

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 12 FEBRUARY 2019

REPORT BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report summarises the discussions and recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 18th December 2018.

<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u>	
(A)	That Executive notes the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee contained in the report.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 18th December 2018 and considered the following key items:

- Executive Member Update - Environment And The Public Realm;
- Climate Change Task and Finish Group;
- CCTV Partnership Shared Service Update;
- IT - Shared Service
- Brexit: Task and Finish Group: Terms of Reference
- Work Programme 2018/19

A summary of their discussions and recommendations is set out below.

2.0 Update from the Executive Member for Environment and the Public Realm

2.1 The Executive Member for the Environment and Public Realm provided Members with a presentation covering his portfolio. He referred to the Council's corporate priorities, the successes achieved in a number of environmental service areas including for example, Waste and Recycling, Licensing, Environmental Health, Enforcement and Community Safety, highlighting steps for the future.

2.2 Members sought and were provided with clarification in relation to:

- Rapid charging for taxis and charging points;
- Hertford Hydro - the progress made so far with the Environment Agency, the project's investment potential and the opportunities for harvesting energy from other rivers within the District;
- Community Safety and Purple Flag status; and
- Recycling (currently at 53%) and in particular the fate of plastics and where this commodity was sent. The Executive Member undertook to provide Members with further information on this as this fell within the remit of Hertfordshire County Council.

3.0 Climate Change Task and Finish Group

3.1 Councillor B Deering, Chairman of the Climate Change Task and Finish Group provided Members with a summary of the work of the Group. He thanked the Environment Sustainability Co-ordinator for his in depth knowledge and expertise during the Council's process of reviewing climate change activity within East Herts.

3.2 Councillor Deering suggested that the Council might work more closely with local environment groups to promote

energy efficiency measures and carbon reduction generally and that consideration might be given to:

- Holding a yearly local environment conference and inviting community groups;
- Sending out further general information to the public;
- Development of a promotional exemplar home energy show facility;
- Investigating the use of battery storage amongst other alternative energy technology on land owned by the Council and which could become a source of revenue;

3.3 The Environment Sustainability Co-ordinator provided a summary of:

- The on-going work which the Council was currently undertaking to tackle climate change;
- What could be done, in terms of new ideas and proposals, to tackle climate change; and
- Additional policy principles that should be adopted and which could be recommended to the Executive.

The Chairman, on behalf of Members thanked all those who had been involved in the process and stated that the Council's ongoing target to reduce carbon emissions remained ambitious.

A number of issues were discussed such as oil-buying clubs, energy use by Leisure facilities and retail premises, domestic energy use and Electric Vehicle charging points.

The Environment Sustainability Co-Ordinator commented that leisure facilities were among one of the Council's largest users of energy and as such, further improvements in efficiency of those premises would contribute to reducing the Council's carbon emissions. He also commented on energy efficiency grants currently available to home owners, that the use of domestic Smart Meters might go some way to controlling

energy usage and confirmed that information was available on the East Herts website about local oil buying clubs.

The Environment Sustainability Co-Ordinator explained the process developers had to go through in terms of applying to the District Network Operator for a level of energy provision on new developments and how some areas had sufficient energy provision but in others there were problems of grid constraint and insufficient on-site power to facilitate adequate electric vehicle charging points.

The Chairman suggested a stand at Hertfordshire Agricultural Show, using a market stall to promote information or setting up a demonstration home.

Councillor B Deering commented that it was important to do something and ensure that the public was involved.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- A The Executive be advised that, given the importance of the climate change policy principles to the health and well-being of East Herts residents, the Council adopt the matters set out in ERP E (Appendix A in this document) as over-arching policy principles;
- B The ongoing work of the Council in tackling climate change should be acknowledged and that the continuation of these activities be endorsed by Members; and
- C A number of new ideas and proposals to tackle climate change were worthy of more detailed consideration be supported and proposals forwarded to Lead Members and Heads of Service for consideration when drawing up revised service plans and priorities.

4.0 CCTV Partnership Shared Service Update

4.1 The Head of Housing and Health submitted a report on the CCTV Shared Service which the Service Manager, Community Wellbeing and Partnerships, provided a summary update.

4.2 The Chairman sought assurances that the recommendations arising from the SIAS Governance Review were:

- Achievable; and
- That the council needed to work in partnership and share additional sources of information rather than only that from the Police.

4.3 There was a lengthy general discussion about the rules and protocols associated with the use of CCTV cameras, and the business and governance arrangements of the shared service usage between the four authorities.

4.4 Members also raised issues relating to specific CCTV locations. The Service Manager explained that these were being considered as part of the review and that work was ongoing

4.5 It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The governance review of the CCTV Partnership conducted by the Shared Internal Audit Service be received and used as the basis to inform the Head of Housing and Health's input to the work of the CCTV Officer Management Board;
- The progress and the findings to date on the operational review of CCTV coverage in the District be noted; and
- The Head of Housing and Health should report back on the implementation of the recommendations of the Governance Review and the outcome of the Operational Review of CCTV coverage.

5.0 IT - SHARED SERVICE

- 5.1 The Deputy Chief Executive provided an update on the IT Shared Service arrangements and introduced the new Stevenage ICT Strategic Partnership Manager who had already come up with a solution to improve resilience by using a microwave link between masts at a cost of £80K instead of a potential cost of £500K for a new cable. How this would improve resilience was discussed.
- 5.2 It was noted that Microsoft 365 would be introduced shortly, to help address issues of storage and resilience and that an IT Steering Group had been established to review projects going forward. An outline was provided of how digital print-and-post worked. It was also noted that new printers with “follow me” capability and scanners were in the process of being installed which would improve security (especially in relation to GDPR requirements) and improve overall resilience and efficiency.
- 5.3 Several Councillors expressed concern at the seemingly regular failure of IT including the unreliability of hosted desktops and welcomed any work to improve resilience.
- 5.4 It was RESOLVED that the progress to date within the Shared IT Service be noted.

6.0 BREXIT: TASK AND FINISH GROUP: TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 6.1 The Head of Communications, Policy and Strategy submitted a report on a proposed Terms of Reference for the Brexit Task and Finish Group. The Policy Officer provided an overview of the background.

6.2 It was RESOLVED that the Executive be advised that Terms of reference for the Brexit Task and Finish Group be adopted.

7.0 WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

The Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee submitted a report setting out the draft Work Programme.

RESOLVED – that the work programme be agreed.

Contact Member: Councillor Mike Allen, Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee mike.allen@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Alison Stuart– Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Extn: 2170.
alison.stuart@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Michael Edley – Interim Scrutiny Officer, Extn: 1515. mike.edley@eastherts.gov.uk

Appendix A: CLIMATE CHANGE ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'E'

Climate change policy principles

- These matters have been considered and debated by the Task and Finish Group. The Task and Finish Group has concluded that the potential importance of these matters to the health and wellbeing of East Herts residents is such that the authority should considering adopting the matters as over-arching policy principles.
- The Task and Finish Group recommends that Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorses the policy principles and recommends to the Executive that they be adopted by the authority.

Activity
E1) The council will take a forward-thinking, longer term approach to renewable energy technologies, with the aim of maximising their use in new developments in the District.
E2) The council will proactively promote energy efficiency measures and strive to demonstrate their tangible benefits to residents, businesses and other partner organisations.
E3) The council will promote the principle of sustainable transport as a means of tackling climate change, particular with regard to the development of new neighbourhoods and garden towns.
E4) The council will proactively support the national Clean Air Day and promote the involvement of residents, businesses and other partner organisations in delivery of activities.
E5) The council will seek to enhance and promote local cycling and walking networks and encourage uptake of these activities in place of car use.
E6) The council will seek opportunities to encourage and grow the low carbon economy within the district.