

# **EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Scrutiny (Climate Change and Environment) Committee**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny (Climate Change and Environment) Committee held in the Coltman VC Room, Town Hall on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2024 at 6.30pm.

### **Present:**

Councillors M. Slater (Chairman), G Allen, Mrs B Ashcroft, A Bailey, M. Holton and M. Huckerby.

### **Officers Present:**

The Corporate and Commercial Manager (James Abbott) and the Principal Democratic Services Officer (Andrea Davies).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs V J Gould and K Smith BEM

#### **38/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest at the commencement of the meeting.

#### **39/24 URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business submitted to the meeting pursuant to Rule 12.

#### **40/24 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from members of the public submitted.

#### **41/24 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

One question had been received from Councillor M Slater in advance of the meeting. A copy of the question and response is appended to these minutes.

Councillors wished to ascertain the number of Cabinet members who had taken part in the training and how up to date those officers who prepared reports were with this training. A response would be circulated under separate cover outside of the meeting

#### **42/24 PUBLIC MINUTES**

##### **Resolved:**

That the Public Minutes of the Meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows.

Those voting for the motion Councillor	Those voting against Councillor	Those abstaining Councillor
M. Slater		
G Allen		
Mrs B Ashcroft		
A. Bailey		
M. Holton		
M Huckerby		

#### 43/24 **FLOODING AND SEWAGE OUTFLOWS WITHIN THE BOROUGH**

Joel Hancock, Waste Team Manager at Severn Trent attended the meeting and gave a presentation to the committee on Incident Reporting and Response; Misuse Management; Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Process and Response and the Long Term Vision and Future Investment of the Company.

An overview was provided of the front line reporting process and response; operational assurance, which dovetailed into the proactive measures Severn Trent had put into place to prevent blockages on the system.

It was noted that approximately 70% of incidents attended were due to misuse of the sewer network. Severn Trent had a targeted Commercial FOG (Fats, Oils and Greases) strategy, whereby a third party (ECAS) would attend businesses on behalf of Severn Trent, visiting businesses in the area, to enquire about current practices. ECAS would also carry out a visit as a result of a reported incident being traced back to a specific company's use of the sewage system. Severn Trent had the power to ensure the company addressed their misuse and provided a solution. Ultimately Severn Trent had the right to charge the business for any non-compliance work needed to be carried out on the network. In addition a Domestic Misuse Strategy was also in place, whereby a dedicated Network Protection team dealt specifically with misuse management issues (including flushing of wipes and sanitary products into the system), this involved direct customer contact through door knocking, leaflets. In addition the Education Team attended schools and public engagement events to raise awareness. Councillors noted that the main aim of both teams was to decrease the misuse on the network.

Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO) were foul sewers which had an overflow to a storm sewer, essentially acting as a flood prevention mechanism in that it prevented hydraulic flooding into properties. Screens were part of the overflows, to prevent solids reaching the watercourse. All CSOs within the network was monitored and a live map would shortly be available on the Severn Trent website. If a monitor were to alarm into the 24 hour call centre, if there is a spillage, the team would attend within 2 hours. The Committee noted that the majority of the time when there was an issue on the monitor, this was due to monitor issues (i.e. wipe caught on the sensor etc.).

Each CSO would undergo a full health check at least once a year, however in reality this was carried out more frequently. A constant review of CSOs was in operation and improvement activity on the system was ongoing.

With regards to the future vision of the organisation, approximately £13billion of investment had been committed, with £4.4Billion on CSO investment over the next 25 years. It was envisaged that Severn Trent work with Local Lead Flood Authorities on potential joint schemes regarding surface water resilience.

It was agreed that a copy of the presentation would be circulated to Members and uploaded to the Member intranet, in addition to circulating the contact details for Joel Hancock, Waste Team Manager for Severn Trent. In addition, Severn Trent would provide a FAQ document or wording with contact details for reporting issues, which could be included within the Members Weekly briefing, including providing any further information, which could be cascaded to Councillors and residents (to be sent to the communications department at the Council). It was agreed that Severn Trent provide an indication of what changes would be anticipated for the sewage system within the next 5 years.

An opportunity for questions followed.

**NOTED.**

#### 44/24 **SCRUTINY REVIEW PROGRAMME**

Councillors received an update from the Corporate and Commercial Manager on the review of Community Engagement Mechanisms in relation to Climate Change. It was noted that the final report would be submitted to a future committee meeting for approval. It was also noted that ideas for inclusion in the programme of future reviews would be provided by Members. It was agreed that the Corporate and Commercial Manager would circulate the previously identified potential review topics for Members to consider further and suggest additional topics.

**NOTED.**

#### 45/24 **PUBLIC EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORDS**

Members received for information a list of Public Executive Decision Records. In respect of EDR 083/23, Councillors requested a definition of "Black wet pour". It was agreed this would be provided and circulated to Councillors outside of the meeting.

An opportunity for questions followed.

**NOTED.**

#### 46/24 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee be confirmed once the Council diary had been finalised.

**NOTED.**

47/24 **CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3**

The Report of the Head of Corporate and Environment Services, on the performance update on progress at the end of the third quarter of the 2023/24 financial year towards delivering East Staffordshire Borough Council's Corporate Plan, Leisure Services Contract Performance and Towns Fund Programme was considered. Appendix 1: Quarter 3 updates for all Corporate Plan targets had been circulated with the report.

Councillors noted that out of 132 corporate targets, 118 were green, 3 were amber; 5 were red; 3 were not yet due to be reported and 2 had been deleted and that of the 126 live targets 93.65% were green; 2.38% were amber and 3.97% were green. At the end of Quarter 3 of the 2023-24 contract year a review of the Outcomes Scorecard's RAG ratings for the Key Performance Indicators showed the following: 77 Green; 1 Amber and 0 red. With regards to the Towns Fund Programme, Councillors noted project progress; key risks; current financial profiles and total spend and commitment claims for three projects was as follows: Canal Towpath Project (£157,821.28); Cycle Network Enhancements (£1,063,788.19) and the Specialist College Project (£3,494,894).

An opportunity for questions followed

In response to a query with regards to the Uttoxeter Leisure Centre extension and whether this had improved membership, it was agreed to provide this information to Councillors outside of the meeting.

In response to a question raised to clarify the wording of Corporate Plan target GD11 and removal within 5 days, it was agreed to provide a response outside of the meeting.

**NOTED.**

48/24 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Resolved:**

That, in accordance with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting during discussion of the following items as it would likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets before each item number on the Agenda

**APPENDIX 2 QUARTER 3 LEISURE SERVICES CONTRACT PERFORMANCE SUMMARY; APPENDIX 2a LEISURE SERVICES CONTRACT CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS; APPENDIX 3 QUARTER 3 TOWNS FUND PROGRAMME SUMMARY**

**PRIVATE MINUTES**

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

Those voting for the motion Councillor	Those voting against Councillor	Those abstaining Councillor
M. Slater		
G Allen		
Mrs B Ashcroft		
A. Bailey		
M. Holton		
M. Huckerby		

**SCRUTINY (CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT) COMMITTEE – 3<sup>RD</sup> APRIL  
2024**

**QUESTIONS RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

Questions received from Councillor M Slater:

In respect of the Council's Climate Change & Nature Strategy, references 6.13 and 6.14 -

1: Can the committee be given the number and percentage of Councillors who have completed the "mandatory Carbon Literacy Training" that has been offered to councillors since May, 2023?

2: Can the committee also receive numbers and percentages of council employees who have received "key information about climate change initiatives the council" and have also completed any necessary training that ensures they have "a basic level of knowledge of climate change"?

Response provided in the form of a presentation (attached)