

## **OUTSOURCED SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL**

**13 FEBRUARY 2014**

Present: Councillor S Counter (Chair)  
Councillors S Greenslade, K Hastrick, A Joynes and S Rackett

Also present: Councillor Derek Scudder  
Mr Tim Brinkman, HQ Theatres

Officers: Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services  
Partnerships and Performance Section Head  
Commissioning Manager  
Contract Monitoring Officer  
Client Manager - Waste and Recycling  
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (JK)  
Member Development and Civic Officer

### **17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/ COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **18 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of interest.

### **19 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2013 were submitted and signed.

### **20 UPDATE ON WASTE AND RECYCLING SERVICE**

The Panel received a presentation of the Client Manager (Waste and Recycling) which provided an update on the service since his presentation at the last meeting,

His update included the following –

- The progress on the changes to the service including staffing and equipment.
- The levels of recycling which had increased from 80-96 tonnes per week before the co-mingled service to 135-186 tonnes per week.
- The quality of the material for recycling has been consistently high and this has been communicated from a range of re-processors.
- The forthcoming communications strategies and educational campaigns.

- The streetcare services including the gum-removal project in the High Street.
- The grounds maintenance service including the maintenance of three green flags and the application for a fourth green flag.
- Details of the contract monitoring and regular meetings with Veolia.

Following a question from Councillor Joynes, the Client Manager explained that deep cleans were scheduled following feedback from residents and councillors. It was sometimes possible to aggregate work with the County Council when short road closures were scheduled for minor repairs.

There was a discussion of the problem of chewing gum on pavements. The Client Manager explained that this required specialist equipment. There was currently a focus on the High Street. The Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services added that the status of gum-removal work in the contract needed to be verified. She asked that areas of particular concern be reported to the client team, rather than Veolia, in the first instance.

**ACTION** – The Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services to provide the Panel with further details of how gum-cleaning operates.

Councillor Hastrick asked how parks were selected for an application for a Green Flag. She referred to Garston Park in particular. The Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services responded that applications for Green Flags were resource-intensive. The contract stipulated the maintenance of the three existing Green Flags but a further application for Oxhey Park had been submitted. As parks were upgraded, their suitability for a Green Flag was assessed. The Client Manager (Parks and Streets) would be able to provide more information.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Client Manager explained that the outreach team had worked with Watford New Hope Trust as part of the roll out of the new service.

The Chair asked for more information about the accuracy of the contamination levels data. The Client Manager explained how the sampling was carried out.

Councillor Greenslade also referred to the problem of chewing gum on pavements. She added that residents had been pleased that there were road sweeps in the neighbourhood.

The Chair noted that when complaints and compliments were reported, it would be useful to see the themes of what was being reported.

Following a question from Councillor Greenslade, the Client Manager advised that there had been an improvement in the quality of the recycling loads from flats. There had been a lot of engagement with residents and management companies. There could still be an improvement in the tonnages collected.

The Chair advised that it would be useful for the Panel to receive data about levels of fly-tipping in the performance report.

ACTION – Partnerships and Performance Section Head

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted.

21 **UPDATE ON ACTIONS**

The Panel received an update on different actions which had arisen at previous meetings.

Members noted that actions PR1, PR2, PR3, PR5 and PR6 would be considered under the performance report and should stay on the actions update.

The Panel agreed that SLM1 and SLM4 could be signed off.

In reference to SLM5, the Commissioning Manager reported that this was included in the quarterly monitoring. There was a good marketing strategy for this programme. The Panel agreed that this could be signed off.

Councillor Rackett asked that VE1, flyposting on empty shops, be added to the performance report.

The Panel agreed that VE2, VE3 and VE4 could be signed off.

RESOLVED –

That the actions update be noted and the completed actions be signed off.

22 **PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Panel received a report of the Partnerships and Performance Section Head providing the quarterly performance indicators for quarter 3 2013/14.

The Partnerships and Performance Section Head introduced the report. She underlined that the report remained a work in progress. Officers were working with partners to ensure that the Panel received meaningful data. She anticipated that from quarter 1 of 2014/15 the data would include the different measures that the Panel had asked for.

She reported that indicators around concessions and total memberships would be added to the data from SLM. She referred to CS4 and said that the accuracy of the figures needed to be confirmed. She noted that the Council retained the equality duty for outsourced services. The level of throughput at

Woodside would be followed up. More granularity of the complaints and compliments at the leisure centres was required in CS9.

The satisfaction figures in CS10 came from a membership satisfaction survey that the Council had facilitated. A report back to members would be available at the reception desks. She confirmed that it was intended to undertake the survey annually. The report would be circulated to the Panel

**ACTION – Partnerships and Performance Section Head / Commissioning Manager**

With regard to the Colosseum, the number of dark days, when there were no events taking place, would be added to the report.

Following a discussion about the satisfaction levels in CS15, it was agreed that it would be useful to include satisfaction at Watford Palace Theatre as a comparison.

**ACTION - Partnerships and Performance Section Head**

With regard to the indicators for Veolia, it was noted that the level of composted waste was very seasonal. She advised that the next report would include levels of fly-tipping as well as detritus. Allotments would be promoted as part of the allotment strategy and it was hoped that occupancy would increase.

The Chair asked whether the Panel could receive more detail on contamination in the recycling collection.

**ACTION – Client Manager (Waste and Recycling)**

The Chair said that in her view the report seemed more qualitative which was useful. She asked whether the Client Manager (Waste and Recycling) could come back to present to the Panel in a year's time.

**RESOLVED –**

1. that the performance of the identified outsourced service indicators at the end of quarter 3 (October - December) 2013/14 be noted.
2. that the proposed future additions to this report be noted.

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## **CONTRACT WITH HQ THEATRES**

The Panel received a presentation of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services and the Commissioning Manager.

The presentation provided the Panel with details of the history of the Colosseum, how the programmes were delivered, key performance indicators,

a summary of performances between September 2011 and December 2013, community use and an overview of the finances. In addition, details were provided about the vision for the future and the areas for development.

Councillor Joynes referred to the youth production and she asked whether this event would continue in future years. Mr Tim Brinkman, HQ Theatres, responded that this was a Colosseum initiative and a range of youth based events would be planned .

Councillor Rackett asked about opportunities for local bands to perform as support acts. Mr Brinkman advised that he felt this was an excellent idea as it gave bands public exposure as well as experience of working in a venue and the opportunity to attract the attention of industry professionals. It was something the Colosseum could do more of and he would get to know who could source local bands.

Following a suggestion from Councillor Joynes about competitions for young local bands, Mr Brinkman informed the Panel that the Colosseum had a strong relationship with West Herts College. He also felt it was important to give acts exposure to agents.

The Chair asked about work undertaken with schools. Mr Brinkman advised that schools used the venue for performances and students' training opportunities. The Colosseum also hosted students' placements.

Councillor Hastrick noted that there needed to be a balance between commercial and community activities and asked for more details about how this worked at the Colosseum. The Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services advised that the balance needed to ensure that the Colosseum was sustainable as it was currently dependent on the management fee. There was an expectation that community was important and it also helped to drive wider audience engagement. Officers worked with HQ Theatres to achieve the right balance. The economic situation meant that the Council could not heavily subsidise the venue and local organisations had also been encouraged to adopt a business-like approach.

Councillor Greenslade asked about the afternoon programme and the Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services replied that it was important to focus on ensuring the programming was right. Mr Brinkman added that it was his intention to ensure that the venue was used as much as possible.

Councillor Rackett asked for more detail about the profit-sharing agreement. The Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services confirmed that the contract has not yet triggered the profit share agreement and it had not been anticipated to be achievable during the first four years of the contract. An economic review was planned for August 2015. The Council was mindful that a profit share was not something which could be easily achieved. The aim was to lower the subsidy longer term.

The Chair noted that as far as performance indicators were concerned, the Colosseum was different to other services as residents could choose whether to attend.

The Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services confirmed that the presentation would be circulated with the minutes.

ACTION - Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services

RESOLVED –

That the presentation and the Panel's comments be noted.

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## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Panel discussed any conclusions arising from the presentation.

Councillor Rackett stated that he would like to see figures on how many times per year that local bands performed at the Colosseum.

ACTION – Partnerships and Performance Section Head/Commissioning Manager

The Chair added that she would also like to see data on community events including the number and the types of events held as part of the ongoing performance report.

ACTION – Partnerships and Performance Section Head and Commissioning Manager

Following a question about the departure of the previous director, the Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services gave an overview of the circumstances at the time and noted that the new director was very positive and staff had been retained.

The Chair suggested that the themes of compliments and complaints be added to the performance report.

ACTION – Partnerships and Performance Section Head/Commissioning Manager

RESOLVED –

That the actions be noted

Chair

The Meeting started at 6.30 pm  
and finished at 7.55 pm

