

Minutes of the Meeting of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE held on 31 January 2017

PRESENT -

Councillor John Beckett (Chairman); Councillors Richard Baker, Steve Bridger, Liz Frost, Rob Geleit, Keith Partridge, Jane Race, Mike Teasdale and Tella Wormington

Absent: Councillor Lucie Dallen

Officers present: Simon Young (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), Mark Berry (Head of Place Development) (For Items 25 to 28), Ian Dyer (Head of Operational Services), Joy Stevens (Head of Customer Services and Business Support) (For items 25 to 38), Jo-Anne Chang-Rogers (Chief Accountant) (For Items 25 to 35), Richard Chevalier (Parking Manager) (For Items 25 to 38), Grant Miles (Interim Accountant), Mark Rouson (Corporate Communications Officer), Jon Sharpe (Trade & Waste Services Manager), Samantha Whitehead (Streetcare Manager) (For Items 25 to 29) Fiona Cotter (Democratic Services Manager) and Sandra Dessent (Democratic Services Officer)

25 QUESTION TIME

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

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by councillors in respect of items on this Agenda.

27 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee held on 25 October 2017 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

28 SURREY LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Surrey Flood Risk Management Strategy was adopted by Surrey County Council four years ago in consultation with the 11 Districts and Boroughs in the County. It expired in 2016 and the Committee was asked to support a renewed Strategy which would run until 2032.

The updated Strategy set out how the responsible flood management authorities in Surrey were seeking to manage the impact of flooding from rivers, ground and surface water. In recognition of the long term nature of measures to address

flood risks, it was proposed that the Strategy cover a fifteen year period during which rolling action plans would be developed to address the long term needs of the area.

Once agreed by the 11 District and Borough Councils in the County, the County Council proposed to undertake a public consultation prior to its adoption.

The report highlighted that Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Officers had been engaged in the preparation of the Strategy both at technical and policy levels. The Strategy created a positive framework within which to manage and address flood risk across the County and was consistent with the policy objectives of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council.

There were no direct financial implications arising from endorsing the Strategy and it did not commit the Council to specific initiatives. Any action requested of the Borough Council that might be proposed in the future would have to be brought forward to Committee on an individual basis for consideration together with funding proposals.

Accordingly, the Committee:

- (1) Approved the Draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2017-2032; and
- (2) Authorised the Head of Place Development to approve, in consultation with the Chair of the Environment Committee, minor modifications to the draft strategy in light of amendments required to be made by Surrey County Council from its public consultation.

29 CORPORATE PLAN: PERFORMANCE REPORT TWO 2016 TO 2017

The Committee received and considered a report which provided an update against its Key Priority Performance Targets for 2016 to 2017 in accordance with the Corporate Plan.

Having considered the performance reported in Annexe 1 to the report, the Committee did not identify areas of concern.

30 CAR PARKING REVIEW 2016

The Committee received and considered a report which set out the findings of the Car Park Working Group. The Working Group had been established to undertake a parking review as part of the programme of planned service reviews reported to the Financial Policy Panel in July 2015. The Chairman thanked Officers and Members for a thorough review.

The report highlighted proposals in relation to Blue Badge Bays, Richards Field, Annual Permit Schemes, Court Recreation Ground and Hook Road Car Park. It also highlighted a number of other actions flowing from the review.

The cross party Working Group had identified a parking strategy to promote Hook Road as a long stay car park, Upper High Street and Depot Road as long to medium stay car parks, the Ashley Centre as a medium to short stay car park and the Town Hall and Hope Lodge as short stay car parks. Car park tariffs were set with the aim of promoting this strategy so that car parks were used for their designated purpose.

In response to concern regarding usage figures at the Ashley Centre Car Park, Officers stated that there was nothing to indicate that the charges were a significant factor in the parking trends. The proposals of the Working Group in relation to Richards Field were in response to complaints received from local residents and monitoring of its use.

The Committee:

- (1) Received and considered the findings of the Car Parking Working Group;
- (2) Agreed with the Car Parking Working Group's recommendations as below that:
 - a) Officers should conduct a study of blue badge usage within the rear of the Town Hall car park and, subject to the outcome, remove but to three blue badge bays;
 - b) Subject to public consultation, the layout of Richards Field car park should be altered to include a mix of residential permit parking and limited waiting bays for shoppers to visit the retail outlets in the area;
 - c) In principle, if and when any annual permit schemes were introduced in Epsom and Ewell Borough Council owned car parks in future, the charges should be aligned with Hook Road permit prices;
 - d) Officers be authorised to allow the purchase of up to 15 permits in Court Recreation Ground on a Monday to Friday basis for a price in line with the residents rate of £330 per year;
 - e) Hook Road Car Park opening hours should not be extended and the current opening hours maintained;
- (3) Noted the changes to be made to the running of the car park service as outlined in the annexe subject to the Council's Human Resources policies;
- (4) Agreed the following action to be undertaken by officers as a result of the review: namely:
 - a) A review into the existing arrangements within the Kingston Road (Stoneleigh Parade) car park during 2017/18 (to be specifically undertaken by the Head of Property and Head of Legal and Democratic Services); the findings to be reported to a future meeting of the Committee;

- b) The introduction of signage identified during the Working Party tours, funded from current revenue budget allocation in 2016/17 and 2017/18;
- c) A review of the shopmobility service, the findings to be reported to a future meeting of the Community and Wellbeing Committee;
- d) A review of existing leasing arrangements for car washing facilities in car parks by 30 September 2017;
- e) A review of the effectiveness of the moped introduced for on street parking with a business case for an additional moped to be carried forward as part of the budget requirement 2017/18;
- f) To pursue options for advertising in car parks during 2017/18;
- g) The investigation of potential site options for additional parking by the Council's Place Development team and Head of Property.

31 TRAFFIC ORDER 2017 REPRESENTATIONS

The Committee considered the representations made to the making of the Traffic Order to vary parking charges. Twenty representations had been received by the deadline and one following the deadline of 4.00pm on 19 December.

Concern was expressed over the introduction of evening charges in Ewell Village, in particular in relation to Bourne Hall: all the representations received had been in relation to Bourne Hall and the view was expressed that in view of the income it was likely to generate, its introduction could be counter-productive. However, on the Chairman's casting vote, it was decided to continue with the making of the relevant Order, the effect of which would be revoke the previous Off Street Parking Places Order on the date that the New Order came into effect and to update and amend the Council's current Off Street Parking Places Order as detailed in Annexe 1 to the report.

32 FEES AND CHARGES 2017/18

A report was presented to the Committee recommending fees and charges for which it was responsible to take effect from April 2017.

An amended Annexe of fees and charges had been circulated following publication of the Agenda which included the detailed breakdown for 2017/18 for individual services.

The following points were noted:

- Certain waste collection fees and charges would be discontinued as a result of the introduction of the new refuse and recycling collection service in 2017;

- The fee for burial rights for residents of the Borough was being increased by 13.6%. This would bring it up to roughly half the charge to non-residents. The Council's charges for this service still remained competitive;
- Certain services were indicating a negative % change. The charges in relation to the stray dog service had been a market led decision and charges in relation to enforcement action taken in accordance with the Housing Act were either on a cost recovery basis or there was a statutory element to the charge.

Accordingly, subject to the approval of Council, the Committee agreed the fees and charges for 2017/ 18 as set out in Annexe 1 to the report.

Note: Annexe 2 (Trade Waste fees and charges) to the report had not been published on the grounds that the information related to the financial or business affairs of the Council and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

33 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18

A report was presented to the Committee which set out its proposed Capital Programme for 2017/18 and the provisional programme for 2018-20.

The report set out that the Financial Policy Panel had recommended the following schemes for inclusion in the capital programme, £242,000 to be funded from capital reserves and £25,000 to be funded from the Repairs and Renewals Reserve:

- Container Bin Replacement Programme (£68,000 to be funded from capital reserves);
- Improvement Works (Depot Road Car Park) & Pay and Display machines (Depot Road & Upper High Street Car Parks) (£174,000 to be funded from capital reserves)
- Waste Strategy Containers (£25,000 to be funded from the Repairs and Renewals Reserve)

The proposed provisional programme for 2018-20, all currently proposed for inclusion in the 2018/19 capital programme with no proposed schemes in 2019/20, was as follows:

- Upgrade to Levels 4a & 4b of the Ashley Centre Car Park (£184,000 to be funded from capital reserves)
- Hope Lodge Car Park extension (£97,000 to be funded from capital reserves)
- St Mary's Churchyard Wall Repairs (£63,000 to be funded from capital reserves)

The Committee:

- (1) Recommended the Capital Programme for 2017/18 as identified in section 4 & 5 of the report to the Council for approval on 14 February 2017;
- (2) Confirmed its support for all of the schemes proposed for inclusion in the provisional programme for 2018-20 as identified in section 6 of the report;
- (3) Noted that:
 - a) Schemes subject to external funding from section 106 and Government grants only proceed when funding has been received;
 - b) Schemes for 2018-20 were provisional pending an annual review of funds available for capital investment.

34 REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18

The Committee received a report which set out estimates for income and expenditure on its services for 2017/18.

The report highlighted that the probable outturn for this Committee in 2016/17 was an over spend of £119,000. This was the result of some significant adverse variations due to a shortfall in planning fee income, building control fees and cemetery income. This had been addressed in the 2017/18 budget. However, the report also highlighted that planning and building control income was dependent on applications and exposed to the volatility of external market forces.

The report set out a summary of the Committee's revenue estimates for 2017/18, giving an overall base position of £1,877K. This included additional income from discretionary fees and charges of £262K.

Accordingly, the Committee recommended the 2017/18 service estimates for approval at the budget meeting of the Council on 14 February 2017.

35 PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS

A report was presented to Committee which sought authority to the making of Public Space Protection Orders in place of former Designated Public Place Orders.

It was noted that the financial implications set out in the report, for which there was currently no budgetary provision, were worst case scenario and Officers would look to implement the Orders in the most cost effective way.

Officers were seeking broad delegation in the drafting of the Orders but it was proposed that consultation would be undertaken with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee before the terms of the new Orders were finalised. The Committee requested that consultation be extended to include Ward Councillors.

The Committee:

- (1) Authorised the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, following consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee and Ward Councillors, to make up to three Public Space Protection Orders;
- (2) Agreed that any Public Space Protection Orders should be made in accordance with the statutory process set out in the Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014;
- (3) Agreed that any Public Space Protection Orders replicate so far as possible the provisions of the Orders set out in Annexe 1 to the report and cover such other areas and related restrictions as the Head of Legal and Democratic Services considers appropriate following consultation with the local police.

36 A JOINED UP APPROACH TO ENFORCEMENT

A report was presented to the Committee which set out proposals for a more co-ordinated approach to enforcement across the Council.

It was considered that it would be beneficial for the Council to agree a process for ensuring that it could pull all relevant people together with a view to resolving issues where it could, or, to be clear at the earliest opportunity if an activity was not considered amenable to corrective action. This accorded with the Government's aim to put victims at the heart of the Council's response to anti-social behaviour and not to hide behind a silo approach. However, the report highlighted that in doing so, it would be important to manage public expectations as in reality, there was no "magic wand" available to deal with some issues.

Accordingly, the Committee:

- (1) Noted and endorsed the proposals in section 3 of, and Annexe 1 to, the report;
- (2) Did not make any further comment on the proposals;
- (3) Noted that a report on the operation of the process would be taken to the Audit Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee after one full year of operation.

37 CAR PARKING WORKING GROUP

The Committee received a report which proposed arrangements for substitution of members on the Parking Working Group. The Council's normal arrangements in respect of substitutions did not automatically apply to Working Groups.

The Committee agreed that either Councillor Tella Wormington or Councillor Tony Axelrod would be permitted to substitute for Councillor Neil Dallen on the Parking Working Group during his absence for the next few months and that the

Vice Chairman of the Environment Committee would be permitted to attend the Working Group, whether in substitution for the Chairman or otherwise.

38 OUTSTANDING REFERENCES

The Committee noted the references to Officers detailed in Annexe 1 attached to the report.

39 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 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.

40 FEES AND CHARGES 2017/18 - TRADE WASTE

The Committee noted the proposed fees and charges in relation to Trade Waste, noting that all places of worship benefited from a discretionary exemption. Charities benefited from legislative exemption.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.49 pm

COUNCILLOR JOHN BECKETT (CHAIRMAN)