

SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL - STOCKPORT'S COMMUNAL CORRIDORS: SECURING THE SAFETY, CLEANLINESS AND BIODIVERSITY

Meeting: 5 October 2023
At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Matt Wynne (Chair) in the chair; Councillors Hibbert, Tom Morrison and Rachel Wise.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interests which they had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations of interest were made.

2. SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL PROCEDURE RULES

The Assistant Director – Legal & Democratic Governance submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which set out the Scrutiny Review Panel Procedure Rules and suggested that the Panel should adopt them for the purpose of conducting the review.

RESOLVED – That the Scrutiny Review Panel Procedure Rules be formally adopted for the purpose of conducting the review.

3. SCRUTINY REVIEW SCOPING REPORT

The Director of Place Management submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) outlining the proposed scope for reviewing the topic of Stockport's Communal Corridors: Securing the safety, cleanliness and biodiversity of our streets and passageways.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:-

Street cleanliness, drainage, grids and gullies

- It was agreed that first element of this review would focus on issues affecting street cleanliness, drainage, grids and gullies.
- Members agreed that optimising street cleansing should be an important focus of this review and the key aspects would include frequency, efficiency, a review of existing contracts and associated costs.
- Another key aim of this part of the review should be to achieve a cohesive approach, ensuring all parties worked together effectively to meet the expectations of residents.
- Along with the financial challenges related to street cleansing, drainage, grids and gullies, Members agreed to consider the logistical challenges involved and to determine how those could be removed or alleviated.
- The issue of future-proofing the Council's current procedures was considered, particularly in terms of how climate change might affect the service in the future.

Scrutiny Review Panel - Stockport's Communal Corridors: Securing the safety, cleanliness and biodiversity - 5 October 2023

- Members agreed that a review of best practice, including technical processes, at other councils along with consideration of a best-practise case study would be useful to determine whether the Council can take inspiration from elsewhere.
- In terms of evidence-gathering, it was agreed that officers would circulate the following documentation in advance of the next meeting:-
 - Current policies and procedures related to street cleansing, drainage, grids and gullies including a look at the end-to-end process.
 - A report on financial challenges related to street cleansing, along with further information about the service's readiness for challenges related to climate change.
 - Information about which parts of the service were responsible for which areas of street-cleansing with a particular focus on the relationship between the council and the Totally Local Company (TLC)

Alleyway greening

- The second element of the review would focus on alleyway greening with the key objective potentially being the development of a guide or toolkit for residents, voluntary groups and stakeholders.
- Representatives of groups involved in green-space projects such as Groundwork Greater Manchester could be invited to future meetings of the review to share their achievements, along with their knowledge and expertise.
- It was suggested that the scope of the review could be widened to include local stakeholders such as schools and local businesses.
- Members commented that the objectives of this review linked in with other schemes and projects being undertaken by the Council, including the school climate assemblies.
- It was reported that council Neighbourhood Officers had been engaged in greening projects with local community groups. The council provided employers' liability insurance for power tools, along with training. It was agreed that a toolkit would be a valuable addition to the council's existing work in this area. It was stated that it there were likely to be more voluntary groups which the council could engage with on greening projects.
- Many alleyways have drains, gas pipes and similar features and, as such, safety was an important consideration for this review.
- It was reported that an alleyway greening project in Edgeley had used removable structures to enable the council to clean and maintain the alleyway; this was a good example of type of information which would be useful to include in a toolkit.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to the scope aims and objectives of the review as detailed in Section 5 of the report.

The meeting closed at 6.59 pm