

## **Environmental Services Committee – 6 December 2005**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Environmental Services Committee** held on **6 December 2005** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr M G B Starke  
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Mrs L Hungate

Cllr Mrs R Brown

Cllr T G Cutmore

Cllr K J Gordon

Cllr C J Lumley

Cllr Mrs J A Mockford

Cllr P R Robinson

Cllr C G Seagers

Cllr Mrs M S Vince

Cllr Mrs M J Webster

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R A Amner and Mrs T J Capon.

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| R Crofts      | - Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) |
| S Scrutton    | - Head of Planning Services                          |
| P McKenna     | - Woodlands and Environmental Specialist             |
| S Worthington | - Committee Administrator                            |

### **491 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to amending minute 442/05 so that all instances of “biannually” are replaced with “biennially”.

### **492 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS**

The Committee noted the schedule relating to progress on decisions and in response to Member questions the following was noted:-

#### **Assessment of Odour Emissions from the Stambridge Sewage Treatment Works**

A response from Anglian Water had been received on 30 November. An item would appear in the Members' Bulletin to update Members.

#### **Additional Bring Banks**

There were no plans to re-introduce bring banks to the Grange Community Centre. A further meeting of the Waste Management & Recycling Sub-Committee would be scheduled to consider issues relating to additional bring banks.

### **Quys Lane, Rochford**

Tenders would go out in the New Year and it was anticipated that the deadline of 31 March 2006 for scheme completion would be met.

### **Contaminated Land – Update**

A further progress report would be made in September 2007.

### **Essex Schools Organisation Plan 2005 – 2010**

A letter of response had been received from the County Council's Education Department which indicated that if places for Rochford secondary schools weren't taken by students outside the District there would be a surplus of places. Schools tended to operate an admissions system, which meant that they aimed to fill all available places in each year. There was, accordingly, no facility for accommodating children who might move into the District partway through an academic year. There was clearly significant movement of children between neighbouring districts and Rochford. Some Rochford children, for example, attended grammar schools in Southend. Approximately 13% of pupils within Rochford District schools come from the Southend area. Members would receive an update in the Members' Bulletin relating to the numbers of children living within the Rochford District who attend school outside the District.

It was further noted that officers would explore the possibility of providing a key for the progress report to enable Members to see whether there were any particular issues that needed to be addressed urgently.

## **493 NEW LOCAL NATURE RESERVE DESIGNATIONS**

**(Note:** Cllr Mrs M J Webster declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of membership of the Cory Environmental Trust in Rochford.)

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) seeking Members' agreement to proceed with the necessary actions, in conjunction with English Nature, to achieve the designation of Grove Woods, Kingley Woods and Betts Woods as local nature reserves. It was noted that in the event of these three sites being approved as local nature reserves, Rochford District would have more nature reserves than any other District in the county.

Responding to a Member enquiry relating to higher rated designations for nature areas, officers advised that preliminary negotiations were taking place with English Nature with the eventual aim of the nomination of Hockley Woods as a national nature reserve.

In response to a Member concern with respect to occasional shooting in Kingley Woods, officers confirmed that work was underway with a view to all woodland sites within the District having appropriate signage, which would include specific instructions for visitors about what could and could not be done at these sites. Officers further confirmed that there would also be up to date leaflets available for the woodland sites.

Responding to a further Member enquiry relating to the possible advantages of applying for Trust status, officers advised that the Council had a 5-year management agreement with the Forestry Authority, which resulted in grant monies being made available for the woodland sites, with additional monies forthcoming for Hockley Woods. The Council's Legal department was, however, investigating the possibility of Trust status and a report would go to Committee in due course.

In response to a Member query relating to fly tipping, officers confirmed that there were no litter problems associated with these woodland sites; visitors appeared to respect the nature reserves and to want to protect them.

Concluding the debate, Members all concurred that the initiative was a laudable one that should be well publicised as soon as practicable.

### **Resolved**

That, in conjunction with English Nature, the designation of Grove Woods, Kingley Woods and Betts Woods as local nature reserves be achieved.  
(CD(F&ES))

## **494 GROUNDWORK TRUST – NOMINATION OF MEMBER REPRESENTATIVE**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) seeking the nomination of a Member to become a Board Director/Trustee of the Groundwork Trust for South Essex.

There was a general consensus that, in view of the Council's financial commitment to the Trust, it would be logical to become a founder member of the Trust.

### **Resolved**

That the Council become a founding member of the Trust.

On a Motion moved by Cllr K J Gordon and seconded by Cllr Mrs R Brown

It was further **Recommended to Council:-**

That Cllr T G Cutmore be nominated to become a Board Member/Trustee of the Groundwork Trust. (CD(F&ES))

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The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....