

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF NEIGHBOURHOODS SELECT COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2017
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.30 - 8.25 PM**

Members Present: N Bedford (Chairman), H Brady (Vice-Chairman), N Avey, R Baldwin, L Hughes, J Jennings, J Lea, R Morgan, S Neville, A Patel, C P Pond, G Shiell, E Webster and J H Whitehouse

Other members present: W Breare-Hall and J Philip

Apologies for Absence: M Sartin

Officers Present D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Neighbourhoods), K Durrani (Assistant Director (Technical Services)) and V Messenger (Democratic Services Officer)

25. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

It was noted that Councillor J Lea was substituting for Councillor M Sartin.

26. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the last meeting of the Neighbourhoods Select Committee held on 19 September 2017 be agreed, subject to the amendment below:

Work Programme (Min no 17) – Councillor S Neville asked if Essex County Council (ECC) Passenger Transport officers could be invited to a future meeting of this Select Committee (SC), as agreed at the meetings of 21 March and 27 June 2017. D Macnab replied that this was correct, but was dependant on their availability.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made pursuant to the Member's Code of Conduct.

28. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PROGRAMME

Terms of Reference

These were noted by members.

Work Programme

Councillor A Patel asked if the 'Identification of Recommendations to be made to the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee' on the Council's Transformation Project from the Transformation Task and Finish Panel meeting of 11 September 2017 (Min no 22), and subsequent amendments made by the O&S Committee on 31 October 2017 (Min no 33) could be added to this SC's Work Programme. This concerned

recommendations 4 (Details of new projects should be submitted to the relevant select committee for their scrutiny, or in the case of those being managed by the Chief Executive they would come to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee) and 5 (Project closure and benefits realisation reports should be submitted to the relevant select committee for their information, or in the case of those being managed by the Chief Executive they would come to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee), which was agreed.

On item (7) Environmental Enforcement Activity, Councillor N Bedford suggested raising the profile of this issue through more publicity of successful cases to increase public awareness, which was agreed.

On item (11) Yearly Review of the Off-Street Parking Service, Councillor N Bedford advised that the first meeting of the Off-Street Car Parking Contract Partnership Board had been rescheduled for 7 December 2017 at 5pm.

On item (16) Air Quality Officer, Councillor N Bedford recommended these issues were included in a presentation next March – how air pollution was monitored; how we could reduce pollution; impact on air quality at roadworks; and impact on air quality from idling vehicles.

Councillor W Breare-Hall, Environment Portfolio Holder, said that Council Enforcement Officers had recently asked vehicle drivers parked outside a Buckhurst Hill primary school to turn their engines off and that if they did not comply, would be fined. Councillor S Neville said that idling vehicles were a frequent problem outside both primary schools in Buckhurst Hill. D Macnab stated that Epping Underground Station was on LUL land and suggested that TfL be approached to work with the Council on this issue. Councillor W Breare-Hall said that the Council had a general power to fine idling drivers and was able to issue up to a level 3 fine, the maximum amount of which was £1,000 for an offence.

On item (17) Councillor N Bedford said it would be useful to know from the Public Health Officer information on – which departments came under Public Health; how the team worked; how to raise the profile; trends; and the identification of hazards.

Councillor J H Whitehouse asked if both the Air Quality and Public Health Officers would be attending this SC's meeting in March 2018. D Macnab confirmed this and that a Land Drainage Officer (item 14) would attend the January meeting to explain the various land drainage and flood matters in which officers were involved.

Councillor A Patel asked if there would be an update provided on the anniversary of the introduction of the four-day collection service part of the Waste Management Contract in April 2018. D Macnab said the Minutes of the Waste Management Partnership Board were published on the Intranet at the link below: <https://eppingforestintranet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=769&Year=0>

D Macnab advised members that TfL would be attending the O&S meeting in January 2018, but there was no firm date on when Essex County Council Passenger Transport would attend a meeting.

Agreed:

- (1) Work Programme new additions to be made for Transformation Projects relevant to this Committee and for Transformation Projects closure and benefits reports.

- (2) Work Programme: (7) Environmental Enforcement Activity – D Macnab to organise increased public awareness through more press releases of successful cases.
- (3) Work Programme: (16) Air Quality Officer, the following issues be included in the officer's presentation next March information:
 - How air pollution was monitored;
 - How we could reduce pollution;
 - Impact on air quality at roadworks; and
 - Impact on air quality from idling vehicles.
- (4) Work Programme: (14) Land Drainage Officer – K Durrani to organise and presentation to include the various land drainage and flood matters with which officers were involved.
- (5) Work Programme: (16) Air Quality – D Macnab to organise co-operation with TfL on idling vehicles on LUL at Epping Station.
- (6) Work Programme: (17) Public Health Officer, the following issues be included in the officer's presentation next March information:
 - How the team worked and which departments came under Public Health;
 - How to raise the profile;
 - Trends; and
 - Identification of hazards.

29. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2017/18 - QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE

There were twelve indicators that fell with this SC's areas of responsibility. Of these, 10 (84%) had achieved target, 1 (8%) had not achieved target and 1 (8%) had performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator. It was noted that 75% of indicators were anticipated to achieve year-end target.

NE1013 (What percentage of all household waste was sent to be recycled or reuse?)

K Durrani, explained that the Council had not hit the mark on the first or second quarters. It was difficult to assess what more could be done as the trend had been going upwards for a while, and was it because there was more waste or not enough waste being recycled.

Councillor J Jennings asked how the targets were set. D Macnab, replied that members would set the targets on the recommendation of officers. It was an internal process reviewed by the Management Board with a view to stretching the targets every year. The waste targets were split into two. This Council was in the top ten nationally and the top two in Essex.

Councillor J Lea asked about the recycling of glass bottles and why these were not collected separately from commercial establishments. K Durrani said that the Council did offer a commercial service, but that businesses chose their own contractor. Domestic glass was collected separately. However, there were incentive schemes for businesses to separate out glass.

Councillor W Breare-Hall, Environment Portfolio Holder, acknowledged that it was a problem to get residents to reduce their residual waste. On the positive side the Council had introduced a 'recycling rewards' scheme for blocks of flats, which a hundred were participating in, and were rewarded with vouchers to spend in local businesses or could choose to raise money for a nominated charity. A list of these blocks was available from Waste Management. However, the scheme was not available for individual households.

Councillor H Brady asked if a slogan with a financial incentive could be put on recycling sacks, such as 'recycling more keeps housing tax down' and publicise this.

NE1005 (What percentage of the issues and complaints received by the Environment & Neighbourhoods Team received an initial response within 3 days?);

NE1006 (What percentage of the recorded incidences of fly-tipping were investigated within 3 working days of being recorded?); and

NE1007 (What percentage of recorded incidences of fly-tipping (contract cleared) were removed within 5 working days of being recorded?).

Congratulations were offered by members to the officers on the high targets achieved.

Councillor R Morgan stated that as the Council did not remove fly-tipping from private land, how many prosecutions had been carried out and how could this be stopped. D Macnab said that the Council had used both covert and non-covert methods in hotspots in certain areas. Incidences were on the increase but this trend could not be linked back to Essex and the revised policy in use at its recycling centres. However, the Council could and did publicise prosecutions, but suffered from people that travelled from other areas, such as London into the District. The Environment and Neighbourhoods Manager, R Gardiner, and his team worked hard to keep fly-tipping under control. Environmental Enforcement Activity (Work Programme item 7) would go to the Neighbourhoods SC meeting in March 2018. It was a complex situation but ECC would not pay for disposal from private land. S Neville asked if neighbourhood police could be involved, to which Councillor Morgan said there was a rural policing team and suggested the SC could invite the rural policing unit to a meeting. It was noted that the Communities Director, A Hall, had regular meetings with the Essex Community Team. Councillor W Breare-Hall remarked that over the last year there had been between 10 – 13 prosecutions of fly-tippers and householders, who had given their waste to rogue traders. Therefore the 'duty of care' was not hugely popular, but the Council would be diligent in pursuing viable prosecutions.

RESOLVED:

That the Select Committee reviewed and noted the KPIs for 2017/18 Quarter 2 Performance in relation to the key performance indicators within its area of responsibility.

30. CORPORATE PLAN KEY ACTION PLAN 2017/18 QUARTER 2 POSITION

The Corporate Plan was the Council's key strategic planning document that set out its priorities or corporate aims over a five-year period from 2015/16 to 2019/20. The Corporate Plan Key Action Plan for 2017/18 was adopted by Council in September 2016. In relation to the ten actions and deliverables, which fell under the responsibility of this SC against the Key Action Plan for 2017/18, the report reviewed progress made, as given below:

- 9 (90%) of these actions have been 'Achieved' or are 'On-Target'
- 0 (0%) of these actions are 'Under Control'
- 1 (10%) of these actions are 'Behind Schedule'
- 0 (0%) of these actions are 'Pending'

Objective 1.b. To continue to review and develop the Council's own assets and landholdings

Action 7 Sell the Council-owned Nursery site at Pyrles Lane, Loughton to deliver a capital receipt

Councillor C P Pond asked about progress on the marketing agents that had been appointed. D Macnab said that the agents appointed for the valuation of the sites would have these on the market by early 2018.

Action 9 Deliver an approach to North Weald Airfield with an agreed operating partner, to maximise the use of the facilities

Councillor S Neville asked for an update on the North Weald Airfield. D Macnab said a progress report would be going to the next Asset Management and Economic Development Cabinet Committee in January 2018.

Action 10 Open the Epping Forest Shopping Park

D Macnab reported that the official opening of the retail park was planned for mid-December. Aldi would open on 30 November while JD Sports and Next would open in December.

Objective 2.c. To deliver the Council's new Leisure and Cultural Strategy

Action 2 Develop a new leisure centre at Waltham Abbey

D Macnab reported that this was on target and the main pool and learner pool tanks were completed.

RESOLVED:

That the Select Committee reviewed and noted the progress of the Corporate Plan Key Action Plan for 2017/18 Quarter 2 Position in relation to its areas of responsibility.

31. LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

(1) Verbal report on current position of the Local Plan

Councillor J Philip, Planning and Governance Portfolio Holder, reported that there had been an all-member briefing on 21 November to learn about the latest developments on the Local Plan (LP). The Council's LP submission had been scrutinised last week by Counsel to ensure it was being done correctly. All the Forward Planning team were working very hard to ensure the LP would be ready to be published in the agenda of the Extraordinary Council Meeting scheduled for 14 December 2017 at 6pm. This would be followed by a six-week representation period on the soundness of the plan. The SC was advised that

the Inspector would reply to the responses, as this was his responsibility under Regulation 19. The Council would be significantly better off if the LP was submitted to the Government by 31 March 2018, the target date of which was 15 March, otherwise the Government would increase housing numbers for the District.

Councillor R Morgan agreed it was sensible to have a two-week buffer period. Councillor J H Whitehouse asked when the LP would be finalised. Councillor J Philip said it was in the hands of the Inspector, but East Herts had submitted their LP in March 2017 and were expecting a completion report back in April 2018. The Council also had no choice on which Inspector would be appointed to review the Council's LP. D Macnab said the Council had enlisted the Programme Officer, who had supported the Inspector during the inspection of the East Herts submission. Councillor H Brady asked what would happen to the Forward Planning Interim AD after the LP submission, and if the consultants she worked for would be retained. Councillor J Philip said that a report would be made to Cabinet detailing the delivery phases of the LP and staffing etc. that would be required. The Forward Planning team had been working for over seven years on the LP. A five-yearly review would also be required.

- (2) Response to Government Consultation: Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places: 14 September 2017 – 9 November 2017

This consultation had been a large consultation on the Government's proposed standardised methodology for an authority's housing requirement. The response detailed that Epping Forest District Council's LP contained the requirement to deliver 11,400 new homes for the period 2011 – 2033; an average of 514 new homes per year. However, the proposed standardised methodology would set the Council's indicative housing requirement at a figure of 923 or 20,306 homes over the plan period. The Council supported the introduction of a straightforward, standardised methodology, but summarised a number of reasons why the Government should not introduce the proposed methodology.

The report was noted.

32. LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT

D Macnab said that a Partnership Board (PB) had been established and would be similar to the PBs for Waste Management and the Off Street Car Parking Contract. The first meeting was held on 6 November and was chaired by Councillor H Kane, Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder. The membership was comprised of Councillors R Brookes, G Chambers, P Keska, R Morgan plus two observers, Councillors S Murray and S Neville. The Places for People (Leisure) (PfP) comprised T Goodhand – Operations Director, D Jolliffe – Area Manager and M Nicholson – Contract Manager. The minutes would be published shortly on the Intranet at <https://eppingforestintranet.moderngov.co.uk/ielistmeetings.aspx?CId=792&Year=0>

The PB had published its Terms of Reference which detailed its aims, memberships, functions and duties, which were revised slightly at the first PB meeting. PfP gave a presentation detailing the company, its staff and the investments it had made since taking over the contract in April 2017. Members had been happy with the improvements made. This had included the re-development of the squash courts at Epping to accommodate the league matches and junior coaching sessions, which was now resolved. A report would be going to Cabinet on 6 December 2017 about

proposed crèche facilities at Loughton. This leisure centre was very well used and one of the best in the country. PfP would be completely refurbishing the centre and investing in its future. There had been significant uplifts in membership, especially a high demand for the 'swim only' membership scheme. PfP had submitted its proposed fees and charges from April 2018 but these would only increase by the rate of inflation. Any fee proposals over and above would need a specific agreement. There had been staffing issues that had included the closure of the café and crèche at Loughton, the reasons of which were detailed in the PB minutes. The local leisure forums were not an ideal way for handling issues and did not usually have a good turnout. There was a move by PfP towards regular meetings whereby their fitness managers would talk directly with customers on a regular basis.

Councillor A Patel commented that the consultation processes did not seem to be working in the leisure centres. D Macnab said that this could have been better at Loughton. PfP were more proactive and there was better publicity. They had undertaken numerous meetings with café and crèche users. Councillor A Patel asked how the Council would gauge feedback from members if the forums only had small attendance numbers and to engage with the wider public. Also could the Council look at how complaints were handled and the membership made aware of these complaints along with the PB. D Macnab said that PfP talked face to face with customers and had also organised a customer comments / feedback system and collated evaluation sheets on courses etc. The contract with PfP had required a complaints procedure system as part of the contract. However, he advised that PfP was handling complaints as quickly as possible and they would be monitored on a regular basis.

Councillor J Jennings asked if there would be a recruitment drive for new members to which D Macnab replied that they had non-stop membership drives which were available to view on their website. PfP's philosophy was a community orientated culture, visiting schools etc.

Councillor R Morgan said he was very impressed with PfP's presentation and that the new management got on to complaints very quickly and that he was of the opinion that the contract was working well.

33. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The SC noted that TfL would be attending the next O&S meeting on 9 January 2018.

34. FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that the future meetings of the Neighbourhoods SC for this municipal year would be on 30 January and 20 March 2018 at 7.30pm.