

**Minutes of the Meeting of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
held on 25 October 2016**

PRESENT -

Councillor John Beckett (Chairman); Councillor Lucie Dallen (Vice-Chairman);
Councillors Richard Baker, Kate Chinn (as nominated substitute for Councillor Rob Geleit), Liz Frost, Keith Partridge, Jane Race, Mike Teasdale and Tella Wormington

Absent: Councillor Steve Bridger and Councillor Rob Geleit

Officers present: Joy Stevens (Head of Customer Services and Business Support), Brian Thompson (Interim Head of Financial Services), Simon Young (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), Jon Sharpe (Trade & Waste Services Manager), Kelvin Shooter (Community Safety & Projects Officer), Samantha Whitehead (Streetcare Manager), Teresa Wingfield (Senior Accountant) and Fiona Cotter (Democratic Services Manager)

14 QUESTION TIME

No questions were asked or had been submitted by members of the public.

15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by Councillors regarding items on the Agenda.

16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Environment Committee held on 7 June 2016 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

17 BUDGET TARGETS FOR 2017/18

The Committee received and considered a report which informed members of the Council's revenue budget targets approved by the Strategy and Resources Committee. The report sought support for changes to services and any further guidance on the preparation of the Committee's service estimates for 217/18 and for the next two financial years.

The report highlighted that the Committee had agreed savings of £127,000 for 2017/18. Additional savings from income generation and efficiencies of £48,430 had been further identified by Officers. This resulted in total savings of £175,430 by this Committee. However, despite these and savings being made in other areas, there was still a Council wide shortfall of £220,000 in 2017/18.

On a point of clarification on paragraph 2.1 of the report regarding the Council's overall budget targets, it was noted that the intention was that the Capital Member Group sought to limit schemes included within the capital expenditure programme so that they were able to retain the agreed minimum level of capital reserves, and not that it was intended to limit schemes that enabled retention of the minimum level of reserves.

Accordingly, the Committee:

- (1) Noted the implications of the budget targets approved by the Strategy and Resources Committee;
- (2) Supported the changes to services and savings set out below and that these should be included within the budget presented to this Committee in January 2017 namely:
 - Not to cease additional cuts to highway verges (- £150K)
 - To cease sweeping up verge grass cuttings (brought forward from 2018/19) (£52K)
 - To restructure the Highways Horticultural team (£41K)
 - To handback Highways Tree Maintenance to Surrey County Council (£31K)
- (3) Noted the future savings option previously agreed as set out below for further work and inclusion in the Medium Term Financial Strategy: namely to charge for an Enabling Officer (£3K)
- (4) Noted how it was proposed to work towards generating additional savings to address the Council-wide funding gap of £220,000 as follows through:
 - Continued service reviews – in addition to venues the Car Park Working Group would be considering ways to increase income and reduce costs;
 - Efficiency savings – Officers would be continuing to review service delivery to identify any further efficiencies, income streams and economies of scale;
 - Income generation – the Capital Bid process would include schemes that had the potential to generate further income streams for the Council
- (5) Endorsed the work streams as set out below:
 - Charging at Auriol, Kingston Road, Court Recreation Ground, Richards Fields, Ewell Court House and Harrier Centre Car Parks;
 - Parking Enforcement

- CCTV provision
- Car Parking Service Review

18 EPSOM & EWELL COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Committee received and considered a report which sought agreement to the amalgamation of the current Epsom and Ewell and East Surrey areas into a single Community Safety Partnership (CSP).

The report highlighted that the viability of the Epsom and Ewell CSP had become more difficult, in large part due to the lack of resources and capacity since the removal of direct Home Office funding in 2011. It had also become increasingly difficult for all responsible authorities to engage with CSPs and meet their statutory obligations – working together across East Surrey would help address this issue.

The opportunity to amalgamate with neighbouring CSPs that formed the East Surrey CSP did not impose any additional liabilities on this authority but added value in its ability to tackle strategic issues that had an area and/or county focus.

On that basis, the Committee:

- (6) Agreed in principle to the combination of the Epsom and Ewell and East Surrey areas to form a single East Surrey Community Safety Partnership;
- (7) Authorised the Chief Executive to finalise the terms of a combination agreement with the other responsible authorities in the combined area and to enter into that agreement on behalf of the Council.

19 CORPORATE PLAN: PERFORMANCE REPORT ONE 2016 TO 2017

The Committee received and considered a report which provided an update on performance against the Committee's Key Performance Targets for 2016/17 under the Council's Corporate Plan.

The Committee noted that the target to remove each abandoned vehicle on Borough Council land within five working days from being reported was classified as "Off Track/Not Achieved".

The Committee:

- (8) Considered the performance reported in Annexe 1 to the report and identified an area of concern regarding the target in relation to the timescale for the removal of abandoned vehicles, noting that this would be addressed in the next reporting cycle;
- (9) Noted the results of the Streetcare Quality Survey reported in Annexe 2

- (10) Considered the actions that had been proposed or taken where performance was currently a concern as set out in the table at paragraph 3.1 in the report.

20 REFUSE AND RECYCLING POLICIES

Note: the order of the items was altered, item 8 (Recycling and Refuse Policies) being taken before item 7 (Parking Fees and Charges 2017/18)

The Committee received and considered a report which proposed policies relevant to the launch of the new weekly recycling and refuse collections in the spring of 2017.

A key driver of the changes in the service was the need to reduce or avoid cost wherever possible by increasing the amount of rubbish that could be recycled. However, with the introduction of greater levels of mixed recycling the risk of contamination was more significant. The proposals in the report were designed to support and complement the efforts of the majority of residents in avoiding contamination of recycling. Concern was expressed over a hard line use of these policies and how these might be invoked in the case of communal bin areas and houses in multiple occupation. However, the Committee was assured that if agreed, a common sense approach would be taken to their implementation and Officers would be sensitive to individual cases where it was inappropriate to invoke them.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed that:

- (11) Recycling bins contaminated with unsuitable waste should not be collected until the contamination had been removed by the resident;
- (12) Refuse bins containing large amounts of recyclable waste, or where significant recyclable waste was found on a regular basis, should not be collected on the scheduled collection day but should instead be collected the following week;
- (13) Residents should be requested not to wrap recycling in black refuse sacks (or other opaque bags) prior to recycling.

21 PARKING FEES AND CHARGES 2017/18

A report was presented to the Committee which sort agreement to off street parking fees and charges for 2017/18 and the introduction of proposals recommended by the Parking Working Group during the forthcoming year.

The report highlighted that the strategy of the Parking Working Group had been to propose fees and promote Hook Road as a long term stay car park, Upper High Street and Depot Road as long to medium term stay car parks, the Ashley Centre as a medium to short term stay car park and the Town Hall and Hope Lodge car parks as short term stay. The Parking Working Group had recommended changes to 24 of the 103 car park tariffs currently charged which

meant that an increase to 23% of the car park tariffs was being proposed for 2017/18.

It was stressed that the Council was not relying solely on increasing parking revenue to plug the gap in its revenue budget and some of the revenue generated from car parks was channelled back into maintaining and improving them. Fees and charges across all services were being increased and the Council was looking at a number of other measures to address the overall funding shortfall. In fact, the proposed charges would generate additional income of £95,350 (net of VAT) which was a shortfall of £13,950. It was further highlighted that the forthcoming highways improvements to South Street could adversely affect car parking income, particularly in the Ashley Centre. It was not accepted that the small decline in visitor numbers to the Ashley Centre in particular were solely and directly attributable to increases in parking charges.

Having noted that fees and charges should also include a reference to parking dispensation permits, the price of which would remain unchanged in the 21071/8 financial year, the Committee:

- (14) Noted the Epsom Retailer Consultation analysis and that as a result of the consultation, the Parking Working had recommended that:
 - a) The 1 hour minimum stay rate for the Ashley Centre Car Park be reinstated;
 - b) Officers contact the retailers who were interested in permit parking within Hook Road car park;
 - c) Officers should discuss the possibility of validator or discounted parking options with the retailers who indicated that they might be interested in subsidising parking at one of the Council car parks for visitors to their retail premises at no cost to the Council;
 - d) Officers be instructed to investigate opportunities for paid advertising in Council car parks with local retailers expressing an interest in the consultation to generate additional income for the Council;
- (15) Agreed in principle the changes to car park fees identified in Annexe 1;
- (16) Agreed in principle the changes to business and residential permit fees in Annexe 2
- (17) Agreed in principle the changes to parker card fees and lost tokens in Annexe 3
- (18) Agreed in principle the changes to car park fees identified in Annexe 4 including:
 - a) the introduction of a 40p overnight rate in Ewell High Street, Dorset house and Bourne Hall car parks;

- b) the introduction of a 30p 30-minute tariff in Ewell High Street and Dorset House;
 - c) the change in discounted parking for users of the Rainbow Centre who use Hook Road Car Park to a flat rate of £1 for up to 3 hours;
- (19) Subject to planning permission being granted for Ewell Grove School:
- a) Approved the harmonisation of charging times in Ewell village car park to allow parents to drop off their children without charge before 09:00 from a date to be determined by the Head of Customer Services and Business Support;
 - b) Authorised the Head of Customer Service and Business Support to continue discussions with Surrey County Council and Ewell Grove School regarding permits for staff working at Ewell Grove School and to issue such permits for Ewell car parks on such terms as she considered appropriate up to a maximum of 12 permits;
- (20) Authorised the Head of Customer Services and Business Support to give such notice(s) and/or make such order as is considered necessary in order to give effect to the above recommendations.

22 OUTSTANDING REFERENCES

References outstanding to Officers as at 25 October 2016 were noted.

23 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee resolved to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended) and that pursuant to paragraph 10 of Part 2 of the said Schedule 12A the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - PROPOSAL TO SITE A BREAST SCREENING UNIT IN HOPE LODGE CAR PARK AND EPSOM HOSPITAL PARK AND RIDE SCHEME

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Environment Committee held on 7 June 2016 considered exempt from publication were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 9.20 pm

COUNCILLOR JOHN BECKETT (CHAIRMAN)