

Minutes

Environment and Housing Management Committee Wednesday, 15th June, 2016

Attendance

Cllr Hossack (Chair)	Cllr Mrs Fulcher
Cllr Poppy (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Russell
Cllr Cloke	Cllr Mrs Squirrel
Cllr Mrs Coe	Cllr Tumbridge
Cllr Mrs Davies	

Also Present

Cllr Mrs Hubbard
Cllr Parker
Linda Skinner

Officers Present

David Carter	- Senior EHO (Team Leader)
Mike Dun	- Trade Waste Officer
Zoey Foakes	- Governance & Member Support Officer
Helen Gregory	- Interim Head of Housing
Nicola Marsh	- Housing Manager
Wayne Richardson	- Building Surveyor
Dawn Taylor	- Business Support Services Manager

45. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

46. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Environment and Housing Management Committee on 9th March 2016, were approved and signed as a true record, subject to an amendment request by Cllr Tumbridge to Minute 384 to state that the previous minutes be approved rather than agreed.

47. Co-option of Tenants Representatives

The report set out proposals to co-opt representatives of Tenants Talkback into the Environment and Housing Management Committee for housing related items, in accordance with the Council constitution and with the previously approved Tenant Participation Compact.

Cllr Hossack MOVED and Cllr Poppy SECONDED the recommendations in the report be approved that:

- 1. Tenant Talkback be invite to send two representatives to each meeting of the Environment and Housing Management Committee where housing items are to be discussed.**
- 2. The representatives of Tenant Talkback be co-opted onto the committee for the duration of the consideration of these items, and have the right to speak, but not vote.**
- 3. The Head of Housing and Benefit Services be requested to arrange appropriate training of the representatives.**

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

Tenants Talkback play an integral role in the decision making process; Tenants Talkback is consulted and able to influence on all new policies and improvements within the housing service before implemented, as part of their scrutiny role.

48. Verbal update from the Chair

Updates were received from Officers on:

Textile Collection Scheme

An update was given on what has been collected and the financial return from Essex Textiles and Essex County Council. There had been limited feedback from the public and no negative comments from the Charity sector.

Three Arch Bridge Estate – Balcony Refurbishment

Information was received on who had been awarded the tender where a contract was in draft stages. An anticipated start date, completion date and tender value were notified.

Housing Stock Condition Survey

A tender had been awarded and with anticipated start dates, completion date and tender value informed.

Drake House Central Heating

A tender had been awarded and with anticipated start dates, completion date and tender value informed.

Love Essex Litter Campaign

The campaign had a new look with the same objective – to combat litter and put pressure on offenders to change their anti-social behaviour. Planned event dates including Recycling/Litter awareness events for the campaign had been put in place, and will be circulated to all Members and Parish clerks.

Fly-Tipping

Fly-tipping statistics were given which included estimated fly-tipping clearance and disposal costs. Additional signage had been erected as well as additional covert surveillance in areas that were “hotspots”. It was hoped that evidence acquired with the use of the covert surveillance would result in the issuing of fixed penalties, or if deemed appropriate, prosecution would be considered.

West Horndon Waste and Recycling Collection Pilot Scheme

West Horndon residents were issued with a bin for dry recyclables and another one for general waste. The full details of this pilot scheme would be brought back to Committee.

This was noted by Members of the Committee.

49. Performance Presentations

A presentation on Key Performance Indicators was given to the Committee by the Interim Head of Housing.

Overall, the results were pleasing and quarterly targets were met or very close to the target.

Environmental Health and Operational Services presented on Performance Indicators for litter/fly-tipping.

There were 11 mobile cameras around the Borough with flexibility to relocate them in order to target “hotspot” sites when required.

The presentation was positively received by the Committee. The Committee did ask officer Mike Dun to present back to Committee on a yearly basis recyclable rates.

This was noted by Members of the Committee.

50. Brentwood Garage Sites Update

The report provided an update on the progress for delivering the Garage Site redevelopment proposal.

In September 2015 the committee granted approval to procure a Registered Provider (RP) developer framework, to acquire and redevelop Magdalen Gardens, and for redevelopment of Fawters Close for older people's housing to remain in Council ownership.

By January 2016 with significant changes to the funding of local authorities, the Council sought to identify alternative revenue funding streams for the General Fund. The Council were exploring how garage site redevelopment could generate revenue funding for the General Fund.

The financial assessment was ongoing. Whilst this was taking place, the procurement of an RP framework had been placed on hold pending the outcome of the assessment. It was the intention that the Council would invest the Right To Buy Capital Receipts with the RP framework partners. As it was on hold, consultants had been commissioned to procure a building contractor for Fawters Close and Magdalen Gardens. That would contribute towards the Council meeting in December 2016 Right To Buy Capital Receipt expenditure target.

A separate project management tender would be undertaken to seek architectural advice, contracts administration and cost management throughout the construction process to completion and handover, as there would be no in-house development team.

A report would be brought back to Committee in September 2016 with more information once options had been discussed with Members.

Cllr Hossack MOVED and Cllr Cloke SECONDED the recommendations set out in the report be approved that:

- 1. Delegated authority was granted to seek tenders to produce a building contractor for the redevelopment Fawters Close and Magdalen Gardens.**
- 2. Delegated authority was granted to seek tenders to appoint consultants to provide architectural advice, contracts administration and cost management throughout the construction process to completion and handover, as there was no in-house development team.**
- 3. Delegated authority was granted to the Chief Executive and Finance Director in consultation with the Chair of Environment and Housing Management Committee to award the building contract to the successful building contractor within the approved budget.**

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

REASONS FOR DECISION

The council would progress the design to tender and the procurement of a building contractor for Fawters Road and Magdelan Gardens directly, pending the outcome of the financial assessment.

It would contribute towards the council meeting its Right To Buy Capital Receipt expenditure targets for December 2016.

51. New Housing/Planning Act 2016

On Thursday 12 May 2015, the Housing and Planning Act received Royal Assent. The Housing and Planning Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on 13 October 2015 by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

The key changes in the new Housing and Planning Act 2016 that would impact the Council's housing department were:

- The requirement to Sell our higher value vacant properties to fund the voluntary Right to Buy for Housing Association tenants.
- The implementation of the "Pay-to-Stay" policy which required the Council to increase the rent to tenants earning higher incomes.
- Secured tenancies, the introduction of a new fixed 10 year tenancy agreement.

The Council needed to plan to make financial provision for the changes and adjustments had to be made in service delivery.

The Interim Head of Housing was to report back to a future Committee when more information on this Act had been publicised.

Cllr Hossack MOVED and Cllr Poppy SECONDED the recommendation set out in the report be approved that:

- 1. Members of the Committee were requested to note the contents of the report.**

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**.

52. Unauthorised Deposit of Waste (Fixed Penalties) Regulations 2016

The Unauthorised Deposit of Waste (Fixed Penalties) Regulations 2016 came into force on 9th May 2016.

These regulations introduced a new fixed penalty notice for fly tipping of waste offences under section 33 of the Environment Protection Act 1990.

The default fixed penalty amount set in the regulations is £200, however it was open to councils to set alternative rates up to a maximum of £400.

Officers were looking into a number of different deterrents and ways to address this important issue.

Cllr Hossack MOVED and Cllr Poppy SECONDED the recommendations set out in the report be approved that:

- 1. Members agreed to set a fixed penalty amount of £400 to provide a greater deterrent to fly tipping and help towards the recovery of costs to the Council of this activity.**
- 2. Members do not set a reduced amount for the early payment of this fixed penalty due to the significant harm caused by fly tipping.**
- 3. Members delegate to the Environmental Health Manager authority to implement a scheme for the issuing of fixed penalties for the unauthorised deposition of waste.**

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

Fly tipping was a serious problem in Brentwood and used resources of the Authority when tips had to be cleared from public land. It was burdensome for private land owners who were unfortunate enough to have land targeted by tippers.

The imposition of a £400 fixed penalty for fly tipping would allow officers investigating these offences, where sufficient evidence was available, to deal with smaller scale fly tips by way of fixed penalty notices where appropriate, and in some cases avoid the need for lengthy and expensive court proceedings that could be reserved for the larger scale offence which occur.

A fixed penalty notice of £400 would deter many would be household fly tippers and leave more resources remaining for the investigation of the offences committed by a hard core of professional offenders.

53. Waste Strategy Group

At Environmental Committee on 20th January 2015, it was unanimously resolved to develop a cross party Waste Strategy Working Group to meet and develop a Waste Strategy for the Council in line with the Essex Waste Management Partnership. It was agreed that the working group would report back to Committee with key recommendations for the future of waste related items.

The original Members consisted of Cllr Hossack, Cllr Poppy, Cllr Sleep, Cllr Squirrell and Cllr Barrett as well as Officers from Street Scene. Cllr Cloke volunteered himself to joining this group replacing Cllr Sleep.

Dates for the Waste Strategy Group meetings were scheduled for:

- 4th July 2016
- 7th September 2016
- 23rd November 2016
- 22nd February 2017

Items that would be addressed at the Waste Strategy Group meetings consisted of:

- Consider ways to limit the amount of black bag waste that's generated and therefore collected.
- Look at Bring Sites – for example “hotspot” locations
- Strategies to encourage waste minimisation
- West Horndon bin pilot scheme
- Garden waste bins
- Early presentation of waste
- Review Essex County Councils Waste Strategy Report

Cllr Hossack MOVED and Cllr Poppy SECONDED the recommendations set out in the report be approved that:

- 1. Members approved that the Waste Strategy Group continued to meet and develop the Waste Strategy for the Council in line with the work that had been undertaken through the Essex Waste Management Partnership.**
- 2. The working group report back to the Environment and Housing Management Committees and commit to meeting four times a year (prior to Panel meetings).**
- 3. Original Members remained on the group and that one more Member be elected to replace Cllr Sleep.**

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

To enable a cross party group to discuss ideas/research and bring recommendations back to Panel.

54. Urgent Business - Papworth Home Improvement Agency

Brentwood Borough Council works in partnership with Papworth Trust to provide a Home Improvement Agency (HIA) service, which gave assistance to elderly and vulnerable residents to obtain adaption's for disabilities, small repairs, access to funding for housing repairs and other services.

A report was presented to Environment and Housing Management Committee on 9th December 2015.

Members agreed to extend the Borough Council's contract with Papworth to 31st March 2016 at the December meeting.

Essex County Council extended the contract period further to 31st March 2017.

Cllr Hossack MOVED and Cllr Poppy SECONDED the recommendations set out in the report be approved that:

- 1. Members agreed to extend the time period for the service level agreement with Papworth to 31st March 2017.**
- 2. Officers were instructed to report back on the outcome of Essex County Council's procurement exercise for the future provision of Home Improvement Agency services for the Borough.**

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

To ensure continuity of services provided by the HIA in line with the Essex agreements.

55. Termination of Meeting

In accordance with Rule 28 of the Council's Rules, the business of the meeting not having been concluded by two hours after its start, the Committee voted to continue with the meeting for 30 minutes.

56. Urgent Business - Parking Order

In 2015 Housing Services were asked by Members and Residents to review and implement parking enforcement over three Housing owned sites, Gibraltar House, Mayflower House and The Keys Eagle Way.

At Environment and Housing Management Committee in March 2016 it was agreed by Members that these car parks be included in the parking order.

The final costs for parking permits needed to be agreed.

A meeting was booked for the 5th July at 17.30 in the Town Hall where affected residents and businesses would be consulted on the proposed costs.

Cllr Hossack MOVED and Cllr Poppy SECONDED the recommendations set out in the report subject to an amendment to recommendation 2 as set out below:

- 1. The Committee approved the request to enable the Head of Housing to develop pricing mechanisms in relation to parking permits on Housing Owned sites.**

2. **Committee agreed for final decisions on pricing mechanisms to be made under Delegated Authority by the Interim Head of Housing in conjunction with the Chair of the Environment and Housing Management Committee.**

A vote was taken by show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

The Committee was asked to note the request from Members and residents to enforce parking in these three car parks and the prior approval by Members in March 2016 to include the car parks in the order.

The Committee was asked to note the length of time this problem had been going on.

The meeting concluded at 21.10.