

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on
Tuesday, 27 January 2009 at 9.30 a.m.

Portfolio Holder: Mrs SM Ellington

Councillors in attendance:

Scrutiny and Overview Committee monitor: -

Opposition spokesmen Mrs HM Smith and Dr SEK van de Ven

Also in attendance: -

Officers:

Iain Green	Environmental Health Officer (Public Health Specialist)
David Hill	Accountant
Dale Robinson	Corporate Manager, Health & Environmental Services
Susan Walford	Health Protection Team Leader

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Portfolio Holder declared a personal interest as a manager of a Pest Control company; item 4 relating to Fees and Charges refers.

20. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The notes of the meeting held on 6 November 2008 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Minute 12.2 – Arbury Park – it was noted that £15,000 had been provided towards cleaning the site of waste material.

Minute 15.1 – Air Quality Monitor – it was noted that a monitor had been installed at Orchard Park

21. LOCAL AIR QUALITY STRATEGY

As no significant changes had been required following the consultation process, the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder **APPROVED** the Local Air Quality Strategy for South Cambridgeshire District Council.

22. HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES FEES AND CHARGES

Consideration was given by the Portfolio Holder to the information provided in the covering report and accompanying appendix. The following information arising from the ensuing discussion was noted:

- The charging arrangements relating to processes under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 had not yet been finalised by DEFRA
- Changes to the charging regime relating to the Animal Welfare Act 2006 would be

introduced in 2009/10 as a result of the national permitted charging regime

- A 2.5% rate of inflation increase had been included in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2009/10 that would form the basis of the Estimates
- The fees suggested for 2009/10 as contained in Appendix 1 had been built into the 2009/10 budget process
- There had been no increase in problems relating to rodent activity due to the introduction of charges. It was felt however, that a policy regarding whether the Housing Revenue Account should pay the fees, as landlord should be considered, as disputes had arisen in the past with tenants
- There were alleged frequent complaints/concerns relating to rodent infestations in areas where watercourses were situated and in particular in the vicinity of residential properties

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder **APPROVED** the fees and charges for the various licensing, authorisation functions, Environmental Health Services and training for the 2009/10 financial year as set out in the appendix to the report contained in the agenda, subject to the following which are to be retained at the 2008/09 fee/charge:

- Animal Boarding Establishments
- Dog Breeding Establishments
- Riding Establishments
- Pet Shops (i) Basic
- Street Trading (i) Mobile traders in villages up to 2 nights a week and (ii) Each additional night
- All Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicle Licensing categories
- Food Hygiene and Health & Safety Training Courses
- Trade Refuse Charges
- School Customers

It was **NOTED** that, due to the retention of the 2008/09 fees/charges in the above named services, amendments to the Environmental Services Portfolio Estimates for 2009/10 would be required.

23. DRAFT CAPITAL AND REVENUE ESTIMATES

Prior to consideration of this item, the Corporate Manager informed the Portfolio Holder that £25,000 had been allocated by Cabinet at its meeting on 13 November 2008 towards a Flood Risk Assessment on the impact of the raised eastern banks of Covells Drain. An adjustment would therefore be required to the 2009/10 Estimates contained in Appendix A to the report.

The following information was subsequently noted:

- The 2009/10 estimates were over target by approximately £30,000; this was mainly due to the dry recycling contract inflation rate, which stood at 4.7% at the time of the annual review of the waste recycling contract and the effect of the Portfolio Holder's earlier decision with regard to fees and charges
- That the results of a benchmarking exercise had shown that SCDC ranked as 10th lowest out of 16 for Waste Collection; lowest of 16 for Street Cleansing and 2nd

lowest out of 16 for Environmental and Public Health Services

- Due to either climatic conditions or ecological constraints staff had been reallocated from work on watercourses to street cleansing duties with their salaries allocated to the street cleansing service budget. This ensured that the workforce remained occupied all year round and negated the use of agency staff
- At the request of Cllr Mrs HM Smith, the Corporate Manager undertook to investigate the dumping of bags containing plastic bottles at the Tesco store in Milton and in response that the Travellers at Chesterton Fen did not have a collection point for plastics recycling, Cllr Mrs HM Smith would be approached to assist with the 'hard to reach' refuse collection and recycling review. Those areas would be collated and included in the report for consideration by the Portfolio Holder at a future meeting
- That there had been a reduction in the material price for re-cycling kerbside plastics, however this did not affect the Council's current budget as material price was at the contractors risk. The current contract expired in October 2010
- A lay-by litter bin/cleansing schedule was included on the Council's website
- The number of adaptations to property, which ranged from the installation of grab rails to creating pathways, was due to the increase in the population of 65-75 year olds

The Portfolio Holder, having thanked the Corporate Manager and Accountant for the exemplary manner in which the budgetary process for Environmental Services had been managed:

- (a) **CONFIRMED** the proposals for capital expenditure shown in Appendix E to the report, for inclusion in the capital programme, and
- (b) **ENDORSED** the Revenue Estimates and Capital Programme shown in Appendices A and D, subject to the inclusion of £25,000 re Covells Drain, for consideration by Cabinet on 12 February 2009.

24. **SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS 2008/09 - NINE MONTHS PROGRESS REPORT**

The Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the information regarding progress on Service Improvements 2008/09 and in particular regarding:

- **Workflow software migration.** The procurement process had commenced and three potential providers had been identified
- **Customer satisfaction action plan.** The results of a telephone survey would be presented to the Portfolio Holder at a future meeting
- **Equality impact assessments.** Additional resources would be required in order to action, therefore the status would change to Red
- **Taxi's and private hire vehicles.** Reference to further initiatives related to local transport managers
- **Healthy eating and alcohol related award schemes.** The FSA Board had now

met and the implementation of a Countywide Healthy Eating Scheme had been agreed

- **Re-instate handyman service.** The portfolio Holder would be advised of progress in due course when this had become clearer

25. **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2008/09 - NINE MONTHS POSITION**

The Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the information regarding progress on Performance Indicators 2008/09 and in particular relating to:

- **SE209.** Three staff on long-term illness had been resolved, however there had recently been an accident involving an Operator who had sustained a broken collar bone
- **BV86.** Increase in cost of waste collection per household. This was due to increase in fuel costs as explained in the budget report
- **SE220.** Home Improvement Agency. A bid for additional resources was unsuccessful
- **SE118/19.** An additional surveyor was required
- Staff vacancies had been kept at a minimum

26. **JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE - PHASE 2**

The Portfolio Holder was informed that the bi-annual Needs Assessment was a combined document that included information provided by SCDC, Cambridgeshire County Council and NHS Cambridgeshire and related to the needs of Children & Young People, Adults of working age and Older People. It was particularly emphasised that the population of those aged over 65 was expected to increase by 60% and those aged over 75 by 55% by 2021 which had a particular impact on the Council and sheltered housing.

Issues raised as a result of the subsequent discussion included the following:

- The need for future consideration of the provision of 2-bed sheltered accommodation in order to accommodate carers
- A projected increase in planning applications for granny flats and annexes
- Awareness of the areas of deprivation, isolated villages and Travellers needs
- Travellers' life expectancy was lower than the rest of the population. The life expectancy for Migrant workers was difficult to obtain due to their movement around the country
- One of the key findings was the incidence of Child and Adult obesity
- Progress had been made regarding cardio vascular disease using preventive measures
- The increase in smoking, particularly amongst teenage girls

In conclusion, the Portfolio Holder,

- (a) Recommended to the Council's representatives on the South Cambridgeshire Strategic Partnership that the Council use its influence on the partnership to raise the importance of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and its findings. (A presentation is due to be heard by the South Cambridgeshire Strategic Partnership on 23 February 2009),
- (b) Agreed to discuss with other appropriate Portfolio Holders, the key areas of concern raised by the JSNA listed in paragraphs 57-61 of the report, with a view to including the said areas of concern within their respective departmental service plans where appropriate,
- (c) Agreed to highlight with Corporate Managers the need for the Council to have an input into the JSNA process to ensure all relevant health needs of South Cambridgeshire residents are incorporated in future JSNAs, and
- (d) Agreed to take forward the contents of the report into future discussions at the Health & Well-being Partnership.

27. **PROGRESS ON AWARDED WATERCOURSE SERVICE TENDERING - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Corporate Manager reported that twelve responses had been received in response to the advertisement process, including an internal application and that six were likely to be invited to submit a tender. The tenders would be considered on the Most Economically Advantageous Tender criteria, ie 40% price, 60% quality. It was anticipated that evaluation of the pre-qualification responses would take place in early February; draft specifications and contract documentation would be submitted to the Portfolio Holder for consideration in March; a formal invitation to tender would take place in April; an offer given to the successful tenderer in July and a start date in August.

It was noted that Members would not be part of the evaluation, however, they would set the evaluation criteria against which tenders would be evaluated.

28. **MEMBER TRAINING**

The Portfolio Holder was provided with an update on training and development initiatives undertaken during 2008-09 and progression on the programme for 2009-10.

Councillor Dr S van de Ven expressed concern that, although the mentoring session she had attended had been good, the follow up process had not been satisfactory. She had submitted data as requested by the mentor that had not been acknowledged and the subsequent feedback received had been a generic report.

It was noted that training in respect of the *National Leadership Academy* was mainly for Cabinet members and chairs of specific committees. Work was also currently being undertaken on a document containing the criteria for seminars and training.

The Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the report.

29. **FORWARD PLAN**

The contents of the Portfolio Holder's Forward Plan was **NOTED** subject to the inclusion of the 2009/10 Member Training and Development Programme for consideration on 24

February 2009 and in the event that accurate figures in respect of the 2008/09 Outturn budget monitoring report might not be available for the 28 April meeting, the report would be held over until May 2009.

30. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 24 February 2009 unless there were insufficient items for consideration.

The Meeting ended at 12.30 p.m.
