

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY 21
MARCH 2023, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J Wyllie (Chairman)
Councillors M Brady, I Devonshire,
H Drake, J Frecknall, M Goldspink,
D Hollebbon, I Kemp, S Rutland-Barsby,
D Snowdon and C Wilson

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors J Goodeve, G McAndrew and
P Ruffles

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Scrutiny Officer
Jonathan Geall	- Head of Housing and Health
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Katie Mogan	- Democratic Services Manager
Claire Spendley	- Environmental Health Practitioner (Environment Team Manager)
Paul Thomas-Jones	- Service Manager – Environmental Health

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Eric Buckmaster	- Hertfordshire County Council
Councillor Bob Deering	- Hertfordshire County Council
Councillor Calvin Horner	- Hertfordshire County Councillor

403 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Curtis and Symonds.

404 MINUTES - 8 NOVEMBER 2022

Councillor Rutland-Barsby proposed and Councillor Wilson seconded, a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2022, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

405 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman apologised for the cancellation of the 17 January 2023 meeting which had been necessary

because some reports were not available as anticipated.

With the consent of Members, the Chairman asked that the order of the agenda items be changed and that the report on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Policy Review be brought forward as this was an update report. He explained that the report on Air Quality Management Plan would take up most of the time on the agenda.

He welcomed Hertfordshire County Councillors E Buckmaster, C Horner and B Deering to the meeting as well as East Herts Executive Members Councillor G McAndrew (Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability) and Councillor J Goodeve (Executive Member for Planning and Growth).

On behalf of Members, Councillor Hollebon thanked the Chairman for his Chairmanship skills for the past year. He thanked Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee in response.

406 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

407 INFORMATION GOVERNANCE AND DATA PROTECTION POLICIES

A report was submitted on behalf of the Executive Member for Corporate Services which provided an update on the Access to Information, Data Breach and

Data Retention Policies as part of the annual policy review.

In summary, the Access to Information Policy had had minor amendments made to reflect new council policies and to clarify that exemptions would be considered rather than directly applied.

The Data Breach Policy had had minor amendments made to reflect new council policies and learning from data breaches.

The Data Retention Policy had had some minor amendments made to reflect new council policies and had been updated to reflect storage locations of data, particularly in backup, following the council's migration to Microsoft 365. The changes to the reports were set out in the Appendices to the report.

Councillor Rutland-Barsby explained that following the May 2023 elections, new Members should be provided with training as early as possible to protect both themselves and the council. Members supported this view.

Councillor Goldspink proposed and Councillor Rutland-Barsby seconded, a motion that the content of the report and amendments made to the policies be noted and the Information Governance and Data Protection Manager be advised that early training should be provided to new Members following the May 2023 elections.

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

RESOLVED – that (A) the content of the report and amendments made to the policies be noted and

(B) the Information Governance and Data Protection Manager be advised that early training be provided to new Members following the May 2023 elections.

408 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability submitted a report which aims to address questions raised by members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at an earlier meeting around the council's air quality management areas and air quality action plan.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that he would like to give Members a presentation which highlighted some of the work the council had been doing in respect of air quality. The slides provided an update on reducing pollution levels since 2014 in the three air quality management areas in Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Sawbridgeworth. The first slide indicated that the three areas were nearly falling below the air quality management designation status. He explained that from the evidence presented, the recent growth in housing development had not stopped the downward trend of

air pollution levels despite increases in car usage and additional schools' admissions.

The Executive Member provided a summary of achievements since 2020 these included the purchase of electric cars for officers use, revised taxi policies, the sustainability policies, new pollution monitors and a new Climate Change Strategy. He explained the timetabling proposed for the introduction of a new Air Quality Action Plan which would go out for consultation, to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (21 September 2023), the Executive (January 2024) and to DEFA for approval. It was noted that a Government Grant had been received to delivery Air Quality projects in the sum of £126,408.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members asked some pre submitted and supplementary questions. The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability and the Executive Member for Planning and Growth responded to these questions. Hertfordshire County Councillors E Buckmaster, B Deering and Calvin Horner also responded to some of the questions and the answers that were given.

Having scrutinised the report and its contents, Councillor Devonshire proposed and Councillor Drake seconded, a motion that the council's work in relation to air quality and more specifically in the three air quality management areas be reviewed including the extent to which the council was using available resources to have a positive impact on public health. Secondly Members acknowledged the extent to which the council was fulfilling its statutory obligations with

regard to the three air quality management areas with comments being referred to the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability.

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

RESOLVED – that (A) council’s work in relation to air quality and more specifically in the three air quality management areas be received including the extent to which the council was using available resources to have a positive impact on public health; and

(B) Secondly that Members acknowledged the extent to which the council was fulfilling its statutory obligations with regard to the three air quality management areas with comments being referred to the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability.

409 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT (RIPA) POLICY REVIEW

A report was submitted on behalf of the Executive Member for Corporate Services which provided an update following the Council’s recent IPCO inspection and which sought support to implement recommended changes to the RIPA policy. It was noted that the council was last inspected in 2019.

The changes were detailed in the Appendices to the report.

Councillor Goldspink proposed and Councillor Snowdon seconded, a motion that the content of the report be received and the Regulation and Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Policy be recommended to the Executive for adoption.

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

RESOLVED – that the content of the report be received and the Regulation and Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Policy be recommended to the Executive for adoption.

410 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME - 21 MARCH 2023

The Scrutiny Officer presented the draft work programme which was attached to the report as an appendix. She reminded Members that the appendix set out what was currently in the work programme. She said that the Head of Operations would be reporting on the Waste Shared Service Client Team and Corporate Service arrangements at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 June 2023 meeting.

Members were reminded that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had asked at an earlier meeting, for an update on support from the Herts Growth Board and the suggestion of presenting a case for additional infrastructure funding in Hertfordshire. This item had been on the work programme but was deferred at the request of HGB who wanted to

re-evaluate their priorities. Officers at HCC would be asked for an update on when this report could be included on the work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that post the district council elections, Democratic Services would be establishing two workshops, one with Overview and Scrutiny Members and one with Heads of Service to brainstorm topics for scrutiny and inclusion in their Work Programme. Additionally, in terms of training and as part of the Induction Process, a Workshop on the Essentials of Effective Strategic Scrutiny has been booked with the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny for Overview and Scrutiny Members.

Members noted that following the report on the Air Quality Management Plan this evening and the timetabling of a proposed Action Plan, it was noted that Members would be presented with an update report on its progress to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 September 2023.

It was proposed by Councillor Snowdon and seconded by Councillor Wilson that the Committee Work Programme, as amended, be approved. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (A) the main agenda items for the next meeting be agreed; and

(B) the proposed Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, as amended, be approved.

411 URGENT ITEMS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm

Chairman

Date