

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2022

Present:

Councillor Kevin Tait (Chair) (in the Chair)

Councillor Joseph Birkin
Councillor Jeff Lilley

Councillor Tony Lacey
Councillor Pam Windley

Also Present:

L Gebbie	Head of Corporate Services – Rykneld Homes Ltd
H Summers	Head of Neighbourhoods – Rykneld Homes Ltd
J Hawley	Principal Planning Enforcement Officer
D Stanton	Governance Officer
A Bond	Governance Officer

CSC/ Apologies for Absence

49/2

1-22 Apologies were received from Councillors B Lewis and R Hall.

CSC/ Declarations of Interest

50/2

1-22 Members were requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and/or other interest, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

There were no declarations of interest.

CSC/ Minutes of Last Meeting

51/2

1-22 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 10 December 2021 were approved and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

CSC/ Scrutiny Review - Potential 'Out of Hours' Service

52/2

1-22 Members conducted a series of interviews to ascertain if there was a need for an out of hours' service and how this might work throughout the District.

Interview One with the Head of Neighbourhoods and the Head of Corporate Services at Rykneld Homes Ltd

Members heard that Out of Hours calls for Rykneld Homes Ltd were handled by SPS. If these calls required a site visit, then this would be conducted by a Rykneld employee. Eight senior managers were available via an emergency escalation phone 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Vulnerable residents also had the option of a community alarm service that

operated seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Depending on the type of emergency, a visit would be made by the emergency services, named contacts or a next of kin. Employees of Rykneld would not typically attend. This service was provided by Tunstall.

The Committee heard that the SPS out of hours service also covered incidents of anti-social behaviour. The out of hours service had typically received between 400 and 450 calls per month but this would increase during periods of bad weather. Some months had been in excess of 1200 calls.

It was noted that the anti-social behaviour service was not as widely used and the Community Alarm Service, which had 560 customers, and received a majority of calls during normal operating hours.

The interviewees considered that a joint service between the Council and Rykneld could be possible. The call handling response would be able to accommodate other requirements if necessary.

Members heard that the cost of implementation was £23,000 per year.

Committee was informed that Rykneld monitored the performance of SPS. SPS would always provide the staff necessary for the work and there had not been any issues with this.

Tenancy management was conducted within normal operating hours only. Members also noted that DCC offered a falls recovery service and at least one ambulance service had a falls recovery unit.

Interview two with the Principal Planning Enforcement Officer

The Officer informed Members that there was not a need for an out of hours' service. In the year 2020 there had been 229 enforcement enquiries, and in 2021 there had 315. In both years, only three of those enquiries had been out of hours.

Members heard that it was not always necessary to deal with those enquiries out of hours and when it was, it was possible to accommodate this due to the use of flexi-time.

Committee were informed that how an out of hours service might work would depend on what issue they were trying to resolve. Currently, there was very little need for planning enforcement to operate out of hours.

CSC/ Previous Scrutiny Review

53/2

1-22

Members were presented with the Lead Officer response to the Committee's previous Scrutiny Review into Residential Parking. The response detailed progress made against the action plan.

As the Director of Growth was unable to attend the meeting, it was agreed that any questions would be sent to her and she would provide a written response. The officer would be invited to return to the Committee to present a

further update on progress made against the action plan.

The Committee discussed the previous review at length. They sought clarification on a number of issues such as the trials with grasscretes and allocated parking spaces for new builds.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

CSC/ Forward Plan of Executive Decisions

54/2

1-22 RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions be noted.

CSC/ Scrutiny Work Programme

55/2

1-22 RESOLVED – That the Work Programme be noted.

CSC/ Additional Urgent Items (if any)

56/2

1-22 There were no additional urgent items.

CSC/ Date of Next Meeting

57/2

1-22 The next meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee will be held on Friday 1 April 2022 at 1:30 pm.

CSC/ Venue for Next Meeting

58/2

1-22 The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be held in person at the Council Chamber, Mill Lane.