

EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MINUTES

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Committee **Date:** Tuesday, 14 October 2014

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 8.20 pm

Members Present: Councillors R Morgan (Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee) (Chairman) K Angold-Stephens (Vice-Chairman) G Chambers, K Chana, L Girling, P Keska, Mrs J Lea, A Mitchell MBE, S Murray, B Rolfe, Mrs M Sartin, Ms G Shiell, B Surtees and D Wixley

Other Councillors: Councillors R Bassett, Mrs A Grigg, Ms H Kane, S Neville, J Philip, D Stallan, G Waller and C Whitbread

Apologies: Councillors D Dorrell and A Watts

Officers Present: D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Neighbourhoods), S G Hill (Assistant Director (Governance & Performance Management)), S Tautz (Democratic Services Manager), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer), A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer), M Jenkins (Democratic Services Assistant) and G. Nicholas (National Management Trainee)

27. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Chairman reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

28. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no substitute Members for the meeting.

29. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2014 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

31. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE NEW SCRUTINY PANELS REVIEW TASK AND FINISH PANEL

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel Review Task and Finish Panel, Councillor Angold-Stephens briefed the Committee on what the Task and Finish Panel had been doing since it had been set up. They have held two meetings so far when they

had started gathering information and speaking to Directors and Officers to get their thoughts on the state of the Scrutiny Panels. So far they had noted that some areas of the Council's activity did not fall under the umbrella of any Scrutiny Panel and that some reports tended to get agreed without full scrutiny. The system should be member led and not officer led. The Panel has the services of a post graduate Management Trainee to help with the research, write background reports and also look at what other councils were doing. As part of this initial phase they have put together a set of terms of reference for the Panel and were now seeking the agreement of the Committee to endorse these terms. Once they have firmed up their proposals they will consult all members.

RESOLVED:

The Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Panel Review Task and Finish Panel be agreed.

32. WORK PROGRAMME MONITORING

a) Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Work Programme

The Committee considered their work programme for the remainder of the year. They noted that they were supposed to have had a presentation from Essex County Council's Children Services; however this had to be cancelled. It was hoped that this could be brought to the next meeting in November. If this was to go ahead, Councillor Murray asked that the Youth Council be formally invited to attend the Children's Services presentation.

Councillor Girling asked if ECC Children Services Presentation could cover the changes to children services happening across the district. Councillor Murray would also like them to address the loss of 'Homestart' in Epping Forest.

SCRUTINY PANELS

b) Housing Scrutiny Panel

There was nothing further to add as they had not met since the last O&S Committee meeting.

c) Constitution and Member Services Scrutiny Panel

The Chairman of the Panel noted that their work programme had now been added to and they had a full programme for the coming year.

d) Safer Cleaner Greener Scrutiny Panel

The Chairman of the Panel noted that they had recently met. They had a lively meeting mainly focusing on waste. There may also be a chance to receive a presentation from Thames Water at one of their future meetings.

Councillor Surtees raised some concerns about the Local Highways Panel; Councillor Lea said that she would raise these issues at the next Highways Panel she attended.

e) Planning Services Scrutiny Panel

The Chairman of the Panel noted that they had not met since the last meeting of this Committee. He urged all members to attend the Panel when the Local plan was discussed. He noted that the new Planning Electronic Document Management System was now up and working well and that the Panel would look at Building Control when it could.

f) Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel

The progress of the work programme was noted.

TASK AND FINISH PANELS

g) Scrutiny Panel Review Task and Finish Panel

This had been dealt with under a previous item.

h) Grant Aid Task and Finish Panel

This panel was still to meet and set their Terms of Reference. Councillor Whitbread asked that they extend their terms to also look at discretionary rate relief. This was agreed by the Committee.

PICK FORM

i) PICK Form

A PICK form had been submitted by Councillor Neville on air particulate pollution in Epping Forest. This was based on a 'Public Health England Report' that had worrying findings of high rates of particulate pollution, attributable to 6% of all deaths in our district. He noted that this was worrying and needed to be looked into.

This form was supported by Councillors Surtees and Mead. Councillor Surtees made a supporting statement.

Councillor Murray spoke in support, noting that this was worthy of scrutiny as it would also have an effect on the forest. He thought that this should be looked at by the Safer Cleaner Greener Scrutiny Panel (SCGSP). Councillor Sartin agreed that the SCGSP should consider this although the report was complex and not written for the layman. The Panel should invite the Council's air quality officer to address them and proposed that this was added to their work programme.

Councillor Chambers was concerned about what resources were needed to monitor any pollution. He thought County should be consulted about this and what they had done about it.

Councillor Waller commended Councillor Neville for putting up this PICK form. He noted that the high levels of particulates in our district was not that surprising as we had London to the South and also with the Motorways criss-crossing the district, we had a high level of vehicle movements going through, especially diesel vehicles. We did not need to look too hard to find out why we had these levels, although the London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea had some of the best life expectancy in the country, suggesting that other factors were in play. We did not need to do our own monitoring or measurements but it should be referred to the SCGSP.

Other councillor supported this, one said that perhaps road sweepers and dustmen would be most affected; another councillor wondered how these figures compared to Unitary Authorities; another pointed out that a large number of residents worked in London and this would also skew the figures.

The Chairman of the Safer Cleaner Greener Scrutiny Panel was happy for this to go onto her Panel's work programme and to receive a report from the Council's officer.

RESOLVED:

That the Safer Cleaner Green Scrutiny Panel adds the PICK form produced by Councillor Neville to their work programme.

33. REVIEW OF CABINET FORWARD PLAN

The Committee reviewed the Cabinet's Forward Plan for September 2014. They had no specific items that they wanted to consider.

CHAIRMAN