

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 10 September 2013.

PRESENT: Councillor G J Bull – Chairman.

Councillors M G Baker, Mrs M Banerjee, K J Churchill, J W Davies, D A Giles, G J Harlock, D Harty, Ms L Kadic and Mrs D C Reynolds.

Mr D Hopkins – Co-opted Member.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors K M Baker and I C Bates.

22. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 9th July 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

23. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

24. NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel considered and noted the current Notice of Executive Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been prepared by the Leader of the Council for the period 1st September to 31st December 2013. The Panel requested sight of the items entitled Carbon Management Plan and Green Deal prior to their submission to the Cabinet.

25. STATEMENT OF CONSULTATION AND DRAFT REVISED SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT - LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY TO WIND TURBINE DEVELOPMENT - FEEDBACK

With the aid of a report from the Cabinet (a copy which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel was acquainted with the Executive Members' deliberations on the Statement of Consultation and Draft Revised Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Turbine Development. Members noted that the Cabinet had endorsed their recommendations that further work should be carried out on the content of the SPD and that the Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impacts report should be subject to a separate public consultation exercise.

RESOLVED

that the content of the report now submitted be received and

noted.

26. YAXLEY SEWERAGE

(Councillor D M Tysoe, Executive Councillor for Environment, was in attendance for consideration of this item).

The Panel received and noted a report by the Project and Assets Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which provided an update on the drainage issues experienced in Yaxley. By way of background, the Project and Assets Manager reminded Members that this had been drawn to the Panel's attention in December 2011 via a petition which had been submitted by Yaxley Parish Council. A number of improvement works had already been undertaken and Anglian Water was currently liaising with affected residents on laying a new surface water sewer. It was expected that this would be completed at the end of the financial year.

Members' attention was drawn to a problem with the maintenance of the surface water balancing pond off Mere View in Yaxley. The company who built it as part of the residential development had gone into liquidation and the area was now owned by the Crown. Silt building up in the balancing pond could lead to flooding and the fencing around it required some repair works to be undertaken. The Council had written to Anglian Water requesting that it took responsibility for the balancing pond; however, agreement to do this had not been received. The Council would continue actively to pursue the matter on behalf of Yaxley residents.

The key finding from this work was that residents should report any flooding to Anglian Water and the County Council's Flood Team so that all instances were recorded. This would strengthen the case for Anglian Water to carry out works in affected areas. In agreeing that the study on drainage in Yaxley should now be concluded, it was

RESOLVED

that the content of the report now submitted be received and noted.

27. JOINT MATERIALS RECYCLING FACILITY PROCUREMENT

(Councillor D M Tysoe, Executive Councillor for Environment, was in attendance for consideration of this item).

The Panel gave consideration to a report by the Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) proposing the joint procurement of a material recycling facility operator to manage and process all the recycling materials collected across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. In introducing the report, the Executive Councillor for Environment reported that the proposal had been developed by the Recycling in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (RECAP) Waste Partnership and would confirm the waste collections authorities' commitment to continuing with it.

Having been advised that the proposals related to the bulking, sorting and onward processing of recyclable materials, the Panel gave

consideration to the possibility that requirements for the presentation of materials might influence the way in which they were collected. Members therefore, sought assurances that the level of service in Huntingdonshire would not be lowered and that any “levelling” would be to at least the District’s current standards. Similarly, the Panel expressed the view that requirements for the delivery of materials for recycling should not restrict the future development of the service nor the Council’s ability to change the way in which it was delivered should that be necessary in the future.

It was confirmed that the proposals related to “back office” functions and would not affect the delivery of front line services. Whilst market forces would influence the level of income generated, the overall risk would be no greater than if the District Council let its own contract. There was some concern over awarding the contract to a single organisation, which would be in a strong negotiating position. In response, the Executive Councillor for Environment indicated that separate contracts might be put in place for different types of recycle. This would mitigate the risk of dealing with one company. The possibility that partners might wish to withdraw from the contract was a further area of concern. Members received assurances that the terms of the contract would be legally binding and that financial penalties would be imposed in such cases.

Members drew attention to the fact that the proposal did not contain any reference to scrutiny of the new arrangements. It was suggested that the Governance Agreement should be amended to include provision for scrutiny of the contract and its effect on the waste collection service individually or collectively by the partner local authorities. In considering the recommendations referred to in Section 1 of Annex 1 of the report, the Panel suggested that recommendation 3 should be amended to refer to the fact that the decision to award the contract should be made by the Head of Operations after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Environment. The Executive Councillor for Environment accepted this suggestion. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be recommended to:-

- (a) agree that the Council is committed to the procurement and appointment of a contractor to deliver joint material recycling facility services for bulking, sorting and onward processing/sale of recyclable materials for all participating RECAP partners, unless all partners agree not to appoint;
- (b) approve, on behalf of the Council, the ‘RECAP Partnership Charter’ as attached at Appendix 1, including approval of the additional Schedule 2 Governance Agreement relating to the operation of the joint material recycling facility contract and commitment to participation in and commitment of recycle materials into the joint contract;
- (c) agree delegation to the Head of Operations after

consultation with the Executive Councillor for Environment to authorise the final Invitation to Tender and to award the contract;

- (d) agree that Peterborough City Council will nominate a preferred supplier in collaboration with the participating partners, for the provision of the services of bulking, sorting and onward processing/sale of recyclable materials contract, on behalf of both Peterborough City Council and the RECAP participating partners; and
- (e) note and agree the approach to the Waste Framework Directive compliance regarding source separation of recyclate, as agreed by the RECAP Board on 4th September 2013 and as attached as Appendix 3 to the report now submitted.

28. WORK PLAN STUDIES

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of studies being undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Social Well-Being and Economic Well-Being. The Chairman reported that the Economic Well-Being Panel had put on hold its Working Groups to enable it to focus on the Council's future financial position.

29. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of actions taken in response to recent discussions and decisions. The Chairman reported that the next meeting of the Corporate Plan Working Group would be held on 23rd September 2013 when the Managing Director would be sharing with Members her views on performance management.

During discussion, the Panel requested the Tree Strategy Working Group to reconvene to consider the terms of a draft Strategy with Planning Officers. It was also noted that a position statement on areas where household recycling was not taking place would be submitted to the Panel's meeting in November 2013. Having regard to the management of the Council's car parks, it was agreed that this work would proceed once the Cabinet had completed its own work in this respect.

30. SCRUTINY

Having considered the 136th Edition of the Decision Digest, a Member expressed concern at the level of CCTV coverage in St Neots. Officers were requested to refer this matter to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). In light of the Corporate Governance Panel's concerns about compliance with the Code of Procurement, the Panel emphasised that the Code should be adhered to, particularly given the scale of some contracts such as the

one for recycling services, which had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

Chairman