, according to residents, so it did not appear that any action that had been taken was working. Whilst he recognised that this was an interim report, he felt that more detail was required rather than just stating what had been done, for example, he wanted to know more about the potential of fining people for dog fouling. The Head of Community Services indicated that he would take this on board for the next report; he had received an email which needed to be actioned in

relation to fines and he committed to looking into that following the meeting. Another Member was pleased to see the section on community engagement - it was a big job, but if Officers could get that level of support from the public, he felt it could be very effective. The Head of Community Services explained that, under the new structure, Environmental Health would be divided into three teams based on geographical area which it was hoped would help in terms of taking ownership and communications etc. A Member questioned how much publicity was given to enforcement as it was important to send a message that the Council was taking action. Members were advised that action was reported on the Council's website and across social media; whilst press releases were issued, they were not necessarily picked up. Email updates had also been provided to Members over the last two months and that information had been passed to Town and Parish Councils to help engender ownership. The Head of Community Services provided assurance that Officers were doing all they could but were reliant on the press running the stories. A Member indicated that she had seen photographs of vehicles on social media which had been used to name and shame fly-tippers and she felt this could be a very useful platform in relation to enviro-crimes.

- 71.6 In response to a general query regarding consistency of reports, the Head of Corporate Services indicated that the standard template for monitoring reports, which had previously been adopted by the Committee, had been circulated to Officers. The Head of Corporate Services had advised that an action plan would be provided with the annual report in June and going forward. On that basis, it was

RESOLVED That the progress made in tackling enviro-crimes across the borough be **NOTED**.

The meeting closed at 6:18 pm