

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY 18
DECEMBER 2018, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Allen (Chairman)
Councillors S Bull, M Casey, G Cutting,
B Deering, I Devonshire, H Drake, J Jones,
M McMullen, M Stevenson and N Symonds

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor G McAndrew

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Nathan Bookbinder	- Policy Officer
Claire Carter	- Service Manager - Community Wellbeing and Partnerships
Mike Edley	- Interim Scrutiny Officer
Helen Standen	- Deputy Chief Executive
David Thorogood	- Environmental Co-Ordinator
Ben Wood	- Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Russell

- Stevenage ICT
Strategy Partnership
Manager

302 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Abbott and Mrs D Hollebon and later, from Councillor P Moore.

303 MINUTES - 6 NOVEMBER 2018

It was moved by Councillor J Jones and seconded by Councillor G Cutting that the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

304 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked the Vice Chairman for chairing the last meeting in his absence. He thanked Members for their good wishes and said that he was on the mend thanks to a fantastic NHS.

The Chairman provided Members with updates in relation to Shared Services and that training was being organised by the Scrutiny Officer in relation to Universal Credit.

305 EXECUTIVE MEMBER UPDATE - ENVIRONMENT AND THE PUBLIC REALM

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.

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;
- 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.

Councillor N Symonds commented on the shortage of taxis which could accommodate users of larger wheel chairs.

The Chairman, on behalf of Members thanked the Executive Member for his detailed presentation.

RESOLVED – that the presentation be received.

306 CLIMATE CHANGE TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Councillor B Deering, Chairman of the Climate Change Task

and Finish Group provided Members with a summary of the work of the Task and Finish 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. Councillor Deering commented that it had been a very interesting area of work to review and of the need to give consideration to what could continue to be done. He 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;
- Investigate use of battery storage amongst other alternative energy technology on land owned by the Council and which could become a source of revenue;

The Environment Sustainability Co-ordinator provided a summary of the report in the context of:

- Carbon reduction
- Clean growth, carbon efficiency and energy generation;
- Community development and communication;
- Cleaner transport; and
- Energy affordability and home energy efficiency

The Environment Sustainability Co-ordinator drew Members' attention to Essential Reference Paper "C" which

summarised the on-going work which the Council was undertaking to tackle climate change and also what could be done (Essential Reference Paper "D") in terms of new ideas and proposals, to tackle climate change. The Environment Sustainability Co-ordinator also referred to Essential Reference Paper "E" which set out 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.

Councillor N Symonds sought and was provided with clarification regarding buses automatically cutting out and being manually re-started by drivers. She also referred to the need to publicise oil buying clubs and for Members to communicate this in their wards.

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 what domestic energy efficiency grants had in the past, as well as currently, been available to home owners. Additionally he confirmed that information was available on the East Herts website about local oil buying clubs.

Councillor H Drake referred to wasted energy by shops keeping their doors wide open and that developers needed to be pressed to future proof developments and ensure energy capacity was sufficient in new developments to

allow for expansion of electric vehicle charging points at a later stage.

The Environment Sustainability Co-Ordinator acknowledged the problems with shop doors and energy wastage. He referred to 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. It was acknowledged that the use of domestic Smart Meters might go some way to controlling energy usage.

Councillor M Stevenson felt that the climate change strategy provided a good example to the public generally.

The Chairman drew Members' attention to the fact that Essential Reference Paper "E" set out additional policy principles that should be adopted and recommended to the Executive. Councillor G Cutting referred to E2 (Proactively promoting energy efficiency measures and demonstrating tangible benefits), he suggested a stand Hertfordshire Agricultural Show, using a market stall to promote information or demonstration home.

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

The Chairman, on behalf of Members, thanked all those involved in the work of the Task and Finish Group.

It was moved by Councillor B Deering and seconded by Councillor G Cutting that the recommendations, as

detailed, be supported. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the recommendations were declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Executive be advised that given the importance of the climate change policy principles as detailed in Essential Reference Paper “E”, to the health and well-being of East Herts residents, the Council adopt the matters as over-arching policy principles; and that

(A) the ongoing work of the Council in tackling climate change, as detailed in Essential Reference “C” be acknowledged and that the continuation of these activities be endorsed by Members; and

(B) new ideas and proposals to tackle climate change as detailed in Essential Reference Paper “D”, and deemed 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.

307 CCTV PARTNERSHIP SHARED SERVICE UPDATE

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

The Chairman sought and was provided with clarification regarding the target set (31 March 2019) in relation to SIAS Governance Review recommendations and whether this was achievable. The Service Manager provided assurances

that it could. Concerns were expressed by Councillor M Stevenson in relation to the last meeting about the objectives which had been set and the need to ensure that the Council worked in partnership and not just with the Police, for sources of information.

Members debated at length, the use of CCTV cameras, how long they were left in position when they were moved and the role of the Control Room in ensuring their optimum usage as a source of providing information. The Head of Communications, Strategy and Communications explained the business side and governance arrangements of the shared service usage between the four authorities.

Councillor J Jones referred to plans by Buntingford Town Council to install CCTV cameras and queried whether the joint shared service could assist the Council. The Service Manager explained that she would be happy to refer the matter over. The Service Manager explained that cameras could not be attached to lamp-posts as these were owned by Hertfordshire County Council and there was evidence the camera fittings weakened the lamp-posts. She also expressed concerns about the cameras currently in use in terms of their fitness for purpose.

Councillor H Drake referred to "hot spots" within Bishop's Stortford and the need to ensure that these were covered and financed with Section 106 monies, otherwise these monies might have to be returned. This was supported by Councillor G Cutting who also suggested that the cameras should have a wider lens and cover a wider area.

The Service Manager explained that this was being looked at as part of the review and that work was ongoing. Councillor B Deering suggested that the CCTV cameras in

Hertford might be moved around more.

It was moved by Councillor G Cutting and seconded by Councillor J Jones that the recommendations, as detailed, be supported. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the recommendations were declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (A) the governance review of the CCTV Partnership conducted by the Shared Internal Audit Service (Essential Reference Paper “B”) 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.

(B) the progress and the findings to date on the operational review of CCTV coverage in the District be noted; and

(C) the Head of Housing and Health report back on the implementation of the recommendations of the Governance Review and the outcome of the Operational Review of CCTV coverage.

308 IT - SHARED SERVICE

The Deputy Chief Executive provided an update on the IT Shared Service arrangements and introduced the new Stevenage ICT Strategic Partnership Manager. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the new ICT Manager had come up with an alternative solution to a proposal 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.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that she would be reporting to Members of Performance Audit and Governance in January 2019 on Section 106 agreements.

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 (and especially in relation to GDPR requirements) and improve overall resilience and efficiency.

Councillor J Jones expressed concern at the regular failure of IT including the unreliability of hosted desktops. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the three-day failure was because a cable had been cut and had disrupted the power supply. Councillor N Symonds was equally frustrated by disruptions to her IT service. The ICT Strategic Partnerships Manager explained possible reasons why their IT service connections might be disrupted. Councillor G Cutting suggested that general housekeeping routines might improve his service.

It was moved by Councillor G Cutting and seconded by Councillor I Devonshire that the progress to date within the Shared IT Service be noted. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the recommendation was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the progress to date within the Shared IT Service be noted.

309 BREXIT: TASK AND FINISH GROUP: TERMS OF REFERENCE

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.

Councillor B Deering explained that Hertfordshire County Council had also carried out a similar exercise.

Councillor Deering explained that this was the Policy Officer (Nathan Bookbinder's) last meeting and wished him well for the future.

It was moved by Councillor M Casey and seconded by Councillor H Drake that the recommendation, as detailed, be supported. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

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

310 WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

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

It was moved by Councillor H Drake and seconded by Councillor M Casey that the work programme be agreed. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken the recommendation was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the work programme, as detailed

within Essential Reference Paper "B" be agreed.

The meeting closed at 9.13 pm

Chairman
Date