



# Havering

L O N D O N B O R O U G H

## ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

**7.30 pm**

**Thursday  
7 November 2013**

**Town Hall, Main Road,  
Romford**

Members 6: Quorum 3

**COUNCILLORS:**

Jeffrey Brace (Chairman)  
John Mylod (Vice-Chair)  
Barbara Matthews

David Durant  
Lynden Thorpe  
Keith Wells

**For information about the meeting please contact:  
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wendy.gough@havering.gov.uk**

## **What is Overview & Scrutiny?**

Each local authority is required by law to establish an overview and scrutiny function to support and scrutinise the Council's executive arrangements. Each overview and scrutiny committee has its own remit as set out in the terms of reference but they each meet to consider issues of local importance.

They have a number of key roles:

1. Providing a critical friend challenge to policy and decision makers.
2. Driving improvement in public services.
3. Holding key local partners to account.
4. Enabling the voice and concerns of the public.

The committees consider issues by receiving information from, and questioning, Cabinet Members, officers and external partners to develop an understanding of proposals, policy and practices. They can then develop recommendations that they believe will improve performance, or as a response to public consultations.

Committees will often establish Topic Groups to examine specific areas in much greater detail. These groups consist of a number of Members and the review period can last for anything from a few weeks to a year or more to allow the Members to comprehensively examine an issue through interviewing expert witnesses, conducting research and site visits. Once the topic group has finished its work it will send a report to the Committee that created it and it will often suggest recommendations to the executive.

## **Terms of Reference**

The areas scrutinised by the Committee are:

- Environment
- Transport
- Environmental Strategy
- Community Safety
- Streetcare
- Parking
- Social Inclusion

## AGENDA ITEMS

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

(if any) – received.

### 2 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Members are invited to disclose any pecuniary interest in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting.

*Members may still disclose any pecuniary 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 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 1 October 2013 and authorise the Chairman to sign them.

### 5 OPERATION AUGUSTA (Pages 5 - 12)

The Committee will receive a presentation on the outcomes of "Operation Augusta". (slides attached)

### 6 BRIDGE STRUCTURES (Pages 13 - 14)

The Committee will receive a briefing on the maintenance of bridge structures within the Borough. (Briefing note attached)

### 7 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.

**8 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.

**Andrew Beesley  
Committee Administration  
Manager**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford  
1 October 2013 (7.30 - 9.00 pm)**

**Present:**

Councillors Jeffrey Brace (Chairman), John Mylod (Vice-Chair), David Durant, Lynden Thorpe, Keith Wells and June Alexander (In place of Barbara Matthews)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Barbara Matthews

**7 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**8 CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE**

The Committee noted that since the last meeting membership had been reduced from seven members to six. As a result Councillor Peter Gardner was no longer a member of the committee.

**9 RIVER INGREBOURNE UPDATE**

Officers provide the Committee with details of the environmental improvement works which had been completed last year. This had included the stretch of the river Ingrebourne from Hacton Lane to Squadrons Approach and involved the installation of flow deflectors to protect banks, introduction of wetland shelves to encourage ecology and improve flow. Also, back waters had been installed to assist ecology and flood storage.

The next stage is similar works from Squadrons Approach to the River Thames. This would be a very large project and requires much discussion with the Environment Agency and Natural England as it has been agreed in principal that silt removal would be necessary to alleviate flooding upstream at Squadrons Approach and Hacton lane. This was a very sensitive area of river and included Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which required many approvals prior to commencement of work.

The Committee welcomed the work being undertaken and drew officers' attention to issues on over rivers in the borough.

**10 ROMFORD MARKET**

As requested at the last meeting officers provided an update on:

- The demise of the Farmer's Market,
- Other specialist markets arranged by the Regeneration Team, and
- an update on the proposed Food Court.

The Committee were reminded that Upminster Farmers market had originally begun life in Romford, trading on a Sunday along South Street, approximately eight years ago. The market operator had then asked to move location to Upminster to trade on a Thursday which the Council agreed to. Later the trading day reverted to Sunday. As trader numbers decreased and the difficult economic climate took hold the Farmers Market decided to cease trading in December 2012.

Since the beginning of the year there had been 5 specialist markets. The three of the four Italian markets had been held in South Street, Romford, with the fourth being held in Corbets Tey Road, Upminster. All had been held on Sundays. The Regeneration team were looking to arrange four to five further Italian markets in the future, two in Upminster and two/three in Romford.

The one-off European Market had been held over two days in June, Sunday the 2nd and Monday the 3<sup>rd</sup>. This had proved very successful and the Economic Development Team were looking to book one/two further markets for 2014.

The Committee were pleased these had been successful but felt that if they had been held on a market day the traders would have benefitted from the additional footfall.

The Food Court had opened in June 2013 with the aim of bringing greater retail activity and footfall to the northern end of the Market Place. It had opened with 6 hot food traders but lost three of the traders fairly quickly. A replacement had been found for one of the traders but this trader had left due to poor sales.

At present two of the trader's trade on all three days, one just on Saturday and a new Dry and Wet Fresh Coffee stall trades just on Friday. Officers were continuing to work to attract new traders and five potential traders were sorting out food registration certificates before they commenced trading. Unfortunately the timing of establishing the food court clashed with the festival season and this had broken momentum.

Officers informed the Committee that they were looking at another initiative which had worked elsewhere, i.e. the introduction of a teenager market.

In discussions the Committee identified what they believed were the main problems:

- Competition from local stores like Primark, Matalan,
- No stalls for teenagers,
- Failure of stall holders to give monetary refunds.
- Location of the market, the Chairman believed relocating the market closer to the railway station would revitalise the market.

The report was noted.

## 11 **FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

Officers provided a brief overview of the current financial position for those services which fall under the committee's remit. By period four Trading Standards and Environmental Health were looking at an over spend of £40k. The position for StreetCare in period four was an under spend of £100k. However, by the beginning of period six this had been reduced.

Officers explained that winter was the most difficult time for StreetCare. Not only is it likely that expenditure will increase for gritting, call-out fees and overtime, but excessive snow also reduces parking income as people stay at home, rather than go out shopping. Also from November onwards it is not possible to carry out yellow lining or road repairs, unless emergencies.

Details of the extra monies which had been made available for specific works were provided, these included improvements to bus stops funded by London Transport.

The Committee **noted** the report.

## 12 **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

The Committee were provided with details of the Annual Corporate Performance Indicators for 2012/13. The Committee agreed that any questions should be e-mailed to the Head of StreetCare.

## 13 **FUTURE AGENDAS**

The Committee decided they did not wish to change anything in the work plan at this time.

## 14 **URGENT BUSINESS**

The Committee's attention was drawn to work being under taken by PETRA to reduce the carbon footprint. Officers advised that a report would be submitted to Cabinet seeking approval for expenditure to replace existing sodium street lights with LED street lights as part of the Council's commitment to reducing its Carbon Footprint.

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**Chairman**

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# Operation Augusta

Update on the Fake Golf Club conspiracy

## Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

7 November 2013



## Operation Augusta

- This case came out of Havering Council's 'Operation Augusta' investigation. The focus was primarily on the sale and distribution of counterfeit golf clubs, clothing and accessories, but also Qantas Complimentary Lounge Invitation Cards.
- Over the course of approximately five years, between mid-2003 and early 2008, the ten-strong gang sold the fake goods around the world and duped hundreds of thousands of customers.



## Operation Augusta

- The case concerned a conspiracy on a global nature. Contacts were thought to have been based in the UK, Thailand, Australia, Germany, Singapore, the USA, Hong Kong and China.
- It is thought that the fake goods had been distributed globally via their Ebay shop to countries including Australia, Italy, France, Canada, the Netherlands, Brazil and New Zealand.



## Operation Augusta

- The value of the conspiracy has been difficult to determine, due to its sheer size, but the PayPal accounts alone used by the conspirators received over \$3 million during the relevant time

## Trial in July 2013

- The previous trial in 2009 saw the successful prosecution of the seven original defendants.
- Three defendants had been resident in Thailand for a period of years prior to the start of the case. After the conviction of the seven, Havering Council started proceedings to extradite the remaining members.
- Paul Biggerstaff surrendered himself voluntarily to Court. Brian Ferrigno and Raymond Crook were extradited from Thailand.

## Trial in July 2013

- In July, at Basildon Crown Court, the final three were found guilty for their part in the conspiracy.
- Paul Biggerstaff was sentenced to 18 months
- Brian Ferrigno was sentenced to 10 months
- Raymond Crook was sentenced to 9 months
- The starting point for Mr Ferrigno and Mr Crook was expressed to be 20 months, reduced by 50% to reflect the time spent in a Thai prison awaiting extradition. The draconian conditions endured by the defendants and the obvious ill effects it has had on Mr Crook (he has lost 60kg in weight) helped the defence.

## What Next

- Two of the latest defendants have lodged an appeal – a decision on whether that will be allowed is expected soon.
- We will proceed to gaining orders for the forfeiture of proceeds of crime from the three
- Collection of previous confiscation orders will continue.

## Cost recovery so far

- So far we have received costs of £158,600 which have been returned to central funds
- We have also received £123,606 in proceeds of crime.
- All of the above has been in instalments over the years since the trial.



## **Maintenance of Bridge Structures in Havering**

There are over 150 highway structures in Havering of which the majority are owned by, and the responsibility of, the Council. These include bridges, subways, culverts and retaining walls.

Those associated with Trunk Roads (A12, A13, and A127) and Motorways (M25) are owned and maintained by the Highways Agency.

Railway Bridges are generally owned by the company that they serve i.e. either Network Rail or London Underground, however in the case of 'road over rail' bridges, the Borough has a responsibility to maintain the footway and carriageway surfaces.

All structures for which the Council has a responsibility are visually inspected every two years (General Inspection) to assess their overall condition, and once every six years a more detailed survey is undertaken (Principal Inspection) which involves the inspector actually being close enough to touch all visible areas of the structure and tests are carried out to more accurately determine the condition.

From those inspections, reports are compiled to indicate the condition of all elements of the structure, identify any defects, and recommend any necessary remedial works together with providing an estimate of the costs involved.

The recommendations of those reports are used to prioritise subsequent works. It may be possible to make minor repairs to rectify the situation, but where more extensive repairs may be necessary, structures will need to be assessed to confirm their load carrying capabilities.

Applications for Assessment funding need to be made to TfL via the LoBEG (London Bridge Engineering Group) bidding process.

Structures that do not satisfy current assessment requirements will require strengthening or other interim measures until such time as sufficient funds are available to do so under TfL's Assessment and Strengthening budget. However, available funds are very tight and all bids are considered alongside those from other London Boroughs before being strictly prioritised. Therefore, it is often necessary to simply monitor structures and resubmit a bid the following, and often subsequent, years.

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