

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE
WAYTEMORE ROOM, BISHOP'S
STORTFORD ON TUESDAY,
26 FEBRUARY 2008 AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor W Quince (Chairman).
Councillors W Ashley, D Clark, A F Dearman,
A D Dodd, Mrs M H Goldspink, M P A McMullen,
D A A Peek, N C Poulton, G D Scrivener
(substitute for Councillor G McAndrew).

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors M G Carver, A M Graham, R I Taylor,
M Wood, C Woodward.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Linda Bevan	- Committee Secretary
Cliff Cardoza	- Head of Environmental Services
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer
George A Robertson	- Director of Customer and Community Services
Bryan Thomsett	- Planning Policy Manager
David Thorogood	- Environmental Co- ordinator

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs S Thompson	- Local resident
Mr Bailey	}
Mr S Davies	
Mrs G Davies	
Mrs A Lacey	
Mr F Lacey	
Mr P Welch	
	- Havers Bowls Club Bishop's Stortford

551 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors G McAndrew and T Milner. It was noted that Councillor G D Scrivener was substituting for Councillor G McAndrew.

552 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman drew Members' attention to an excellent publication entitled "Greening Growth". It had been circulated with the Members' Information Bulletin and he commended it to the Committee.

RESOLVED ITEMSACTION553 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2007 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the addition of the following to Minute 394.

"Councillor D Clark commented on the lack of consultation, the need for an urgent decision and new WRAP guidance.

Councillor D Clark proposed and Councillor M Wood seconded, a motion that an additional meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee be convened to scrutinise the issue of alternate weekly collections, in light of revised recommendations and to review options.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared LOST".

ACTION554 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for the Committee had been approved by Council and were circulated at the meeting.

RESOLVED - that the Committee's terms of reference be noted.

555 BUSINESS PERMIT PARKING SCHEME - SOUTH STREET, BISHOP'S STORTFORD

The Chief Executive submitted a report advising that Councillors Mrs M H Goldspink, A Graham, R I Taylor and M Wood had called-in a decision of the Executive concerning the matter now detailed.

A report regarding a proposed business permit parking scheme at South Street, Bishop's Stortford had been considered by the Executive on 5 February 2008. The Executive had agreed the following:

- (A) the summary of objections received in respect of the above proposed scheme be noted;
- (B) the actions of officers in overruling these objections be endorsed;
- (C) the recommendations of the Highways Joint Member Panel meeting held on 14 January 2008 in respect of the Council's proposals be considered; and
- (D) the continued implementation of the proposed business permit parking scheme and ancillary single yellow line restriction be supported.

This proposal had arisen during negotiations for a new bridge over the River Stort in Bishop's Stortford which would require the use of land used by a local firm for car parking.

ACTION

The Chairman explained that in considering the call-in, the Committee had three options as follows.

1. If having considered the decision, the Environment Scrutiny Committee was still concerned about it then it could refer the matter back to the Executive and the Executive had to reconsider it within 21 days;
2. The Scrutiny Committee could refer the item to Council. If Council did not object to the original decision then no further action was necessary. If Council did object it had no locus to make decisions in respect of the Executive decision unless it was contrary to the policy framework or contrary to or not wholly consistent with the budget. If the decision was not contrary to the policy framework etc Council would refer the matter back with any views it had. The Executive then would have the final decision and that decision had to be made within 10 working days of the referral from Council; or
3. The Committee could do nothing. If having considered the call-in the Scrutiny Committee was satisfied with the decisions made by the Executive, then these decisions would be implemented as originally agreed.

Councillor Mrs M H Goldspink, on behalf of the signatories of the call-in request explained Members had asked for this decision to be called in for three main reasons. These were that giving free parking permits to a commercial business when residents had to pay for their parking permits was wrong; giving spaces to the business would exacerbate parking problems for other users eg residents, visitors and the Bowls Club and alternative arrangements for parking on the other side of the river had not been fully investigated.

She stated that Members felt it was wrong to give away spaces on the public highway and pointed out that the

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highway authority, Hertfordshire County Council had expressed disquiet about this.

Councillor Goldspink pointed out that a petition signed by 89 people had requested a commuter parking ban in the area and this had been agreed by the Highways Joint Member Panel. She circulated photographs of the area on the other side of the river (the Goods Yard) where parking might be provided for the business and asked for this to be considered by the Executive.

Councillor R I Taylor asked Officers to investigate the ownership of land within the Goods Yard area in case some could be used for parking and Officers agreed this could be checked. He emphasised the need to provide parking for the warden of Kings Cottages and one elderly resident who owned a car. He pointed out that the bridge was under construction so the potential users of the business permits must have found parking elsewhere and could continue to do so.

Councillor M Wood referred to difficulties in gully cleansing if long term parking was provided as proposed.

Councillor A Graham added that the provision of a landmark bridge should not lead to other local interests being ignored.

The Chairman informed the Committee that the Council had received two letters of objection to the decision of the Executive. One was a copy of a letter sent to the local newspaper and another was from a local resident.

The Executive Member for Planning Policy and Transport explained that the provision of the free parking spaces for a local business had arisen as part of difficult negotiations to bring about the provision of the new bridge and obtain a grant for it. The bridge would provide a much improved link between different parts of the town. It was hoped that the provision of parking spaces elsewhere might be possible in future and this could be investigated. However, this would

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be difficult as the development of the Goods Yard was expected to incorporate underground parking only for residents. The introduction of a two hour commuter ban would not be consistent with the provision of the spaces.

The Chairman invited Anne Lacey of Havers Bowls Club, Bishop's Stortford to address the meeting on the concerns of the club and local residents.

Anne Lacey explained that, since a night time taxi rank had been provided in South Street, it had been difficult to park because taxis and taxi driver's personal vehicles were parked in the rank 24 hours a day for seven days a week. She had submitted the petition asking for a commuter ban which had been approved by the Highways Joint Member Panel. However, another scheme was now proposed which would allow more business parking. Spaces would be lost and they would be free to the business concerned when residents had to pay. Previously, people had parked in the area to use the shops, doctors' surgery and chemist and visit residents of Kings Cottages. The Bowls Club members also parked here as the nearest car park at Jackson Square was too far away. She suggested that if the scheme was reduced from 6 pm to 5 pm it would allow Bowls Club members to park for evening games in the summer.

The Committee expressed concern at the loss of parking for residents, visitors and the Bowls Club because of the proposed scheme and parking by taxi drivers. It decided to refer the matter back to the Executive for further investigation of providing parking for the groups affected.

RESOLVED - that the matter be referred back to the Executive for further investigation of providing parking for residents, visitors and the Bowls Club.

ACTION556 STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING

A report was submitted by the Executive Member for Community Safety and Protection on a street naming and numbering policy framework. The Executive had considered this, had felt it needed refining and referred it to the Environment Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

The Council controlled the naming and numbering of streets and buildings within its area. This was to ensure that any new street names and building names and numbers were allocated logically with a view to ensuring, among other things, effective delivery of mail and that emergency service vehicles were able to locate any address to which they might be summoned.

A policy framework had been further amended in the light of the Executive's comments and the Committee considered it. A number of queries were raised on matters in the policy framework including terminal words and numbering. A Member raised concerns over two roads in the District with similar names which had led to problems with emergency services. He was assured the renaming was in hand.

The Committee decided this should be the subject of a Task and Finish Group chaired by Councillor P A Ruffles who had raised the original concerns.

RESOLVED - that a Task and Finish Group with Councillor P A Ruffles as Chairman be set up to consider the street naming and numbering policy framework.

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557 DEVELOPING A CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY FOR EAST HERTS

A report was submitted by the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation setting out key issues relating to Climate Change, the role of local authorities in

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responding to it and the stages in the preparation of a Climate Change Strategy for East Herts.

The Council's Environmental Co-ordinator gave a presentation on the issue. The presentation gave details of climate change and various scenarios if emissions were high or low for temperatures and rainfall by the 2050s and 2080s.

A number of national indicators produced by the Government concerned climate change.

He gave examples of relevant policy action in East Herts including the Environmental Policy Statement; Energy Policy and Action Plan; Nottingham Declaration; Affordable Warmth Strategy; Herts Bio-Diversity Action Plan; Local Plans; Sustainability Indicators; and Building Futures Guidance.

He also gave examples of practical initiatives including Energy Efficiency and Environmental grants, Solar Clubs, office refurbishment, Ware solar toilets, Corporate renewables, Energy Roadshows, awareness raising, the Eco House and Green Transport Survey. He referred to partnership working with Herts Environmental Forum, local community groups, the Local Strategic Partnership and the Primary Care Trusts.

The Council had a role in climate change as an estate manager, service provider and community leader.

The Committee considered what should be included in the policy and the stages of it and adopting the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme and Energy Efficiency Accreditation Scheme which would involve the Council in reducing its own carbon emissions.

ACTION

It decided to proceed with a strategy considered by a Task and Finish Group, which would take over and expand on the work of the previous Energy Efficiency Panel. It also decided to adopt the Programme and Scheme to limit the Council's carbon emissions as detailed below.

RESOLVED - that the Executive be informed that the Committee considers:

- (a) the preparation of a Climate Change Strategy should be supported, to include both mitigation and adaptation measures;
- (b) a Climate Change Strategy focussing on the Council's own estate and the wider community and service provision should be supported;
- (c) a Climate Change Task and Finish Group of five Members should be set up including Councillor D A A Peek as Chairman and Councillors Mrs M H Goldspink and D Clark and two others selected from all other Councillors; CE
- (d) the adoption of the Local Authority Carbon Management programme and Energy Efficiency Accreditation Scheme, as detailed in paragraph 7 of the report before the Committee, should be supported as useful frameworks to help progress carbon reduction in the Council's own estate and service provision; and
- (e) a further report should be brought to a future meeting of this Committee exploring in more depth the detail of the Climate Change Strategy and reporting on progress made. DNS

ACTION

558 HERTFORDSHIRE WASTE DEVELOPMENT PLAN:
WASTE CORE STRATEGY SUBMISSION STAGE
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT: JANUARY 2008

The Committee received a report on the Council's response to the Hertford Waste Development Plan: Waste Core Strategy Submission Stage Consultation Document: January 2008.

This would be the subject of a non-key decision on 29 February 2008.

The Executive Member for Planning Policy and Transport drew attention to the format of this and the following two items which were similar to the pattern which would be followed by the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) eg core strategy, options, allocations.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Environmental Services confirmed that the County Council had issued tender documents for a site to provide the organic waste disposal site on which the introduction of an alternate weekly waste collection by the District Council depended.

RESOLVED - that the report be received.

559 HERTFORDSHIRE WASTE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
WASTE DISPOSAL POLICIES PREFERRED OPTIONS
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT: JANUARY 2008

The Committee received a report on the Council's response to the Hertfordshire Waste Development Plan - Waste Disposal Policies Preferred Options Consultation Document: January 2008.

This would be the subject of a non-key decision on 29 February 2008.

ACTION

RESOLVED - that the report be received.

560 HERTFORDSHIRE WASTE DEVELOPMENT PLAN WASTE
SITES SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS PREFERRED OPTIONS
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT: JANUARY 2008

The Committee received a report on the Council's response to the Hertfordshire Waste Development Plan - Waste Sites Specific Allocations Preferred Options Consultation Document: January 2008.

This would be the subject of a non-key decision on 29 February 2008.

RESOLVED - that the report be received.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.