

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY
21 JUNE 2016, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J Wyllie (Chairman).
Councillors Mrs R Cheswright, K Crofton,
G Cutting, H Drake, M Freeman, R Henson,
M McMullen and S Reed.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors L Haysey, A Jackson,
G McAndrew and P Ruffles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

David Allen	- Waste Services Manager
Cliff Cardoza	- Head of Environmental Services and Leisure
Oliver Furbur	- Project Manager
James Kidd	- Graduate Finance Officer
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Liz Watts	- Chief Executive

102 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Councillor M Freeman and seconded by Councillor G Cutting that Councillor H Drake be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Environment Scrutiny Committee for the 2016/17 civic year.

After being put to the meeting, Councillor H Drake was

appointed Vice–Chairman of the Environment Scrutiny Committee for the 2016/17 civic year.

RESOLVED – that Councillor H Drake be appointed Vice–Chairman of the Environment Scrutiny Committee for the 2016/17 civic year.

103 MINUTES – 23 FEBRUARY 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

104 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised that this would be the last meeting of Environment Scrutiny Committee attended by Cliff Cardoza. Members joined the Chairman in thanking Cliff for his hard work and advice to the Committee.

105 WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

The Chairman submitted a report setting out the future work programme for Environment Scrutiny Committee for 2016/17. The Scrutiny Officer provided a summary of the report and invited Members to consider any additional items and whether they wished to invite Executive Members to future meetings.

Members were also requested to consider whether there was any training Members would like arranged that was relevant to the remit of Environment Scrutiny. Councillor K Crofton referred to housebuilding in the District and commented on whether Members could scrutinise the provision of supporting infrastructure.

The Leader referred to the District Plan in terms of house types and design as well as supporting infrastructure. She stated that the document was in the final stages and there had been many opportunities to contribute. She concluded that any further matters of substance should

be dealt with at meetings of the District Plan Executive Panel rather than via the Scrutiny process.

The Scrutiny Officer referred to a future meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and the linkages between the District Plan, Development Management and Health. She stated that issues such as walking and cycling could be discussed at that meeting along with the points raised by Councillor Crofton.

Councillor R Henson referred to a review of parking policy. The Leader confirmed that there was a parking policy in the District Plan and this matter could be discussed at future District Plan Executive Panel meetings.

Councillor Mrs R Cheswright commented on ways of giving residents information regarding recycling. The Head of Environmental Services and Leisure referred to a report on how the Council communicated with the public. Councillor G Cutting stated that wheel cards had been very effective at informing residents in Bishop's Stortford Central ward in terms of which material to include in which bin or recycling container.

The Committee supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the work programme, as now detailed, be approved.

106 PERFORMANCE REPORTING – CONTRACT
PERFORMANCE 2015/16

The Head of Environmental Services and Leisure submitted a report setting out the current performance of the Council's two main environmental management term contracts as well as other environmental management initiatives that had been undertaken.

The Head provided a summary of the report and highlighted a

number of key issues. He referred in particular, to an increase in fly tipping and abandoned vehicles. Members were advised that the low steel price meant that vehicles were no longer being sold for scrap. However, abandoned vehicles in East Herts remain very low.

Councillor Mrs R Cheswright commented on the availability of future dates for the collection of electrical equipment. Councillor H Drake emphasised that information leaflets were working, but there needed to be more focus on informing residents how to reduce the amount of residual waste in black bins. She referred to the significant cost of landfill compared to compost and recycling.

Councillor S Reed was advised that it fell to East Herts Council to enforce dog control under new legislation as the Police did not have the resources to be of assistance. Signs had been changed across the District to reflect the changes in legislation. The Head explained that it was too early to see how the Council's new measures were impacting on dog fouling but anecdotally, from telephone calls received, residents were reacting favourably to the publicity and communities were putting pressure on irresponsible dog owners to change their attitude and behaviour.

In response to a comment from Councillor G Cutting, the Head advised that it was the County Council's role to pay for waste disposal and East Herts was only responsible for waste collection. Members were advised that an application for an 'energy from waste' plant in Hoddesdon would be submitted in September or October 2016.

The Committee noted the current performance of the Council's main environmental management term contract and endorsed the management initiatives that had been undertaken.

RESOLVED – that the current performance of the Council's main environmental management term contract be noted and the management initiatives

be endorsed.

107 WASTE AND STREET CLEANSING CONTRACT – FUTURE SERVICE DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group submitted a report on the results of a review of waste and street cleansing services and recommended aspects for the future design of services which could be incorporated into the next service contract. The Chairman and the Head of Environmental Services and Leisure provided a summary of the report and the findings of the Task and Finish Group.

Members were referred to paragraph 2.3 of the report for the specific strategic objectives of the future waste and street cleansing service. The Chairman highlighted paragraph 2.10 with regard to the options for future domestic waste collection services that had been considered by the Task and Finish Group. He paid tribute to the Members and Officers that had assisted the Group with invaluable advice and guidance.

Councillor Mrs R Cheswright commented on the possibility of additional battery recycling containers at key locations. Councillor M Freeman commented that it was felt there were sufficient disposal points across the District as shops that sold batteries had to offer the recycling containers.

Members received the report and recommended that the Executive be advised that Environment Scrutiny Committee supports the design considerations as detailed paragraph 2.52 of the report submitted for incorporation into the next Waste and Street Cleansing contract.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be received; and

(B) the Executive be advised that Environment Scrutiny Committee supports the design considerations as detailed in paragraph 2.52 of the

report submitted for incorporation into the next Waste and Street Cleansing contract.

108 SHARED WASTE SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS WITH NORTH HERTS

The Ambassador and Executive Member for Shared Services submitted a report setting out proposals for a shared Waste and Street Cleansing Service with North Herts District Council (NHDC). The Head of Environmental Services and Leisure provided a summary of the report.

The Head reminded Members of previous decisions resulting in the current proposals. Specifically, he referred Members to Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted, for the results of that detailed work. He stated that the 'Strategic Outline Case' (SOC), considered by the Committee last year had provided a high level assessment of likely risks, costs, savings and outcomes and short-listed options for further evaluation. This had shown that there were potentially significant savings to be made from a shared service. The more detailed report presented indicated greater savings than previously estimated, totalling £707,000 per annum for both Authorities, of which £213,000 would accrue to East Herts Council.

Members were advised of the detailed guiding principles of a shared service for waste and street cleansing as well as the main drivers behind this approach. The main advantage would be efficiency savings without a reduction in the quality of service provided by either Authority.

Members were advised of the detailed governance arrangements of the proposed shared service. The Head stated that if the shared service was approved by both Authorities, then the procurement would commence in the autumn with a contract being awarded in spring 2017 to commence in May 2018.

In response to a query from Councillor K Crofton, the Head detailed the differences between the waste and street cleansing regimes at both Authorities. He advised that there would be no problems in absorbing the differences within any new shared contract.

The Head confirmed to Councillor M McMullen that there were differences in the contractual costs in place at both Authorities. He summarised some of the key differences and emphasised that the terms of conditions of all the contractor's operatives involved were protected by the Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) regulations.

The Head responded to a number of other queries from the Committee regarding the recycling performance of NHDC and the amounts of the various types of waste produced in both Districts. He stated that the current refuse trucks were the latest Euro 5 compliant diesel vehicles and technology was in use to monitor how they were being driven to maximise efficiency and save on fuel costs.

Members were advised that more fuel efficient electric and gas/diesel powered vans were on the road but the cost and efficiency of using such technology in large refuse trucks was currently questionable.

The Committee received the report and recommended to the Executive that the implementation of a Shared Waste and Street Cleansing Service with NHDC and the procurement of a joint contract be approved.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be received; and

(B) the Executive be advised that Environment Scrutiny Committee supports the implementation of a Shared Waste and Street Cleansing Service with North Herts District Council (NHDC) and the procurement of a joint contract.

The meeting closed at 8.04 pm

Chairman

Date