

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on
Tuesday, 14 October 2014 at 2.00 p.m.

Portfolio Holder: Mick Martin

Councillors in attendance:

Scrutiny and Overview Committee monitors: David Bard

Opposition spokesmen: Anna Bradnam and Janet Lockwood

Also in attendance: Lynda Harford

Officers:

Patrick Adams	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Gemma Barron	Sustainable Communities & Partnerships Manager
Iain Green	Environmental Health Officer (Public Health Specialist)
Mike Hill	Health and Environmental Services Director
Paul Quigley	Head of Environment Commissioning
Helen Taylor	Waste and Recycling Minimisation Officer

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

3. NORTH WEST CAMBRIDGE - WASTE AND RECYCLING SHARED SERVICE AGREEMENT

The Head of Environment Commissioning presented this report, which invited the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder to approve the North West Cambridge Shared Services Agreement between the Council and Cambridge City Council for the collection of waste and recycling from the North West Cambridge development.

Instead of individual wheeled bins for each household there would be 500 underground bins. This was a first for the UK, although such arrangements could be found in Europe. The underground scheme was introduced following representation by Cambridge University. Though this will cost more, the terms of the Section 106 Agreement ensure that the costs to either Council of the scheme will not exceed their current service costs. The Head of Environment Commissioning explained that there were bins inside the concrete bunkers and he saw no reason why this would encourage rats.

The Head of Environment Commissioned explained that whilst the City Council did not collect paper separately, this situation could change depending on the revenue generated. It was also possible that the Council could stop collecting paper separately if the market price for recycled paper dropped significantly.

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder

AGREED the Shared Services Agreement between South Cambridgeshire District

Council and Cambridge City Council for the collection of waste and recycling from the North West Cambridge development.

DELEGATED authority to sign the Shared Services Agreement on behalf of the Council to the Director of Health and Environmental Services.

4. **POLICY AMENDMENT: WASTE AND RECYCLING SERVICE**

The Head of Environment Commissioning presented this report which invited the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder to consider amendments to the current waste and recycling service policies arising out of implementation of the Business Improvement Efficiency Programme options agreed on 13 February 2014.

The Head of Environment Commissioning disagreed with the suggestion that the policy should ensure that those with short-term disabilities receive an assisted collection, as it was too inflexible. It was noted that all those who received an assisted collection would continue to do so.

The Head of Environment Commissioning explained that giving residents an extra bin impacted on the time taken to complete the rounds.

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder

AGREED

- A) To amend the Council's policy in relation to assisted collections to "Assisted collection arrangements will be made on the grounds of disability, where there is a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term effect on the ability to carry out normal daily activities.
- B) To suspend the provision of additional green bins until the effects of the revised winter collections have been fully evaluated and a report brought back for consideration.

5. **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE PRIORITIES 2015/16**

The Director of Health and Environmental Services presented this report which sought the approval of the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder for the suggested high-level Portfolio priorities for the financial year 2015/16.

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder reminded the meeting that the priorities identified for the Directorate meant extra work on top of the officers' day-to-day responsibilities and he welcomed the reduction in priorities from 47 this year to 36 for 2015/16.

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder stated that the priorities would be reviewed once a month and he

AGREED the emerging priorities for his Portfolio to be developed and delivered in the Health and Environmental Services Directorate Plan for 2015/16.

6. **FOOD SERVICE PLAN**

The Head of Service, Environmental Health and Licensing presented this report, which sought the approval of the Environmental Health and Licensing Food Safety Plan for

2014/15.

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder stated that the Council was not obligated to follow the Food Standard Agency's (FSA's) recommended best practice in all areas and that he was satisfied with explanations which detailed why the Council had adopted alternative arrangements. For example it was noted that due to the wider needs of the service Council officers multi-tasked, while the FSA preferred specialist staff. It was agreed that the Council should focus on outcomes instead of process.

With regard to suspected cases of food poisoning, the Director of Health and Environmental Services explained that no conclusive evidence had been found to confirm that either the food or premises was responsible for the illness in any of the 180 notified cases. It was accepted that people were more at risk from food poisoning from their own cooking, especially barbeques, than from commercial food establishments.

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder

APPROVED the Environmental Health and Licensing Service Food Safety Plan 2014/15.

7. **ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY SURVEY - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Head of Environment Commissioning explained that 811 surveys had been completed; this was a response rate of approximately 40%, which was comparatively high for a survey of this kind. He agreed to circulate his report to councillors. It was noted that it would be useful to see actual figures as well as just percentages.

Overall respondents had expressed an 87% satisfaction rate with the Council's Health and Environmental Services section, compared to 84% last year.

Waste and recycling

92% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the waste and recycling service, compared to a rate of 89% last year. Suggestions had included increasing the green bin service in the summer and to decrease the frequency of the black bin collection service. The councillors present recognised that whilst some households could have less frequent black bin collections, this would not be true for everyone.

Dog fouling

54% had identified dog fouling as an issue. It was suggested at the meeting that the Council could liaise with parish councils on this matter.

Air quality and smells

It was noted that complaints regarding smells were not surveyed and that such an issue was subjective. Air quality on the District's major roads was monitored.

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the report.

8. **TAXI FEES TO THE PUBLIC - UPDATE**

The Head of Service, Environmental Health and Licensing explained that in 2009/10 the Council agreed to link its fee increases for private hire vehicles with those of Cambridge City Council. It was noted that the sophisticated system used by the City Council had always resulted in an increase that was roughly in line with inflation. Any valid objection to the increase would result in the matter being taken to the Licensing Committee. The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder expressed his approval of these arrangements.

9. **JOINT PROCUREMENT OF A CAMBRIDGESHIRE HANDY PERSON SCHEME - VERBAL UPDATE**

This item was discussed after item 2.

The Environmental Health Officer – Public Health Specialist explained that the Council funded a Handy Person Scheme in partnership with Cambridge City Council and Huntingdon District Council. The work carried out under this scheme, such as installing hand rails, allowed people to remain in their own homes. The aim was now to make the scheme county-wide, funded by all Cambridgeshire local authorities. However, the tender process had been delayed by six months because a number of the local authorities had been unable to commit to funding.

The Environmental Health Officer – Public Health Specialist stated that all being well the new county-wide scheme would take effect from September 2015. He explained that the Council had three options:

- To continue to participate in the county-wide procurement exercise.
- To provide the service outside such a partnership arrangement.
- To cease the provision of the service to residents.

The Director of Health and Environmental Services explained that the Council provided a similar service for its own tenants and it was possible that this could be extended to all residents. It was noted that several of the larger villages already ran their own Mobile Warden Schemes, which carried out some of the same work as the Handy Person Scheme.

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder asked for an update in early 2015 and he **NOTED** the verbal report.

10. **FORWARD PLAN**

Community awards categories

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder announced that he wanted to set up a task and finish group to discuss the community awards categories for March 2015. He asked the Partnership and Sustainable Communities Manager to invite Councillors Anna Bradnam, Kevin Cuffley, Lynda Harford and Janet Lockwood to a meeting to make recommendations on this matter.

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder noted that the following items would be discussed at his next meeting:

- Fees and Charges.
- Active & Healthy 4 Life GP Referral Scheme.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Legislation changes – Fixed Penalty Notice charges.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Environmental Services Portfolio Holder meeting will be held on Friday 12 December 2014 at 2pm.

The Meeting ended at 4.05 p.m.
