

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on  
Tuesday, 28 July 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

Portfolio Holder: Mrs SM Ellington

### **Councillors in attendance:**

Scrutiny and Overview Committee monitors: Mrs DP Roberts  
Opposition spokesmen Mrs HM Smith

### **Officers:**

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Richard May   | Democratic Services Manager                        |
| Dale Robinson | Corporate Manager, Health & Environmental Services |
| Ian Senior    | Democratic Services Officer                        |

## **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder signed the minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2009 as a correct record,

## **3. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH-HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE PLAN**

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder considered a draft Health and Safety Service Plan for 2009-10.

The Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services) explained the relationship between local authorities and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), emphasising the good partnership arrangements between the HSE and South Cambridgeshire District Council. He stressed that health and safety was intended to identify what was reasonably practical in a given situation, and not simply to prevent certain activities altogether. The Portfolio Holder was informed that the Health and Safety Service Plan, while conforming to the HSE's requirements, had been drafted so as to meet the specific conditions existing in South Cambridgeshire.

Those present discussed a number of elements contained in the Service Plan.

In the objectives at paragraph 1.2.2, Councillor Hazel Smith suggested that "Be professional, consistent and equitable, showing mutual respect towards others" would be better if it used the word "encouraging" instead of "showing". The Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services) agreed to review the wording used at a future date. He explained that respect promoted understanding which, in turn, made sure that objectives were achieved.

At paragraph 1.3.4, the Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services) highlighted the importance of understanding the range of perceptions held by different people within so-called hard to reach groups.

At paragraph 2.0, reference to "...the proposed new village of Northstowe" should be re-worded as "...the proposed new town....".

The Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services) informed the Portfolio Holder that the Health and Environmental Service Plan covered most of the important aspects within the Health and Safety Service Plan. The Portfolio Holder agreed that there was little point in continuing with the latter unless it related to items not being addressed elsewhere and said that, subject to confirmation that the Council would not expose itself to legal challenge, the Health and safety Service Plan 2009-10 should be the last one produced by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder **approved** the Health and Safety Service Plan 2009/10, attached to this report. The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder noted that the Health and Environmental Services' Service Plan addressed the issues contained in the Health and Safety Service Plan and agreed that, subject to the Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services) being satisfied that such an action would not present the Council with any difficulties in relation to the requirements of the Health and Safety Executive, the Health and Safety Service Plan should not be produced after 2009-10.

#### 4. MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder considered a report updating her about the implementation of the 2009-2010 Member Training and Development programme and proposing the reconvening of the Task and Finish group to oversee the annual Member training and development survey.

The Democratic Services Manager highlighted the good progress made to date, but added that continued good progress would require that appropriate resources were made available.

The following points were raised.

- Co-ordination with Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council was the most efficient and effective way of conducting training sessions for members of the various development control and planning policy joint Committees.
- Recent training sessions relating to scrutiny and overview and equality and diversity had been well received.
- Lead members, Committee chairmen and peer pressure would be key in encouraging greater engagement with, and participation in, future events, publicity for which should indicate who would benefit most from the training in question and what the aims were of the course.
- Training within political groups might be more attractive to some members.
- The suggestion that every member should undertake a minimum of six hours training every year.
- In paragraph 5(b) of the report, the phrase "...positive changes in behaviour..." should be reworded as "...improved knowledge and skills..."

Suggestions for future training events included

- A policy and legislation briefing to explain the differing responsibilities of central and local government, the County and District council, the Executive and Regulatory Committees, officers and members, and so on.
- Dealing with the media
- Computer-based file management

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder **agreed** to reconvene the Member Training Task and Finish Group to oversee the production of the 2009 Member survey and subsequent training and development plan for 2010-2011.

**5. FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY FUNDING UNDER SPECIAL GRANT SCHEME**

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder received and noted a report informing her about progress being made with the county food liaison group application for funding under the Safer Food, Better Business (SFBB) project. She welcomed the Council's success in obtaining this funding.

**6. FORWARD PLAN**

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder received and noted the Forward Plan attached to the agenda. She requested that the Corporate Manager (Health and Environmental Services) brief the local members shortly after zoo inspections were carried out.

**7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Those present noted that future meetings had been scheduled as follows:

- 9 November 2009 at 2.00pm
- 14 December 2009 at 2.00pm
- 25 January 2010 at 10.00am
- 16 March 2010 at 2.00pm
- 18 May 2010 at 2.00pm

---

**The Meeting ended at 4.00 p.m.**

---