

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 2.00 pm on 7 September 2017 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, 5 October 2017.

**Elected Members:**

- \* Mr Bob Gardner (Chairman)
- \* Mr Wyatt Ramsdale (Vice-Chairman)
- \* Mrs Mary Angell
- \* Mr Bill Chapman
- Mr Stephen Cooksey
- Mr Paul Deach
- \* Mr Jonathan Essex
- \* Mr Matt Furniss
- \* Mr Eber A Kington
- \* Mrs Bernie Muir
- \* Mr John O'Reilly
- \* Mr Stephen Spence
- \* Mrs Lesley Steeds
- Mr Richard Walsh
- \* Mr Richard Wilson

**In attendance**

Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

#### **8/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

Apologies were received from Stephen Cooksey, Paul Deach, and Richard Walsh. Hazel Watson substituted for Stephen Cooksey.

#### **9/17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 3 JULY 2017 [Item 2]**

The minutes from the previous meeting on 3 July 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

#### **10/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

- Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests relevant to items on the agenda.
- Councillor Jonathan Essex declared a personal interest in regards to item 7, as a trustee of a charity reuse furniture store called 'Furnistore'.
- Councillor Wyatt Ramsdale declared a personal interest in item 7, as Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Waverley Borough Council.
- Councillor Matt Furniss declared a personal interest in item 7, as Deputy Leader of Guildford Borough Council.

#### **11/17 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]**

None were received.

#### **12/17 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5]**

##### **Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. Following the Cabinet Member's response regarding Local Highway Funding 2017/18, members raised concerns over the reduction to the highways funding for local committees.
2. Members stated that many residents were being told by officers who managed the highways budget centrally to approach the Local Committees for funding. As Local Committees were having their respective highways budgets reduced, it was important residents were not given false hope for promised funding from Local Committees.
3. Members raised concerns that funds were near enough depleted and that the Cabinet's Member's response did not indicate any long term solutions or commitment.

4. It was stated that the burden of councillor responsibilities to carry out highway improvements for residents would not be met unless funds were increased.

### **13/17 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 6]**

The Committee noted and reviewed its recommendations, actions tracker and forward work programme.

### **14/17 /PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE COMMUNITY RECYCLING CENTRES [Item 7]**

#### **Witnesses:**

Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport  
Trevor Pugh, Strategic Director for Environment and Infrastructure  
Richard Parkinson, Waste Operations Group Manager  
Nick Meadows, Change Consultant

#### **Declarations of interest:**

None

#### **Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Select Committee received a presentation from the waste service covering the financial position of the council, cost reductions already made from Community Recycling Centre's (CRCs), the public consultation undertaken and the proposed changes being put before Cabinet.
2. Despite stories in the press, the Cabinet Member for Environment & Planning clarified that the council had not already made a decision to close sites. Any decision on service changes would be made by Cabinet taking into account the outcome of the consultation. The purpose of the consultation was to allow residents to give their feedback on two proposed options before Cabinet decided on which proposal to adopt.
3. It was noted that £3.3m savings were required from the operation of CRC service. A saving of £1.4m would be met in 2017/18 from changes introduced last year. Officers stated that additional savings would need to be identified to achieve the overall savings target of £3.3m.
4. Officers indicated that the closure of every CRC two days in the week would potentially save the service £385k and that discussions were underway with Suez to develop an optimal solution of CRC day closures.
5. The Committee raised concerns around the possible increase in fly-tipping if the proposed changes in the report were agreed by Cabinet.

It was agreed that a more uniform method of recording fly-tipping with district & borough councils was needed which would also include the recording of fly-tipping on private land.

6. It was noted that although there was a national system for recording ( Waste Data Flow), fly-tipping incidents including those on private land , however not all incidents on private land are recorded, as landowners either don't report all of them or district and borough council's don't accept them. Some members stated that more work needed to be done with partners in regards to the proposals being taken forward including the potential impacts on partners.
7. Concerns were also raised around the removal of the free daily allowance for construction waste and the possible increase in fly-tipping as a result of this. Officers explained that since the introduction of charging at CRC's, there had been a reduction in the amount of construction waste going to CRC's, which had not reappeared in as fly-tipping, in domestic and street sweeping waste streams. The Cabinet Member present at the meeting stated that if the free daily allowance of chargeable waste was stopped, and there was an increase in fly-tipping that could be directly linked to this change he would look at this with the service.
8. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport whilst stating fly-tipping had fallen over 1000 tonnes recognised members concerns that more consistent and accurate data on fly-tipping was needed for the county.
9. Members queried the ownership status of the CRC sites proposed for closures. Officers clarified that two sites were leased from the respective borough councils and they have the freehold on the other two CRC sites. Each site has been valued however most are limited in terms of future use.
10. Officers explained that the four reuse shops that have been introduced at CRC sites are generating additional income for the council and landfill diversion cost savings. In 2017/18 the council project that they will make in the region of £0.1m. This prompted members to suggest improving measures in this aspect to provide additional income. The Committee were informed the service were looking into the best method for sorting black bags that have come onto the sites. A trial had been undertaken in the last year with some staff dedicating time to sorting black bags as part of their duties, which led to a recovery rate of 18%.
11. The Strategic Director for Environment and Infrastructure advised members that the proposals offered different levels of efficiencies and that the Committee can make recommendations and/or comments which would be considered by Cabinet.
12. Some Members expressed the view that the two proposals put forward were not satisfactory and that there were missed opportunities on other options.

13. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport explained that the two proposals being put forward before Cabinet were the two best options officers could arrive at taking into account consultation feedback and the savings required.
14. A vote was taken by the Select Committee on Proposal 1 and Proposal 2. The votes were as follows,
  - a. Proposal 1- four votes for and eight votes against.
  - b. Proposal 2- five votes for, three votes against and four abstentions.
15. It was agreed that a set of recommendations be submitted to Cabinet from the Select Committee.

**Recommendations:**

The Environment and Infrastructure Select Committee made the following recommendations,

- a) That Cabinet reconsider the removal of the free daily allowance.
- b) That a network of CRC sites across the county are open 7 days a week.
- c) That a more robust method for recording fly tipping is agreed and implemented in partnership with district and boroughs which includes fly tipping on private land.
- d) For more work to be done around further reuse and black bag sorting, so more advantage can be taken of commercial opportunities.

**15/17 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY 5 OCTOBER 2017 [Item 8]**

The next meeting of the Environment and Infrastructure Select Committee will be held on Thursday 5 October 2017 at 10.30am in the Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames.

Meeting ended at: 4.07 pm

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**Chairman**

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