ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CULTURE & LEISURE SCRUTINY PANEL

MINUTES of the meeting of the Economic Development, Culture & Leisure Scrutiny Panel held on Monday, 9 January 2017 at 5.00 pm at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Councillor Hannah Hockaday (in the Chair)

Councillors   Steve Hastings
                Alicia Denny
                Matthew Winnington

23. Apologies for absence (AI 1)

Councillor Chowdhury had sent his apologies for absence as he was unwell and Councillor Hunt sent his apologies that he was unable to attend.

24. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of members' interests.

25. Minutes of Previous Meeting - 17 November 2016 (AI 3)

The minutes of the EDCL Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 17 November 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

26. Smarter Cities Review (AI 4)

The Chair had agreed to vary the order of witnesses, whose presentations related to PCC services and copies were circulated at the meeting and would be made available on the website.

i)   Colette Hill, Assistant Director of Property & Housing Services (Environment) - Smart Cities and Waste Management

Colette Hill spoke as the manager of PCC's waste services, which was a statutory duty for local authorities and for the citizen they may be interested on how much is collected and what happens to their waste. The weight of recorded waste is recorded as required by government and this information is available on the Environment Agency's website but not published on PCC's website. The cost of waste is £6m p.a. as per PCC's waste contract as part of a Hampshire wide partnership 'Project Integra' via Veolia as well as use of the Energy Recovery Facility (ERF)and Mixed Recyclables Facility (MRF) in Portsmouth and therefore links with sustainability were important. Currently Portsmouth (unlike some other local authorities) has unrestricted waste collection so it is difficult to control the spend on it. The table within the presentation gave details on the breakdown of types of waste.

It was reported that whilst Portsmouth is low on the UK recycling rates[1] the rates for contamination of recycling is very low so that less goes to landfill.

Smart technology available for use in the waste industry includes:
- Public smart bins
- RFID tagging/fill sensors (using radio frequency to detect if bins are full)
- GPS
- Route optimisation
- Call Management
- PDAs (personal digital assistant/handheld devices)

There is less use of on-board weighing and tagged bins.

Colette stressed that the barrier to embracing some of this technology for PCC waste management was that the contracts had been entered into on a long term basis (e.g. for Biffa a ten year contract until 2021). The recycling contract included 5 types of recyclables (so that plastic tubs and trays were not recyclable here). However changes were being considered such as the possibility of kerbside glass collection. RFID bin tagging is not in use here but its use being monitored elsewhere, and the Havant BC trial had shown that its use had broken even rather than made savings. PCC does use GPS on the collection vehicles so can track rounds and this helps with route optimisation. She reported that the PDAs data was not reliable regarding logging information from the vans but could be better used to flag up 'red hangers' where contamination reoccurred. Tagged bins were not in use in Portsmouth. Technology was more widely used where there was a 'pay as you throw' system which was not implemented here.

Resident access to systems such as booking for bulky collections and being given information on their nearest recycling facilities was being considered by their 'Channel shift' project.

Colette outlined a recent project on the Highbury Estate to try to improve recycling rates and decrease waste production rates, which had shown that changes in behaviour could be encouraged as the tonnage rates had significantly decreased since the wheelie bin experiment had been implemented in September 2016. This included contamination rates decreasing too.

It was reported that the recycling boxes were also available as an alternative to bins and could be ordered on-line.

During the questions session, Colette reported that Veolia were inviting participation in an Innovation Day and information from this on technological advances would be shared with members.

The Chair thanked Colette for her interesting presentation.

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[1] Ranked 338 of 345 local authorities

ii) Meredydd Hughes, Assistant Director of Property & Housing Services - presentation on Property and Housing Services Repairs and the Smart City

Meredydd Hughes gave a presentation on the use of technology for Housing, its residents and other PCC assets. With regard to resident interaction this could be used to empower them in the booking of appointments of work in their property, to know targets for completion of repairs and to provide information on energy consumption. The condition of PCC properties will have an impact on health and wellbeing of residents and building users.

PCC manage and maintain over 15,000 assets and the presentation gave a breakdown of activities on the properties including repairs (over 50k day to day repairs carried out each year), electrical installations, gas safety inspections (13.5k), smoke detection installation and monitoring of void properties.

Linking in with sustainability aims Meredydd reported on the energy consumption and production figures across the PCC property portfolio:

- Electrical consumption 36m KWhrs - £4.6m
- Gas consumption 35m HWhrs - £1.1m
- Solar PV production in 2016 = 2.5m KWhrs[2] which equated £442k as combined income and cost avoidance to PCC

The solar PV panels have been placed in civic buildings such as the Civic Offices and the Somerstown Hub and the use will be extended which will generate further income.

The current use of smart technology in the delivery of the repairs service included:
- A detailed Property & Housing Asset database on which repairs can be logged
- ½ hour meters for energy consumption for monitoring of use
- SIM cards on the PV Solar panels - this provides information such as how these are operating and when they need cleaning
- Heat meters in sheltered accommodation - these show trends of usage
- Mobile Tablets - for use by gas engineers on their inspections and for remote ordering of parts
- PDAs - used for Legionella records
- Integrated Reception Systems (IRS) helps connectivity for Freeview TV, connection to Sky+, SkyQ and DAB radio and this cuts down on the use of multiple satellite dishes

Meredydd further explained that the PHS department's detailed database contained histories of repairs to properties and work was not when it was required and there was better information on the payment and validation of bills which were more accurate now. The systems gave better visibility of energy use which was useful information for schools too on when power was

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[2] This is enough electricity to light and power a 3 bed house for 714 years

being consumed. The BMS system also allowed for remote monitoring, and the intelligent systems meant that the longevity of equipment was being extended by the varying the use of equipment such as the main heating fans at the Civic Offices and boiler systems at schools to share the load. The mobile tablets and PDAs mean that photographs/certificates can be taken on site and scanned for inspections.

Future Developments -
- Residents would be empowered to take responsibility for their properties such as booking repairs directly and be able to track progress and arrange appointments for regular inspections (currently approximately 90% of dealings with customers were via the phone or face to face)
- Heat meters to communal heating systems would mean monitoring of usage so 'pay as you use' for fairer bills
- A roll out of more solar PV installations and exploration of a solar co-operative
- Use of LiFi (light fidelity) and trialling of LED lighting
- Empowerment of schools with more access to registers and tracking of repairs and records such as for asbestos and testing including Legionella.
- Work was taking place with Social Care on the alarm systems in supported living accommodation

Meredydd stressed that the use of technology brought benefits but it had to be where it was appropriate and in conjunction with skilled surveyors.

It was reported that the solar panels were not moveable ones but that the Portsmouth locations meant that there was good solar coverage to help maximise energy. A capital bid was being made to extend the project into Gosport which would give joint benefit and generate further income for PCC. This may then expand to other neighbouring authorities and local schools, including academies. The next development would be the battery storage of the solar panels and how to share the power generated in the communities. A constraint currently was the SSE grid capacity for Portsmouth which needs to be improved. An arms-length company has been set up to offer energy advice to external bodies such as the hospital, on a commercial basis.

Members asked regarding links with the University of Portsmouth to take forward innovation. Meredydd reported on the work placements, apprentices and employment of graduate architects as there were good links with the university's departments of Architecture and Building and Surveying.

Nick May suggested further consideration be given to the different means of communication by residents so that smart phones and tablets and mobiles could be used for requesting repairs - such as expanding the My Portsmouth App.

The Chair thanked Meredydd for his interesting presentation.

27. Date of Next Meeting (AI 5)

The date of the next scheduled meeting of 26th January was noted to hear from Professor Lehmann from the University of Portsmouth at 5pm.

Member attendance at the Ascent Events Smart Cities 2017 2 day event in London (1st & 2nd February) was discussed and it was agreed that Cllr Hockaday should attend as Chair and Cllr Winnington would be able to go to Day 2 only. Members would report back to the panel on their attendance.

The meeting concluded at 6.55 pm.

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Councillor Hannah Hockaday
Chair