

JOINT REGULATORY SERVICE COMMITTEE
9 DECEMBER 2014

(10.00 - 11.35)

PRESENT Councillor Judy Saunders (in the Chair), Councillor Nick Draper, Councillor Rita Palmer, Councillor Pamela Fleming.

ALSO PRESENT: Paul Foster (Head of Regulatory Services Partnership), Jon Freer (Assistant Director, Development and Street Scene), John Hill (Head of Public Protection), Susanne Wicks (Democratic Services Officer).

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

There were no apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

No declarations were made.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2014 (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED: That the minutes are agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 SERVICE UPDATE REPORT (Agenda Item 4)

John Hill advised the Committee that the report included all information requested at the previous meeting.

Paul Foster presented the report and went through each item, giving more detail where appropriate, and responding to questions and comments. Matters raised are detailed below:

Paul Foster confirmed that properties owned and managed by housing associations are within the remit of the Environmental Health (Housing) team. Councillor Judy Saunders asked if Merton and Richmond could share the cost of new equipment when required, (e.g. air quality monitoring equipment) or if the current equipment could be shared. Jon Freer confirmed that all options would be considered when replacing equipment.

The Committee discussed the best way to deal with resident complaints arising from road works. Councillor Rita Palmer noted that residents do not always know which agency to approach and Paul Foster agreed that it would be very helpful for residents and councillors to be informed on how to make such complaints.

Councillor Nick Draper asked if a single point of contact could be established to deal with issues arising from road works, and Paul Foster outlined two possibilities; a Business Support Team who could provide initial advice, or a dedicated team to

perform a 'triage' function for resident complaints . Councillor Pamela Fleming agreed either role would be useful, but also asked that information be posted on the internet, to guide residents.

The Committee discussed the issue of counterfeit goods, and it was noted that Trading Standards in both boroughs are experienced in dealing with ticket touts, due to Wimbledon Tennis and the Twickenham stadium. John Hill noted that one of the benefits of partnership working is that resources can be deployed from both boroughs when needed.

Councillor Pamela Fleming asked if any action can be taken against doorstep sellers, as some residents find them distressing. Paul Foster advised that they are not committing an offence, but if aggressive or persistent, could be considered anti-social. Officers often refer such complaints to the Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

Paul Foster confirmed that an EH Pollution Manager has now been appointed. He undertook to email the structure chart to Richmond and Merton councillors, and to add names and contact details to the chart.

The Committee discussed the potential benefits and viability of a shared IT system for both boroughs, and agreed that given the potential cost and risk, any such installation must be carefully planned and managed.

The Committee discussed the possibility of charging for officer advice that is currently given free of charge. Paul Foster confirmed that the Licensing Manager is very keen to develop a charging mechanism given the amount of free advice currently given by Licensing Officers. John Hill, whilst supporting the idea, also noted that if a charge were made, it's likely that advice would have to be supplied in writing and therefore the service must have the resources in place to meet demand. Jon Freer acknowledged that there is work to be done in this area.

Councillor Pamela Fleming asked about key performance indicators relating to the inspection of high-risk food businesses in Richmond and Paul Foster replied that the inspection target of 100% had been met. He added that one of the strengths of the shared service was being able to deploy a collective resource across the two boroughs as and when it was needed. Councillor Judy Saunders noted that additional KPIs may be added as the joint service develops.

With regard to fees and charges, Jon Freer advised that the Committee is delegated to approve these. The Committee considered whether three meetings per year would be sufficient, and agreed to consider this further should the need arise.

John Hill outlined Phase 2 of the implementation of the Joint Regulatory Service, and Councillor Nick Draper noted that this phase is more operational than strategic, so requires little input from the Committee.

Report received.

5 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 5)

RESOLVED: That the terms of reference are agreed.