

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES

Committee: Council **Date:** 1 November 2011

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 9.58 pm

Members Present: Councillors K Angold-Stephens (Chairman), B Rolfe (Vice-Chairman), R Barrett, R Bassett, A Boyce, W Breare-Hall, Ms R Brookes, Mrs T Cochrane, R Cohen, Mrs D Collins, D Dodeja, C Finn, Mrs R Gadsby, P Gode, Mrs A Grigg, Ms J Hart, D Jacobs, D C Johnson, Mrs S Jones, P Keska, Mrs J Lea, L Leonard, Mrs M McEwen, J Markham, A Mitchell MBE, G Mohindra, R Morgan, S Murray, J Philip, Mrs C Pond, Mrs P Richardson, B Sandler, Mrs P Smith, P Spencer, D Stallan, Ms S Stavrou, Mrs J Sutcliffe, H Ulkun, Mrs L Wagland, G Waller, Ms S Watson, A Watts, Mrs E Webster, C Whitbread, Mrs J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and J Wyatt

Apologies: Councillors K Chana, J Hart, Ms Y Knight, A Lion, S Packford, W Pryor, Mrs M Sartin and D Wixley

Officers Present: D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive), R Palmer (Director of Finance and ICT), I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive), G Lunnun (Assistant Director (Democratic Services)), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer) and G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer)

76. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Assistant to the Chief Executive 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.

77. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 September 2011 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

78. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest by members of the Council under this item.

79. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Announcements by the Chairman of the Council

(i) Attendance at Events

The Chairman reported on his attendance at an information afternoon held at the recently extended Careline Centre at Parsonage Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton. He advised that the afternoon had celebrated the first anniversary since the completion of the extension and had presented an opportunity to bring members up to date with

the range of services offered by Careline. He referred to the dedicated staff at the Centre.

The Chairman advised that on 1 October 2011 he had attended the Special Constabulary Muster Parade which recognised Special Constables who had done outstanding work within the community along with the officers that had recently been promoted. He reported that Special Constables volunteered their time for a minimum of 16 hours every four weeks and that the majority undertook this work in addition to a normal full day's work.

The Chairman reported that he had enjoyed the King Harold Day held at Waltham Abbey on 8 October 2011. He advised that the event had been informative and had been well attended by the public.

The Chairman referred to his attendance at the Council's Celebrating Success event at which presentations had been made to District Council staff who had achieved professional qualifications in a variety of work-related areas during the past 12 months.

The Chairman said that he had enjoyed the New Horizons Bowls Gala Day and he thanked officers in Community and Cultural Services for organising the event.

The Chairman stated that on 6 October 2011 Councillors and staff had participated in a white water rafting event held in aid of his charity. He advised that a DVD had been made of the event which was shown to the Council.

(ii) Floral Display

The Chairman announced that he intended to send the flowers from tonight's meeting to Pelly Court, Hemnall Street, Epping.

(b) Announcements by the Leader of Council

The Leader advised that she had no announcements to make under this heading.

(c) Announcements by Portfolio Holders

(i) Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder

Councillor Gadsby, Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, reported that in the early hours of 30 October 2011 the Epping Forest District Museum had been broken into. A number of display cases had been damaged and a number of items had been stolen. Some of the items had subsequently been recovered by the Police but others were still missing. Councillor Gadsby reported that the Museum had been closed on Monday and Tuesday of this week so that the damage could be repaired. She said that the Police were continuing to investigate the theft and that she could not give any further details at this stage. She stated that on completion of the investigation decisions would be made on whether there was a need for further improved security.

(d) The Alan Ball Local History Award

The Chairman announced that the Council had been the joint winner for 2010 of the Alan Ball Local History Award for the best work of local history produced under the auspices of a local authority. He reported that the award was made by the Library Services Trust, part of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals.

The Chairman continued that the award had been for the life and art of Octavius Dixie Deacon, a 52 page colour book by Chris Pond and Richard Morris. The Chairman reported that the Epping Forest District Museum had purchased a number of sketch books by Deacon, an artist and publisher, who had lived in Loughton from the 1870s until 1916. A joint project had been agreed, whereby the Museum would digitise the sketches and paintings and make them available free to the Loughton and District Historical Society, who had undertaken to research Deacon's life and work, and write a comprehensive introduction, and publish them in book form, at their own expense and at cost price.

The Chairman welcomed Michael Saich from the Awarding Committee and invited him to say a few words about the award. Mr Saich advised that Alan Ball had been a former Chief Librarian of the London Borough of Harrow and he had written a lot of local history publications. The object of the award was to encourage local authorities to produce items of local history of high standard. Mr Saich advised that Alan Ball had taken part in the judging and the award Committee had congratulated the Council on a well produced book and its collaboration with the local society.

The Chairman invited Chris Pond to address the meeting. Mr Pond referred to the current difficult times for local authorities and suggested that the project represented a good example of partnership working between a public authority and a local society. He advised that as a result of publication of the book, the work of Deacon had been made known to a wider audience and that as a result of locating further works it was possible that a second volume of the book would be published in the future.

The Chairman invited Mr Saich to make the formal presentation of the award to Councillor Gadsby, Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder and he invited them to join him together with Chris Pond and Tony O'Connor, the Council's Museum Services Officer in the well of the Chamber for photographs.

80. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

The Council noted that there were no public questions for this meeting.

81. FIRE ALARM

At this stage in the proceedings the fire alarm sounded. The meeting was adjourned and the Council Chamber vacated.

On returning to the Chamber the Chairman thanked members for taking part in what had been a fire drill. He reminded members that normally they would have been required to assemble at the War Memorial but that as it had been a test a concession had been made requiring them to vacate to the corner of Homefield Close only.

Councillor Markham drew attention to the fact that the doors at the top of the staircases had not opened automatically and had required members to use their swipe cards in order to access the stairs. The Acting Chief Executive thanked Councillor Markham for drawing this to his attention and undertook to get officers to resolve this fault in the system.

82. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER, CHAIRMAN OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

The Council received written reports from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Environment Portfolio Holder, the Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, the Housing Portfolio Holder, the Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, the Planning and Technology Portfolio Holder, the Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio Holder and the Support Services Portfolio Holder. The Council also received a supplementary written report from the Planning and Technology Portfolio Holder.

The Chairman invited the Leader and Legal Portfolio Holder to provide an oral report, and the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the other members of the Cabinet to give an oral update of their written reports.

(a) Leader and Legal Portfolio Holder

Councillor Wagland reported that she had recently attended a meeting of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership covering Essex, Kent and East Sussex. The Leader advised that this Council now had a key role on a broadband sub group of the Partnership and this role would be filled by Councillor Philip, Deputy Leader of the Council. Councillor Wagland reported that John Spence, formerly Chairman of the West Essex Alliance, had been appointed Chairman of the Partnership. She suggested that this would benefit the Council as he understood the issues relating to this District. She advised that John Spence was on record as saying that he wished to be part of a Local Enterprise Partnership which added value, only centralised if this was more effective and efficient than a local solution and aimed to become the most enterprising economy in England. Councillor Wagland reported that it had been made clear the Local Enterprise Partnership would be focussed on actions and not a talking shop. She advised that the first priority which had been identified related to transport projects which would either benefit the region as a whole or would be of local importance in order to secure economic progress. The Partnership had recognised that in order to move forward on such projects it would be necessary to explore various ways of funding.

Councillor Wagland advised that the Council had hosted a breakfast meeting of the West Essex Alliance. As it had been necessary for John Spence to stand down as Chairman of the Alliance, Vance Rowe, a local businessman, had taken over as Chairman. The meeting had identified employment issues as being of key importance and reference had been made to the shortage of semi-skilled workers in West Essex, the need to link skills to the ambitions of colleges and employers and the acceptance of new retail developments as presenting opportunities not threats. The Leader advised that she would include the West Essex Alliance Vision in the Council Bulletin.

Councillor Wagland reported that she had attended a meeting of the North London Strategic Alliance which comprised East Anglia corridor authorities. The key issue had been investment and reference had been made to identified employment areas (clusters) including a high tech one in Hackney which had produced 30,000 new jobs in a year. The Leader advised that Anglia Ruskin University were attempting to use the concept to get some sites set up in Essex for Life Sciences employment. Reference has also been made to an existing cluster in the Lea Valley for the growing of vegetables and distribution.

The Leader reported that together with Councillor Bassett she had met County Councillor T Chapman who had taken over as the County Council's Highways

Portfolio Holder. Councillor Chapman had advised that she had been addressing a backlog of work and the need to make significant reductions in the highways budget. The County Council Portfolio Holder had advised that the Highways Service would soon be put out to tender and that it was her aim to try to get some local input into the Highways Service. The County Council Portfolio Holder had acknowledged that Loughton had been poorly served from a Highways Service prospective and that she would attempt to address this in the future. The County Council Portfolio Holder had expressed concern at the reception County Highways officers had received at local Highways Panels but she had been advised that in the main this was due to County Council officers not being solution driven or being sufficiently briefed on issues. The Leader reported that she had been advised that the strategic arrangements for winter gritting would be similar to last year although town and parish councils wishing to stockpile salt would be provided with more manageable bags.

The Leader advised that following the meeting with Steve Quartermain, the Chief Planner at the Department for Communities and Local Government, she had arranged for Mark Beard, Barrister, to advise the Council on elements of the Council's existing Local Plan which could be carried forward into the new plan and thereby achieve savings in time and resource.

Councillor Wagland reported that following the Dale Farm eviction, this Council's legal officers were supporting officers at Brentwood Borough Council to prevent a possible incursion onto a site which was 80% within Brentwood Borough and 20% within Epping Forest District. Officers had also issued advice to landowners about their rights in relation to trespass.

(b) Housing Portfolio Holder

Councillor McEwen, Housing Portfolio Holder, advised that the previous day the Government had issued a consultation document outlining their proposals to reduce the amount of Feed In Tariff payable to those that installed solar PV to generate electricity. The consultation document had set out a reduction of as much as 47% which would have a significant effect on the content of the report that had been considered by the Housing Scrutiny Panel on 25 October 2011 and was due to go to the Cabinet in December. Councillor McEwen advised that together with officers she would be analysing the impact of the consultation document with a view to determining whether the scheme was now viable.

(c) Planning and Technology Portfolio Holder

Councillor Philip, Planning and Technology Portfolio Holder, reported that arising from the discussion with Steve Quartermain, Chief Planner at the Department for Communities and Local Government, it appeared that there would be a transitional period, probably of 12 months from April next year during which existing Local Plan policies could carry weight. He advised that in order to ensure that the Council had a new Local Plan was in place before the transitional arrangements expired, he had spoken to the Council's Forward Planning Team with a view to this Council's submission being ready by the end of the calendar year 2012. Councillor Philip pointed out that this would involve a significant amount of work for the Council, both for members and officers.

Councillor Philip also drew attention to the progress being made in relation to a new website for the Council.

83. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE**(a) Heritage Lottery Fund Application**

Councillor Watts referred to the written report of the Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder regarding the submission of a first stage application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Town Heritage Initiative and invited the Portfolio Holder to join him in welcoming this as a unique opportunity to harness some £2 million with the aim of creating Waltham Abbey as a first class visitor centre and visitor experience, building on existing attractions and acting as a stimulant and catalyst for the redevelopment/regeneration of the area.

Councillor Mohindra, Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, agreed that this presented an exciting opportunity. The £10,000 per annum part funding of the Olympic Regeneration Officer could result in potentially in excess of £2 million investment in the area with this Council's contribution being some £600,000 not necessarily in cash but support in kind. Councillor Mohindra continued that the Cabinet was fully aware of the legacy issues and advised that he would be working closely with Councillor Watts and other local members to secure a successful bid.

(b) Merger of Hospitals

Councillor Johnson asked the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to confirm that accident and emergency services would not be affected by the proposed merger of Barts and The London, Whipps Cross and Newham NHS Trusts.

Councillor Bassett, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, confirmed that this was the case.

(c) Olympic Games – Parking Issues

Councillor Jon Whitehouse referred to the reference in the written report of the Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder to the proposed restrictions on parking within the Waltham Abbey area during the Olympic Games next year and asked if any steps were being taken to alleviate possible parking issues which would arise in the District as a result of the public travelling to the Olympic site in Stratford on the Central Line.

Councillor Gadsby, Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, advised that she would publish a written response to this question in the Council Bulletin.

(d) Leisure/Sports Facilities

Councillor Grigg asked the Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder for details of the 2010/11 income share amount agreed with SLM and how this compared to the amount paid to the Council in 2009/10.

Councillor Gadsby, Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, advised that she would publish a written answer to this question in the Council Bulletin.

(e) Council Website

Councillor Jennie Hart asked the Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder if there would be different areas within the new website enabling residents to select different parts of the District in order to find out information about shops and what was on offer.

Councillor Mohindra, Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, advised that he had a meeting the following week with officers following which he would be able to update members on the proposals.

(f) Installation of Solar Photovoltaic Panels to Council Dwellings

Councillor Jacobs referred to the oral report given by the Housing Portfolio Holder regarding the Government proposals to reduce the amount of Feed In Tariff payable to those who installed solar PV to generate electricity and asked the Portfolio Holder if it would be possible to bring forward proposals in order to take advantage of current tariffs.

Councillor McEwen, Housing Portfolio Holder, advised that she would discuss this possibility with officers but doubted whether it would be possible in the timescale available.

(g) Ongar Recycling Centre

Councillor Jacobs advised that it was his understanding the relevant County Council Portfolio Holder had made a decision to close the Ongar Recycling Centre and asked if there was any further information available about a possible alternative which had been mentioned by this Council's Environment Portfolio Holder at the last meeting of the Cabinet.

Councillor Wagland, Leader and Legal Portfolio Holder, in the absence of Councillor Knapman, stated that this was a decision for the County Council and it was her understanding that this was not a matter for the District Council or Town/Parish Councils. However, she undertook to investigate the position further and to publish an item in the Council Bulletin.

(h) Loughton Leisure Centre – Public Swimming

Councillor Brookes asked the Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder if she would investigate the possible increased use of both pools at Loughton Leisure Centre for public swimming.

Councillor Gadsby, Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, advised that she would consider this suggestion.

(i) North Essex Parking Partnership

Councillor Markham asked the Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio Holder if the Council would receive a better service as a result of the North Essex Parking Partnership and whether the Council would still be able to take decisions regarding free parking in its car parks on Saturdays leading up to Christmas and the provision of parking restrictions.

Councillor Smith, Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio Holder, advised that she had attended a meeting of the Partnership the previous week at which there had been a discussion on the issue of parking charges. The Portfolio Holder reported that it was the long term intention of the Partnership to harmonise pricing across the Partnership area but that in the foreseeable future, each district would retain its own parking charge levels. She continued that the Partnership would be maintaining separate links on its website for the various member authorities so that the public could access information about their local areas. She also advised that steps were

being taken to introduce payment on line for a one day pass. Councillor Smith advised that the Partnership's website was Parkingpartnership.org.

(j) Olympic Games – Letting of Properties

Councillor Stallan advised that a number of residents were considering letting their properties for the duration of the Olympic Games. He continued that some councils had warned their residents that such lettings would require permission and some London Borough Councils had quoted a charge of £335 for a change of use permission whereas others were taking a more relaxed attitude. He asked what this Council's policy would be in relation to this matter.

Councillor Philip, Planning and Technology Portfolio Holder, stated that it was his understanding the charges were being made for subletting council property only. However, he said that he would investigate the position further and would publish the outcome of this investigation in the Council Bulletin.

(k) Loughton Leisure Centre – Air Conditioning and Poolside Showers

Councillor Barrett asked the Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder if she agreed with him that work undertaken in relation to the air conditioning and the poolside showers had resulted in a great improvement.

Councillor Gadsby agreed and thanked Councillor Barrett for his comments.

(l) North Essex Parking Partnership – Free Parking in Car Parks and Current Contribution

Councillor Whitbread asked the Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio Holder if the Council would continue this year to support local shopkeepers and residents by providing free car parking in Council car parks on Saturdays in the lead up to Christmas. He also referred to the fact that this Council's parking budget had been in surplus prior to the North Essex Parking Partnership and he asked what was the current cost of the Partnership to this Council and if this Council was subsidising other authorities in the Partnership.

Councillor Smith, Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio Holder stated that the Partnership was currently in a strong financial position and that this Council was not subsidising to an extreme level the other partners. She said that she did not have the figures with her but the Partnership was being supported during the next year or so by a £100,000 contribution from the County Council. The Portfolio Holder assured Councillor Whitbread that officers were scrutinising the financial arrangements of the Partnership on a regular basis. Councillor Smith continued that the Council would continue to support local businesses and residents with free parking on Saturdays in the lead up to Christmas 2011.

84. MOTIONS

(a) Councillors' Remuneration

Moved by Councillor Stallan and seconded by Councillor Johnson

"That this Council calls on the Government, through the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to amend the rules on Councillors' remuneration in order that:

(1) potential candidates who are in receipt of state benefits are able to seek election without placing those state benefits at risk if elected; and

(2) remuneration is based on either a combination of attendance and basic allowance or on attendance at meetings alone”.

Councillor Murray advised that he would support the motion subject to the deletion of the following words in (2):

“either” and “or on attendance at meetings alone”.

Councillors Stallan and Johnson advised that they would accept this change and by leave of the Council amended their motion accordingly.

Motion as amended ADOPTED

RESOLVED:

That this Council calls on the Government, through the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to amend the rules on Councillors' remuneration in order that:

(1) potential candidates who are in receipt of state benefits are able to seek election without placing those state benefits at risk if elected; and

(2) remuneration is based on a combination of attendance and basic allowance.

(b) Community Toilet Scheme

Moved by Councillor Janet Whitehouse and seconded by Councillor Jon Whitehouse

“(1) That this Council notes:

(a) its public toilet provision currently consists of four Universal Superloos (USL) and one Automatic Public Convenience (APC) located in Buckhurst Hill, Epping, Loughton, Debden and Waltham Abbey;

(b) the rest of the District has no Council provision;

(c) Community Toilet Schemes (which involve some local businesses volunteering to provide public access to their toilet facilities in return for modest payments from the local council) work successfully and cost effectively in other local authorities; and

(2) That the Council therefore resolves:

to investigate the provision of a Community Toilet Scheme across the Epping Forest District to enable better provision of toilet facilities for residents and visitors”.

Amendment moved by Councillor Mohindra and seconded by Councillor Breare-Hall

“That the following amendments be made to the motion:

(a) deletion of paragraph 1(a) and substitution of the following revised paragraph:

“The public toilet provision provided by the District Council at the High Street (Ongar), Bakers Lane (Epping), Brook Path, the Broadway and Traps Hill (all Loughton), Quaker Lane (Waltham Abbey) and Lower Queens Road (Buckhurst Hill)”;

(b) deletion of paragraph 1(b) and substitution of the following words:

“The public toilet provision provided by Town and Parish Councils, the Corporation of London, London Underground and businesses in the District”;

(c) deletion of “modest” from the third line of paragraph 1(c) and the words “work successfully and cost effectively in other local authorities”, the latter to be substituted by the following: “have been introduced by other local authorities”;

(d) deletion of paragraph (2) of the motion and substitution of the following wording:

“To request the relevant Portfolio Holder to analyse and report to the Cabinet on whether the existing public toilet provision is commensurate with local needs and demand and, if not, to determine whether a possible solution is the introduction of a Community Toilet Scheme”.

Carried

Motion as amended ADOPTED

RESOLVED:

(1) That the Council notes:

(a) the public toilet provision provided by the District Council at the High Street (Ongar), Bakers Lane (Epping), Brook Path, the Broadway and Traps Hill (all Loughton), Quaker Lane (Waltham Abbey) and Lower Queens Road (Buckhurst Hill);

(b) the public toilet provision provided by Town and Parish Councils, the Corporation of London, London Underground and businesses in the District;

(c) Community Toilet Schemes (which involve some local businesses volunteering to provide public access to their toilet facilities in return for payments from the local council) have been introduced by other local authorities; and

(2) That the Council therefore requests the relevant Portfolio Holder to analyse and to report to the Cabinet on whether the existing public toilet provision is commensurate with local needs and demand and, if not, to determine whether a possible solution is the introduction of a Community Toilet Scheme.

85. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE

(a) **Fixed Penalty Notices**

By Councillor Janet Whitehouse to Councillor Knapman, Environment Portfolio Holder

“(1) How many officers from the Environment and Street Scene Directorate are authorised to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for litter offences and when did they start doing this;

(2) How many Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued and for what offences in:

Buckhurst Hill
Chigwell
Loughton
Epping
Theydon Bois
Waltham Abbey
Ongar
the rest of the District; and

(3) How many of these have resulted in prosecution?”

Response of Councillor Knapman, Environment Portfolio Holder (read by Councillor Wagland, Leader and Legal Portfolio Holder in the absence of Councillor Knapman)

(1) 9 Officers - (6 Environment & Neighbourhood Officers, the Environment & Neighbourhood Manager, the Animal Welfare Officer and the Assistant Director (Neighbourhoods)).

It should be noted that no Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) are issued in the field. Litter offenders are stopped and following an explanation of the offence they have committed they are issued with an incident ticket that records the offence and the offender's details. The incident ticket has no legal standing and is simply a means to record the offence and act as a visible deterrent to others. The evidence is then taken back to the office and checked. If there is sufficient evidence to instigate prosecution proceedings, consideration is then given to offering the offender the opportunity to discharge the offence through a FPN. In normal circumstances, when the offender has cooperated a FPN will be issued for first time offenders.

A FPN can be issued on the basis of any evidence that is sufficient to prosecute a relevant offence through the Courts. Anyone in receipt of a FPN but then fails to pay will normally be prosecuted through the Courts unless additional information comes to light.

15 Police Community Support Officers are being trained by Council officers to enable them to use the same procedures in respect of dog fouling and littering offences. Prosecution or the issue of a FPN will then be dealt with by the Neighbourhood Team as appropriate.

The 1st FPN was issued for an offence that occurred in November 2010.

(2) 28 FPNs have been issued for the offence of littering, in the following locations

Buckhurst Hill - 1
Chigwell - 2
Loughton - 18
Epping - 2
Theydon Bois - 0

Waltham Abbey - 5
Ongar - 0
the rest of the District – 0

An additional 7 FPNs have been issued in respect of failure to use the correct waste receptacles (Sections 46 & 47 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990). 5 of these were issued in Loughton and 2 in Buckhurst Hill. No incident ticket is issued in these cases.

(3) Of all of the above, 3 litter related FPNs and 1 waste related FPN have resulted in a prosecution, all of which have been successful.

Although not part of the questions asked, I thought Members would also be interested in the various activities and operations undertaken by the Neighbourhoods Team:

(a) 4 planned operations per quarter targeting litter and dog fouling are being carried out by the Neighbourhoods team (one littering operation in area South, West and East plus one dog fouling operation);

(b) Operations have been completed in High Road, Loughton; Sun Street, Waltham Abbey; High Road, Epping; High Street, Ongar; Larsens Recreation Ground, Waltham Abbey; Nazeingbury Parade, Nazeing; and Queens Road, Buckhurst Hill;

(c) "No littering" posters are provided and displayed by local shops prior to littering operations. In addition to the no littering posters, cigarette pouches are also distributed to information points and via Loughton Pub Watch;

(d) An article was published in the 'Forester' regarding littering and enforcement. A press release was issued regarding an offender prosecuted from an operation in Loughton; and

(e) A reporter from the local Ongar newspaper accompanied Officers on an operation in High Street, Ongar resulting in a two page article in Ongar Gazette "Hitting the street with litter patrol".

(b) Parking Restrictions – The Broadway, Loughton

By Councillor Jennie Hart to Councillor Smith, Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio Holder

"In view of the Broadway Parking Scheme being the last to be implemented (and this is now accepted), will Councillor Smith assure me that she will support the effort being made by County and District Councillors to get yellow lines painted on dangerous corners and junctions where commuters are persistently parking, and where, in some cases, the requests have been outstanding for years?"

Response of Councillor Smith, Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio Holder

Since the formation of the North Essex Parking Partnership, the Office managing requests for and the implementation of junction protection and related traffic signing has changed. For most requests approved prior to the formation of the Partnership, the responsibility remains with the County Council, and for most made after the formation of the Partnership, the responsibility rests with the Partnership. If Councillor Hart will provide me with a definitive list of the locations causing her

concern I shall ask officers to determine which are outstanding with the County Council and which should be brought to the attention of the Partnership. I will then use my best endeavours to ensure that these are progressed accordingly.

Supplementary question by Councillor Jennie Hart:

“Could you clarify whether this is a matter for the North Essex Parking Partnership or the County Council. I was initially advised it would be the North Essex Parking Partnership but subsequently it was suggested that it would be a matter for the County Council in view of the outstanding parking review in relation to the Broadway.”

Response of Councillor Smith, Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio Holder

As you will be aware from the programme for the outstanding parking reviews it will be some time before the Broadway Parking Review is progressed. Outside of this meeting you have asked me to look into a specific issue and I am pursuing that matter. If you wish to receive any further clarification please speak to me after this meeting.

(c) Staff Vacancies

By Councillor Jon Whitehouse to Councillor Wagland, Leader and Legal Portfolio Holder

“(1) Please list those posts on the Establishment which are:

- (a) vacant;
 - (b) have been vacant for three months or longer;
 - (c) have been vacant for six months or longer; and
- (2) Please identify which of the above posts are:
- (a) currently the subject of an active recruitment process;
 - (b) currently have no activity planned;
 - (c) subject to a recruitment freeze”.

Response of Councillor Wagland, Leader and Legal Portfolio Holder

1(a) (Posts on the establishment which are vacant) -

55 posts are vacant which equates to 47.2 full time equivalents

1(b) (Posts which have been vacant for three months or longer) -

13 posts have been vacant for 3 months to 6 months

1(c) (Posts vacant for six months or longer) -

27 posts have been vacant for 6 months or longer

(Therefore 15 posts have been vacant for less than 3 months)

2(a) (Posts currently the subject of an active recruitment process) -

Of the total 55 vacant posts, 26 are currently being advertised either internally or externally

2(b) (Posts which currently have no activity planned) -

Of the total 55 vacant posts 28 have no activity planned at this time. This includes posts which are under review, contractors are currently carrying out the work (i.e. cleaning) or consultants are being used (i.e. Building Control)

2(c) Posts which are subject to a recruitment freeze) -

There is no recruitment freeze but there are recruitment restrictions in place. Of the total 55 vacant posts, 1 is subject to the recruitment restrictions and has not been advertised.

(d) Parking Restrictions – Station Way, Buckhurst Hill

By Councillor Dodeja to Councillor Smith, Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio Holder

“As you will be aware the Buckhurst Hill Parking Review area does not include Station Way, Buckhurst Hill. This road includes a shopping parade and Roding Valley Underground Station. The current uncontrolled parking arrangements around the station attract a large amount of all-day commuter parking. This causes problems for local residents and local traders and means shoppers find it difficult to park close to the shops. There have also been a series of accidents in the area.

What plans does the Portfolio Holder have to ensure that parking arrangements in Station Way are reviewed in order to provide a better balance of parking in the area, including limited waiting parking for shoppers?”

Response of Councillor Smith, Safer, Greener and Highways Portfolio Holder

The extent of the Buckhurst Hill Parking Review was agreed following consultation with Members. There followed an informal public consultation exercise. Station Way was never included within that review, although the parking pressures in the area are understood, along with other areas affected by commuters parking near to Central Line stations.

Any changes to parking arrangements in the vicinity of Roding Valley Station will need to be considered by the North Essex Parking Partnership and to that end I will ensure that the area is included in any future programmes of traffic regulation orders.

86. REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

Mover: Councillor Bassett, Chairman of the Committee

Councillor Bassett submitted a report on a review of polling districts and polling places required under the Electoral Administration Act 2006 to be undertaken by the end of 2011.

Report as first moved ADOPTED

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the proposals for polling districts and places as set out in the Appendix to the report of the Committee be approved; and
- (2) That the proposals be published and copies made available for inspection by the public at the Civic Offices, in at least one place in each local Parliamentary Constituency and on the Council's website.

87. REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL AND COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mover: Councillor Whitbread, Chairman of the Committee

Councillor Whitbread submitted a report of the Committee following consideration of the initial proposals of the Boundary Commission for England the new Parliamentary Constituencies.

Report as first moved ADOPTED

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the proposed formal response to the Boundary Commission for England in respect of the new Parliamentary Constituencies be approved as set out in the Appendix to the report of the Committee;
- (2) That a copy of the Council's views be sent to the three local Members of Parliament;
- (3) That the relevant Government Minister be advised (with copies to the local MPs) about the Council's concerns about the constituency boundary at Matching Green; and
- (4) That the action taken by the Committee in authorising the Assistant to the Chief Executive (accompanied by Councillor R Morgan, the local district member for the Matching area) to attend the Commission's hearing about the review on 31 October 2011 in Colchester and present these views in person be confirmed.

88. REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - MEMBER REMUNERATION

Mover: Councillor Bassett, Chairman of the Committee

Councillor Bassett submitted a report of the Committee following a review of a report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on members' allowances.

Report as first moved ADOPTED

RESOLVED:

That the following recommendation (11) in the report of the Remuneration Panel Report 2010-11 be adopted:

“That the reference to first class rail return fare in the current scheme in relation to travel to meetings outside the District or by members resident outside the District be removed from the Scheme”.

89. EXTENDING PERIOD OF ABSENCE - COUNCILLOR S PACKFORD

The Council considered a request from Councillor Packford for an extension of her period of absence from the Council on health grounds from 16 November 2011.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Packford's period of absence from the Council on health grounds be extended until 27 March 2012.

90. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

The Council received written reports from Councillor Morgan in relation to the Stansted Airport Community Trust and from Councillor Pryor in relation to the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills.

CHAIRMAN