

Minutes

Environment Committee Tuesday, 20th January, 2015

Attendance

Cllr Lloyd (Chair)	Cllr Mrs Murphy
Cllr Sapwell (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Mynott
Cllr Cloke	Cllr Newberry
Cllr Faragher	Cllr Russell
Cllr Keeble	Cllr Ms Sanders

Apologies

Substitute Present

Also Present

Cllr Tee	
Cllr Quirk	
Mike Armstrong	Thames Chase Trust
Scott Sullivan	Thames Chase Trust

Officers Present

Chris Potter	Monitoring Officer and Head of Support Services
Claire Hayden	Governance and Member Support Officer
Roy Ormsby	Head of Street Scene
Stuart Anderson	Parks, Countryside, Cemeteries & Open Spaces
	Service Co-ordinator
Dawn Taylor	Business Support Services Manager

385. Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received for this meeting.

386. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the Environment Committee held on 12th November 2014 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

387. Verbal update from the Chair

Cllr Lloyd gave an update on the following:

Fire Authority – open discussion of future business working to taken place late in the year.

Textile Launch – this will commerce on 1st April 2015.

Mountnessing Recycling Site – Cllr Cloke updated the Chair on the Recycling site in Mountnessing. Current site is situated on Parish Council/Parish Hall land, not Borough Council land. Recent feedback from Mountnessing Parish Council, is the situation is not getting better and have requested for the site to be removed and potentially relocated, if an appropriate site is found.

388. Cemetery Regulations

The Council is facing an unprecedented set of challenges. The cuts in funding and the need to reduce expenditure increases the need to review the way in which we deliver our services, and how these can be done more efficiently, but still meet customer expectations.

The Council currently operates two active cemeteries, these being London Road which is open to new ashes interments and also existing pre-purchased burial plots, and Woodman Road Cemetery which is open to both new ashes and full burial interments.

The current ‘regulations’ of the cemeteries were last reviewed over 20 years ago and have become outdated and no longer reflect current operating standards, or the resources available to effectively maintain the cemeteries.

There is also often confusion amongst the bereaved regarding what is and isn’t allowed in the cemeteries and what they are entitled to do as the Exclusive Right of Burial holder, and so the regulations are intended to clarify this area.

A Motion was MOVED by Cllr Lloyd and SECONDED by Cllr Sapwell to receive the recommendations set out in the report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to:

2.1 That Members approve the new regulations for them to be implemented accordingly.

2.2 Members agree that the regulations (Appendix A) will be reviewed on an Annual basis.

389. Education Programme

Over the past year the Council have been providing an education programme, working with schools and other key partners to raise awareness of the need to keep our Borough clean.

The programme was entered into the Clean Britain Awards, a National Awards Scheme for Council's that are seen to be providing high quality community programmes to increase awareness to local residents, especially young people, about a clean environment.

At the awards ceremony on 26th November 2014, the Council were awarded a 4 star commendation for the programme they provide. This was the first time the Council had been entered for the award, and was a great achievement for the Council to be represented at in a National competition.

Although the award was a commendation for the work that was being done, it was felt that this should be tested to see what residents felt about the Street Scene Services provided across the Borough. This was done through a short questionnaire run from September through to November. The results were very positive, and are detailed in Appendix A.

The Council will continue to work with other agencies from across the County, and a new campaign is being developed as part of the Clean Essex campaign for 2015.

Members thanked staff for their hard work on the programme.

A Motion was MOVED by Cllr Lloyd and SECONDED by Cllr Sapwell to receive the recommendations set out in the report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to:

2.1 That Members note the success of the work being undertaken through the education programme to highlight the need to keep the Borough clean.

2.2 To agree that a Full Environment/Awareness Action Plan be drafted to address an issues from the 2014 survey, for approval at the next meeting on 18th March 2015.

390. Thames Chase

The Council had been providing funding to Thames Chase Trust since 1991, and was formed as one of the twelve Community Forests in 1990.

Engagement with Thames Chase over recent years has diminished this is mainly due to a number of requests to them not being met. Mainly how Brentwood Council received value for money for its £7,770 investment.

The Council has now received a proposal for the Trust, which is outlined in Appendix A. The request is to commence further engagement, and to identify how any future funding provided to the Trust can benefit our communities.

The Chair welcomed Mike Armstrong and Scott Sullivan from Thames Chase Trust.

Cllr Tee, was present as a Ward Member and spoke in support of the recommendations.

A Motion was MOVED by Cllr Lloyd and SECONDED by Cllr Sapwell to receive the recommendation set out in the report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to:

- 2.1 Members approve the re-engagement between Brentwood Borough Council and Thames Chase Trust within existing budgets.**
- 2.2 That delegated power is given to the Head of Street Scene in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair to work with the Thames Chase Trust on the development of a Management Plan to be brought to the next meeting of the Environment Committee.**

391. Waste Strategy

The Council is facing an unprecedented set of challenges. The cuts in funding and the need to reduce expenditure increases the need to review the way in which we deliver our services, and how these can be done more efficiently, but still meet customer expectations.

Waste services is one of the largest services delivered, both by Essex County Council (ECC) as the disposal Authority, and by the Borough Council with responsibility for collection of waste.

A review of waste has been taking place with ECC since September 2014, which is to Improve the Waste Management Partnership for Essex so that there is a shared understanding of the whole partnership (including the Waste Partnership Board) which:

1. has a clear vision to reflect changing circumstances and risks
2. has a financial framework and three year financial plan (including all partners)
3. has a capital investment programme that enables innovative operational models of delivery to be developed
4. has a new model for partnership working (including commissioning and procurement)
5. explores a best practice collection model designed by housing type and/or urban/rural area, cost-effectiveness and customer feedback on ease of use and achieved performance

The Council's current Waste Plan was approved at the Environment Panel on 30th January 2013. This now needs to be reviewed in line with the work that is being undertaken with ECC, but it is felt that this needs to be done to enable Members to consider the current financial challenges that this, and all other Council's now face.

A Motion was MOVED by Cllr Lloyd and SECONDED by Cllr Sapwell to receive the recommendations set out in the report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to:

- 2.1 That Members establish a cross party working group to develop a Waste Strategy for the Council, in line with the work being undertaken through the Essex Waste Management Partnership.**
- 2.2 That Members approve the Terms of Reference as detailed in Appendix A.**
- 2.3 That the working group report back to the Environment Committee in June 2015 with key recommendations for the future of waste collection.**

2.4 That an interim report is brought to the Environment Committee on 18th March for discussion.

392. Free Food Waste Bags

The Council introduced the food waste collection in December 2011 to further enhance the recycling service offered to our residents. The service is funded by ECC as part of the 28 year Inter Authority Agreement that was agreed in 2009, with the 2014/15 grant being £371,414.

The current service was agreed in June 2011 at the Environment, Health and Housing Board, with a recommendation to collect kitchen waste with residual waste without the ongoing supply of liners.

A further report was presented at the Environment Panel on 14th November 2012, after additional funding was agreed with ECC to pilot a scheme for free food waste bags. The panel approved a one year pilot scheme of distributing two free rolls of liners to all households from April 2013, with an additional two rolls to be redeemed from local collection points via a token system if they wish to participate.

It was evident that the delivery of free bags to all households was not an efficient use of funds, as it was clear from the monitoring by crews, and the tonnage being collected that participation across the Borough was reducing, despite the free delivery of the bags. This was confirmed through a recent user survey, which identified that only 35% of residents used the service.

In February 2014 Members were informed, via their newsletter, that a more efficient delivery system would be piloted, and that residents who wish to have free bags delivered would need to register. This attracted over 1,400 households, and two free rolls were delivered in June 2014.

The Council currently provide free food waste bags from the Town Hall, Brentwood Library, Shenfield Library, Ingatestone Library, Ingatestone Parish Council and West Horndon Horticultural Society. Residents also have the option to purchase bags for £1 from a number of local retailers.

Mr Ormsby informed the committee of an amendment to 1.4 of the report which states at 35% of residents used the Food Waste Service, this figure is now 43%.

Concerns were viewed by Members over the size and quality of the bags provided. This will be investigated in a procurement exercise.

Cllr Murphy requested an investigation to take place on commercial food waste. Mr Ormsby will investigate, however, may not be an option as this stage.

A Motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Lloyd and **SECONDED** by Cllr Sapwell to receive the recommendation set out in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and was **RESOLVED** to:

- 2.1 That Members approve the option of providing free food waste bags, through retailers that are prepared to distribute them free of charge, and at no cost to the Council.**
- 2.2 That additional outlets are identified to distribute free food waste bags, such as Parish Halls and community groups, and publicised through media outlets.**

393. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business.

394. Local Government Act 1972 -Exclusion of Press and Public

Not applicable.
