

Executive Board – 27 June 2007

Minutes of the meeting of the **Executive Board** held on **27 June 2007** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr T G Cutmore
Vice-Chairman: Cllr K H Hudson

Cllr K J Gordon
Cllr J M Pullen
Cllr C G Seagers

Cllr D G Stansby
Cllr M G B Starke
Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr P F A Webster

OFFICERS PRESENT

P Warren - Chief Executive
G Woolhouse - Corporate Director (External Services)
S Scrutton - Head of Planning and Transportation
S Worthington - Committee Administrator
M Power - Committee Administrator

214 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

215 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS

The Board considered the rationalised list of outstanding actions from predecessor Committees, which was attached to the Agenda. In response to questions, officers advised that:-

Essex County Council – Tree Preservation Orders (Minute 388/06)

No formal notification has been received from the County Council regarding the future management of TPOs.

The County Council was, however, planning a 3-year programme, which would include full surveys of each District, with a view to transferring TPOs to the District Councils.

How Clean are our Streets Survey July 2006 Analysis (Minute 73/07)

A report would come to the Executive Board in September outlining options for possible prosecutions relating to dog fouling. The issue would be addressed as part of the annual budget-setting process and the contract procurement process.

Bird Watching – Tourism Potential (Minute 263/06)

No formal response had yet been received from the RSPB in respect of

potential sites suitable to be developed as nature reserves/areas of tourism. It was noted that the Essex Wildlife Trust should also be included in discussions regarding sites within the Rochford District.

Update of Gypsy and Traveller Sites (Minute 40/07)

It was advised that although a further successful prosecution in respect of site 3 had been undertaken, circumstances had subsequently changed. Although site 7 had ceased to be occupied, direct action relating to an area of hardstanding on the site was being investigated. A further report would be made at the next meeting.

Review of the Operation of the Planning Enforcement Service (Minute 104(2)/07)

Progress would be provided at the next meeting.

It was noted that, with respect to item (10), the aerial survey was commissioned bi-ennially, not bi-annually.

216 REVISION TO THE ROCHFORD DISTRICT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Board considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation seeking approval for a second revision to the Rochford Local Development Scheme, to take account of a change in planning circumstances, in particular the timetable for the preparation of the Joint Area Action Plan. It was noted that further discussions relating to the timetable were taking place with GO-East. A report would therefore be made to the Board in September.

Resolved

That the contents of the report be noted. (HPT)

217 REVENUES AND BENEFITS – POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND ACTION PLANS

Members considered the report of the Corporate Director (External Services) on the current progress of the 10 improvement plans for Revenues and Benefits included in the Division's Operational Plan.

Officers advised that the end of paragraph 2.5 should be amended to read '2007/8'.

Officers advised, in response to a Member enquiry relating to difficulties associated with contacting some residents, that concerted efforts, including home visits, continued to be made to contact those members of the public who were less likely to be aware of their entitlement.

It was noted that officers would provide Members with details of what publicity was being generated with respect to service provision successes in this area.

Responding to a Member enquiry relating to the retention of Revenues and Benefits staff, officers advised that a career matrix had been introduced which provided staff with a series of incentives linked to training and development of skills. During debate, Members stressed the importance of the Authority motivating and rewarding staff, while recognising the difficulties inherent, associated with budget limitations and the need for parity between similar posts across the Authority and county-wide.

In response to a Member question relating to enhancement of performance and efficiency savings, officers advised that a bid was being made jointly with Chelmsford Borough Council for the Eastern Region Capacity Building Fund. Officers confirmed, in response to an enquiry relating to Council Tax collection, that it was difficult to improve on performance, given that this Authority's collection levels were already very high.

During debate of risk analysis on page 17 of the operational plan, it was observed that there would be merit in including a third column in the table that would identify any mitigating measures being taken by the Authority to address any identified risks.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to partnership working, officers confirmed that a report would be made available in September providing details of a business case for a partnership with Chelmsford Borough Council Revenues and Benefits section. There were currently issues being explored including on costs. A visit by Members to Anglian Revenue Partnership would be organised.

Responding to a question about the Service improvement plans, officers confirmed that the actions were largely completed, with just one or two minor slippages in timescale.

Resolved

That the updated policies and action plans be endorsed. (CD(ES))

218 HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE INCREASE

The Board considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation on a request from the Rochford Hackney Carriage Drivers Association for an increase to the existing authorised fare tariff. In response to a Member enquiry relating to the implementation date for any proposed fare increase, officers confirmed that any increase would commence on 3 September 2007. Members took the view that it would be appropriate for the fare increase to be over a period of 18 months. On a motion moved by Cllr P F A Webster and seconded by Cllr K H Hudson, it was

Resolved

That Hackney Carriage fares be increased from 3 September 2007, as detailed in the report, subject to retaining the night rate implementation time of 10.30 pm. (HPT)

219 TINTED WINDOWS IN LICENSED VEHICLES – PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO CONDITIONS

The Board considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation on a new licence condition that would prevent vehicles with dark tinted windows or privacy glass being licensed with the Council to carry passengers for hire and reward.

Resolved

That the conditions proposed in the report in respect of the use of dark tinted windows and privacy glass for hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, licensed by Rochford District Council, be approved and the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles Licence Conditions be amended accordingly. (HPT)

220 AMENDMENT TO THE VEHICLE LICENCE CONDITIONS – USE OF FRONT SEATS

The Board considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation on a minor amendment to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence conditions relating to a restriction of allowing only one passenger to be carried in the front seat of a multi-purpose vehicle or minibus type vehicle.

In response to a Member enquiry, officers confirmed that 15 vehicles would be affected by the proposed amendment. In response to a Member concern relating to the timetable for imposing the amendment to the conditions, officers advised that there would be no requirement for any alternations to vehicles, but that the effect of the change would mean drivers could carry 2 front passengers if the vehicle was suitable.

Resolved

That the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licence Conditions be amended to permit the use of both front passenger seats in MPV or mini bus type vehicles that provide accommodation for 2 passengers in the front of the vehicle, subject to the conditions outlined in the report. (HPT)

221 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Board considered the revised timetable setting out, where possible, Executive Board meetings on Wednesday evenings. It was noted that the East Area Committee scheduled for July would take place on 25 July 2007.

Resolved

That the revised timetable, appended to these Minutes, be agreed. (HICS)

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

222 EXEMPT REPORT OF THE CONTRACTS SUB-COMMITTEE – 18 JUNE 2007

Members considered the exempt report of the Contracts Sub-Committee relating to waste management, street cleansing and grounds maintenance procurement. It was noted that the word 'cans' should be inserted after 'glass' and that '(all types)' related to plastic in the penultimate bullet point of paragraph 1.2. In addition, 'the public must have' should replace the beginning of the final bullet point of paragraph 1.3.

Members observed that the Authority's overall recycling rate last year was 17.3%. The rate was currently just over 18%, sometimes almost 19%, which was not close enough to future recycling targets for the Authority. It was therefore apparent that step change would be necessary in order to meet future recycling targets, although any changes would be subject to affordability.

It was observed that costings would be obtained for a combined weekly collection of kitchen and garden waste and also for separate weekly collections of kitchen waste and green waste, although it was stressed that the latter would result in the need for an additional bin.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to the aligned procurement process with Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, officers advised that there had been little alignment to date given that the two Authorities were adopting different tendering processes. Rochford residents continued to be charged for using the civic amenity site in Stock Road, the charge for which had recently increased to £4.00.

Responding to a Member query relating to the collection of clinical waste, officers confirmed that clarification would be sought from the South Essex Primary Care Trust as to collection arrangements for the different kinds of clinical waste, as well as ascertaining whether some clinical waste could be double-wrapped and deposited in residual waste bins.

Members emphasised the importance of developing an extensive education

campaign for residents, which would, for example, stress that putrescables would continue to be collected weekly. Publicity would take the form of various options including recycling roadshows, items in Rochford District Matters and on the Council website as well as educational visits to local schools.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to provision for a combined weekly collection of kitchen waste and garden waste, waste management Option 3 be selected for the tender stage of the procurement process.
- (2) That, at this stage, street cleansing Options 1 and 2 be selected for the tender stage of the procurement process, tendering to include the identification of specific prices for toilets.
- (3) That ground maintenance Option 1 be selected for the tender stage of the procurement process.
- (4) That contract specifications and tender documents be produced based on the selected options in recommendations (1), (2) and (3) above and that tenders be then sought for these options.
- (5) That, subject to replacement of the term 'company profit level within tenders' with 'contract profit level within tenders' and further work on the actual points allocation, a tender evaluation model based on a 60:40 ratio on quality and price respectively be agreed.
- (6) That a contract length for waste management, street cleansing and ground maintenance contracts of seven years be agreed, which can be reviewed for a further seven years if both the Council and the contractor agree.
- (7) That the policy be continued that no side waste to be collected and no crocodile bins be collected, except at Bank Holidays, as is the current practice. (HCS)

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

Chairman

Date

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