

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMY AND GROWTH) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 12th April 2016.

- PRESENT: Councillor T D Sanderson – Chairman.
- Councillors Mrs B E Boddington,
B S Chapman, J W Davies, Mrs A Dickinson,
I D Gardener, D A Giles, S Greenall,
P Kadewere, K D Wainwright and R J West.
- APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor I C Bates.
- IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors J D Ablewhite, R C Carter, D B Dew and R B Howe.

33. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 8th March 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

34. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received.

35. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which has been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st April 2016 to 31st July 2016.

36. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY UPDATE

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economy and Growth) received a presentation from the Implementation Team Leader on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Members were informed that the Council introduced a CIL charging scheme in 2012 and that it is a levy payable by all eligible forms of development. The key points are as follows:

- CIL is likely to generate between in the region of £33m based on Core Strategy figures but this could rise to approximately £80m under the draft Local Plan. These figures are prior to exemptions and relief being granted. However £121m infrastructure funding gap had been identified as part of the infrastructure work to support the Core Strategy.
- Sites of 200 dwellings and above still require a Section 106 (S106) agreement.
- The Council receives funding from a range of sources

including S106 obligations, CIL, Highways Contributions, New Homes Bonus and the Retention of Business Rates.

- CIL is paid on development that involves buildings that people go into.
- The developments that are exempt from CIL liability include social housing, charities and self-build dwellings, on meeting certain criteria.
- The amount of CIL paid to a Parish depends on the establishment of a Neighbourhood Plan. If there is a Neighbourhood Plan the amount paid is 25% if there isn't then it is 15%. There has been one payment in an unparished area.
- CIL accounts for 3-5% of a developer's costs.
- Any CIL the Council receives has to be spent on infrastructure however it could be spent on infrastructure outside the District if that infrastructure has an impact upon the District.

Following a query from a Member regarding the CIL liability of industrial and retail sites the Panel was informed that retail developments are liable for CIL however industrial developments currently do not pay CIL as evidence at the Charging Schedule examination showed that a charge could make such developments unviable.

In response to a question on what Parishes can spend CIL money on Members were informed that Parishes have more flexibility than the Planning Authority however the money should be spent on infrastructure. If the CIL is not spent in accordance then the Planning Authority could get the Town or Parish to pay back the money. In addition the Panel was informed that Parishes have five years to spend the CIL funding.

The Panel was informed in response to concerns that Council staff are stretched as a result of administering CIL, the legislation allocates 5% of CIL to the Authority to cover administration costs.

In response to the point that in 2010 £1.3m was not paid in S106 contributions which could have been, the Panel was informed that there was a series of developments that was not contributing S106 however if CIL was established then those developments would be making CIL contributions towards infrastructure needs.

Following a question regarding the charging schedule Members were informed that the schedule was established following viability work. Under the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended) the charges set in the Charging Schedule are index linked. The schedule will be reviewed once the Local Plan process has progressed.

A concern was raised that CIL could be affecting development within the District however Members were informed that CIL represents a realignment of costs for developers and that it is not stopping development as development is still coming forward in Huntingdonshire.

Members were reminded that the CIL Annual Report will be presented to the Panel before it is submitted to Cabinet.

(At 7.00pm, during the discussion on this item, Councillor's J D

Ablewhite and K D Wainwright entered the meeting).

(At 7.01pm, during the discussion on this item, Councillor R B Howe entered the meeting).

(At 7.59pm, on the conclusion of this item, Councillor R B Howe left the meeting).

37. WASTE SERVICE - SERVICE SPECIFICATION

With the aid of a report by the Interim Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Waste Service – Service Specification was presented to the Panel. Members were informed that the Service Specification is an operational document aimed at directing the service and improving delivery of the service. The core hours for the delivery of collection services going forward will be 6.30am to 3.00pm.

Members commented that since a series of policies and working practices have been implemented they have received fewer complaints regarding the Waste Service.

The Panel commented that they were concerned that there was not the sufficient level of staff within the service especially considering the level of staff sickness however the Panel was informed that the service does have a sufficient level of staff and that management are taking proactive measures to reduce staff sickness.

Following a concern that six weeks was too long to get a bin delivered Members were informed that the service would be working on decreasing the six week timescale.

The Panel was informed that the Council are focusing on getting trade waste contracts from small businesses in order to increase revenue.

In response to a question regarding the asbestos disposal service Members were informed that the service is funded by the County Council and that the County Council will only dispose of cement based asbestos for free. The Council is responsible for the administration of the service within the District.

Following a question on what items could be included in the green bin Members were advised that shredded paper, tea bags and food waste can be disposed of in the green bin. If all residents put these items into the green bin instead of the black bin then the amount of waste going to landfill would be significantly reduced.

Regarding missed bins, the Panel was advised that the Council is committed to recovering missed bins within 48 hours and that currently 98% of missed bins are recovered within 48 hours. Although residents would have to consider that the Council does not include weekends or Bank Holidays within the 48 hour recovery time frame.

In summary the Panel wanted to highlight the following key points:

- 1) the Panel would like the service to investigate the possibility of recovering missed bins within 24 hours;

- 2) Members are keen that the delivery of replacement bins are reduced from the current six week timescale, and
- 3) the Panel would like the service to investigate the possibility of opening recycling facilities on bank holidays.

38. STREET SCENE SERVICE SCOPING REPORT

With the aid of a report by the Interim Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Street Scene Service Scoping Report was presented to the Panel. Members were advised that the Council aims to deliver an area based and integrated Street Scene Service to better maintain the public realm of Huntingdonshire.

The Panel was informed that graffiti and flyposting removal issues were not included in the report and these would be the subject of a further report to the Panel. The resources for the service are to be divided into two areas: North and South.

Details highlighted to the Panel include the increased use of the precinct sweeper in the market towns therefore increasing the availability of the mechanical sweeper for sweeping the villages. Reducing the timetable for the road sweeper from a six week programme to a four week programme. Weed treatment throughout the District three times a year and getting the right equipment to carry out grass cutting.

The Interim Head of Operations confirmed following a query regarding the organisational structure provided within the report that Members would receive an update organisational structure with names next to the post title.

In response to a question about graffiti on media boxes and the garages owned by Luminus the Panel was informed that Luminus are responsible for the graffiti on their garages. In regards to the media boxes the Council continues to work with the media companies to remove graffiti from the boxes.

Following a concern with regards to the precinct sweeper in St Neots and the working practices of the sweepers in general, Members were advised that working practices would be reviewed in order to maximise the amount of road swept by the mechanical and precinct sweepers.

In summary the following key points were highlighted:

- 1) the Panel would receive a copy of the organisation structure with names.
- 2) the Interim Head of Operations is to present a report to the Panel in June 2016 on the topic of Flyposting.
- 3) the Panel is to receive an update report at the meeting in September 2016.

39. WORK PLAN STUDIES

The Panel received and noted a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of studies being undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Communities and Customers and Finance and Performance.

Members were informed that Councillors T D Sanderson and R J West were invited to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Communities and Customers) meeting held on 5th April 2016 as they had been members of the Registered Social Providers Working Group. The Councillors informed the Panel that they thought the Housing Strategy was a good strategy although it needed to be more robust.

(At 9.00pm, during the discussion on this item, Councillors R C Carter and D B Dew left the meeting).

40. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROGRESS

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel reviewed the progress of its activities since the last meeting.

The Panel was advised that the Corporate Enforcement Policy Working Group would not be a formal working group. The group would work alongside Executive Councillors R C Carter and D B Dew as well as the Head of Community Services on the formation of the Corporate Enforcement Policy. The Head of Community Services would circulate meeting dates by the end of the week ending 15th April 2016.

Chairman