

EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES

Committee: Council **Date:** 25 July 2006

Place: Civic Offices, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 10.20 pm

Members Present: Councillors Mrs A Haigh (Chairman), Mrs C Pond (Vice-Chairman), K Angold-Stephens, D Bateman, Councillor Mrs D Borton, Mrs P Brooks, R Church, Mrs S Clapp, M Cohen, M Colling, Mrs D Collins, Mrs A Cooper, J Demetriou, R D'Souza, T Farr, R Frankel, Mrs R Gadsby, P Gode, R Goold, A Green, Mrs A Grigg, J Hart, P House, D Jacobs, D Kelly, J Knapman, R Law, Mrs J Lea, A Lee, J Markham, Mrs M McEwen, P McMillan, S Metcalfe, G Mohindra, R Morgan, S Murray, Mrs S Perry, Mrs P Richardson, T Richardson, Mrs P K Rush, Mrs M Sartin, Mrs P Smith, P Spencer, D Stallan, Ms S Stavrou, P Turpin, Mrs L Wagland, C Whitbread, Mrs J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse, M Woollard, K Wright and J Wyatt

Apologies: Councillors Mrs H Harding, B Sandler, D Spinks and G Stollar

Officers Present: T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer), J Gilbert (Head of Environmental Services), P Haywood (Joint Chief Executive), G Lunnun (Democratic Services Manager), R Palmer (Head of Finance), J Scott (Joint Chief Executive), T Tidey (Head of Human Resources and Performance Management) and I Willett (Head of Research and Democratic Services)

31. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2006 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

33. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Chairman's Announcements

(i) Chairman's Charity - Neighbourhood First Responders

The Chairman welcomed representatives of Neighbourhood First Responders in Epping Forest to the meeting.

She advised that First Responders in this area were St John Ambulance members but when on shift, they were under the control of the East of England Ambulance Service from their control room in Chelmsford. The volunteers dealt with category A emergency calls which included diabetic emergencies, unconsciousness, chest pains and heart attacks and were able to be with the patient within eight minutes of being called. First Responders were equipped with oxygen equipment and a defibrillator as

well as the more conventional first aid equipment. They used their own cars which, when on duty, had magnetic signs on the side but did not have flashing lights and a Responder was unable to break any of the traffic laws in proceeding as quickly as possible to the patient. Currently, First Responders were neither called to trauma cases nor to young people under the age of 12, although this was subject to review.

The Chairman reported the training of Responders took nearly three full days, spread over weekends usually, and finishing with both practical assessment and oral questions. The qualification lasted six months after which each Responder had to be reassessed. Training included managing an incident, making a survey of a patient and managing a patient who might neither be breathing nor have circulation, CPR, use of oxygen equipment and the automated external defibrillator were also taught and practised.

The Council noted that Responders met together fortnightly at St Margaret's Hospital in Epping where they dealt with unit administration, listened to lectures from visiting ambulance professionals and practiced their skills on specially designed dummies. The Responders were holding two open days on 5 and 12 August 2006 in Epping St John's Hall and Loughton Methodist Hall respectively where they would demonstrate and allow members of the public to perform some of these resuscitation techniques.

The Council noted that the Epping First Responders Unit had about 17 members, split operationally into two groups - Epping and Loughton. The volunteers did whatever shift hours they were able. The more equipment they had in the unit, the more volunteers could be on shift at any one time and the area of cover could either be enlarged or covered more intensively. The unit was called out at least once every week. Members were advised that it costed about £3,000 for each set of equipment. The Ambulance Service replaced the oxygen cylinders and the defibrillator pads without charge as these items were consumed. The unit was hoping and planning to expand to at least 25 active volunteers when it was hoped that 24/7 cover could be maintained in both areas.

The Chairman presented certificates to John Newman for 750 hours service, to Sandra Newman for 750 hours service and to David Read for 500 hours service. She also presented a certificate and the Service Medal of the Order of St John to Roger Salmon. The Chairman reported that there was a certificate for Karen Leese who was unable to be present at this meeting.

(ii) Flowers

The Chairman announced that the flowers from tonight's meeting would be sent to one of the Council's Sheltered Housing Units.

(iii) Future Charity Events

The Chairman reminded members that a Business Golf Day would be held on 19 September 2006 and she invited them to form a team of four players. She advised that a Carol Service would be held for Members and Officers of the District Council and Town/Parish Councils on 8 December 2006. She advised that a Multi-Faith Service would be held in the new year. The Civic Awards Evening would take place on 1 March 2007.

(b) Leader's Announcements**(i) Meeting with Deputy Ombudsman**

The Leader reported on a meeting held between members and officers and Peter MacMahon, Deputy Ombudsman on 21 July 2006. She advised that Mr MacMahon had made a very interesting presentation on the work of the Local Government Ombudsman and had highlighted the changing role of the Ombudsman. He had also complimented the Council on its Complaints procedure. The Leader advised that copies of Mr MacMahon's slide presentation would be included in the Members' Bulletin.

(ii) Travellers' Sites - Meeting with Go East

The Leader reported on a meeting with a representative from Go East following a count of gypsy/traveller caravans in the District not on settled (permanent or transit) sites. The figure quoted by Go East had been 42 caravans and they had emphasised that additional sites should be provided in the right locations for those in housing need. The representative had advised that if the Council did not find the means of providing adequate accommodation it would be directed to do so. The Leader advised that officers were attempting to clarify the number of caravans not on settled sites as it was thought that Go East had included those on an unauthorised site which had now been vacated. The Council noted that reports would be submitted to Overview and Scrutiny and the Cabinet in due course.

(iii) Meeting between Portfolio Holders, Local County Councillors and Local Members of Parliament

The Leader reported that a meeting had taken place to discuss issues of general concern including the current review of the structure of Local Government, Highways issues including pilot schemes in relation to Street Lighting, Local Area Agreements, PCT and Social Care Reviews and Meals and Wheels Service. The Council noted that it was planned to hold three meetings each year with Local County Councillors and Local Members of Parliament.

34. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been received for consideration at the meeting.

35. REPORTS OF THE CABINET

Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Cabinet, invited the Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder and the Customer Services, Media, Communications and ICT Portfolio Holder to present the reports of the Cabinet.

(a) Supplementary Estimates

(Mover: Councillor J Knapman - Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder)

The Portfolio Holder summarised the reasons for seeking supplementary estimates in relation to the Benefits Division, a proposed Compulsory Purchase Order, an Environmental Health practitioner, major tree work on housing-owned land and the replacement of the Civic Offices Atrium ventilators.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

RESOLVED:

- (1) That a District Development Fund (DDF) supplementary estimate of £40,000 be approved to maintain acceptable levels of service within the Benefits Division while staff on are maternity leave;
- (2) That a supplementary capital estimate to £377,500 be approved to fund a Compulsory Purchase Order, if required, in respect of the purchase of 8/8a Sun Street Waltham Abbey;
- (3) That a Continuing Services Budget (CSB) supplementary estimate of £19,000 in the 2006/07 financial year (£38,000 in a full year) be approved to meet the cost of appointing one additional fulltime equivalent Environmental Health practitioner from 1 September 2006 onwards;
- (4) That a supplementary estimate of £42,000 to be funded from the Housing Revenue Account balances be approved in order to clear the backlog of major tree work on housing-owned land; and
- (5) That an additional supplementary DDF estimate in the sum of £13,500 be approved to enable the replacement of the Civic Offices Atrium ventilators.

(b) Draft Council Plan 2006 -2010

The Portfolio Holder advised that over the last three months, the draft Council Plan and its aims and objectives had been subject to consultation with members, staff, residents, partner agencies and other local and representative organisations, so as to ensure that actions and resources were targeted at those areas of greatest importance. He advised that the Cabinet had considered the draft plan and the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with regard to consultation responses.

Amendment Moved by Councillor D Jacobs and seconded by Councillor J M Whitehouse.

"That the draft Council Plan 2006-2010 be referred back to the Cabinet for further consideration".

Lost

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

RESOLVED:

That the draft Council Plan for 2006/2010 be adopted.

(c) Waste Management Service

(Mover: Councillor S Metcalfe, Portfolio Holder for Customer Services, Media, Communications and ICT)

The Portfolio Holder reported that it had not been possible to negotiate a longer-term contractual arrangements with Cory Environmental for the Waste Management

Service. Cory had served notice bringing to an end the interim provisions phase of the Novation Agreement and were now being paid on an open book basis.

The Portfolio Holder also reported on the need to commence a formal procurement process and on current service issues.

By leave of the Council, Councillor Metcalfe presented an amendment (First Amendment) to recommendation (2) as follows:

"(2) That a formal procurement exercise be commenced in respect of the Waste Management Service and as part of that exercise tenders be invited on the basis of full weekly or part of the year weekly collection of residual waste".

On the requisition of five members under Paragraph 15.4 of the Council Procedure Rules, a recorded vote was taken on the amendment and there voted:

"For the amendment (50) namely: Councillors K Angold-Stephens, D Bateman, Mrs P Brooks, R Church, Mrs S Clapp, M Cohen, M Colling, Mrs D Collins, Mrs A Cooper, J Demetriou, R D'Souza, T Farr, R Frankel, Mrs R Gadsby, P Gode, R Goold, A Green, Mrs A Grigg, J Hart, P House, D Kelly, J Knapman, R Law, Mrs J Lea, A Lee, J Markham, Mrs M McEwen, P McMillan, S Metcalfe, G Mohindra, R Morgan, S Murray, Mrs S Perry, Mrs C Pond, Mrs P Richardson, T Richardson, Mrs P K Rush, Mrs M Sartin, P Spencer, Mrs P Smith, D Stallan, Ms S-A Stavrou, P Turpin, Mrs L Wagland, C Whitbread, Mrs J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse, M Woollard, K Wright, J Wyatt.

Against the amendment: (0)

Abstentions (3) namely: Councillors Mrs D Borton, Mrs A Haigh, D Jacobs

Second amendment moved by Councillor J M Whitehouse and seconded by Councillor R Goold

"That the words "and/or provision of a collection of food waste" be added after the words "residual waste".

Carried

Third Amendment Moved by Councillor J Knapman and seconded by Councillor R Morgan

"That the words "all subject to full public consultation" be added after the words "food waste".

Carried

By leave of the Council Councillor Metcalfe presented a further recommendation (Fourth Amendment) as follows:

"(6) That a supplementary revenue estimate of £230,000 be approved in order to facilitate a weekly residual waste collection service commencing as soon as possible until 30 September 2006".

Carried

Report as amended **ADOPTED**

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the receipt of notice from Cory Environmental bringing to an end the "Interim Provisions" phase of the Novation Agreement be noted and that consideration be given to a report in private session setting out the consequences of this action;
- (2) That a formal procurement exercise be commenced in respect of the Waste Management Service and as part of that exercise tenders be invited on the basis of full weekly or part of the year weekly collection of residual waste and/or provision of a collection of food waste, all subject to full public consultation;
- (3) That a Portfolio Holder Advisory Group be established to advise the Customer Services, Media, Communications and ICT Portfolio Holder on the procurement arrangements and the service levels to be included in the contract specification;
- (4) That the Group Leaders of each political group represented on the Council be invited to nominate a representative to serve on the Portfolio Holder Advisory Group;
- (5) That the agreement of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee under Paragraph 17 of the Council's Access to Information Rules to the taking of the key decision set out in (2) above on grounds of special urgency in order to continue refuse collection arrangements without interruption be noted; and
- (6) That a further supplementary revenue estimate of £230,000 be approved in order to facilitate a weekly residual waste collection service commencing as soon as possible until 30 September 2006.

36. REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Mover: Councillor R Morgan, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

Councillor R Morgan, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee presented a report on the future role of Council meetings.

He advised that following a comprehensive review, which had included visits to other local authority Council meetings and an assessment of a questionnaire to all members of the Council, the Constitutional Affairs Scrutiny Panel had put forward a number of suggested enhancements for increasing interest in Council meetings and enhancing debate generally. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had agreed with the recommendations put forward by the Panel which, in essence proposed the introduction of the following in the 2006/07 year:

- (a) state of the District debates which would focus on the key issues being faced by the authority;
- (b) single issue debates on particular topical issues affecting the Council and the local community;

- (c) written reports from the Leader, Portfolio Holders and the Overview and Scrutiny Chairman at each meeting on current activities falling within their remit;
- (d) changes to the item on questions by members which would allow questioning of the Leader, Portfolio Holders and Overview and Scrutiny Chairman, not just on their written reports, but on any activity within their remit; and
- (e) enhancements to the system for questions by the public.

Councillor Morgan reported that there were also suggestions for further possible enhancements at a later stage should these ideas prove successful. These included the Council in Committee and/or the Council in Seminar concept. He advised that if the recommendations were adopted the new arrangements would apply from the next Council meeting on 26 September 2006.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

RESOLVED:

- (1) That approval be given to the proposed enhancements in relation to Council meetings, namely those in respect of "State of the District" debates, "Single Issue" meetings, reports from Overview and Scrutiny/The Leader/Portfolio Holders and questions from members;
- (2) That approval be given to a review of the publicity arrangements in respect of questions from the general public to Council and Committee meetings; and
- (3) That, accordingly the Terms of Reference and Procedure Rules in respect of meetings of full Council be amended as shown in Appendices 1 and 2 attached to these minutes.

37. MOTIONS

No motions had been received for consideration at the meeting.

38. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

No questions by members had been received for consideration at the meeting.

39. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the item of business set out below as it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act indicated and the exemption is considered to outweigh the potential public interest in disclosing the information:

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Information Paragraph Number
10	Waste Management Service - Supplementary Estimate	3 and 4

40. WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICE - SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE

(Mover: Councillor S Metcalfe, Customer Services, Media, Communications and ICT Portfolio Holder)

The Portfolio Holder presented a report summarising the reasons why Cory Environmental had exercised their right under the Novation Agreement to bring to an end the "Interim Provisions" phase and commence the "Cost Plus" phase. He also reported on the financial implications of this action.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That a supplementary revenue estimate of £1.8 million be approved to maintain the Waste Management Service whilst a procurement exercise is undertaken; and
- (2) That the agreement of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee under Paragraph 17 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules to the taking of this key decision on grounds of special urgency in order to continue refuse collection arrangements without interruption be noted.

CHAIRMAN