

## **Review Committee – 8 January 2019**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Review Committee** held on **8 January 2019** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr J C Burton  
Vice-Chairman: Cllr D J Sperring

Cllr J D Griffin  
Cllr B T Hazlewood  
Cllr N J Hookway  
Cllr M J Lucas-Gill  
Cllr Mrs C M Mason

Cllr J R F Mason  
Cllr Mrs J E McPherson  
Cllr Mrs C A Pavelin  
Cllr P J Shaw  
Cllr C M Stanley

### **VISITING MEMBERS**

Cllrs I H Ward and A L Williams

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs J R Gooding, M Hoy and Mrs L Shaw

### **SUBSTITUTES**

Cllr Mrs C A Weston for Cllr Mrs L Shaw  
Cllr D S Efde for Cllr Mrs J R Gooding  
Cllr Mrs D Hoy for Cllr M Hoy

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

J Bostock - Assistant Director, Democratic Services  
M Hotten - Assistant Director, Environmental Services  
M Power - Democratic Services Officer

### **1 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Mrs C A Weston declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 6 of the Agenda, The Operation of the Development Committee, by virtue of her membership of that Committee.

### **3 THE OPERATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director, Environmental Services on the decision by Full Council on 20 October 2015 that the size of the Development Committee be reduced, and to examine whether this had led to an improved decision-making process.

One Member felt that, while the report focussed on statistical evidence relating to the impact of the reduced size of the Committee on the decision-making process, it failed to address the benefits of retaining a Committee of 39 Members. This included the extensive local knowledge and experience available when all Ward Councillors were given the opportunity to be involved in debate at Committee meetings when representing residents. In addition, attendance at Development Committee meetings provided a training ground for less experienced Members.

In response, however, it was noted that all Members of the Council are permitted to attend and speak at the Development Committee on behalf of their residents. Development Committee training provided by the Council is available to all Members, and particularly beneficial for Members who wish to substitute at a meeting or attend as a visiting Member.

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- There had been no specific complaints from Members or the public since the size of the Committee had been reduced in 2015.
- It was at the discretion of the Chairman of the Committee as to whether non-Committee Members could speak again if they needed clarification on an answer to a question they had raised.
- The composition of the Development Committee was determined on a pro-rata basis according to the political composition of the Council; this would not necessarily result in there being a Councillor from each Ward on the Committee.
- If a Councillor wished to represent their ward residents in respect of an application, they could speak at the Committee meeting without having to consider the issue of pre-determination. In practice, Ward Councillors get involved in planning applications that affect their Ward and have the opportunity to present their views at the meeting.
- At the time of the decision to reduce the size of the Committee, thought had been given to the size of other Committees of the Council.
- Members could contact officers in advance of a planning application being considered by the Development Committee with any questions they had.

### **Resolved**

That the contents of the report be noted.

### 4 DOG FOULING

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director, Environmental Services, which provided an update on the issue of dog fouling in the District and ways in which it could be reduced.

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- The 'any bin will do' campaign that encourages dog-walkers to use public litter bins as well as designated dog bins could be promoted by the Council. Signage would be placed on or near Council bins in public open spaces.
- The best location for siting dog bins is near the entrance to a public space.
- Where requests for additional dog bins had been received and there was seen to be a need, bins had been purchased and sited. Siting an additional bin on a pavement required permission from Essex County Highways, which could be a long process. Requests for additional bins often came from District and Parish/Town Council Members and 'Friends' groups. Parish/Town Councils could be contacted with information on the price and criteria that needed to be met to site additional dog bins, should they wish to do so.
- Signage with details of the number to phone should a bin be overflowing and needing to be emptied could be made more prominent. Contract management would cover any need for a bin to be emptied more regularly.
- Public Space Protection Orders replaced the existing Dog Control Orders, which meant there had been no need to go out again to public consultation. Enforcement of the Orders could be an issue.
- Essex County Highways had removed some bins situated on the highway without consulting Rochford District Council; Essex County Highways would not provide funding for these bins to be replaced. Bins that were on posts at bus shelters or on the pavement could not be replaced without permission from Essex County Highways.
- Although guidelines state that the Council could not actively encourage people to undertake surveillance, any reports of instances of dog fouling witnessed, including photos and CCTV, would be accepted and taken forward by the Council. This could be made clearer on the website.
- Additional enforcement of dog fouling had been shown not to be cost effective. Any income from Fixed Penalty Notices would be ring-fenced for street cleansing.
- A progress report to cover the issues raised would be issued to Committee Members in six months' time.

**Resolved**

That the contents of the report be noted.

**5 KEY DECISIONS DOCUMENT**

The Committee considered the Key Decisions Document and noted its contents.

**6 WORK PLAN**

The Committee considered its work plan.

The meeting closed at 8.27 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....

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