



ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

7.30 pm

**Tuesday
13 September 2011**

**Town Hall, Main Road,
Romford**

Members 7: Quorum 3

COUNCILLORS:

Jeffrey Brace (Chairman)
Dennis Bull
Peter Gardner
Garry Pain

John Mylod (Vice Chairman)
Barbara Matthews
David Durant

**For information about the meeting please contact:
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AGENDA ITEMS

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

(if any) – received.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members are invited to declare any interests in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting. Members may still declare an interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

3 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will announce details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

4 MINUTES (Pages 1 - 10)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28 June 2011 and the Joint Meeting held on 28 July 2011 and authorise the Chairman to sign them.

5 MONITOR OF SCHOOLS UNDER THE CARBON REDUCTION COMMITMENT

The Committee will receive a verbal update on the current position of Schools under the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC).

6 SCORES ON THE DOORS

The Committee will receive a presentation on the "Scores on the Doors" Scheme.

7 BUDGET VARIANCE REPORT

The Head of Streetcare will give an overview of the budget variances within the Committee's remit.

8 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Head of Streetcare will provide details of performance information within the Committee's remit.

9 FUTURE AGENDAS

Committee Members are invited to indicate to the Chairman, items within this Committee's terms of reference they would like to see discussed at a future meeting. Note: it is not considered appropriate for issues relating to individuals to be discussed under this provision.

10 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any other items in respect of which the Chairman is of the opinion, by reason of special circumstances which shall be specified in the minutes, that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

**Ian Buckmaster
Committee Administration and
Member Support Manager**

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 28 June 2011 (7.30pm – 9:00pm)
Havering Town Hall, Romford

Present:

Councillors Jeff Brace (Chairman), Wendy Brice-Thompson (substitute for Garry Pain), Barbara Matthews, John Mylod, Billy Taylor (substitute for Peter Gardner), Frederick Thompson (substitute for Dennis Bull)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dennis Bull, Councillor Peter Gardner and Councillor Garry Pain.

There were no declarations of interest.

The Chairman announced the arrangements to be followed in the event of the building needing to be vacated as a result of an emergency.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 April 2011 were agreed as a correct record, subject to the following comments and signed by the Chairman.

A member stated that they understood the total cost of tonnage under the Carbon Reduction Commitment to be £450,000, however the minutes stated £400,000. Officers confirmed that this was due to the cost of street lighting being taken out of the figures.

Members asked for clarification on the adaptation for heat waves as listed under the nine actions for the Climate Change Action Plan. Officers stated that whilst there were no defined rules, the Council had an obligation to give advice on what to do in the hot weather, especially for the young, old and vulnerable people.

The Committee discussed the grants available from Energy Action Grants Agency (EAGA) and Warmfront. Officers gave information that the council were aware of some shortcomings of EAGA, and that a letter from local MPs can help, however the call-centre is based in Newcastle, and the funding had been cut back. Members stated that the website was difficult to use, and that trying to contact someone was impossible. Members asked if officers could find out the company policy of EAGA.

2. BUSINESS CASE FOR LED LIGHTING PROGRAMME

The Committee received details of business cases for various sites, where LED Lighting had been piloted, from the Energy Manager. The officer explained that LED lighting is used more than general lighting now, and the payback is 1/10 of ordinary lamps.

Business Case for Angel Way multi-storey car park.

The Committee were informed that a number of different lighting systems had been trialled, however due to Angel Way Car Park having the ParkMark the lighting had to meet certain standards, and that 90% had to be lit at all times.

Officers stated that for the period of one year, the saving was £8,245 with a total investment of £40,000 with 50% from the Salix grant.

Members asked how the LED lights compare with traditional lighting? Officers explained that some LED lights have a blue tinge which represents daylight, however there are different colours available dependant on where they are being placed. Officers stated that LED lights were now used in subways.

The Committee discussed issues relating to LED lighting including how the heat can affect them. Officers clarified that the fluorescent tubes used look the same as ordinary lights, however they have an aluminium strip with ridges on the top which disseminated the heat.

The Committee were informed that refurbishment of Angel Way Car park was due to be completed by 15 July 2011, and publicity would be made available. Officers stated that existing fittings were being used, as these were vandal proof, and the car park also had CCTV.

Business Case for Road Signs

The Committee were informed that there were 600 signs which could be de-illuminated, and others that could be changed to LED lights and a photocell added. There were three individual measures, which were being proposed. These were:

1. Removal of lighting from signs which do not have to be illuminated
2. Removal of one lamp and installation of photocell
3. Replace existing lighting with LED lights and install photocell.

Officers informed the committee that the first measure was a good saving, the second measure was a good cost benefit, however the third measure could be dangerous to implement as some lights were difficult to change given their locations. Officers stated that the engineers wished to look at how this would work so by the time it was implemented the cost could have reduced.

Officers stated that where possible self illuminated bollards were being installed, however there was no Salix funding available for road sign lighting.

LED lighting to floors 1 and 2 West Wing, Town Hall

The Committee were informed that the basement had already been completed with LED lighting, the first floor had been completed and the second floor was awaiting a delivery of the tubes. The lighting used was close to natural light. Due to personal taste over half of the tubes had now been removed, which was an additional saving to the Council's overall consumption. The funding for this was from the Salix grant which funded 50% of the cost.

3. COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

The Committee received a report containing the proposed work programme for the municipal year. During discussion of this, Members expressed a wish to view one of the alternative vehicles used as part of the fleet.

The Committee agreed the work programme for 2011/2012.

4. BUY WITH CONFIDENCE PRESENTATION

The Committee received a presentation from the Trading Standards Fair Trading Divisional Manager on the Buy with Confidence Approved Trader Scheme. The Committee were given examples of rogue trading and explained that in response to concerns about "rogue traders" which were often highlighted in the media, a partnership of Local Authority Trading Standards Services had taken a ground-breaking step by putting together the Buy With Confidence Scheme.

The Scheme provided consumers with a list of local businesses which have given their commitment to trading fairly. Every business listed had undergone a series of detailed checks before being approved as a member of the scheme. Initially there were only small businesses including builders and electricians, however this had grown and now included Estate Agents, Photographers and Solicitors. To date there were 43 councils across the country promoting the scheme, and there were 56 Havering based business on a database of 4,200. This was increasing all the time.

The Committee were informed that the scheme was set up due to pressure from consumer groups, local traders, CAB, Age Concern, local anti-acquisitive crime groups and community safety partnerships. Furthermore, the scheme supported the "Cold Calling Control Zones".

Members asked if the "Cold Calling Zones" could be rolled out across the whole borough. Officers informed the committee that there is no law against cold calling, therefore it was difficult to enforce borough wide. The service was, however, looking to expand the "Cold Calling Control Zones". Officers

explained that the zones were across the borough, with three in Harold Wood/ Harold Hill, one in Collier Row, and one in the south of the Borough

The Committee were informed that the scheme was promoted to members of the public and local traders. There was information available on-line, via Age Concern, and via telephoning Consumer Direct. An advertisement had been published in the Living magazine, which had been paid for by local traders.

Members asked about the checks that are carried out before traders are added to the scheme. The officer stated that the following checks were carried out:

- Experian check
- Companies House check
- CRB check (if the work included entering peoples homes)
- Insurance check
- Full audit of contracts, and advice given to improve standards if necessary

Members asked if this was an additional cost of council staff time. The officer confirmed that it was part of the Trading Standards role, so there was no additional cost, and it embraced Havering's Living Ambitions Strategy by:

- Safeguarding the elderly and vulnerable.
- Preventing crime committed by rogue traders.
- Stimulating the local economy by directing consumers from Havering and other authorities to businesses based in the borough.
- Educating traders and consumers.
- Attaining a high level of customer satisfaction.

The Council were informed that a new "Care with Confidence" addition to the scheme was being developed in conjunction with Adult Social Care, to assist with the Individual Budget Scheme, in ensuring providers were approved before they can offer any care.

Members asked how business/traders on the scheme were monitored. The officer informed the Committee that all members were checked as above, but also that they hold the appropriate professional qualification. The service relied on the public informing them if there were problems, and they would investigate any issues.

Members asked if there was a problem with a trader, what action is taken? The officer explained that if necessary the trader could be suspended from the scheme or removed completely. Trading Standards offered a mediation scheme in the first instance. To date there have been no problems in Havering, however there have been traders removed from the scheme nationally.

The Committee were informed that there was a fee of £135 per year for businesses to join the scheme, during the initial set up there would have been

costs in officer time however, it was hoped that the scheme would become cost neutral in the future.

The Committee thanked the officer for the informative presentation and agreed that details on Cold Calling Zones should be added to their work programme for the next municipal year.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was agreed that Service Performance Information would be dealt with at the next meeting.

A Member requested that budget variances be included on the Committee's work programme. It was agreed that the information would be brought to the September meeting.

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Chairman

13 September 2011

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**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES
Havering Town Hall, Romford
Thursday 28 July 2011 (7.30pm – 10.50pm)**

Present:

Children & Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Councillors Sandra Binion (chairman), Clarence Barrett (substituting for Gillian Ford – vice-chairman), Dennis Bull, Robby Misir, Linda Trew, Billy Taylor, Frederick Thompson, Nic Dodin and Pat Murray.

Co-opted Member present (non-voting) – Margaret Cameron

Crime & Disorder Committee –

Councillors Ted Eden (chairman)*, John Wood (vice-chairman), Rebecca Bennett, Roger Evans, Frederick Osborne, Linda Van den Hende*, Keith Darvill (substituting for Denis Breading) and Jeff Tucker* (substituting for David Durant).

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Councillors Jeff Brace (chairman), John Mylod (vice-chairman)*, Dennis Bull, Peter Gardner, Robby Misir (substituting for Garry Pain) Barbara Matthews* and Jeff Tucker (substituting for David Durant).

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Councillors Pam Light (chairman)*, Clarence Barrett (substituting for Brian Eagling – vice-chairman), Wendy Brice-Thompson, Fred Osborne, Linda Trew and Nic Dodin.

Individuals Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Wendy Brice-Thompson (chairman), Linda Van den Hende (vice-chairman)*, Jeff Brace, Pam Light*, Keith Wells and Clarence Barrett (substituting for June Alexander).

Towns and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Fred Osborne (chairman), Linda Hawthorn (vice-chairman)*, Wendy Brice-Thompson, Osman Dervish, Robby Misir (substituting for Garry Pain) Keith Wells, Ray Morgon, Paul McGeary and Michael Deon Burton.

Value Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Robby Misir (chairman), Ray Morgon (vice-chairman), Ted Eden*, Billy Taylor, Damian White and Clarence Barrett (substituting for Ron Ower).

Members of the Cabinet

Councillors Michael White (Leader of the Council), Lesley Kelly*, Steven Kelly, Roger Ramsey and Paul Rochford* were present.

Other Members

Councillor Denis O’Flynn

* - for part of meeting

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors June Alexander, Denis Breading, David Durant, Brian Eagling, Gillian Ford, Georgina Galpin and Ron Ower.

There were no declarations of interest.

6. CHAIRMAN OF MEETING

With the agreement of all Overview & Scrutiny Committee Members, the Chair was taken at this special joint meeting by Councillor Sandra Binion.

The Chairman advised all present of action to be taken in the event of emergency evacuation of the Town Hall becoming necessary.

7. THE COUNCIL’S FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael White explained that the Council’s financial strategy had sensible financial planning as its bedrock. Investment had continued and could be seen in initiatives such as the My Place youth centre in Harold Hill and the recently announced new leisure facilities in Romford. There remained however an overall funding gap of £40 million and this report brought forward a series of balanced and focussed measures to meet the remainder of this deficit.

Services valued most by residents by residents would be protected under the proposals and there were be no closures of libraries or parks (indeed Havering’s parks has recently won eight green flag awards) nor would there be any change to refuse collection. Children and the most vulnerable adults would continue to be supported.

Particularly in social care, investment would be made in preventative measures in order to realise savings in future years. Falls prevention would receive additional funds and technology used to allow people to live longer in their own homes. Work would also be started with families at an earlier stage.

The report set out recommendations to make the £16 million savings required to balance the Council's books. Councillor White added that the report provided reassurance to residents that the Council would continue to act in their best interests and deliver a sustainable level of Council Tax. Councillor White was confident the savings would be delivered but a contingency had also been established, should it be needed.

Councillor White had recently met, in conjunction with Conservative Council Leaders in North East London, the Local Government Minister, Bob Neill MP. Funding for local government would be changing to a business growth model and, in future, Business Rates would pay for up to 70-80% of Council services. Councillor White had explained that grant levels per head were key and that residents in some local roads received very different grant levels depending on which side of the road they lived. The Minister had indicated he was open to a separate funding deal for London, if this could be agreed by all boroughs.

Councillor White emphasised that the proposals sought to protect front-line services. He thanked officers and Cabinet Members for their professionalism during the process and was particularly grateful to Councillor Ramsey, the Chief Executive and the Group Director – Finance & Commerce for their assistance.

General Questions

Councillor Barrett felt there was insufficient detail of the savings given in the report but thanked officers for the further information they had supplied to him. He asked that, in future such reports include more detailed information as this would benefit the public.

The Leader clarified that the figures did not assume an annual Council Tax rise of 2.5%. Raising Council Tax was one option but other ways to make savings would also be considered. The change from a grant-based to a business rate-based system might also help the Council's finances but nothing could be ruled out at this stage.

Councillor Tucker asked if the Government Minister had given any advice on what areas the Council could invest in. Councillor White replied that he had not as this was not the Minister's role. The new model of funding would mean it was important to attract more businesses to Havering as this would increase the level of Business Rates collected and hence give more funds to be spent on services.

The Council was in any case investing in projects such as the new swimming pool and new libraries in Rainham and Elm Park.

Councillor Barrett felt that monitoring of the budget savings was very important and asked if this could be done via exception reports brought to the overview and scrutiny committees. Councillor White was however seeking to reduce the cost of committee meetings. It was also part of Councillor Ramsey's role as Cabinet Member for value to ensure close monitoring of the savings. Councillor Ramsey added that monitoring of budgets was very important and that overview and scrutiny committees were welcome to look at the budget if they wished. The budget was considered robust enough for a two-year settlement and a new funding system would be in place after this.

Councillor Darvill asked if each Overview & Scrutiny Committee could look at the proposals but Councillor White pointed out that it was for each Committee to determine its own work programme, including investigations such as that suggested. Staffing implications of some proposals would however mean they could not be discussed in a public forum.

Councillor O'Flynn asked if there was a total saving of £16 million or £19 million as both figures were mentioned in the report. Councillor White confirmed that £4 million was not covered in the papers and there were various options to make this up including Business Rates and technical budget adjustments.

Questions raised and answers given relating to the specific savings proposals are shown in the appendix to the minutes.

Two propositions relating to items in the schedule of Savings Proposals were put to the vote. The details of those votes are set out in the appendix.

During the course of discussions, the Members of all Overview & Scrutiny Committees agreed to suspend Committee Procedure Rule 8(b) in order to complete the agenda of the meeting.

The Committees noted:

- 1. The financial position of the Council.**
- 2. That the report was formally consulting them on the Corporate budget adjustments and that this was the opportunity to scrutinise the Cabinet's decisions.**

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Chairman
13 September 2011