

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on
Tuesday, 9 November 2010 at 2.00 p.m.

Portfolio Holder: Ray Manning

Councillors in attendance:

Scrutiny and Overview Committee monitors and Opposition spokesmen: Jose Hales

Opposition spokesmen: Hazel Smith

Also in attendance: Lynda Harford

Officers:

Patrick Adams	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Stuart Harwood-Clark	Environment Operations Manager
David Hill	Accountant
Paul Howes	Corporate Manager, Community and Customer Services
Paul Quigley	Environment Services Manager
Fiona McMillan	Legal & Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Susan Walford	Acting Environmental Health Manager

32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

33. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

34. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Senior Democratic Services Officer presented this item which updated the meeting on the progress being made on the Council's pursuit of Member Charter Status and the Member development programme in general. The Leader agreed that an assessment of Councillors' training needs should be carried out in-house, as there was no budget to hire a consultant to carry out this work.

It was agreed that face-to-face interviews to assess Councillors' training needs were preferable to a telephone conversation, although it was noted that if repeated attempts to arrange a meeting with a councillor proved unsuccessful then the researcher might have to resort to a telephone call. It was hoped that the Council's group leaders would encourage their members to participate in this process and that all Group Leaders would sign-up to the Charter at Cabinet on 11 November.

The Leader

AGREED That the process of assessing Councillor training needs should be carried out in-house.

35. COMMUNITY PRIDE AND VILLAGE HERO AWARDS EVALUATION

The Corporate Manager Community and Customer Services presented this report, which evaluated the recently held Community Pride and Village Hero awards. The event had been covered in the local media and had received positive feedback. It was suggested that the submissions nominating residents as village heroes should be made public, to ensure that all worthy nominees were recognised.

Sponsorship

It was noted that the event had been sponsored which meant that there had been no cost to the Council, except for officer time. Concerns were expressed regarding the submission of a planning application by one of the sponsors of this event. The Leader supported the recommendation, highlighted in the legal implications section of the report, that a sponsorship policy be developed prior to a future awards event where sponsorship is sought.

The Leader **NOTED** the report and expressed the hope that the event would be repeated next year.

36. DRAFT SERVICE PLAN 2011/12

The Corporate Manager for Community and Customer Services explained that the draft Service Plan needed to be considered by Senior Management Team (SMT) before being discussed by the Portfolio Holder at a public meeting. SMT were due to consider the draft Service Plans at its meeting on 17 November 2010.

37. HAUXTON: FORMER BAYER CROP SCIENCES SITE - UPDATE

The Acting Environmental Health Manager presented this report which updated the Portfolio Holder on the remediation works at the former agrochemical works in Hauxton. She reported that foam on the river Cam had been investigated and was found to have been due to natural causes.

Media reports

It was noted that an article had appeared in the Cambridge News and an informative radio interview had been held recently, involving representatives from HauxAir and the Environment Agency.

Soil excavation

The Acting Environmental Health Manager stated that she expected that some soil from the site would have to be removed and disposed of in a suitably licensed landfill site.

Pipeline to treatment works

It was noted that pipes taking water towards the treatment plant were encased in a concrete box with granular activated carbon, which would absorb any leakage. It was further noted that any leakage would cause water to collect in the sump, which was checked regularly.

It was recognised that there was a long history of chemical works at the site, going back to before the War.

The Leader **NOTED** the report.

38. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORTS 2010/11: SECOND QUARTER

The Accountant presented this report, which summarised expenditure up to 30 September for this portfolio and compared this with a pre-determined budget profile covering the same period.

Savings to be identified

It was noted that £35,000 of funding that had been expected from the LPSA reward grants had not been forthcoming and £35,000 of savings to be identified had been carried over from the previous year. This equated to an overspend of £70,000, which was offset against a projected underspend of £41,000 for this portfolio, leaving approximately £30,000 of savings still to be identified.

Savings due to increased recycling

The withdrawal of LPSA funding has resulted in an unexpected overspend of £35,000 due to a commitment to a two year lease of a mechanical street sweeper and an extra cost of £25,000 for replacement green boxes and unforeseen insurance costs. However, it was expected that the new blue bin service would increase income through more recycling. It was also hoped that it would make the Council one of the top five local authority recyclers in the country. It was understood that other external factors, such as the thickness of newspapers, the price of recycled paper and the increase in the cost of diesel could all affect the costs and savings related to waste collection. It was noted that by purchasing its diesel in collaboration with Donarbon, the Council had the lowest cost per litre of all the district councils in the county.

The Leader **NOTED** the report.

39. SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS & PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2010/11: SECOND QUARTER

The Environment Services Manager presented a report on the progress being made on service improvements for the first six months of the year. The Leader welcomed the fact that the action status for all service improvements was either green or amber and there were no reds.

In-house service for emptying paper recycling banks

The Environment Operations Manager explained that by using its own vehicles to collect from existing paper recycling banks the Council would save on contractor costs. The use of these banks would be monitored following the introduction of the blue bin scheme.

Recycling of domestic waste

The Environment Operations Manager explained that as of 30 September, 56% of the Council's waste was being recycled. This was an improvement on the figure of 53% for the same time last and was before the introduction of the blue bin scheme. Council officers were praised for the smooth introduction of the blue bin scheme.

Trade waste recycled

The Environment Operations Manager explained that this was the first year that the amount of trade waste being recycled was being measured and so the end of year target of 9% was an estimate of what could be achieved.

Data in CorVu

It was understood that the description field for the performance indicators in the CorVu system would be improved to allow more explanatory information for the data. It was noted

that the data for the PIs BV089 and BV182 was not yet known and so the boxes in the report should have been greyed out.

Government guidance on performance data

It was noted that the Government had decided that it was no longer compulsory to collect data for any of the performance indicators; however, the Environment Services Manager explained that the Council were awaiting further guidance on the use performance indicators from the Government.

The Leader **NOTED** the report.

40. FORWARD PLAN

Waste and recycling collections from schools and village halls

The Environment Services Manager reported that the reviews of the current policy on recycling collections from schools and the waste and recycling collection arrangements from village halls were dependent on information from the Government. As a consequence these two items would probably have to be delayed until April/May next year.

Bayer Crop Sciences site at Hauxton

It was agreed that an update on the Bayer Crop Sciences site at Hauxton should be a standing item on the agenda.

Hard-to-reach groups

The Environment Services Manager explained that the Hard to Reach project, which aimed to develop recycling opportunities for Hard to Reach groups such as Travellers, some of whom had not traditionally accessed the council's recycling services, was still seeking funding before it could progress. He explained that, following a proposal by the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder to the RECAP Board, a pilot RECAP Hard to Reach project was being developed, based on the South Cambridgeshire District Council proposal, initially targeting traveller groups in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire. It was hoped that this would be funded by the RECAP partnership and included within the 2011-12 RECAP work plan. It was noted that this was not a portfolio holder decision and so was not on the Forward Plan.

Recycling plastics

In response to a question from a member of the public the Environment Services Manager explained that instead of trying to provide residents with a comprehensive list of plastics that could be recycled the Council had opted for the term kitchen plastics as experience had shown more detailed descriptions had proved ineffective. He further explained that a small amount of unrecyclable plastic in the blue bin could be tolerated.

41. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would be held on Monday 24 January 2011 at 2pm.

The Meeting ended at 3.25 p.m.

**Forward Plan – Environmental Services Portfolio
As at 1 November 2010**

9 Dec 10	Meeting cancelled			
24 Jan 11	Capital and Revenue Estimates		Decision	Alex Colyer David Hill
	Service Improvements Q3 2010/11		Monitoring	Steve Hampson Susan Walford
	Financial Performance Q3 2010/11		Monitoring	Steve Hampson David Hill
	Performance Indicators Q3 2010/11		Monitoring	Steve Hampson David Hill
	Capital and Revenues Estimates: Awarded Watercourse		Decision	Alex Colyer David Hill
	Member Development Update		Information	Alex Colyer Patrick Adams
	PITT Review		Information	Steve Hampson Pat Matthews
	Review current policy on recycling collections from schools		Decision	Steve Hampson Paul Quigley
	Review of Waste and Recycling Collection Arrangements from Village Halls	Y	To review current collection arrangements from village halls and seek a policy decision	Steve Hampson Paul Quigley
	Bring Banks/RECAP		Information	Steve Hampson Stuart Harwood-Clark
	Health and Environmental Services Fees and Charges 2011/12		Decision	Steve Hampson
10 Mar 11	Final Service Plans		Decision	Steve Hampson
	Member Development Update		Information	Alex Colyer Patrick Adams
	Covell's Drain			Steve Hampson Pat Matthews

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