

Minutes of a meeting of the Community and Environment Committee held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Wednesday 21 November 2012 at 5.30pm

P R E S E N T

Councillor Allen Alderson
Councillor Lavinia Edwards
Councillor Kevin Ellis
Councillor Colin Fordham
Councillor Lindsey Harris
Councillor Richard Hobbs (Chairman)
Councillor Tom Kerby
Councillor James Palmer
Councillor Joshua Schumann
Councillor Hazel Williams MBE
Councillor Pauline Wilson

OFFICERS

Shirley Blake - Principal Sustainable Development Officer (part)
Julie Cornwell - Partnerships Officer (part)
Darren Dixon – Head of Community Services
Liz Knox – Head of Environmental Services
Melanie Sage – Democratic Services Officer
Dave White - Waste Strategy Team Leader

3 members of the public attended the meeting.

45. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

One question was received from Mr Kenneth James, relating to agenda item 7 – Ely Riverside Mooring Byelaw, as follows:

'Who does the decking belong to?'

The Partnerships Officer explained that the title plan from the Land Registry specifies that the District Council now owns the area of land where there is currently decking.

With the Chairman's permission Mr James stated that the matter related to who initially constructed the decking. Mr James further stated that the Boathouse had constructed the decking over 70 years ago and that the Council may own the area. However, it did not own the decking.

The Chairman informed Mr James that he would receive a written response to his question. The written response is appended to these minutes.

46. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were no apologies for absence received.

47. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interests from Members on any item on the Agenda.

48. **MINUTES**

Cllr Palmer referred to Minute No. 39 – Community Facilities and Small Villages Fund (Section 106) Grant Schemes – Page 4 of the minutes. Cllr James Palmer noted that the minutes stated that he was a Member of Soham Town Bowls Club. However, Cllr James Palmer clarified that it was a member of his family that was actually a Member of Soham Town Bowls Club, and not himself.

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the amendment regarding Minute No. 39 – Community Facilities and Small Villages Fund (Section 106) Grant Schemes – Page 4 of the minutes, as clarified by Cllr James Palmer in the minute above.

49. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- ShapeYourPlace was launched on 5 April 2012 with five web pages covering the district; Ely, Littleport, West Villages, Soham and East Villages and South Villages. Since the launch, the partnership consisting of the District Council, County Council, Police and Fire service have been working hard to promote ShapeYourPlace through community events, parish magazines, posters, flyers and Neighbourhood Panels.

Since May there has been over 5000 unique visitors, more than 14,500 total visits and in excess of 35,000 total page views. Unique visitors have a return rate of 65% showing that the majority of people are returning to the website.

The most common issues raised across the district are waste and recycling, road improvements and general information regarding funding bids and consultations.

The Chairman congratulated officers for the success of the ShapeYourPlace website, which he expected would impact on the Neighbourhood Panels and stated that this should be considered when the review of Neighbourhood Panels was undertaken.

- Informed Members of the 'Ely Christmas Crawl'. To take part it was necessary to collect 4 stickers from participating shops, attach those to an entry form, which could then be submitted into a prize draw to win £50 of local shopping vouchers. The Chairman noted it was an example of the District Council supporting traders in Ely.

50. **SERVICE REVIEW OF DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF**

The Partnerships Officer presented a report to the Community and Environment Committee (M153), previously circulated, to enable Members to consider the Stage II Discretionary Rate Relief Service Review report.

As part of the 4-year budget savings for 2011/12 to 2014/15 that were presented to Full Council at its meeting in February 2011, Members approved a saving on Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) of £10,000 for 2012/13, increasing to a £20,000 recurring saving from 2013/14 onwards.

To meet the mid-term saving target of £10,000 in 2012/13 the Community and Environment Sub-Committee approved new criteria at its meeting on 5 January 2012. Members also instructed officers to undertake a Service Review on the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy for completion by October 2012, to secure the additional £10,000 recurring savings required by 2013/14. A review of Hardship Relief was also incorporated into the Service Review as it was anticipated that the number of applications for Hardship Relief was likely to increase in the future.

The Service Review Team considered five options for making the required cost savings. These options were identified following a comparison of the District Council's Discretionary Rate Relief criteria against those of the other Anglia Revenue Partnership partner authorities. In comparison to other authorities it was identified that the District Council's scheme was less stringent and the District Council was the only authority not capping the level of Discretionary Rate Relief that it awarded.

The 87 organisations that received Discretionary Rate Relief in the 2011/2012 financial year were consulted and were provided with the level of funding that the organisation would potentially receive against each option.

The Service Review Group concluded that Option E was the preferred option – a capping of the maximum Discretionary Rate Relief payment at £2,000 and the ability of organisations to apply for Hardship Relief to ensure overall financial levels of support were maintained. Under this preferred mechanism identified in the Improvement Plan, all but one of the current beneficiaries of Discretionary Rate Relief would retain their existing levels of financial support.

The Service Review Group discounted a model where a cap on the level awarded by percentage per organisation as it was felt that any cap could potentially result in the collapse of an organisation. Therefore the Service Review Group focused on capping the Discretionary Rate Relief payment. The Service Review Group considered a cap of £5,000. However, this amount was not feasible as the Council would not be able to achieve the required cost savings.

The modelling work for Option E identified that a cap of £2,000 per application would exceed the savings target of £10,000 by over £5,000. Selecting Option E would result in 78 organisations receiving all of their top-up through the application of Discretionary Rate Relief. The remaining 9 would receive £2,000 Discretionary Rate Relief and be invited to apply for Hardship Relief to meet the outstanding ‘top-up’ balance. Based on the financial accounts considered by the Review Group, 7 of those organisations would in theory be eligible for Hardship Relief. Those organisations that consistently achieved a profit of £21,000 would not be eligible for Hardship Relief.

The Scrutiny Committee considered the Draft Stage II Report and Improvement Plan at its meeting on 12 November 2012. The Partnerships Officer reported that the Scrutiny Committee were content with the proposals. However, had requested that a formal response be provided to Mr Max Pocock who had submitted a question at the Scrutiny Committee during public question time, and that the question and its subsequent written response be taken into consideration by the Community and Environment Committee. Members were notified that Mr Pocock’s question and the officer’s response were tabled at the meeting. The Partnerships Officer noted that a further letter was also tabled at the meeting which would be circulated to the organisations currently in receipt of Discretionary Rate Relief if Option E was approved by the Community and Environment Committee.

Cllr Wilson expressed appreciation to the Partnerships Officer, Cllr Kerby, Cllr G Wilson and all other officers involved in the Discretionary Rate Relief Service Review and for their efforts in developing the proposed model. Cllr Wilson noted that the recommendation did not specifically refer to the preferred model ‘Option E’ and therefore proposed that the recommendation be amended to include reference to ‘Option E’, which was accepted by the Committee.

Cllr Wilson also noted a typographical error relating to 7.9 of the contents page of the Discretionary Rate Relief Review Stage II report as a zero had been omitted from the '£2,000' numeral figure.

Cllr Williams MBE noted that the Scrutiny Committee had considered the report at length. Cllr Williams MBE was pleased that Mr Pocock's question presented at the Scrutiny Committee meeting and the officer's response was tabled at the meeting and that Mr Pocock was satisfied with the officer's response.

The Chairman wished that the minutes formally record the appreciation of the Community and Environment Committee to the Partnerships Officer, Cllr Kerby and Cllr G Wilson.

It was resolved:

That the Community and Environment Committee approve the Discretionary Rate Relief Service Review Stage II Report, attached as Appendix 1 of the officer's report, and the implementation of the Improvement Plan, attached as Appendix E of the officer's report, as per Option E, as detailed in the Service Review.

51. **ELY RIVERSIDE MOORING BYELAW**

The Partnerships Officer presented a report to the Community and Environment Committee (M154), previously circulated, to inform Members of the proposed amendments to the Mooring Byelaw relating to Cutter Corner, the Slipway and the end of Willow Walk, and for the Community and Environment Committee to recommend the proposed amendments to Council for approval.

The Chairman referred Members to an additional recommendation that was tabled at the meeting, as follows:

'Instruct officers to work in partnership with relevant agencies and interested parties to develop an Ely Riverside Improvement Plan to inform future amendments and changes to the Ely Riverside Mooring Byelaw.'

The Partnerships Officer explained that at the meeting of the Community and Environment Sub-Committee on 16 June 2011, it was agreed that the Council should seek adverse possession of two areas known as 'the Slipway' and 'Cutter Corner'. This was to address the difficulties experienced of enforcing the mooring byelaw in areas where there was no one officially responsible for the maintenance of these areas.

Officers consulted with local residents and other interested parties in July 2011, collated statements and submitted an application

to the Land Registry in December 2011 for both these areas of unknown ownership. The applications were successful and the District Council now owned 'the Cutter Corner' and 'the Slipway' which were illustrated as A and B respectively on Appendix A of the officer's report.

At the meeting of the Community and Environment Sub-Committee on 16 June 2011 it was agreed that if the applications for adverse possession of 'the Cutter Corner' and 'the Slipway' were successful the next stage should be to amend the Mooring Byelaw to include these two new areas.

The Partnerships Officer noted that the current byelaw map was inaccurate at the point marked C on Appendix A of the officer's report, as the marked area did not extend the full length of the land owned by the District Council. Therefore a revised map was attached at Appendix B of the officer's report. However, this map was superseded by a further revised map, as tabled at the meeting, which removed the area by Babylon Gallery, as this area was no longer leased or owned by the District Council. The tabled map would correct both of these omissions and include the new areas of ownership if the amended Byelaw obtained approval by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (CLG).

The Partnerships Officer explained that the current Byelaw map also required amendment to correct the extent of land covered by the Mooring Byelaw that was not in the control or ownership of the District Council. This related to the land to the rear of Standens that the Council no longer leased from the Environment Agency, as there were no opportunities for mooring. This had resulted in a reduction in the licence fee for Mooring. The other piece of land was situated beyond Ely High Bridge and represented the land leased from the Environment Agency, which granted the District Council fishing rights and should therefore not be included within the Mooring Byelaw. Letters were sent to all consultees confirming the removal of these areas on 7 November 2012.

The Community and Environment Committee at its meeting on 17 July 2012 agreed to consult with local residents and interested bodies on the proposed amendment to the Mooring Byelaw plan and to report the responses back to a Community and Environment Committee meeting before a report was presented to Full Council in accordance with recommendation 2.3 of the 16 June 2011 Community and Environment Sub-Committee report.

The Council received 15 responses to the consultation and a summary of these was attached as Appendix D to the officer's report. There were no objections to the Byelaw extending to cover the areas marked 'B' and 'C' on the map attached as Appendix A of the officer's report. However, there were 2 objections to the Byelaw extending to

area 'A' (Cutter Corner) received from people that currently moored boats/vessels permanently along this stretch of the river.

Some consultation responses were keen to see the wooden decking area retained for use by small vessels stating that this would add character to the riverside. One respondent, a boat owner, suggested that for an annual fee small vessels should be allowed to moor permanently in this area. The Partnerships Officer referred Members to Appendix E of the officer's report that illustrated the wooden decking area.

It was noted that some of the consultation responses did not refer specifically to the proposed amendments to the Mooring Byelaw or to the areas 'Cutter Corner', 'the Slipway' or 'end of Willow Walk' as illustrated as areas A, B and C on Appendix A of the officer's report. These consultation responses raised concern regarding the Council's ability to enforce the Mooring Byelaw and offered suggestions to improve the quality of life for residents living nearby. These concerns would be considered when the content of the Mooring Byelaw was reviewed.

It was proposed that the Mooring Byelaw be amended to include Areas 'A', 'B' and 'C' and that an application to amend the Mooring Byelaw be made to this effect to the Secretary of State for CLG.

It was noted that some respondents during the consultation had claimed mooring rights at Area A. Should a property have mooring rights along a stretch of riverside that the District Council owned then an application would need to be made to the Land Registry with supporting evidence to register these rights. If the applications were successful then these rights would be registered against the District Council's Land Registry title and would enable the District Council to exclude from the Byelaw vessels owned by people with such rights.

If the proposed Mooring Byelaw amendments were approved, boat owners without evidenced mooring rights would be subject to the existing mooring time restrictions and would only be able to moor for a maximum of 48 hours, returning no sooner than 48 hours after they left.

The Partnerships Officer explained that a Structural Engineer had assessed the wooden decking area and had advised that the poor construction and dilapidation of the decking made it unviable to repair. The Structural Engineer had recommended removal of the decking and supporting structures completely as a matter of priority. However, adaptation of the concrete embankment could allow for small vessels to moor. It was therefore proposed that the wooden decking and supporting structures be removed and that mooring rings and edging protection be installed directly to the concrete embankment. In order to treat all boat owners consistently it is proposed that this area be included as part of area 'A' and included within the Mooring Byelaw.

It was explained that once the Community and Environment Committee had recommended to Council the proposed amendments to the Mooring Byelaw then an 'Application for Provisional Approval of Byelaws' will be made to the Secretary of State for CLG. The results of the provisional application will be presented to Full Council on 21 February 2013. If the application for provisional approval to the Secretary of State is successful and Full Council approve the making of amendments to the Mooring Byelaw, the Council will proceed to a full application, which involves publishing an advertisement of the proposed amendments to the Mooring Byelaw at least one month prior to making the formal application to the Secretary of State. If this process is successful then it is anticipated that the revised Byelaw would be ready for implementation from April 2013.

The Chairman noted that it had been a long process to arrive at the current stage and was pleased with the additional recommendation that was tabled at the meeting, as the riverside needed some improvement.

Cllr Schumann referred to the wooden decking area and enquired as to the Council's liability. The Partnerships Officer explained that if the Council owned the wooden decking area then the Council was fully liable in the event of any incident, which was why the Council had taken precautionary measures of displaying signage and proposed the removal of the decking area.

The Chairman thanked officers for their hard work and perseverance at getting to this stage of the process.

It was resolved:

That the Community and Environment Committee:

- i. Note the results of the consultation on the proposed amendment to the Mooring Byelaw plan, as tabled at the meeting.
- ii. Instruct officers to work in partnership with relevant agencies and interested parties to develop an Ely Riverside Improvement Plan to inform future amendments and changes to the Ely Riverside Mooring Byelaw.

It was also resolved to recommend to Council:

- iii. **That Full Council in February make the proposed amendments to the Mooring Byelaw (subject to provisional approval from the Secretary of State) as detailed at Appendix B of the officer's report, as revised by the plan tabled at the meeting.**

At the conclusion of the above agenda item Cllr Palmer left the Council Chamber and did not return to the meeting.

52. **DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS FEBRUARY 2011 – TO DATE**

The Principal Sustainable Development Officer presented a report to the Community and Environment Committee (M155), previously circulated, to enable Members to consider the process for expenditure of developer contributions collected under the Supplementary Planning Document arrangements February 2011 to date.

It was explained that in February 2011, the District Council approved a Supplementary Planning Document, Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations. This set out a series of 'basic types of contributions' towards which all developments were now expected to contribute, including to the following categories:

- Education;
- Community facilities;
- Emergency services;
- Sports facilities;
- Open space;
- Transport;
- Cost recovery.

It was noted that these monies were ringfenced by geographical area and it must be demonstrated that the funds were providing infrastructure, which mitigated the impact of the contributing development.

Whilst the Supplementary Planning Document set out the categories of funding to be collected, it did not stipulate the process by which this funding would be spent.

Previously money collected for education and transport was forwarded to Cambridgeshire County Council under the previous S106 agreements. However, this funding was now held solely by the District Council. Cambridgeshire County Council officers had flagged up their ongoing need for these funds.

The District Council was now the accountable body for all of the funds collected, and was required to publish information on an annual basis as to where and how contributions had been spent, as part of the Annual Monitoring Report produced by the Forward Planning Team. The Principal Sustainable Development Officer noted that the Community and Environment Committee, Development and Transport

Committee and Finance and Governance Committee would consider the Annual Monitoring Report.

To date, the amount of monies collected under these categories was small, details of which were provided in Appendix 1 of the officer's report.

The process recommended in respect of the distribution of monies collected under the Supplementary Planning Document arrangements was listed in paragraph 5.1 of the officer's report.

The Principal Sustainable Development Officer noted that the Development and Transport Committee had considered the report and that the officer's recommendation subsequently required amendment as proposals for the use of emergency services developer contributions should now also be considered and decided by the Development and Transport Committee.

Cllr Williams MBE expressed concern that some Parishes would now be precluded from accessing the developer contributions collected under the Supplementary Planning Document arrangements and noted that some areas of the district required major infrastructure. Cllr Williams MBE noted that Parishes could previously benefit from the funding collected via S106 and she further acknowledged that the Community Infrastructure Levy would only benefit those Parishes where development had occurred. The Head of Community Services explained that a Community Engagement Plan was being developed to consider this issue and how to address the funding gaps.

Cllr Alderson supported Cllr Williams MBE concerns and noted that communities of a certain size could previously access funding via the Small Villages Fund. The Head of Community Services explained that the Small Villages Fund was currently still accessible and was financed via S106 funding. However, S106 funding would not be available indefinitely and the Head of Community Services explained this was the reason why the Community Engagement Plan was important.

It was resolved:

That the Community and Environment Committee supports the process for agreeing expenditure of developer contributions collected under the Supplementary Planning Document arrangements February 2011, as set out in paragraph 5.1 of the officer's report, subject to the amendment that proposals for use of emergency services developer contributions should also be considered and decided by the Development and Transport Committee.

53. **CHANGES TO THE CONTROLLED WASTE REGULATIONS**

The Waste Strategy Team Leader presented a report to the Community and Environment Committee (M156), previously circulated, to report on changes resulting from the revision of the Controlled Waste Regulations 1992, implementation of the power to charge some non-domestic properties by Cambridgeshire County Council and the implications to East Cambridgeshire District Council.

It was noted that tabled at the meeting was Page 2 of the officer's report that had been omitted from the printed agenda. This page had also previously been emailed to Members, prior to the meeting.

The Waste Strategy Team Leader explained that under the Controlled Waste Regulations 1992, waste from certain types of premises was classed as household waste for which a charge could be made for collection, but not for its disposal. These premise types included:

- Residential hostels;
- Public halls;
- Schools and further education establishments;
- Hospitals;
- Care homes and nursing homes;
- Premises occupied by community interest companies or charities;
- Camp and caravan sites.

The District Council had never charged for collections from these types of premises, due to the administrative burden that this would create and the limited number of premises involved. However, on 6 April 2012 the regulations were amended allowing Disposal Authorities (Cambridgeshire County Council) to impose disposal charges on some of these premise types.

To provide uniformity across Cambridgeshire, the County Council had developed a policy in collaboration with the districts, which will be implemented from April 2013 and includes some premises with exemptions from charges. These exemptions were listed in Appendix 1 of the officer's report.

The disposal charges were to be levied through Collection Authorities, who could chose whether to absorb costs or pass them on.

The level of charge has not yet been finalised so the financial implications to the District Council were not yet known. Passing on the charges would create an administrative burden and if this approach was taken it was suggested that collection charges should also be imposed to cover costs.

As the District Council did not operate a trade waste service, it was suggested that the simplest approach would be to arrange collections through a commercial waste provider. South Cambridgeshire District Council and Fenland District Council had agreed to offer services within the East Cambridgeshire District by dividing the district as illustrated in Appendix 2 of the officer's report. However, if neither authority did wish to provide the service this could be arranged via Veolia's commercial section, as was the current practice for trade waste enquiries.

The initial investigations suggested that 1 nursing home, 1 private school and 3 camping/caravan sites would be affected by the introduction of waste disposal charges. However, these premises could be exempt if they qualified for small Business Rate Relief. The Waste Strategy Team Leader noted that he had notified these premises last year of the potential introduction of waste disposal charges.

The Council has a legal requirement to arrange a trade waste service if requested, but could provide this through a commercial provider in return for an administration fee.

The Waste Strategy Team Leader noted that an Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed, as attached to Appendix 3 of the officer's report, which had not identified any significant impact on identified groups.

The Chairman congratulated Cllr Ellis at having become the Chairman of Recycling in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (RECAP).

In response to a question by Cllr Kerby regarding the disposal of asbestos, the Waste Strategy Team Leader explained that Cambridgeshire County Council operated a scheme where an individual could obtain up to nine 8' by 4' sacks that could be taken to the Ameycespa site for disposal.

It was resolved:

That where disposal charges will be applied by Cambridgeshire County Council from April 2013, that the Council regards such collections as trade waste, and arranges alternative providers for service users.

54. **COMMUNITY FUND GRANT SCHEME**

The Partnerships Officer presented a report to the Community and Environment Committee, (M157), previously circulated, for the Committee to note two grants offered under delegated powers from the Community Fund grant scheme.

It was resolved:

That the Community and Environment Sub-Committee note that under officer delegated powers the following grants have been offered from the East Cambridgeshire Community Fund Grant Scheme:

- Community CARTS (ref: 26) - Provide arts development workshops using art forms of graffiti and screen-printing for 11-17 year olds - £1,000
- RELATE Cambridge (ref: 27) - Providing counselling services for Adults, families, couples and young people - £1,000

55. **KEY COMMITTEE INDICATORS 6 MONTH MONITORING REPORT**

The Head of Community Services and Head of Environmental Services jointly presented a report to the Community and Environment Committee, (M158), previously circulated, on 6 month performance and actions on Key Committee Indicators.

The Community and Environment Committee agreed at its meeting on 17 July 2012 eight Key Committee Indicators for inclusion in the Corporate Performance Plan. The performance of each of the eight Key Committee Indicators as at 31 October 2012 was listed in the table under paragraph 3.2 of the officer's report.

The Head of Community Services informed the Committee as follows regarding the Key Committee Indicators relating to Community Services:

- Financial Options paper on a new leisure facility by March 2013 – a report would be presented to the Community and Environment Committee at its meeting on 15 January 2013. Market testing regarding a cinema/leisure provider at the new leisure facility at Downham Road was due to conclude at the end of the week and had produced some interest.
- Implementation of the Maltings Service Review by January 2013 - Market testing of the restaurant is currently being undertaken and offers were to be submitted by 30 November 2012.
- To undertake a Service Review of Discretionary Rate Relief by October 2012 – item had been considered and agreed earlier during the meeting.

The Head of Environmental Services informed the Committee as follows regarding Key Committee Indicators relating to Environmental Services:

- To submit a bid for funding to DCLG by August 2012 to retain weekly collections of waste and enhanced recycling rates – Members would be updated during the next agenda item.
- The percentage of accidents with an initial action within 3 days of notification (85%) - Target of 85% was being achieved and 27 notifications had been received to date. It was noted that the Health and Safety Officer had been absent due to illness for the past 9 months.
- The percentage of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles license plates to be issued on time (1 day for new vehicles and 2 days for renewal) - 210 plates had been issued all on time. It was noted that the recent unforeseen IT difficulties that the Council had experienced may have impacted on this target.
- The percentage of pollution and public health service requests received in 2012/13 and resolved within 90 and 180 days. Currently 79% of the requests were resolved within 180 days and therefore the target of 90% was not being achieving. However, it was expected that by the end of the financial year the target would be achieved.

In response to a question from Cllr Williams MBE, the Head of Environmental Services explained that between 300 to 320 food premises had been inspected this year and that there were currently 800 food premises in the district. The number of food premises in the district was on the increase, and any development that the district experienced also encouraged food premises to the district. Both of these factors then increased the risk of unregistered food premises. The Head of Environmental Services explained that if Councillors were concerned about a new food premises that they should inform Environmental Health with details of the premises.

In response to a question from Cllr Schumann, the Head of Environmental Services explained that a small minority of the complaints that Environmental Services received were difficult complaints. In these instances Environmental Services endeavoured to come to a conclusion to appease the complainant, but in some cases a complaint could never be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant.

In response to a question from Cllr Fordham, the Head of Environmental Services explained that a Service Review had recently been completed on the Commercial Team within Environmental Services, which had considered resourcing issues and how officers could be utilised within the team as well as risk based food premises inspections.

Cllr Fordham noted a new food premises operating from a car park within the district. The Head of Environmental Services explained

that the public often provided Environmental Services with information on food premises.

It was resolved:

That the Community and Environment Committee note the performance of each of the Key Committee Indicators, as detailed in paragraph 3.2 of the officer's report.

56. **DCLG SUPPORTING WEEKLY COLLECTIONS FUNDING BID**

The Waste Strategy Team Leader presented a report to the Community and Environment Committee (M159), previously circulated, to update Members on progress in relation to the Council's funding bid to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) 'Supporting Weekly Collections Fund'.

The Waste Strategy Team Leader explained that the Community and Environment Committee at its meeting on 25 April 2012 had approved that the final bid be submitted to the DCLG 'Supporting Weekly Collections Fund'. The bid was submitted in advance of the 17 August 2012 deadline.

A consultation exercise was conducted from 19 June to 31 July 2012 and the outcomes were submitted as part of the bid. The consultation was promoted through the District Council website, ShapeYourPlace website, a press release, Neighbourhood Panels and an email was circulated to all Parish Councils, District Councillors and District Council staff.

The consultation received 347 responses, which were mostly received via the on-line survey form. However, paper copies of the questionnaire were also available.

The consultation responses were very positive as follows:

- 95% of respondents believed the Council should do more to increase recycling.
- 79% believed the Council was right to bid for funding through the Weekly Collection Support Scheme.
- 76% believed proposals would improve dry recycling services, and 66% believed proposals would improve organics collections.
- More residents would recycle paper, glass and cans through the proposed service than they do now (paper – 86% to 93%, glass – 89% to 93% and cans 77% to 91%).
- For additional materials introduced to dry recycling under the proposed scheme (plastic bottles, other plastic, Tetrapak & cardboard) there would be an average of 89% participation.

- Residents including food waste in organics collection would increase from 46% to 73%.
- 63% of residents anticipated recycling or composting more material through the proposed schemes than current services.
- The only concern was a marginal reduction in those that would present garden waste through the proposed service, down from 87% to 84%. The reason for this result was unclear, but may be negative reaction to the introduction of wheeled bins for this service. This will need to be overcome by a high level of public engagement and quality service delivery if changes are introduced.
- A total of 249 respondents provided further comments. The majority of comments related to the introduction of wheeled bin services 132 (53%) in favour, 81 (33%) against. There were a further 36 (14%) comments covering a range of other issues. As above, this highlights the necessity to work with residents to bring about successful changes, whilst delivering a good quality service to overcome objections.

The outcome of the bidding process was due to be announced by the end of October 2012. However, no announcement has yet been made. The Waste Strategy Team Leader had emailed DCLG to enquire when an announcement could be expected. DCLG had responded by saying a response was imminent.

If funding was successful it would cover the initial costs of changing recycling and organic services to wheeled bins and commit the Council to retaining weekly refuse collections for the next 5 years.

The benefits of the bid were as follows:

- Improved recycling rate from 37% to 45-50%.
- Compliance with EU Waste Framework Directive to recycle plastics from kerbside by 2015, with progress towards 2020 recycling target of 50%.
- Increased satisfaction with services.
- Reduced costs for changing to wheeled bin waste services as is the likely outcome of the Waste Review Group.

If the £5 million bid was successful this would cover the costs to the Council until 2014/15, with net additional expenditure estimated at £72,000 between 2015-18.

The Waste Strategy Team Leader explained that an Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out which recognised potential impacts on residents as a result of age or disability. Where necessary these residents would be provided with an assisted waste collection.

The Chairman thanked the Waste Strategy Team Leader and stated that all anyone could do is wait for the announcement by DCLG.

The Waste Strategy Team Leader noted that part of the 'Proposed Changes to Waste Services Questionnaire' used during the consultation had been omitted from the printed agenda and that copies of this and the consultation responses were available at the meeting.

It was resolved:

That the Community and Environment Committee note the current status of the bid.

57. **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Community and Environment Committee received a report (M160), previously circulated, to update Members on the Council's current financial position for 2012/13, based on the reporting period to the end of August 2012. The report covered both the Council's projected revenue and capital expenditure.

The Committee had a projected overspend for this period of £7,325, with an overall underspend of £4,315 against the original budget.

In response to a question from Cllr Williams MBE regarding the net overspend listed in paragraph 3.6 of the officer's report, it was confirmed that the overspend was £6,325 and not any other amount.

It was resolved:

That the Community and Environment Committee note that since the last report, a projected overspend of £7,325 has been identified, giving an overall underspend across the Committee's services of £4,315 against the original budget.

The meeting concluded at 6.50pm.