

Minutes of the meeting of the Regulatory and Support Services Committee held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014 at 4.32pm

### **P R E S E N T**

Councillor Anna Bailey (Chairman)  
Councillor Allen Alderson  
Councillor Derrick Beckett  
Councillor Lorna Dupre  
Councillor Colin Fordham  
Councillor James Palmer (Substitute for Councillor Parramint)  
Councillor Charles Roberts  
Councillor Mike Rouse  
Councillor Hazel Williams, MBE

### **OFFICERS**

Kathy Batey – Head of HR & Facilities Management  
John Hill – Chief Executive  
Liz Knox – Head of Environmental Services  
Janis Murfet – Democratic Services Officer  
John Tanswell – Principal Environmental Health Officer  
(Domestic)  
Dave White – Waste Strategy Team Leader

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillor Lis Every  
Councillor Josh Schumann

#### 4. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions from members of the public.

#### 5. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sue Austen and Tony Parramint.

It was noted that Councillor James Palmer would substitute for Councillor Parramint for the duration of the meeting.

#### 6. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 7. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee was asked to note the Terms of Reference for the Regulatory & Support Services Committee, which had been drafted in accordance with the delegated authority given to the Chief Executive and the Deputy Monitoring Officer at the Council meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2014, to make any necessary amendments to the Committee Terms of Reference and any consequential amendments to the Constitution arising from the changes to the Committee structure.

The Head of Environmental Services advised that a number of amendments were required to areas relating to Environmental Services as the Waste Strategy Team Leader needed to be included in the scheme of delegation; a list of the changes would be circulated to Members.

Councillor Roberts observed that the Committee had a large number of service areas within its remit, and he imagined that much of its work would be monitoring the activity of those areas. The Chairman agreed, adding that it would also pull together the key policies and procedures and review them over time. The Head of Environmental Services said that there was a requirement for the Committee to look at forthcoming policies and see which ones were necessary.

Referring to acting "in relation to any matter of immediate urgency" as set out in paragraph 5.1, Councillor Roberts believed that this was very important, but it should be restricted to immediate urgency. The Chairman said the Service Delivery Champions (SDC's) would also be consulted but it was her expectation was that such actions would be minimal in number.

Councillor Dupre challenged the wording of the second bullet point in paragraph 5.1 as she believed it said that SDC's would be not be consulted until after decisions had been taken and she questioned the point of this. The Head of Environmental Services said that SDC's would be consulted before decisions were made, and Councillor Palmer commented that Councillor Dupre was reading something into the document that was not there, as it clearly stated "prior to".

Councillor Dupre disagreed and duly proposed that the first bullet point should be amended to read "*the Chairman, Vice Chairman and **Service Delivery Champion***". Councillor Palmer thought this to be unnecessary because it would overcomplicate the process.

Councillor Beckett, in the interests of attempting to resolve this point, proposed that the second bullet point be amended to read "*the Service Delivery Champion is consulted **prior to any decision taken** under this delegated power*" and Councillor Dupre confirmed that she was happy to support his amendment.

The Chief Executive interjected to explain that the Service Lead Officer would have to justify why urgent action was required and the SDC would help them in presenting their case. As such, the SDC would have equal status. However, if Councillor Beckett still felt that his proposed amendment to the Terms of Reference was needed, the Chief Executive should be instructed to make the change. Councillor Beckett responded, saying he thought his suggestion made matters clearer and it would be important to get things right now and for the future. When put to the vote, the motion was declared carried.

The Chairman recognised that the service areas falling within the remit of the Committee represented a large volume of work. She stressed the importance of SDC's getting into their areas of business so that they could get to know the staff and their work.

Councillor Alderson raised the point that he would be a SDC for an area which fell within the remit of a Committee on which he did not sit, and he wondered who he would report to. The Chief Executive informed him that most of his work was likely to be behind the scenes with the Service Lead Officer, so it would be with to relevant Officer. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

That the Terms of Reference for the Committee be noted, subject to the following:

1. That the second bullet point in paragraph 5.1 of the Terms of Reference be amended to read:  
"the Service Delivery Champion is consulted **prior to any decision** taken under this delegated power";
2. That the Waste Services Team Leader be added to the scheme of delegation in respect of the Acts as set out in Appendix 1(attached);
3. That the Chief Executive be instructed to make the above amendments to the Terms of Reference for the Regulatory & Support Services Committee.

## 8. **MINUTES**

It was resolved,

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 9. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman did not make any announcements.

10. **SERVICE DELIVERY CHAMPIONS**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) from which Members were asked to appoint Service Delivery Champions for the service areas covered by the Regulatory & Support Services Committee.

Councillor Dupre said that while she had no particular intention to let her name go forward for consideration, she was disappointed to note that she had been omitted from the list of Members that had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman offered her sincere apologies for this oversight.

Councillor Williams said she had been under the impression that all the nominations would have already been decided. Councillor Palmer informed her that the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group had been provided with a copy of the list, which showed the three service areas to which he could make nominations as desired.

The Chairman said that training was being planned for the Service Delivery Champions. Having called for nominations in respect of each of the service areas,

It was resolved:

That the following Service Delivery Champions be appointed:

- Planning - Councillor Charles Roberts
- Building Control - Councillor Derrick Beckett
- Housing Services - Councillor Mike Rouse
- Environmental Services - Councillor Hazel Williams, MBE
- Waste – Councillor Kevin Ellis
- Legal – Councillor Chris Morris
- Information Technology – Councillor David Ambrose Smith
- Customer Services - Councillor Elaine Griffin-Singh

It was further resolved :

That the appointment of Service Delivery Champions from the Liberal Democrat Group, for Financial Services and for HR & Facilities, be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of the Regulatory & Support Services Committee.

11. **WASTE CONTRACT EXTENSION**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) from which Members were asked to agree an extension of the Council's waste collection and street cleaning contract.

In summarising the main points of his report, the Waste Strategy Team Leader reminded Members that the initial contract term of 7 years ran to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and was extendable for up to a further 4 years until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.

In preparation for the end of this contract, a Service Review Group comprising Members and Officers had looked at recycling performance, the costs of different types of service and the different ways of providing services. Costs were provided by Veolia and three neighbouring authorities that had expressed an interest in running services on behalf of East Cambridgeshire. All of the options considered by the Review Group suggested a significant additional cost, with the cheapest being in the region of £800,000 more per year than the current contract costs.

It was noted that discussions had recently taken place with Veolia regarding options for extending the contract beyond the initial 7 year period, and they had agreed to extend for an initial period ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. Costs would be based on the current contract price and inflationary increase mechanism. Although Veolia were not willing to commit to the final extension year at this time, they had agreed to further discussions closer to the time.

It was also noted that East Cambridgeshire was currently working with the other Cambridgeshire local authorities to identify an optimum service design which, if implemented, could lead to opportunities for joint working, resulting in financial savings.

Councillor Palmer said being a Soham Member he was aware of continuing problems with Veolia in Soham, and that Soham Town Council had a desire to implement its own service for the town centre. He wondered if there would be an opportunity for the larger settlements such as Soham, Littleport and Ely to opt out of the Veolia contract in favour of their own service. The Waste Strategy Team Leader replied that this would be very difficult to accomplish at this time. Veolia spread its costs over the whole District, so as well as increasing costs, there could also be legal implications. The Head of Environmental Services added that when she looked at extending the current contract, she had also had to look at the implications of materially changing the contract. It might mean having to re-tender at an earlier stage and she did not wish to do this.

Councillor Palmer asked if Veolia had been approached about changing the contract and the Head of Environmental Services replied that she had asked them if there would be any reduction in costs; they had said there would be no reduction as the contract was a fixed price.

Councillor Roberts enquired about the scope of the street cleansing contract and the Waste Strategy Team Leader informed him that it favoured the Council because it covered anything that needed doing across the whole of the District.

Councillor Fordham said he had received a complaint about black refuse bags being thrown into the river at the Mill complex in Soham. The

Chairman asked that he speak to the Waste Strategy Team Leader after the meeting so that details could be taken and the matter investigated.

It was resolved:

That a 3 year contract extension to cover the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 be agreed.

## 12. **FUNDING FOR HANDY PERSON SERVICE**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) from which Members were asked to agree a contribution towards a Handy Person Service for the District.

The Principal Environmental Services Officer introduced his report by reminding Members that East Cambridgeshire Care & Repair (as an independent charity) had delivered a handy person service through its funds and finance from the Supporting People Grant. However, the scheme ceased when the Care & Repair service was brought in-house in April 2013.

The Council was now looking to procure a new service on a county-wide basis, and to enable the procurement to move forward, each authority was required to commit to a level of funding. Based on the needs estimation report for East Cambridgeshire, this would be just below £15,000 per year, with the scheme coming into operation on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. Taking part in the scheme would attract an additional £30,000 of funding for the operation of the scheme in the District and it would provide residents with the same level of service based on the estimated need of Cambridgeshire as a whole.

It was noted that the provision of this service linked to the following Health & Wellbeing priorities:

- Priority 2 – Support older people to be independent, safe and well;
- Priority 4 – Work together effectively.

There were major health benefits to the community by ensuring that people were kept safe in their own homes, and that works were undertaken by locally recognised builders. With the reduction in capital funding for discretionary grants, the Council needed to be able to provide a service to offer low level intervention that would help the elderly to remain in their own homes without the need for further costly intervention.

The Chairman, referring to paragraph 3.3 of the report, said she was nervous about the contribution from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) having to be negotiated with the successful provider. She asked if the service would be provided on a district by district basis if the other districts did not take part in the scheme. The Principal Environmental Health Officer replied that it would still be provided county wide, but residents would receive a lesser service compared to those that had signed up to the scheme.

Councillor Beckett wished to know whether the new service would be run by East Cambridgeshire or the County Council. He was informed that the County Council would procure the service; the District Council would pay in and the scheme would be delivered at the level we required. Care & Repair would remain the same and the Handy Person Service would be an additional service available for residents.

Councillor Alderson commented that the wider public seemed to be happy with the Handy Person Service. Although the scheme represented value for money, the local authorities were saving the NHS money and he wondered if there was any way that this could be reciprocated. The Head of Environmental Services responded by saying that the County Council had already planned for £83,300 to be available from April 2015, but East Cambridgeshire would have to contribute in order to get the service at the estimated level required.

In response to a question from Councillor Roberts, the Principal Environmental Health Officer stated that there had been 630 enquiries in the last year of the Handy Person Service. Councillor Roberts then sought clarification regarding the period of time for which the new contract would run, and he was informed that it was likely to be for a minimum of 3 years.

Councillor Williams said she was all in favour of the scheme because it was joined up working, and she was particularly delighted that there were to be talks about a preventative agenda. However, she wished to be assured that the group would look at it as a whole, as she did not want the Police to be going off and “doing their own thing”.

Councillor Dupre remarked that there were lots of numbers that did not add up and blanks that needed to be filled in the business case. There was nothing in the report about the number of jobs likely to be created as a result of the scheme and she felt it would have been helpful to have a map of the many providers so that Members could see areas of overlap etc.

It was proposed by Councillor Dupre and seconded by Councillor Williams that the recommendation contained within the report be amended to read :

*“Members agree to contribute up to a maximum of £15,000 towards a Handy Person Service for the District **subject to the satisfactory conclusion of negotiations with the Clinical Commissioning Group and a further report to come back to this Committee**”.*

During the ensuing discussion, the Chairman asked if it would cause any problems if the Committee did not sign up to the scheme today. The Principal Environmental Health Officer replied that it would cause embarrassment and some delay. The Head of Environmental Services informed Members that the other local authorities had already signed up. Even if East Cambridgeshire did not join the scheme, the procurement would still go ahead and she did not want a lesser service to be provided in this District.

Councillor Palmer agreed with the points raised by Councillor Dupre and Councillor Alderson's comments, but he still felt it would be remiss of the Committee not to find the £15,000.

Councillor Roberts said he wished to support the recommendation, but could not do so until it had been made clear exactly what the Council would be expected to contribute. He also asked for clarification regarding paragraph 5.3 of the report, wanting to know whether or not this was a weakness. The Principal Environmental Health Officer replied that there would be a saving of £15,000 year on year, for 3 years, and Care & Repair was under review.

Members then returned to the motion and having been put to the vote, it was declared lost.

Councillor Roberts suggested that the recommendation should be amended to either say that Members would agree £15,000 for 3 years, or £15,000 for 1 year, with a full report back to Committee before committing to a further 2 years. Councillor Palmer believed that the latter, £15,000 for 1 year and a report back to Committee, was the more appropriate.

The Head of Environmental Services reminded Members that the County Council was seeking a commitment to 3 years. There would be performance indicators within the contract process and these would be reported back to the Committee on a yearly basis.

It was proposed by Councillor Beckett and seconded by Councillor Alderson that the recommendation be amended to read :

*“That a contribution of up to a maximum of £15,000 for a maximum of 3 years towards a Handy Person Service for the District, be agreed.”*

When put to the vote, the motion was declared carried and,

It was resolved:

That a contribution of up to a maximum of £15,000 for a maximum of 3 years towards a Handy Person Service for the District, be agreed.

### 13. **REVISED PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING RENEWAL POLICY (PSHRP)**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) from which Members were asked to approve the draft Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy prior to it being presented for consultation.

The Principal Environmental Health Officer summarised the key points of his report and drew Members' attention to paragraph 3.4, which outlined the suggested changes to the Policy.

It was noted that the draft Policy would be sent for consultation to neighbouring authorities, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group, the Cambridgeshire Sub



Regional Housing Board, and other partners and voluntary groups such as Age UK and the Citizens Advice Bureau. The Policy would also be accessible via the ECDC website.

Councillor Dupre noted that the data relating to the local housing position was now 5 years old and she asked if it was intended to carry out a housing stock survey. The Head of Environmental Services replied that she had not budgeted for a stock survey and the information could be obtained from the Census. However, energy efficiency was monitored and a report brought to Committee every 2 years.

In response to a question from Councillor Alderson, the Principal Environmental Health Officer confirmed that loans had to be repaid if a property was sold.

Councillor Palmer asked for an explanation of the discretionary moving grants and the Head of Environmental Services said that if someone needed adaptations to their property, it might be more cost effective to move them (at a lesser cost) to another property, rather than carry out the works.

It was resolved:

That the draft Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy be agreed and that it be presented for consultation, with a closing date for comments of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014.

#### 14. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY 2014**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) from which Members noted the progress on national pay negotiations for 2014/15.

The Head of HR & Facilities Management explained that 3 unions (Unison, GMB, and Unite) had put forward a claim for a minimum increase of £1 per hour on all pay points. The National Employers had rejected this and made a final offer, as set out in paragraph 4.2 of her report.

Unison, which represented the staff at the Council, had subsequently announced that it would move to a ballot for industrial action, as 70% of those members that voted on whether or not to accept the employer's offer were in favour of rejection.

The results of the ballot were now known, and the vote was in favour of taking industrial action. The Committee was asked to note that the turnout had been very low (14.1%), and it was anticipated that not all members of Unison at The Grange would support the strike.

It was therefore likely that the day of action, called for 10<sup>th</sup> July, would have little impact on the operational efficiency of the Authority, but

nevertheless an embargo had been placed on staff taking annual leave on that day.

It was resolved:

That the report be noted and that Members will receive updates at future meetings, as negotiations etc progress.

15. **ANNUAL REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES.**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) from which Members received the Annual Reports from appointed Council representatives on the activities and manner in which funding was spent by the outside bodies within the responsibility of the Regulatory & Support Services Committee.

Councillor Dupre enquired why the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) had not been mentioned. With the permission of the Chairman, the Democratic Services Officer explained that although the LEP appeared on the ECDC list of Outside Bodies, because of the way in which the Board was set up, the Council was not able to appoint a representative.

Noting the annual report made in respect of the Sanctuary Hereward East Cambridgeshire Committee, Councillor Williams asked if pressure could be applied to help get issues resolved.

The Chairman responded, saying that Councillor Every had asked for information about the problems arising and examples of case studies. The Conservative Group had put forward information, but it was unclear whether the other political groups had done so. She urged Members to fill in the template and return it to Councillor Every, as she was trying to build a profile of what was going on.

After calling for nominations, it was duly proposed and seconded that:

1. Councillor Alderson be appointed as the Council's representative on the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Joint Strategic Planning & Transport Member Group, and
2. That Councillor Rouse be appointed as the Council's representative on the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth Steering Group.

When put to the vote,

It was resolved:

1. That the Annual Reports from appointed Council representatives on the activities and manner in which funding is spent by the outside

bodies within the responsibility of the Regulatory & Support Services Committee, be noted;

2. That the following appointments be confirmed:

:

- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Joint Strategic Planning & Transport Member Group – Councillor Allen Alderson
- Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth Steering Group – Councillor Mike Rouse.

The meeting closed at 6.20pm.