

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON MONDAY 1
JULY 2024, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor D Jacobs (Chair)
Councillors D Andrews, E Buckmaster,
R Carter, N Clements, C Horner,
G McAndrew, S Nicholls, M Swainston,
J Thomas and G Williams

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors B Crystall, B Deering and
T Hoskin

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Michele Aves	- Committee Support Officer
James Ellis	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Chloe Hipwood	- Service Manager - Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning
Jess Khanom-Metaman	- Head of Operations
Peter Mannings	- Committee Support Officer

65 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR 2024/25

It was proposed by Councillor Nicholls and seconded by Councillor Swainston, that Councillor Horner be appointed Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for

the 2024/25 civic year.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that Councillor Horner be appointed Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2024/25 civic year.

66 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors P Boylan and N Cox. It was noted that Councillors S Watson and G Williamson were substituting for Councillors N Cox and P Boylan.

67 **MINUTES - 5 MARCH 2024**

Councillor Nicholls proposed and Councillor Swainston seconded, a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

Delete in 11th Paragraph of Minute 366:

‘Councillor Nicholls said that she had raised the subject of UK Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) at a Buntingford Town Council meeting’.

Replace with: ‘Councillor Nicholls said that she had raised the subject of UK Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) at an Aspenden Parish Council meeting’.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2024, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

Delete in 11th Paragraph of Minute 366:

‘Councillor Nicholls said that she had raised the subject of UK Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) at a Buntingford Town Council meeting’.

Replace with: ‘Councillor Nicholls said that she had raised the subject of UK Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) at an Aspenden Parish Council meeting.

68 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chair's announcements.

69 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Buckmaster declared an interest in the matter referred to in minute 70, on the grounds that he was chairman of the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership and a cabinet member of Hertfordshire County Council (the waste disposal authority).

Councillor McAndrew declared an interest in the matter referred to in minute 70, on the grounds that he was the deputy Executive Member for Environment at Hertfordshire County Council, the waste disposal authority.

70 AWARD OF THE WASTE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANSING CONTRACT

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability submitted a report inviting Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the awarding of the new Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract. He said that North Hertfordshire District Council were the lead authority and would be considering a similar report with similar recommendations.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that the waste, recycling and street cleansing service represented the largest spend on services contracts each financial year, and it was a high-profile service that impacted on residents every week. He talked about the impact of the contract on the council's ability to achieve carbon reduction and sustainability aims for the District.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability summarised the decision-making timeline to date and invited the Overview and Scrutiny Committee comment on and ask questions in respect of the recommendations. He referred to a statutory guidance consultation paper issued in October 2023 to support the simpler recycling proposals that were detailed in the resources and waste strategy 2018. He said that some elements of the draft guidance were not in line with the service changes due to implement by this contract in 2025.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that it would not be prudent to further delay a decision on awarding the contract in the hope that a final clarification was forthcoming in respect of residual waste collections.

Councillor Buckmaster said that he was broadly in agreement with the approach and the design and the proposals. He said that there were variances in respect of recycling across the county and the council needed to move forward.

Councillor Buckmaster referred to the absence of food waste in the East Herts collections, which would be addressed within the next two years. He said that he appreciated the sentiments around three weekly residual waste collections, and he believed that there were good reasons to do that. He said that the change in design would help to increase recycling rates and reduce carbon content.

Councillor Buckmaster said that the additional fibre bin

would be a challenge for some people, and he noted that there would be an app available with a push system to remind people what bin to put out on that particular week.

Councillor Nicholls said that local engagement and educating people about the new system was key in the first few weeks and months of the contract rolling out. Councillor Watson talked about the unknowns and potential risks in respect of IT, and asked if these elements had been risk assessed. He referred to the use of different systems at East Herts and North Herts.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that any risks had to be thought through in terms of how they could be mitigated, and this had been incorporated into the recommendations in terms of how risks could be mitigated. He referred to the strengthening of the project board in overseeing the implementation by having the digital transformation executive on that board.

The Shared Service Manager (Waste) said that each council had a different approach to managing the IT integration, and decisions that affected East Herts would be made by the digital transformation board. She said that these types of integrations were being carried out all over the country and had been done plenty of times before with the Granicus system that East Herts operate. She said that Officers were confident that the integration could be completed successfully, and this work would be overseen by the mobilisation project board.

Councillor McAndrew referred to the DEFRA classifications of some cartons as plastics and some as fibre, and an unrealistic expectation from DEFRA that residents sort between the two. He commented on plastic films being added to national doorstep collections by 2027 and there had been no government assessment as to whether the county would be ready to collect and recycle such materials on a sustainable basis. He expressed a concern that some fleet manufacturers might not be able to deliver on the demand for the vehicles required by the

contract.

The Shared Service Manager (Waste) said that a majority of bidders had indicated a confidence that they could secure the required vehicles. She referred to the competitive dialogue that had been had with the bidders and fleet providers. She said that the food waste services were due to start in August 2025, which was earlier than the governments mandate of March 2026. Members were advised therefore that the council's vehicle orders should be in earlier than some other councils.

The Shared Services Manager (Waste) responded to a question regarding EV vehicles. She said there was an option to extend the contract at the 8-year point. Members were advised that the EV technology was not there yet in respect of 26 tonne refuse vehicles and the contract had been built around every vehicle under 3.5 tonnes being electronic.

In response to comments from Councillors Nicholls and Clements, the Shared Services Manager (Waste) talked about the transformation programme and set out the advantages of the app. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services talked about the transformation programme and the planned introduction of the new CRM system.

The Shared Services Manager (Waste) clarified a number of points regarding the wording of the draft communications plan following a comment from Councillor Thomas.

Councillor Andrews proposed an amendment to the recommendations, as follows:

Recommendation A - Delete:

‘That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to the Executive to award the waste, recycling and street cleansing contract to the preferred bidder, as identified in

Appendix 1 Part 2 of this report.'

Replace with:

'That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the intention of the Executive to award the waste, recycling and street cleansing contract to the preferred bidder, as identified in Appendix 1 Part 2 of this report.'

Recommendation B - Delete:

'That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to the Executive to approve the formation of a joint mobilisation project board to include the Executive Members responsible for digital transformation as well as the Executive Member covering waste, recycling and street cleansing services for both EHC and North Herts to monitor the progress of the mobilisation of the waste, recycling and street cleansing contract.'

Replace with:

'That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee encourages the Executive to approve the formation of a joint mobilisation project board to include the Executive Members responsible for digital transformation as well as the Executive Member covering waste, recycling and street cleansing services for both EHC and North Herts to monitor the progress of the mobilisation of the waste, recycling and street cleansing contract..

No change to Recommendation C

Recommendation D - Delete:

'That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to the Executive to agree the commencement of a procurement exercise for the provision of a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) and haulage.'

Replace with:

‘That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the Executive to agree the commencement of a procurement exercise for the provision of a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) and haulage.’

Councillor Williamson seconded the amendment.

Councillor Jacobs proposed and Councillor Watson seconded, a motion that pursuant to Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the business referred to in Appendices 1 and/or 8 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that pursuant to Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the business referred to in Appendices 1 and/or 8 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

Full details in restricted minutes.

The meeting returned to Part 1 discussion.

The motion to amend the recommendations, having been proposed and seconded, was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

Councillor Watson proposed and Councillor Andrews seconded, the substantive recommendations and, upon a vote being taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the intention of the Executive to award the waste, recycling and street cleansing contract to the preferred bidder, as identified in Appendix 1 Part 2 of this report.

(B) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee encourages the Executive to approve the formation of a joint mobilisation project board to include the Executive Members responsible for digital transformation as well as the Executive Member covering waste, recycling and street cleansing services for both EHC and North Herts to monitor the progress of the mobilisation of the waste, recycling and street cleansing contract.

(C) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has regard for the draft statutory guidance in Appendix 6 and taking into account the matters set out in this Part 2 report and any Part 2 clarifications, recommends to Executive to reconfirm the decision on the 3-weekly collection frequency of residual waste collections made by Executive as per 2.5 and provides clear reasons for the decision.

(D) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the Executive in agreeing the commencement of a procurement exercise for the provision of a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) and haulage.

71 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee Support Officer submitted the work programme report and summarised the items on the work programme for future meetings in 2024/25. He drew Members' attention to the Appendix following the workshop held on 11 June 2024.

The Committee Support Officer reminded Members to complete the scrutiny proposal form circulated by email on 12 June 2024. Councillor Andrews proposed and Councillor Watson seconded a motion that the 2024/25 Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme in Appendix 1, be agreed.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services reiterated the importance of the completion of the scrutiny proposal forms. Members were advised to submit the forms to Democratic Services as soon as possible.

RESOLVED – that the 2024/25 Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme in Appendix 1, be agreed.

72 URGENT ITEMS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 8.01 pm

Chairman

Date