

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND PLANNING SERVICES STANDING
SCRUTINY PANEL
HELD ON TUESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2005
IN CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.00 PM**

Members Present:	D Stallan (Chairman), M Woollard (Vice-Chairman), Mrs M Boatman, Mrs D Borton, D Kelly, P McMillan, T Richardson, Mrs M Sartin and Mrs P Smith
Other members present:	K Faulkner, R Glozier, Mrs A Grigg, D Jacobs, L Martin, J M Whitehouse and K Wright
Apologies for Absence:	A Lee
Officers Present	J Gilbert (Head of Environmental Services), J Preston (Head of Planning and Economic Development), H Stamp (Principal Planning Officer) and Z Folley (Democratic Services Assistant)
Also in attendance:	Councillor Heather Nicholas (Roydon PC), N Wilkinson (Roydon PC), E Borton (Nazeing PC), Councillor Cooper (Nazeing PC), Councillor Derek Farr (North Weald Bassett PC), Councillor Alan Mansfield (Epping Upland PC) and Alan Burgess (PORA)

9. SUBSITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

The Panel noted that Councillor K Faulkner was attending the meeting as a substitute for Councillor A Lee.

10. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillors D Stallan, Mrs D Borton, Mrs P Smith, J M Whitehouse and H Stamp (Principal Planning Officer) declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 (Local Plan and Scheme). They determined that their interests were not prejudicial and that they would remain in the meeting for the consideration and voting on the item.

11. NOTES OF LAST MEETING - 1 AUGUST 2005

Noted.

12. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME

Noted.

13. WEST ESSEX WASTE MANAGEMENT JOINT COMMITTEE - MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Head of Environmental Services drew attention to the minutes of the last meeting of the Joint Committee which included a copy of a presentation received on the Essex Waste Partnership's Outline Business Plan (ODB). He drew attention to the Joint Committee's Business Plan and the Portfolio Holder decision confirming

the adoption of the Plan. A Member expressed concern as the plan was signed off before being submitted to the Panel for consideration. The Head of Environmental Services reported that the ODB was initialled due to be submitted around October/November 2005 but due to policy changes this date had slipped back. Noted that the ODB would be submitted to Members for consideration before it was submitted to the ODPM. Noted that North Weald Airfield was an identified site for a new waste infrastructure as it had been identified in the East of England Plan. Noted that its availability for a waste facility had been recognised by incoming contractors.

14. WEST ESSEX WASTE MANAGEMENT JOINT COMMITTEE - BUSINESS PLAN

The Head of Environmental Services reported the background to and the current position regarding the procurement and implementation of a County Wide Waste Strategy. He considered structural, cost, delivery PFI approach issues and recycling targets. He reported the concerns raised about the process especially those around risk management, decision making in relation to collection and Best Value. He explained Soft Market Testing and the 'affordably envelope'. He stated that a recent assessment using these methods and financial modelling which measured the environmental impact of large scale contracts had indicated that a two area letting process for disposal had benefits over a three area solution. The preferred option would not be let on a fully integrated process. He stated that the Joint Committee's Outline Business Plan would be redrafted to take into account these new conclusions. He asked Members to consider whether, in light of the changes and difficulties they continued to support the overall integrated approach being pursued by the Council to Waste Management.

In response, the view was expressed that a full report should have been circulated prior to meeting. In the absence of sufficient information Members supported the proposals given the investigation, monitoring and reporting arrangements for future proposal from the Joint Commission. The Panel also requested a full report on the issue be made to the next OSC and in view of its importance drawn out as separate agenda item.

ACTION.

The Head of Environmental Services to produce report

15. EAST OF ENGLAND PLAN - RESPONSE TO DRAFT LIST OF MATTERS AND PARTICIPANTS FOR THE EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

The Principal Planning Officer for Forward Planning explained that the examination was due to start on 1 November 2005. He explained that it would take place in Ely and Letchworth and that the District Council would be represented at meetings on regional transport strategy and housing as well as the Harlow sub - region. It was noted that concern was expressed at the last meeting of the Panel about the draft list of attendees for the process as it indicated that Roydon, Nazeing, North Weald and Epping Upland Parish Councils and the interest group PORA, who represent areas in the District most affected by the proposals, had not been invited to discussions. The Principle Planning Officer reported that since that meeting the list had been finalised and amended to include, PORA, and the Association for Town and Parish Councils in Essex and Hertfordshire. Representative of the four local councils concerned and PORA were in attendance to express their views about the list and the examination in general. In response to questions, it was agreed that where feasible both written and verbal submissions should be coordinated. The

Environmental and Planning Services Standing Scrutiny Panel Tuesday, 13 September 2005

Principle Planning Officer invited participants to send written statements into the Council so that consideration could be given to this.

It was reported that the first batch of written submissions of the District Council which was an overview of some statistic issues of interest would be submitted to the EIP by 27 September 2005. Due to this tight deadline, there would not be enough time for Member level consideration of the document . Noted that the Portfolio Holder would consider the batch of statements before they were submitted. Members expressed an interest in viewing the document and asked for it to be attached to the next Panel meetings agenda.

It was reported that the consultation process for further written submissions of the Council's including those on Matter 8 H1 had not yet been identified. Noted that proposals would be formulated in due course and reported to Members. Noted that all written submission would appear on the EIP page on the GO- East Website.

The Principal Planning Officer reported that he had not yet received a reply to his letter of 29 June 2005 to the EIP about discrepancies within the draft list of participants. He undertook to chase up a response and circulate it to Members when it was required.

ACTION:

(1) That the following be circulated to Members of the Panel and the four Parish Council's and PORA:

(a) The Principal Planning Officer's (Forward Planning) follow up letter of 29 June 2005 to EIP

(b) Website address for EIP page on Go- East Website (which contains the Final List of Matters and Participation for the EIP)

(2) That a copy of initial written submission of the District Council be made available

16. LOCAL PLAN AND SCHEME

The Head of Planning and Economic Development reported the results of the redeposit consultation exercise which ended on 30 August 2005. He stated that the Forward Plan team were actively working on representations to see if any could be resolved. A Special Cabinet would be held on 24 October 2005 and a Special Council on 27 October 2005 to consider whether or not to proceed to the Public Inquiry. The Head of Planning and Economic Development anticipated that the number of planning applications submitted could increase during the lead up to the implementation of regional planning guidance. With this in mind the view was expressed that the alterations should go ahead to ensure that planning policy was up to date to deal with future work and a 'policy gap' was avoided.

17. RE USE OF BUILDINGS IN THE GREEN BELT

The Head of Planning and Economic Development stated that the issue of the reuse of agricultural buildings in the Green Belt had been raised during the PICK process for selecting topics for the current scrutiny programme. He also explained that during the Local Plan Alteration process it had been noted that reused agricultural buildings were often being used for business purposes and producing significant

Environmental and Planning Services Standing Scrutiny Panel Tuesday, 13 September 2005

vehicle movements including HGV traffic. Concerns were raised about particular areas in the District. It was reported that there was a need for a proper study of vehicle movements in order that a comparison could be made with activities and usages in the past. Member agreed that this information be reported to the Committee before they made any recommendations.

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

Report on Waste Procurement Process (re- 6 Agenda item)

19. FUTURE MEETINGS

Noted that the next meeting would take place on 20 October 2005 at 7.30 pm.