

**Minutes of: INTERNAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date of Meeting:** 27 March 2012

**Present:** Councillor B Theckston(in the Chair);  
Councillors K Audin; D Boden; S Cohen; D Cassidy; M  
James; J Harris; A Matthews; A Quinn and D O'Hanlon

**Public in attendance:** No members of the public were present at the meeting.

**Also in attendance:** Councillor Isherwood- Executive Member for Environment and Transport

**Apologies for absence:**

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#### **ISC.749 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Quinn declared a personal interest in relation to Minute ISC.xxx below, Update on Recycling Performance, as a Council representative on the Greater Manchester Waste Authority

#### **ISC.750 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No questions were asked by members of the public present at the meeting.

#### **ISC.751 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**It was agreed:**

That the Minutes of the last meeting, held on 15 February 2012, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **ISC.752 CHILDREN'S CENTRE CHARGING**

Further to Minute ISC.469, of the meeting of this Committee, held on 29 March 2011, the Executive Director of Children's Services submitted a report providing a summary of the impact of charging for non core activities within Children's Centres. The report set out information in respect of income received and provided feedback from individual centres on the impact of charging for complimentary activities. The report concluded that no negative impact from the policy of charging for non core activities had been reported from Children's Centres.

Sue Reynolds, Head of Service, reported that work was being carried out to monitor the effect of charging for non core services nationally by the charity 4 Children and undertook to share the results of this with the committee when published.

Questions and comments were invited and the following issues were raised:

- Concerns were expressed about the potential for possible increased charges which would affect those service users who did not qualify to have charges waived. Members highlighted that although there appeared to be no negative impact at the moment, the service needed to be alert to the possibility of a negative effect in the future.
- In response to a question from Councillor Cohen concerning the lack of financial information from Butterstyle Children's Centre, Sue Reynolds explained that this had yet to be attained from the Centre but undertook to provide the information as soon as it was available.
- In response to a question concerning the lack of charging at Hoyle Children's Centre it was explained that the Local Authority did not currently run the Centre, which had opted not to adopt a charging policy at the present time.
- In response to a question from Councillor Cohen, Sue Reynolds undertook to provide a breakdown of the full cost of providing non core activities.
- Councillor O'Hanlon questioned the methods used to obtain feedback from service users and suggested an independently returned survey be carried out.

**It was agreed:**

1. That this Committee notes the current standardised charging regime for non core and requests that the policy continue to be monitored.
2. That cost benefit analysis report be submitted to this Committee in September 2012 monitoring the impact of charging, particularly with regard to the possible effect on the uptake of core activities.

**ISC.753 UPDATE ON RECYCLING PERFORMANCE FOLLOWING THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION SERVICES IN OCTOBER 2011**

Further to Minute ISC.167 of the meeting of this Committee, held on 30 August 2011, the Executive Member for Environment and Transport submitted a report providing an update on performance in respect of recycling. From October 2011 the following changes had been introduced:

- Introduction of a 2-weekly collection of refuse using the existing 240 litre grey bin
- Introduction of a 4-weekly paper/card collection via a new 240 litre green bin
- Retention of the 4-weekly co-mingled blue bin recycling collection
- Retention of the 2-weekly garden waste brown bin collection
- Introduction of food waste collections

The report set out the recycling rates and tonnage collected since the introduction of the new collection services. The Executive Member reported that the average recycling rate following the service changes was 43.19%, which exceeded the target rate of 40%.

Further information was also included in the report setting out plans aimed at achieving a 50% recycling rate as follows:

- In May garden/food waste collections are to be rolled out to a further circa 25,000 properties to achieve near borough-wide coverage.
- The roll out of dry recycling to all flats and apartments will be completed.
- Dry and food waste recycling will be promoted to all commercial waste customers.
- Food waste recycling will be introduced into all schools and Council buildings.
- Town centre, on street recycling will be considered.
- Ongoing educational and promotional work will continue and concerted communications campaigns will be delivered in areas of lower recycling participation.

Questions and comments were invited from members of the Committee and the following issues were raised:

- In response to a question concerning work done in respect of looking at the possibility of returning to weekly grey bin collections, the Executive Member highlighted the success of the new collection services and the positive effect on the recycling rate which ultimately resulted in savings being achieved through reduced landfill tax costs.
- With regard to the cost of the Educational Programme, the Executive Member highlighted the effective nature of the promotional campaign that had been undertaken and provided a breakdown of the associated costs.
- In response to a question from Councillor Harris, the Executive Member explained that individual solutions were being looked at in respect of dry recycling at blocks of flats and apartments
- Councillor Quinn highlighted the importance of encouraging supermarkets to reduce food and product packaging.
- Councillor Cassidy requested feedback from the information gathered by officers canvassing residents with regard to recycling issues.
- Councillor James acknowledged the work done with the jewish community and requested that officers continue to meet with the community to address recycling issues.

**It was agreed:**

That the update be noted.

**ISC.754 WINTER MAINTENANCE**

Further to Minute ISC.445 of the meeting of this Committee held on 7 December 2011 , the Assistant Director of Operations gave a verbal update in respect of the winter maintenance services over the last winter. The following information was given as part of the update:

- 2500 tonnes of safecoat salt was available at Bolton, of which 1125 tonnes was actually used (this compared with 1800 tonnes during the previous winter)
- 1000 tonnes of grey grit salt was available at Bradley Fold, of which 350 tonnes was actually used.
- Gritting vehicles had been deployed on 40 occasions, with the first call out being 4 December

In response to a question concerning hand gritting, the Assistant Director explained that staff from local area based teams did help out in their own locality when necessary.

In response to a question from Councillor O'Hanlon, the Assistant Director undertook to provide information relating to the cost of filling grit bins within the Borough

**It was agreed**

That the Assistant Director of Operations be thanked for the update.

**ISC.755 VOTE OF THANKS**

Councillors O'Hanlon thanked the Chair, Councillor Theckston, for his commitment to the work of the Committee.

The Chair, Councillor Theckston, thanked all Members for their valuable contributions to the work of the Committee.

**COUNCILLOR B THECKSTON**  
**Chair**

**(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.55pm)**