



Minutes

Environment, Enforcement & Housing Committee Monday, 13th December, 2021

Attendance

Cllr Mrs Pearson (Chair)	Cllr Fryd
Cllr Mrs Honess (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Haigh
Cllr Barber	Cllr Heard
Cllr Dr Barrett	Cllr Kendall
Cllr Bridge	

Also Present

Cllr Hossack
Cllr Mrs Pound
Cllr White

Officers Present

Angela Abbott	- Corporate Manager - Housing Needs and Independent Living
Phoebe Barnes	- Corporate Manager - Finance
Greg Campbell	- Corporate Director (Environment & Communities)
Zoey Foakes	- Governance & Member Support Officer
Darren Laver	- Corporate Manager - Street Scene
Tracey Lilley	- Corporate Director (Housing & Community Safety)
Nicola Marsh	- Corporate Manager - Housing Estates
Paulette McAllister	- Principal, Design & Conservation Officer
Ian Winslet	- Viability Advisor (Ark Consultancy)

LIVE BROADCAST

[Live broadcast to start at 7pm and available for repeat viewing.](#)

234. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

235. Minutes of the previous meeting

Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Environment, Enforcement and Housing Committee held on 20th September 2021 were a true record.

236. Chairs update

Members noted the update in the report.

The Chair referred to Ms Lilley to clarify the discussion from the last Ordinary Council meeting where it was questioned about the powers of the enforcement Team with regards to Stop and Search which was published in the Chairs update. Ms Lilley clarified that Brentwood Borough Council enforcement officers do not have powers but they work alongside the police who do for joint operations such as checking Waste Carrier Licenses.

The new Climate and Sustainability officer, Otilie West was unable to attend the meeting but provided the Committee with a presentation given by Mr Campbell on what projects she is working on. Otilie will attend and meeting Councillors at the next committee meeting in March.

Cllr Fryd requested that update reports on BEBA and Sustainability be reported back to future committees.

237. Litter Bin Review

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, nationally behaviours and lifestyles have changed considerably. This had substantial influences on the environment and the amount of litter dropped and discarded or placed into litter bins. There had also been a significant increase in the number of dog owners, contributing to an increase in dog waste which could place into normal waste litter bins.

It was therefore necessary to review the current provision of the litter service overall including litter bin locations and collection frequency. This could reduce any harmful effects this nuisance has on the environment overall.

An amended report was tabled on the night to include recommendations for the report (attached to the minutes).

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Mrs Pearson and **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Hones to agree the recommendations in the report.

Following a discussion a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

R1. Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

R2. That delegated authority will be given to the Director of Environment & Communities in consultation with the Chair of Environment, Enforcement & Housing Committee to remove or relocate litter bins based on usage.

R3. An update on the new technology bins will be reported back to a future committee.

238. Fees & Charges

This report and appendices were published in the supplementary agenda but in consultation with officers, the Chair made the decision to defer this item – this is until confirmed inflation rate figures are available and will taken to PRED Committee in February along with the budget and then to Ordinary Council to be ratified.

239. Contract Award for the Refurbishment of 17 Crescent Road, Brentwood

Planning Permission for the conversion of 17 Crescent Road, Brentwood, a vacant property into 2 x 2-bedroom 3 person apartments was approved on 29 June 2021. Since the last report to this committee in September, a 'Tender Pack' had been released and costs had been received. The report summarised the outcome of the tender process and sought approval for the appointment of the successful contractor. This was the first on site activity as part of the Strategic Housing Delivery Plan bringing a long-term empty property back into use. The Council's Corporate Strategy 'Brentwood 2025' looks to use 'brownfield sites efficiently, such as council owned garage sites, to provide affordable homes...".

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Mrs Pearson and **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Hones to agree the recommendations in the report.

Following a discussion a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

Members are requested to:

Following the completion of a competitive tender process, approve the contract award for the refurbishment of 17 Crescent Road, Brentwood to Colnesett Limited.

240. Rent Setting 2022-23

The report sought the recommendations of the committee on the proposed rent and service charge levels for 2022/2023.

The recommendations would be considered by Policy, Resources & Economic Development Committee when the final recommendation would be made as part of the budget setting process. The final decision would be made by Ordinary Council on 23rd February 2022.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Mrs Pearson and **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Hones to agree the recommendations in the report.

Following a discussion a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** that:

Members are asked to:

- 1. Increase rent by CPI plus 1% (Total 4.1% increase) for Social and Affordable Housing Properties.**
- 2. Increase Shared Ownership and General Fund Property Rents by CPI plus 1%,**
- 3. To apply formula rent to all new tenancies from April 2022**
- 4. To apply a 2% increase to Garage Rents**
- 5. To note that service charges have been reconciled and charges have been increased or decreased so they are brought in line with actual costs and that no increase will exceed CPI plus 1%.**

Reasons for Recommendation

The recommendation is to follow government guidelines which proposes to increase rents by CPI plus 1%, for 2022/23 this is 4.1%

This increase to rents is a welcomed one, allowing the HRA to have certainty around rent setting and it's forecast Business Plan.

The proposed increase will contribute to funding the current services provided as well supporting the development of the capital programme and housing development plans.

When considering the rent setting the following assumptions have been considered:

- The financial viability of the HRA business plan
- Provision for the repairs & maintenance capital programme
- Development for new homes in the borough
- Affordability for tenants
- Investing in services to the tenant receives the best service delivery.

241. Rent Setting Policy

The report presented the Rent Setting Policy to the Committee for approval.

The policy provided a clear framework for setting and reviewing rent levels for all Council homes. The policy ensured that the Council adheres to legislation and regulations when setting rents for Housing Revenue Account (HRA) properties.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Mrs Pearson and **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Hones to agree the recommendations in the report.

Following a discussion a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** that:

Members are asked to:

To approve the Rent Setting Policy in Appendix A of the report.

Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure that the Housing Department has a policy covering the way that rents and accommodation charges are set, both as part of the annual review process and when new tenancies are let.

242. Approval of Non-Cooperation Policy

In January 2019, Local Authorities were given clarity on the steps that could be taken when applicants under the homelessness legislation demonstrate a “deliberate and unreasonable refusal to cooperate”. In line with other Local Authorities, the Council is seeking to implement a Non-Cooperation policy to cover such circumstances. These cases are the exception and the policy will enable officers to take appropriate action when the need arises.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Mrs Pearson and **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Hones to agree the recommendations in the report.

Following a discussion a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that: Members are asked to:

To approve the Non-Cooperation policy included in Appendix A of the report.

Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure that the Housing Department has documentation to support the implementation of the legislation in case of any challenges or complaints made.

243. Approval of Pets Policy

To provide clarity to tenants and leaseholders on keeping a pet, a policy had been developed to provide clarity on how the Council would respond to requests and when issues of anti-social behaviour occur when someone had a pet in a Council owned property or block. This policy’s implementation is supported by the tenancy and lease agreements in place.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Mrs Pearson and **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Hones to agree the recommendations in the report.

Following a discussion a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that: Members are asked to:

Members are asked to:

To approve the Pets Policy in Appendix A.

Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure that the Housing Department has documentation to support the effective management of tenancies and leases, with regards to the keeping of pets.

244. Urgent Business

In order to discuss the Local Authority Data Return (LADR) 2021 – council Rent item openly, this was proposed to take it in to private session.

Cllr Mrs Pearson **MOVED** and Cllr Mrs Hones **SECONDED** to take Urgent Business prior.

There are no items of urgent business to discuss.

The Chair closed the meeting to the press and public and for them to be excluded from the meeting on the next item on the grounds that the disclosure of exempt information as defined in schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

245. EXEMPT - Local Authority Data Return (LADR) 2021 – Council Rent'

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Mrs Pearson and **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Hones to agree the recommendations in the report.

Following a discussion a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Minute Item 237

Committee(s): Environment, Enforcement & Housing Committee	Date: 13 December 2021
Subject: Litter Bin Review	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Greg Campbell, Corporate Director (Environment & Communities)	Public
Report Author/s: Name: Darren Laver, Corporate Manager (Street Scene) Telephone: 01277 312500 E-mail: darren.laver@brentwood.gov.uk	For Decision

Summary

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, nationally behaviours and lifestyles have changed considerably. This has had substantial influences on the environment and the amount of litter dropped and discarded or placed into litter bins. There has also been a significant increase in the number of dog owners, contributing to an increase in dog waste which can now be placed into normal waste litter bins.

It is therefore necessary to review our current provision of the litter service overall including litter bin locations and collection frequency. If we get this right, it will reduce any harmful effects this nuisance has on the environment overall.

Recommendation

R1. Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

R2. That delegated authority will be given to the Director of Environment & Communities in consultation with the Chair of Environment, Enforcement & Housing Committee to remove or relocate litter bins based on usage.

R3. An update on the new technology bins will be reported back to a future committee.

Main Report

Introduction and Background

1. The service the Council provides is very comprehensive with over 500 litter bins across the borough that are emptied on varying frequencies from daily to once a week. Although there are concentrations of these bins there are also a number in the furthest reaches of the borough. Therefore, the spread of bins is wide and varied.
2. During the pandemic it become clear that many bins are being overused and others are not. The service has tried to adapt in order to react to the needs and

the changing environment however it has come to a point where we need to take stock and consider alternative methods and approaches to litter if we are to maintain a positive service.

3. We also need to recognise that by providing a bin does not necessarily solve or reduce the issue. The more bins provided the more waste is deposited and the more the service is required to empty and keep on top of the issue.
4. This report outlines the options that are available to us to consider for the service and in so doing run pilots to determine the best direction.
5. These pilots include the relocation of underutilised bins, replacing the old small dog waste bins to the larger standard litter bins and the use of new technology that compacts the litter and communicates when the bin is full and requires emptying.
6. We have considered how we should approve locations of bins moving forward. We have seen from the location overview carried out that there are many locations where bins are near to each other. For example, there are three bins within approximately 50 metres of each other in Danes Way, Pilgrims Hatch.
7. Moving forward the Council need to agree a way of ensuring litter bins are placed in the most effective locations to reduce litter being dropped on the streets. There will be certain factors that need to be examined. Complaint's history, high footfall, local amenities, schools etc. We will also carry out trial periods of litter bin requests by placement of movable bins that can be placed at locations and easily moved if there is evidence that they have not improved the issue or contributed to making the situation worse. If it is evident that it has reduced littering, then a permanent bin will be installed.
8. Although litter bins provide a good system for reducing litter in problematic areas, we also have to appreciate that they are not always used by the general public in the manner they were intended. In some areas bins that are sited close to residential properties often become abused and are treated as a personal waste collection points for domestic waste. This not only causes the bins to be filled quickly preventing the intended use of the litter bin but also attracts more domestic waste from other households near the litter bins. Litter bins can also appear full if large items are placed in the bin and not compacted, like cardboard boxes and black bagged waste which is not typically conventional litter.
9. It is widely believed that waste attracts waste, and this has shown to be true more than ever through the pandemic as more people are taking exercise and spending time outside in the fresh air. This has caused certain litter bins to

become over filled very quickly and a lot of waste discarded around these locations portraying a poor service from the authority.

10. Considering the above we have listed below the options we consider appropriate to improve the service provision and become more efficient in the way we deliver the service for the future.

Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

11. Review the current bin locations map. Relocate or remove bins from overpopulated bin placement locations. This will enable the Service to cover a wider footprint by removal and relocation where necessary. Any relocation or removal to be undertaken in consultation with ward members.
12. Where bins are requested a trial bin is placed in situ to determine the impact and whether this fixture becomes permanent.
13. Introduce a trial of four solar litter bins that compact the waste and notify when full to reduce unnecessary journeys
14. Signage on bins to advise of collection day and to advise when bin is full to take waste home rather than leaving waste around the litter bin.
15. Work with licencing to request retailers take responsibility of bins outside their outlets by emptying them when full and presenting the waste for collection on the scheduled collection day of the litter bin
16. Dog bins to be replaced with larger litter bins as dog waste has been declassified and can now be placed into normal waste stream and to remove the older small size dog waste bins that are sited next to a current litter bin.

Consultation

17. None

References to Corporate Strategy

18. Protecting our Environment; Delivering an efficient and effective Council

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Phoebe Barnes, Corporate Manager – Finance

Tel/Email: 01277 312829/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

19. For this financial year there is no budget, to purchase the solar litter bins. However, as part of the budget process for 2022-23 a growth bid has been received to purchase the solar bins for next financial year. This growth bid is subject to approval as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy report presented to Ordinary Council at February 2022 committee.
20. Subject to the growth bid being successfully approved and forming part of 2022-23 Capital programme, the trial will help inform if a future programme of replacing bins with solar bins are required.
21. The cost of removing existing bins will be captured within existing resources and should not warrant in additional budget pressures.
22. Once the review is complete this will inform any other financial impacts that will need to be considered against existing financial resources.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Corporate Director (Law & Governance) and Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312705/amanda.julian@brentwood.gov.uk

23. The Council when entering into any trial that would require the entering into a contract must follow the Contract Standing Orders in the Constitution and procurement rules. If the cost is over £25,000 this must be advertised as a tender on the appropriate websites. The Public Contracts Regulations 2006 will need to be considered; it is not possible to disaggregate contracts to reduce the value of the procurement. The total anticipated spend on replacement bins would need to consider when determining the contract value.
24. All contracts would need to have legal input as the matter processed.
25. Any consultation should be undertaken prior to the decision to implement a given scheme and any responses should be considered prior to making a decision.

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director (Planning & Economy)

Tel/Email: 01277 312610/philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk

26. There are no direct economic implications. Any improvement in the environmental condition of the borough can have indirect economic benefits to attract businesses and visitors.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

None

Background Papers

None

Appendices to this report

None

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