

## **OUTSOURCED SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL**

**28 January 2019**

Present: Councillor S Cavinder (Chair)  
Councillor M Hofman (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors J Dhindsa, K Hastrick, B Mauthoor, G Saffery and  
I Stotesbury (substitute for Councillor Rabi Martins.)

Also present: Darren Harding, Senior Contract Manager, Veolia (minute numbers 26 to 29)  
Nick Graham, Contract Manager, Street Cleansing, Parks and Open Spaces, Veolia (minute numbers 26 to 29)  
Karl Miles, Area Contract Manager, SLM  
Gary Foley, Watford Contract Manager, SLM  
Kelly Spencer, Woodside General Manager, SLM  
Leanne Rodriguez-Reid, Sports Development and Physical Activity Manager, SLM

Officers: Leisure and Environmental Services Section Head  
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (JK)  
Contract Monitoring Officer  
Contract Monitoring Officer Parks and Streets  
Sports Development Officer

### **26 Apologies for Absence/ Committee membership**

There was a change of membership for this meeting; Councillor Martins was replaced by Councillor Stotesbury.

### **27 Disclosures of interest**

There were no disclosures of interest.

### **28 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2018 were submitted and signed.

## Street cleaning - Veolia annual leaf clearance programme

The panel received a report from Veolia providing a review of the leaf fall programme in 2018. Darren Harding, Senior Contract Manager at Veolia, introduced the report. Key points from the report were:

- Operatives were out earlier this year, by the end of September, and additional seasonal resources were deployed throughout the period.
- By Christmas the vast majority of leaves had been cleared.
- Environmental managers were able to identify priority areas based on previous experience.
- The mechanical brooms which were hired were more effective than the ageing fleet which were due to be replaced in 2019.
- There were 40% fewer queries and requests in relation to leaf clearance than in 2017.

It was noted by councillors that the leaf fall programme had been effective this year.

The panel discussed the deep cleans which had taken place in a number of streets across the borough. They were a joint operation with Hertfordshire County Council. The deep cleans were partly funded by a number of county councillors and highways issues were addressed at the same time.

Members requested that they be notified when the leaf fall clearances were scheduled for their areas in future. This was agreed, although details would not be made public.

It was planned that the deep cleans would take place earlier this coming year. Members asked whether they could be considered for the spring or summer to coincide with residents being outdoors more. Officers agreed to consider this but cautioned that this was a busy time for the parks and streets teams.

Officers advised that the leaves were composted; Veolia held an annual compost giveaway day which was very popular. It was agreed that councillors would be sent details of the next planned event.

The Portfolio Holder, Councillor Williams, commented that the deep cleans and the leaf fall programme had been very successful. Following a recent debrief it was agreed that September was the best time for the deep cleans as there was too much spring growth earlier in the year.

In conclusion, officers added that part of the challenge of these programmes was liaising with the different organisations which had an interest. Officers were now

meeting Ringway, the highways contractor, regularly to coordinate scheduled work.

The panel expressed their thanks to Veolia and the officers.

RESOLVED –

1. that the report be noted.
2. that the actions agreed be undertaken.

30

### **Leisure Centre Contract - SLM**

The panel received a report from the Head of Community and Environmental Services.

The Watford Contract Manager for SLM, Gary Foley, made a presentation for the panel. The presentation was attached to the agenda.

The presentation provided an overview of the structure of the new contract, recent refurbishment works, the social value and impact of the contract, the partnership work undertaken and the key performance indicators.

The panel noted that SLM managed the paddling pools in Cassiobury Park. Members sought assurances that there would not be the number of closures that had been experienced in the past. SLM advised that as they were operating economies of scale, specialist contractors were in place and issues could be dealt with quickly. Staff had undertaken intensive training in the plant facilities and electricians were on standby. It was noted that in the year before SLM managed the pools, there were 52 occasions of closures, last year under SLM there had only been nine, some of which were scheduled for regular maintenance.

With reference to the market, the panel asked for further details about what assistance SLM have given for this facility. Officers advised that a number of members of staff had been made available to the council supporting the cleanliness in particular. As a result, the market had remained open during the transition period.

Members discussed popularity of classes at the centres which were often oversubscribed. SLM advised that more studio space had been created and that 158 virtual cycling classes had been added each week. Exercise classes were reviewed quarterly so that more spaces could be created at the most popular sessions.

It was confirmed that a sauna/steam room was planned for Watford Central, planning was underway but there were no timelines available yet.

SLM ran a GP referral scheme and also sought to work with other local organisations to reach target groups. The positive case studies from the programme had helped their Quest inspection scores.

Amongst the other groups that SLM worked with were children and young people and those in sheltered housing. The Sports Development Officer was involved in securing further funding for these outreach programmes.

SLM representatives highlighted key areas from the annual report including a reduction in sugar in the food available at the centres, increasing recycling levels and other environmental measures.

Discussing the sporting champions scheme which supported young athletes, SLM described the process of encouraging applications from individuals at local clubs. The number of applications had increased from two to 11 in the last two years; all of which were given funding. Councillors were encouraged to share details of the scheme with local residents.

Future areas for development included, baby CPR workshops delivered by lifeguards, a project to tackle holiday hunger and providing dementia awareness training for staff.

Officers summarised that it was a positive and mature relationship and described the oversight arrangements. There were ambitious targets for the contract and some good case studies. It was suggested that SLM be invited back in 12 months to discuss progress.

The panel expressed their thanks to SLM and the officers.

RESOLVED –

1. that the report and presentation be noted.
2. that the actions requested be undertaken.

Chair

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm  
and finished at 8.05 pm