

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF SAFER, CLEANER, GREENER SCRUTINY STANDING
PANEL
HELD ON TUESDAY, 10 JANUARY 2012
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.30 - 9.20 PM

Members Present: Mrs M Sartin (Chairman), Mrs C Pond (Vice-Chairman), W Breare-Hall, Mrs T Cochrane, A Mitchell MBE, G Mohindra (Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder) and P Spencer

Other members present: Mrs J H Whitehouse

Apologies for Absence: K Avey, Ms Y Knight and Mrs E Webster

Officers Present J Gilbert (Director of Environment and Street Scene), J Preston (Director of Planning and Economic Development), J Nolan (Assistant Director (Environment & Neighbourhoods)) and A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer)

26. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

The Panel noted there were no substitute members.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

28. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The notes from the 17 October 2011 meeting were agreed as a correct record subject to, under the item on declarations of interest, that Loughton are noted as being a Town Council and not a Parish Council.

29. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel noted their Terms of Reference and Work Programme.

Under their Work Programme the Panel noted that:

- (i) **Item 2** (Community Safety, (d)) – the Police and Crime Commissioner Bill had now passed Parliament; there would be an election held on 15 November 2012 and a commissioner would be in post 7 days later.
- (ii) **Item 2** (Community Safety (e)) – monitoring Police resources for the Olympic Games; noted that this information would in all probability be unavailable, as they would want to keep this information secure before the Games. However, Essex Police were conscious that they had to police the District as well as the Games. They would also be implementing their policing “Blue Print” as from 1st March.
- (iii) **Item 7** (Ad hoc report on recycling in flats and HMOs) – officers had recently had a meeting with the Portfolio Holder on their plan on recycling

in flats in the district. Once complete this would be brought to the Panel for their consideration.

- (iv) **Item 8** (Use of Solar Panels on Council owned properties) – noted that this was currently on hold as there were several legal challenges pending at present on the government's cut in the grant on generating electricity by use of solar panels.
- (v) **Item 11** (New SITA Contract) – it should be re-titled as the 'Revised SITA Contract'. A new contract would be framed for 2014 and the Panel would have sight of this in due course.

30. CCTV ACTION PLAN - HALF YEARLY REPORT

The Assistant Director, Environment and Street Scene, Jim Nolan, took the Panel through the latest report on the CCTV delivery plan. It was noted that the CCTV Code of Practice would be updated to include covert procedures.

Councillor Breare-Hall asked what the time frame was for the completion of the two new cameras in Epping High Street. He was told that the columns had been erected and wired up and that they were awaiting for the cameras to be installed, hopefully by next month.

Councillor Breare-Hall asked if the new and improved cameras located at the Cottis Lane/Bakers Lane car parks had yielded any results as yet. He was told that nothing had come from them as yet.

It was noted that no fixed cameras would be replacing the dummy cameras in Epping Lane, Pick Hill, Clays Lane and Station Hill, Theydon.

Councillor Cochrane asked about the current state of the Debden Regeneration Project and was told that it was nearly finished.

Councillor Pond asked if the mentioned Centralised Database would include all CCTV camera footage in the district. Mr Nolan replied that it included all assets that belonged to the Council, but not private shops, the police or other authorities, as they had no control over them. In any case very few shops had systems of evidential standard.

RESOLVED:

That the progress on the CCTV 5 year service plan be noted.

31. ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

The Assistant Director, Environment and Street Scene, Jim Nolan, introduced the update on the Safer Cleaner Greener Strategy on Enforcement Activities for the period 1 April 2011 to 30 September 2011. The Panel noted that there were 630 recorded incidents of fly-tipping reported to the Council. Any incidents that had some evidence to enable a trace to be made are passed on to the Environment and Neighbourhoods Team to investigate; 382 were investigated. Four prosecutions for fly-tipping incidents were concluded in this period and one for related waste enforcement work. Twenty two penalty notices were offered for littering offences and four pre-arranged operations to target littering offenders were carried out in High Street, Ongar; Queens Road, Buckhurst Hill; Nazeingbury Parade and Larsens Recreation Ground, Honey Lane, Waltham Abbey.

Councillor Sartin asked if there were many enforcement actions on excessive noise. She was told that there were; 794 incidents had been looked into. Officers were looking at improved ways of reporting this by breaking down the information into more meaningful chunks.

Councillor Breare-Hall asked if these quarterly figures could be given with the figures from the last quarter so that members could see any changes over the two periods. It also seems that a lot of the fly-tipping incidents happen on Council owned Housing land; how was this dealt with? Mr Nolan said they were talking to their Housing colleagues about this. It was usually a matter of education, as some tenants did not know what to do with their bulky rubbish. They were preparing leaflets targeted at specific areas/streets.

The Director of Environment and Street Scene, John Gilbert, informed the Panel that they had achieved a grade 1 on their KPI on fly-tipping. This was a hard one to achieve but was a very good position to be in, showing that they were having a positive effect on fly-tipping in the district.

The Chairman, Councillor Sartin in summing up, agreed that this was a good outcome. However, she thought the Panel did need figures from the previous quarter so that comparisons could be made.

RESOLVED:

That the update on the Safer Cleaner Greener Strategy enforcement activities for 01/04/2011 to 30/09/2011 be noted.

32. SAFER CLEANER GREENER ACTION PLAN - 3RD QUARTER PROGRESS

The Panel noted the progress made to the Safer, Cleaner Greener Action Plan for 2011-12. They noted that most of the action points listed were being updated separately at this meeting under the various updating reports. The crime figures were largely being successfully tackled, but unfortunately the figures for burglary seemed to be on the increase, however, officers would have a clearer picture by the end of the year. A lot of work had been put into reducing domestic violence and recently money had been used to fund a refuge in Harlow. The CCTV roll-out was going as planned and was deemed to be very successful, as were the ASBO figures.

RESOLVED:

That the Safer Cleaner Greener Action Plan, as at 31 December 2011 was noted.

33. SAFER CLEANER GREENER ACTION PLAN FOR 2012-2013

Noted that this report would be updated and brought back to the next meeting .

34. ESSEX WASTE PLAN

The Panel noted that a background paper to the consultation documents was tabled at the meeting; this supplied an overview of the County's strategy, policies and proposed plans for waste management in Essex and Southend-on-Sea until 2031. The consultation period on this would end on 19 January 2011.

The Panel noted that this authority has been a full and active member of the Essex Waste Partnership since its inception in 2005. Since then recycling performance across the County had increased significantly, with a countywide performance of around 50% in 2010/11. It still remained the case that the County was reliant upon landfill for disposal of non-recyclable or non-reusable waste. Because of this in 2010/11 the County paid over £16.7 million in landfill tax, with this set to rise to £19.4 million in 2011/12 if landfill volumes remained the same; leaving cost to one side it was also the case that landfill void space was diminishing. Therefore, it was imperative that alternative disposal methodologies were implemented.

The aim of the county was to achieve 60% recycling by 2020; to favour anaerobic digestion (AD) for organic waste, with the resulting gases used for electricity; to favour mechanical and biological treatment (MBT) for residual waste; to continue to use windrow composting for garden waste; and to continue to use in-vessel composting for combined garden and food waste.

In previous consultations the people of Essex had said that they had wanted to see:

- More recycling through kerbside schemes;
- Residual waste being treated rather than going to landfill;
- The output from MBT being used to produce energy rather than going to landfill; and
- There was also a clear preference to avoid incineration of raw waste (i.e. energy from waste plants).

In order to effectively manage waste throughout the County, it was envisaged that six transfer stations would be required. All collected waste would be delivered to a transfer station where it would be bulked up and then taken away for final treatment. The six locations had been identified as Harlow (Oct 2013), Uttlesford (March 2014), Braintree (May 2014), Chelmsford (May 2014), Colchester (May 2014) and Southend (May 2015). Dates are the expected dates of opening.

The County has been successful in securing £100.9 million of PFI credits for the provision of residual waste treatment facilities. Procurement of these facilities had commenced and a preferred bidder would be announced in early 2012. Building is likely to start in late 2012 with first operations scheduled for summer 2015. The County had obtained planning consent for a residual waste treatment plant at a location in Basildon.

The draft answers to the questions put by the consultation document had been set out in an appendix to the report and the Panel addressed and commented on these answers as appropriate. It was noted that whilst the vast majority of these did not relate directly to this Council in land use terms, they could and would have an impact on the way in which we would deliver our waste management services in the future.

In considering the answers the Panel noted that:

- There was a shortfall in the capacity relating to Clinical Waste Treatment Facilities in the county;
- Privately owned sites in Essex still imported waste from London Boroughs, although the London Boroughs were looking to reduce this;
- There were some issues with the maps; one showing the Central Line as capable of transporting waste;
- For question 10, instead of saying a qualified yes to the proposal, the Council should say no, citing the same reasons given in the draft answers;
- Again, for questions 11 to 19 it should be a no instead of a qualified yes,

- given the comments by the Planning Section, especially around land raising;
- For question 21 it should say ‘...where possible rail and water should be used...’;
 - Question 22, should again be made a ‘no’ and not a qualified yes as the planning section had misgivings about the use of Green Belt land, the preservation of Green Belt Land and traffic movement; and
 - It was generally acknowledged that the responses tended to be in the affirmative, but they should be changed to a definite ‘No’ if we were at all unsure or critical of the County’s proposal.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the consultation document on the Essex County Council and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council Waste Development Document – The Preferred Approach and the deadline of 19 January 2012 be noted; and
- (2) That the draft responses with the Panel’s added comments as indicated above be agreed.

35. GREEN AND CARBON REDUCTION MEASURES

The Director of Planning and Economic Development, John Preston, introduced the report updating the Panel on green and carbon reduction measures. These came out of the Council’s signing up to the Nottingham Declaration. It was noted that the Council has taken part in a consultation on the new Nottingham Declaration during August and September 2011. Following this consultation, the Nottingham Declaration Partnership and the Local Government Association would be working together to launch a new initiative called “Climate Local – a local commitment to action on climate change”.

It was likely that the new initiative would see local authorities signing up to a minimum list of common targets, with a number of further targets that councils would have the option of taking on in addition. Further information to follow as the initiative develops in 2012.

The Panel also noted that, a draft Carbon Strategy had been sent to members of the Green Corporate Working Party for comments. This was to replace the outdated Climate Change Strategy.

The Panel noted actions achieved during 2010/11. They also noted that as part of the Nottingham Declaration the Council had committed itself, in 2009, to the 10:10 Initiative: a pledge to reduce the organisation’s emissions from its own operations by 10% in 2010. However, since signing the pledge the Council has managed to achieve only a 7.2% reduction in greenhouse gasses in 3 years, an average of 2.4% annually. It should be noted that the Council presently only collates data from buildings requiring Display Energy Certificates (DECs) and has left it with a considerable gap in its knowledge of overall energy use. On the plus side it had showed an overall improvement from a ‘G’ to an ‘E’ rating.

The Panel also noted the long term actions for the future as listed in the agenda.

RESOLVED:

That the updates on the Council’s Green agenda be noted.

36. INTER AUTHORITY AGREEMENT WORKING GROUP MINUTES - FOR 30 AUGUST 2011

The Panel noted the minutes of the Inter Authority Agreement Working Group for 30 August 2011.

Members were concerned of the time it took for the minutes of a meeting held in August to reach this Panel. It was noted that officers were dependant on the County as to when the minutes were released.

37. WASTE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD - MINUTES 10 OCTOBER 2011

The Panel noted the minutes of the Waste Management Partnership Board of 10 October 2011. They noted that the Cabinet had resolved to extend the SITA contract to November 2014, giving three years of certainty to both parties.

Councillor Janet Whitehouse wondered if SITA could supply members with a list of roads that had awkward corners, hills etc. that are not gritted and caused problems for their vehicles. Mr Gilbert would investigate.

It was noted that Chigwell Parish Council had purchased heavy brushes that could be attached to existing machines and used to help clear snow on side roads not currently on the gritting round. They had not been used as yet so it was not known how well they worked. Once used a report could be made to the Local Councils Liaison Committee.

38. BOBBINGWORTH LIAISON GROUP MEETING NOTES

The Panel considered and noted the minutes of the Bobbingworth Former Landfill Site Local Liaison Group meeting held on 2 November 2011.

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

The item on the consultation on Essex Waste was to be reported to the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

40. FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings of the Panel were noted.