

**Minutes of the Meeting of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
held on 16 JUNE 2015**

PRESENT-

Councillor John Beckett (Chairman); Councillor Mike Teasdale (Vice Chairman); Councillors Steve Bridger, Neil Dallen (as nominated substitute for Councillor Lucie Dallen) (Items 1-8), Hannah Dalton, Liz Frost, Rob Geleit, Keith Partridge, Jane Race and Tella Wormington.

Absent: Councillor Lucie Dallen

Officers present: Kathryn Beldon (Director of Finance and Resources), Stewart Cocker (Countryside Manager), Wayne Corby (Waste Services Team Leader), Michelle Dean (Waste Services Assistant), Ian Dyer (Head of Operational Services), Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Officer), Jon Sharpe (Transport & Waste Services Manager) and Joy Stevens (Head of Customer Services and Business Support).

- 1 **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC.** No questions were asked or had been submitted by members of the public.

- 2 **MINUTES.** The Minutes of the Meeting of the Environment Committee held on 19 March 2015 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

- 3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** No declarations of interest were made by Councillors in items on this agenda.

- 4 **ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE TOWN HALL AND HOPE LODGE CAR PARKS TO BARRIER CONTROL.** The Committee received a report requesting it to approve additional funding from capital reserves to enable the completion of the project to install barrier controlled parking in the Town Hall and Hope Lodge car parks.

The Committee discussed the proposed installation of bunds around the boundary perimeter of Hope Lodge car park. It was proposed to install bunds in order to deter users from attempting to leave the car park by driving over the surrounding grassed areas, rather than via the barrier gates. The Committee noted that whilst the installation of bunds for this purpose was desirable to remove the risk of such activity occurring, alternative solutions (such as rearranging street furniture) might be possible to resolve the problem at a lower cost. The appropriateness of such an alternative solution had not yet been fully investigated, and the Committee supported the principle of Officers giving further consideration to the matter.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed that subject to the approval of the Strategy and Resources Committee a total of £16,744 (including a contingency sum of £1,522) be funded from capital reserves for the following works:

- The purchase of infrastructure (chip and coin exit station and I.T. hardware/software) which was necessary for the completion of the project (£10,222);
- The installation of bunds around the boundary perimeter of Hope Lodge car park (circa £5,000). This approval was subject to Officers in consultation with the Chairman considering the appropriateness of alternative solutions which could be provided within the same budget.

5 EPSOM AND EWELL LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2014 UPDATE. The Committee received and noted an update regarding progress against the Epsom & Ewell Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2010-2020. The Committee expressed its thanks to the Council's Countryside Manager and Countryside Officers for all their work in the Borough.

6 FUTURE STRUCTURE OF REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTIONS. The Committee received a report summarising matters for consideration prior to the agreement of the future structure of refuse and recycling collections in the Borough. The future structure of collections would be agreed in October 2015.

The Committee received a presentation from the Transport and Waste Services Manager relating to the current domestic and trade waste collection arrangements within the Borough. This presentation also informed the Committee of potential options for future services, and the timescale within which changes would need to be agreed. The following matters were detailed within the presentation:

- Recycling levels. 45% of the Borough's waste was currently recycled, and this level had been static for some time. The Surrey average was 52%. The Committee was informed that some Local Authorities had been able to drive an increase in recycling rates through the introduction of amended collection arrangements.
- Income from recyclables. Collection of the following materials for recycling provided the Council with a potential source of income: paper, glass, cans. The level of income generated was dependent upon the market price, and this had dramatically fallen for paper and glass in recent months. The income generated was also dependent upon the method of collection – if kerbside sorted (as currently undertaken by the Council) a higher market price would be received than if a co-mingled collection (involving materials being sorted at a separate waste facility) was undertaken.
- Kerbside sorted or Co-mingled collection. The Council currently operated a predominantly kerbside-sorted collection service. This provided a higher level of income than a fully co-mingled collection, but also encountered higher costs. A move to a co-mingled collection would reduce income from materials, as it would be necessary to send them to a sorting facility for processing, but also reduce collection costs. A co-mingled collection would increase risk to income for the Council (as all income would come from a single processor, rather than separate markets for paper, cans and glass) but might also enable a higher rate of recycling (as this had been achieved by some Local Authorities switching to such a service). Further, a co-mingled collection would align the Council's collection arrangements with other authorities in Surrey, potentially enabling a higher income through economies of scale when selling materials to the waste processor. Surrey County Council was considering the potential for establishing a new waste processing plant

in the County, which Epsom and Ewell Borough Council was likely to be able to utilise if built.

- Food waste, Garden waste, textiles and battery collections. Collection arrangements for these materials were unlikely to change as a part of the Committee's consideration of waste collection, as they could not be integrated with other materials without creating significant levels of contamination.
- Glass collection. The Committee was informed that unless glass was separated from other waste, contamination would create difficulty for waste processing facilities, and could reduce the value of materials sent there.
- Garden Waste service. The Council currently had around 11,000 subscribers to its garden waste collection service. Following a question from a Member of the Committee it was noted that the issue of residents continuing to receive the service once their subscription had lapsed was being addressed. The Committee was also informed that this issue only related to a small number of properties.
- Frequency of collections. The Council currently operated a fortnightly collection service for garden, non-recyclable (refuse) and card and plastic waste (on an alternate week basis). A weekly collection service was provided for paper, cans, glass, textiles, food waste and nappies. Options for the future available to the Council included making all refuse and recycling collections on either a weekly or fortnightly basis.
- Collection vehicles. The Council's current kerbside-sorting vehicles were being discontinued by their manufacturer. Due to the specialised nature of a kerbside-sorting operation, if the Council were to retain a Kerbside sorting service, an alternative vehicle would need to be identified.
- Potential to 'swap' bins. There was the potential to 'swap' the use of current bins under a new collection arrangement. If an increase in material was to be generated for the recyclables bin (by the introduction of co-mingled collection), residents could be requested to put this in their green 240-litre bin in future, and all refuse waste into their black 180 litre bin. This would be the opposite of current arrangements.
- Options for future collection arrangements. The Transport and Waste Services Manager summarised 3 options which the Committee might wish to consider:
 1. The "Surrey model" – fortnightly co-mingled collections and fortnightly refuse collections;
 2. Weekly co-mingled recycling collections with fortnightly refuse collections;
 3. Weekly collections of all materials, with glass separated.

It was noted that a co-mingled recycling collection with separate paper collection would not be supported by the market, as the value of the remaining co-mingled recycling materials would be too low.

- Communal bin areas. It was noted that Officers were not considering the introduction of communal bin areas for residential roads. Such a service was operated in some continental European countries, such as Germany and Spain.

- Timescale for decision. The Committee would be requested to decide upon the future structure of refuse and recycling collection service at its meeting in October 2015. The agreed new service would be operated from 2017, when the Council's transport fleet contract would be renewed.

The Committee noted the content of the presentation and agreed that specific recommendations for the future structure of refuse and recycling collections be brought to its next meeting, in October 2015.

- 7** REVIEW OF TRADE WASTE AND RECYCLING. The Committee received and noted a report summarising actions undertaken to increase the amount of trade refuse and recycling within the Borough.
- 8** SURREY WASTE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY. The Committee received a report requesting its consideration and endorsement of the revised Surrey Waste Partnership Strategy for 2015-2020.

The Committee noted that Officers recommended endorsement of the Strategy with the exception of specific Actions detailed within paragraphs 3.1.1 -3.1.3 of the report. These related to a uniform collection, bin capacity and bin colour arrangements for all Surrey Borough's from 2020. The Committee supported these exceptions, and expressed concern that if they were not applied, the Council may be required to change its waste collection service in 2017 (see Minute No. 6 above) and again in 2020, creating a significant reputational and cost risk. The Committee also considered that requiring a uniform bin colour arrangement across all Surrey Boroughs and Districts could lead to a high and unnecessary cost for some Councils.

It was noted that joint working arrangements had been co-ordinated with Surrey Councils through the Waste Partnership, rather than with London Authorities, due to the similarities in housing stock and collection arrangements. London Authorities tended to face different challenges to those experienced within Epsom and Ewell, and had a higher number of residential flats.

It was also noted that the Surrey Waste Partnership was considered to be a joint working initiative rather than a legally binding joint venture, and as such there would be little exposure to financial risk for the Council if any other member authorities chose to withdraw at a later date.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

- To endorse the 2015-2020 Surrey Waste Partnership Strategy excepting those Actions identified in Paragraphs 3.1.1, 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 of the report, which would be considered at a later time.

- 9** PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: PROGRESS REPORT FOUR 2014/15. The Committee received a report setting out its performance at year-end against its actions for 2014-15. The Committee had 'Achieved' 1 Action, 'Signed Off' 4 Actions and 'Rolled Forward' 3 Actions, and was requested to identify any issues requiring action.

Following consideration of the report, the Committee did not identify any issues requiring action.

- 10** OUTSTANDING REFERENCES. The Committee received and noted the outstanding references to Officers.

The meeting began at 19.30 hours and ended at 21.01 hours.

JOHN BECKETT
Chairman