



# Haverling

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

## ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

**7.30 pm**

**Tuesday  
11 March 2014**

**Town Hall, Main Road,  
Romford**

Members 6: Quorum 3

**COUNCILLORS:**

Jeffrey Brace (Chairman)  
Keith Wells  
Barry Oddy

John Mylod (Vice-Chair)  
Barbara Matthews  
David Durant

**For information about the meeting please contact:  
Wendy Gough 01708 432441  
wendy.gough@haverling.gov.uk**

## 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 - 14)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014 and the Minutes of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24 January 2014 and authorise the Chairman to sign them.

### 5 **COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT** (Pages 15 - 18)

The Committee are asked to note its Annual Report and agreed to refer it to full Council.

### 6 **PARKS AND PARKS ENFORCEMENT**

The Committee will receive a report detailing the maintenance and enforcement in parks and open spaces.

Report to follow.

### 7 **AIR QUALITY IN HAVERING**

The Committee will receive a presentation with regard to the Air Quality in Havering.

### 8 **BLUE BADGE RENEWALS UPDATE** (Pages 19 - 20)

The Committee will receive a report updating it on the current situation with the Blue Badge Renewals Scheme.

**9 CARBON FOOTPRINT/ LED LIGHTING**

The Committee will receive a presentation on LED Lighting and how this feeds into the Council's Carbon Commitment.

**10 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.

**11 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**

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford  
28 January 2014 (7.30 - 9.20 pm)**

**Present:**

Councillors John Mylod (Vice-Chair), Barbara Matthews, Keith Wells and Georgina Galpin (In place of Jeffrey Brace)

**20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Jeff Brace, David Durant and Lynden Thorpe.

**21 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Committee asked if there had been any progress made on contacting the large brand companies in relation to the contributing fees paid by the local authority. Officers stated they would report back to the Committee in March.

**22 CARBON FOOTPRINT/ LED LIGHTING**

It was agreed that this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee, which was due to be held on 11 March 2014.

**23 UPDATE ON TRACKER OF VEHICLES**

The Committee received a demonstration of the GPS tracker system, Baktrak, which was installed on all fleet owned by Havering, this included PSV buses, freight vehicles and Streetcare vehicles. There were a total of 180 vehicles in the fleet. Officers agreed to circulate the full list of vehicles to members of the Committee.

It was noted that the majority of bus trips were completed by 18:00, however other vehicles from the Streetcare fleet, were still operational including road sweepers and salters.

The Baktrak system was a web-based system, which updated every 30 seconds and therefore was “real-time” data. It was not to watch staff, but to ensure that routes are being carried out correctly, and if vehicles are needed urgently, officers can see where the nearest vehicle is. It could also be used if claims of damage are received as operators can look back on the system to see where a specific vehicle was at any time. It was invaluable for if a vehicle was stolen, as the tracker would trace it. The system could be used to locate a particular point of interest.

Officers explained that a number of awards had been won by Passenger Transport Services (PTS) for the way the service works. PTS was looking to get accredited under the Freight Operators Rating System (FORS). This would include a number of areas being investigated, including the graph analysis, license checks and CPC training. The officer stated that he attend a monthly meeting with other London Boroughs, to share knowledge.

The Committee asked if the system was cost effective. Officers stated that it was very competitive and the cost was £7 per month, per vehicle. This was half the cost of other providers. Vehicles can be assigned to particular jobs and collections times can be set, this can be programmed onto the system the night before if necessary. The system allows the operator to track a vehicle so if a client calls to say the bus has not arrived; the operator can see exactly where it is and advise the client accordingly.

Officers informed the Committee that upgrades to the system were free and generally done remotely. The software was updated on a monthly basis. Officers were looking into measuring the level of fuel consumption used by each vehicle. This would be another cost saving, as driver training could be set up to target specific areas that could reduce the fuel consumption.

The Committee were very impressed with the system being used and felt that the information should be given to other members through the Member Development Training Group. They also felt that the information about the system should be included in an article for the Living magazine.

The Committee thanked officers for the very informative presentation.

## 24 **SCOPE FOR VARIABLE SPEED LIMITS**

The Committee received a report on Variable Speed Limits. The officer explained that the main operation of variable speed limits was on motorways, where conditions create an increased safety risk in the event of poor visibility or congestion.

Members raised concerns about the 20mph zones, which were in operation around schools and other areas of the borough. They felt that these should revert back to 30mph zones outside of school hours, or during the early hours of the morning. Officer explained that the zones were in place and

were generally in smaller side roads where traffic calming measure had also being put in place. It was explained that variable signs would need Government approval, which was unlikely to be granted.

A member asked about flashing signs which could be operational at certain times of the day, and felt that these would be beneficial in controlling the speed during certain hours of the day, and when not in operation, the speed would revert to 30mph. Officers stated that a third of all traffic scheme requested at Highways Advisory Committee were for speed calming measures i.e. humps, chicanes etc.

After further discussion, officers agreed that they would look at costs of variable signs, road markings and other signage together with a possible pilot location, which they would bring back to the committee in the future.

## 25 **FUTURE AGENDAS**

The Committee noted that at its next meeting the following items would be on the agenda:

- Parks and parks enforcement
- Air Quality
- Carbon Footprint/ LED Lighting
- Blue Badge Renewals update
- Committee Annual Report

The Committee asked that the presentation on the Carbon Footprint/ LED Lighting be circulated prior to the next meeting so that it was simply a question and answer session.

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**Chairman**

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
JOINT (ALL) OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
Town Hall  
23 January 2014 (7.30 - 9.05 pm)**

**Present:**

**COUNCILLORS**

**Conservative Group** Jeffrey Brace, Wendy Brice-Thompson, Pam Light, Robby Misir, Barry Oddy, Frederick Thompson, Melvin Wallace and Keith Wells

**Residents' Group** June Alexander, Clarence Barrett, Gillian Ford, Linda Hawthorn, Ray Morgon, John Mylod, Linda Van den Hende and John Wood

**Labour Group** Keith Darvill+, Pat Murray and Denis O'Flynn

**Independent Residents Group** Michael Deon Burton

**UK Independence Party Group** Lawrence Webb+, Ted Eden and Fred Osborne

+Substituting for Councillor Paul McGeary.

+Sunstituting for Councillor Sandra Binion.

Cabinet Members in attendance: Councillors Michael White (Leader of the Council) Steven Kelly (Deputy Leader) Roger Ramsey and Paul Rochford.

All decisions were taken with no votes against.

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

**1 MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRMAN OF MEETING**

With the agreement of all Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members present, the Chair was taken at this special meeting by Councillor Pam Light.

**2 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

**3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (IF ANY)**

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members:

Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Councillor Sandra Binion (substituted by Councillor Lawrence Webb)

Councillor Nic Dodin (Substituted by Councillor John Mylod)

Margaret Cameron (co-opted Member – non-voting)

Ian Rusha (co-opted Member – non-voting)

Crime & Disorder Committee:

Councillor Osman Dervish (substituted by Councillor Wendy Brice-Thompson)

Councillor Roger Evans (substituted by Councillor Frederick Thompson)

Councillor Georgina Galpin (substituted by Councillor Barry Oddy)

Councillor David Durant

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Councillor Lynden Thorpe (substituted by Councillor Barry Oddy)

Councillor Barbara Matthews

Councillor David Durant

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Councillor Nic Dodin (substituted by Councillor John Mylod)

Councillor Peter Gardner (substituted by Councillor Frederick Thompson)

Towns & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Councillor Osman Dervish (substituted by Councillor Frederick Thompson)

Councillor Garry Pain (substituted by Councillor Melvin Wallace)

Councillor Linda Trew (substituted by Councillor Jeffrey Brace)

Value Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Councillor Rebecca Bennett (substituted by Councillor Barry Oddy)

Councillor Billy Taylor

Councillor Damian White (substituted by Councillor Jeffrey Brace)

Councillor Sandra Binion (substituted by Councillor Lawrence Webb)

#### 4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of interest.

#### 5 **THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael White, explained that the Council had been required to find approximately £40 million of savings over the last four years. The Leader thanked officers for their hard work in delivering these savings. Front line services, for example weekly refuse collection, had been protected while the back office had been transformed through initiatives such as Shared Services. There had also been more than 80 restructures across the Council.

The latest financial settlement meant that further cuts would be required in the coming years although this was in line with projections for this period. Specifically, £6.5 million of funding would be lost in 2014/15 with a further £9.8 million lost in 2015/16. This would of course be challenging but the Council had been very robust in meeting savings targets. The Council should also be proud of there not having been a rise in Council Tax over the last five years.

It was felt that the funding cuts in 2014/15 could be covered in Havering without major service cuts or tax increases. Work was currently underway on the next financial strategy from 2015/16. This was estimating a potential budget gap of around £60 million which would be a challenge for the new Council.

The Government austerity programme would continue until at least 2017/18 and a further Comprehensive Spending Review was expected. Government policy to ensure an average 1% annual increase in public sector pay also impacted on the Council.

The introduction of local level business rates had not generated any additional income for the Council as the Council was only allowed to keep 30% of this revenue. A proposal to pool business rates with some neighbouring Councils would however allow the minimisation of risk. The leader also felt the use of the Council pension fund to invest in the local infrastructure could be explored further.

There was a 10% shortfall from the Government on Council Tax benefits although it was thought that a revision of the Council Tax base in Havering should deliver more money. A new homes bonus of £2.4 million for 2014/15 would allow some one-off investments such as that in Harrow Lodge Park.

There had been a rise in NHS funding to support social care but this was pooled with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). New legislation affecting education and care for people under 25 years and the care of elderly people would also have a financial impact. This was also the case with the rise in numbers of properties and pupils in Havering and the rising numbers of very elderly people would lead to a heavy demand on social care services.

In conclusion, the Leader emphasised that the Council wished to protect front line services and this was in line with the Living Ambition strategy. Efficiencies had been made in all areas of the Council, for example the partnership with London Borough of Newham. Further savings would however be needed and it would be necessary to ask which Council services did not need to continue in their current form and which could be delivered in a better way in order to keep the budget under control.

**Having received the presentation from the Leader of the Council, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees noted:**

1. The financial position of the Council.
2. That the report was formally consulting them on the proposed Corporate budget adjustments and that this was the opportunity to scrutinise the budget proposals.

Answers to questions raised by Members on specific items of the budget are shown in the appendix to the minutes.

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**Chairman**

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APPENDIX: JOINT MEETING OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES, 23  
JANUARY 2014, ANSWERS TO MEMBER QUESTIONS ON THE COUNCIL'S  
FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Questions were asked by Members on the areas shown below and answers were given by officers or Cabinet Members as follows:

1. Amount of business rates levy able to be retained – The forecast for business rates did expect a growth in the pool from the Thurrock area although this did assume that the proposed port in Thurrock went ahead.
2. Details of the Council's response to the Business Rates appeal process – This could be made available to Group Leaders.
3. Robustness of estimate for rise in Council Tax base – For the first time a material rise in the Havering Council Tax base had been seen and officers were looking at the impact of this. This would lead to a rise in demand for Council services but it was difficult at this stage to forecast the precise impact.
4. Pooled Business Rates – This system allowed each Council in the pool to reduce what they paid into Central Government. Officers would produce a briefing note on this for Members.
5. Number of grant announcements still awaited – Most grant announcements had now been received and a full table would be included within the February Cabinet report. There were now fewer grants received than in previous years.
6. Increase in overall level of risk – There was a risk from changes to the means of funding e.g. the local collection of Business Rates. It was also difficult to manage in-year issues. Efforts were however ongoing to manage and mitigate risk within the budget. All Councils were struggling with the risk of grants potentially being replaced by funding that would have to be bid for. This was a challenge for Councils throughout the country. It was also noted that the risk referred to in paragraph 3.7 of the Cabinet report related only to the current programme of savings.
7. Overspend on the Special Educational Needs (SEN) budget – This was due to an overspend on transport costs but had been offset by other savings being delivered early. This would be a pressure again next year and the transport costs were currently undergoing a full review in order to ascertain if efficiency can be improved.

8. Customer Services budget variance – The on-line portal that would allow staff savings to be made had only gone live in December rather than August 2013 due to IT problems. Restructures had now started that would lead to savings in the longer term. It was recommended that Members should use the portal to report issues such as flytips in their ward.
9. Emergency Assistance Scheme – A proposal had been put to the Corporate Management Team to carry forward any underspend to the overall emergency funding budget for next year.
10. Proposed investment in the borough by the Council pension fund – It was intended to put a sum of additional money into the pension fund in order to avoid having to increase future annual contributions by the Council. This investment would allow the pension fund to invest in Havering by e.g. buying property. This was common practice in many other pension schemes and safeguards would be in place and professional advice taken. It was important to maximise the return from the pension fund and a similar model involving a number of local Councils had funded the successful Salford Quays development near Manchester.
11. Distribution of anticipated funding gap – It was expected that the majority of the funding pressures would take place in the first two years of the next four-year cycle. This included expected reductions in Government funding and local pressures.
12. Expected value of reserves – The Council's general reserve currently stood at £11.5 million. The figure for all earmarked reserves was £48 million.
13. Details of revised arrangements for social care funding – This was the first year of Better Care funding under the current arrangements. Governance arrangements were similar for 2014/15 but funding now had to be agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board and by NHS England. Overall funding had risen as this now included the CCG budget but more services also now had to be provided. Arrangements would become more complicated in year two as issues such as delayed discharges and seven-day working in health and social care would have to be addressed. Negotiations would be needed with the CCG on these areas and a two-year plan had to be finalised by April 2013.
14. Impact of Children and Families Bill – Officers were continuing to work through the Bill and its implications. Financial modelling was in progress and it was wished for people to stay local although would be able to receive a personal budget that they could spend anywhere. An overview and scrutiny



topic group was currently looking at this area. It was not yet possible to say however what the demand for these services would be. The cost of potentially providing education for children with special educational needs up to the age of 25 was also being worked on.

15. Member allowances – A saving of two Cabinet posts had already been agreed in the budget although this depended on Members' views after the Council election.
16. Parking income – There was in the current year a projected shortfall of approximately £400,000 across all parking budgets. Central Government was currently consulting on Council parking policies and this and this could introduce measures such as the removal of CCTV cars and a grace period on tickets. Economic factors had meant there was now less use made of car parks and seasonal factors such as wintry weather also negatively affected income.
17. Building control – Officers felt there was not enough external work to bid for to meet the quite high income targets for building control. Some staff would however still be required to discharge the Council's statutory building control functions.
18. Remand framework – The costs of children on remand had now been passed from the criminal justice system to Councils with only a small grant to cover this. The Council had spent some £557,000 on this so far this year and the Council had no control over how quickly cases reached court.
19. Housing Benefit and Council Tax support grant – This grant had been reduced across London and this funding needed to be replaced by the Council.
20. Electoral Registration – More resources were needed to cover the required Individual Electoral Registration process that was due to start in June 2014.
21. Utilities price increase – This was mainly due to inflation in electricity prices.
22. Phase 2 primary expansion – The grant allocation covered both 2014/15 and 2015/16. Although there may be a need to spend some in advance of the grant receipt this would be managed as part of the Council's cash flow and would not impact on the wider Capital programme or delay delivery.
23. Estimated school maintenance grant – Details of schools grants had been compiled for the February Cabinet report but officers would confirm the exact grant figure by e-mail.

24. Transfer of public health – It was confirmed that this was now a function of the Council led by the Director of Public Health.
25. Production of budget - The Chairman and several other Members thanked Councillor Ramsey, the Chief Executive and Council officers for their hard work in producing the budget.

## ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11 March 2014

**Subject Heading:**

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL  
REPORT June 2013 to March 2014

**CMT Lead:**

Ian Burns  
Interim Assistant Chief Executive  
Legal and Democratic

**Report Author and contact details:**

Wendy Gough  
Committee Officer  
01708 432441  
[wendy.gough@havering.gov.uk](mailto:wendy.gough@havering.gov.uk)

**Policy context:**

Under the Council's Constitution, each  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee is  
required to submit an annual report of its  
activities to full Council.

### SUMMARY

This report is the annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the past eight months.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable members and others to compare performance year to year.

There are no direct equalities or environmental implications attached to this covering report. Any financial implications from review and work undertaken will be advised as part of the specific reviews.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee note the 2013/14 Annual Report and refer to full Council

**REPORT DETAIL**

During the period under review, the Committee met on four occasions and dealt with the following issues:

**1. ROMFORD MARKET**

At its meeting in June 2013, the Committee received a presentation on Romford Market. The Committee noted that according to the conditions of their license some traders were expected to turn up every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. There were casual traders who paid a higher rate, but were not tied to appear every week. The rental costs included the removal of rubbish at the end of the day.

The Committee raised concerns about the drop in licensed traders in the last 5 years. A number of initiatives and options were discussed about how the market could be better utilised, including speciality markets, promotions and events. The Committee was informed that marketing and advertising were carried out at different location and through different group, including the visitor centre, Living magazine, visitors guide to Havering as well as other websites and newspaper articles.

At its meeting in October 2013, the Committee received a progress update on the initiatives that had been carried out. The Committee were pleased that the specialist market and one-off European Market had been successful, but felt that if they had been held on market days, the traders would have benefitted from the additional footfall.

**2. WASTE STRATEGY**

The Committee received a briefing on the Waste Prevention and Reward Campaign at its meeting in June 2013. Through the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Weekly Collection Support Scheme, Havering had been awarded £1 million for a reward and incentive scheme and £350,000 for a waste prevention campaign. The prevention activities that were in place, included the Home Composting Bins, Love Food Hate Waste campaign, Real Nappy campaign as well as Give and Take days which took place once a month at Central Library.

A specification had been written for a reward and incentive scheme. The key objective was to encourage residents to reduce their waste, primarily by increasing recycling. Residents would be asked to sign up to the scheme and would be awarded points on a loyalty card, which dependant on the tonnage of recycling produced, would be converted into points which could then potentially either be donated to local charities, schools or used as discounts in local retailers.

### **3. FOOTWAY PARKING BAYS**

At its meeting in June 2013, the Committee received a briefing on the footway parking bays. It was explained that not all footways and carriageways were suitable for parking bays. There were some bays in place where there was no programmed regime for re-lining. Streetcare were looking at getting a regular programme in place which would be a 4-5 year rolling programme. This would not only be the checking of the markings, but also that the time plates were in place and accurate.

There were only four officers who dealt with requests or enquiry for footway parking. Every request was logged, inspected, a report drawn up and if necessary, a drawing put together, before any instructions could be passed to the contractor to carry out the works. Therefore the timescale for each request from start to finish was approximately three months.

### **4. RIVER INGREBOURNE UPDATE**

At its meeting in October 2013, the Committee was provided with details of the environmental improvement works which had been completed over the previous year. This included the stretch of the River Ingrebourne between Hacton Lane and Squadrons Approach. It involved the installation of flow deflectors to protect banks, introduction of wetland shelves to encourage ecology and improve flow. Back waters had been installed to assist ecology and flood storage.

The next stage was similar works from Squadrons Approach to the River Thames. This was a very large project and required discussions with the Environment Agency and Natural England as it had been agreed in principle 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 including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which required many approvals prior to the commencement of work.

### **5. FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

At its meeting in October 2013, a brief overview of the current financial position for those services that fall under the committee's remit was provided. 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.

The Committee noted that winter was the most difficult time for Streetcare. Expenditure was increased with gritting, call-out fees and overtime, however excessive snow reduced the parking income as people stayed at home, rather than go out shopping. From November onwards, it was not possible to carry out yellow lining or road repairs, unless it was an emergency.

## **6. UPDATE ON TRACKER SYSTEM OF FLEET VEHICLES**

At its meeting in January 2014, the Committee received a demonstration of the GPS tracker system, Baktrak, which was installed on all fleet owned by Havering, this included PSV buses, freight vehicles and Streetcare vehicles.

The Baktrak system was a web-based system which updated every 30 seconds and was therefore “real-time” data. The system was used to ensure that routes are being carried out correctly and if vehicles are needed urgently, officers can see where the nearest vehicle is. It was able to be utilised for any claims of damage, where operators can look back at old data to see if a vehicles was in the vicinity. It was also invaluable for if a vehicle was stolen as the tracker would trace it.

## **7. SCOPE FOR VARIABLE SPEED LIMITS**

The Committee receive a report on the variable speed limits at its meeting in January 2014. The officer explained that the main operation of variable speed limits was on motorways, where conditions create an increased safety risk in the event of poor visibility or congestion.

Members raised concerns about the 20mph zones, which were in operation around schools and other areas of the borough. They felt that these should revert back to 30mph zones outside of school hours and during the early hours of the morning. Officers explained that that the zones that were in place were generally in smaller side roads where traffic calming measure had also been put in place. Variable signs would be very costly and would need Government approval, which was unlikely to be granted.

After further discussions, officers agreed that they would look at the costs of variable signs, road markings and other signage together with a possible pilot location, which they would bring back to the committee in the future.

## **8. OTHER ITEMS**

At its meeting in October 2013, the Committee were provided with the Annual Corporate Performance indicators for 2012/13. It was also informed that a report would be submitted to Cabinet seeking approval for expenditure to replace existing sodium street lights with LED street lights. This was part of the Council’s commitment to reducing its carbon footprint.

## ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at 7.30pm

**Subject Heading:**

**BLUE BADGE SCHEME**

**CMT Lead:**

**Cynthia Griffin**

**Report Author and contact details:**

**Penny Nugent**

[Penny.nugent@havering.gov.uk](mailto:Penny.nugent@havering.gov.uk)

**Policy context:**

This is an update report

### SUMMARY

Blue Badge update report, following on from report previously submitted by Jeff Potter

### RECOMMENDATIONS

None – update report only

### REPORT DETAIL

The new Blue Badge Scheme, introduced in January 2012, is working well. The issuing of badges is carried out by Northgate. However, the Council still receives the applications and carries out the administration of the service, prior to instructing Northgate to issue a badge.

The Blue Badge criteria is set out below:

- If an applicant qualifies for the higher level of disability allowance, they are an 'automatic' qualification
- All other applications are subject to assessment; i.e. a desk top assessment where the application and relevant supporting documents are assessed
- If the customer meets the criteria, the badge is awarded
- If the desk top assessment does not meet the criteria outright, the customer is invited to attend a Mobility Assessment to assess their eligibility
- Mobility assessments are carried out by an Occupational Therapist

There is no backlog in applications; all applications are processed upon receipt. If a customer has all their documentation with them, we encourage customers that come in to the PASC, to complete the online form whilst they are with us. This ensures the initial application goes straight on to the Northgate database and subject to our checking processes, speeds up the issuing of the badge. A floor walker is always available to assist customers to complete the form.

2013 information is as follows:

- Total number of applications received: **3968**
- Average applications received per week: **76**
- Total number of badges issued: **3480**
- Of these, total number of 'Automatics' issued: **1369**
- Total number of 'non-Automatics' issued: **2111**
- Total number applications refused: **220**
- A further **268** applicants did not proceed with their application after we requested further information or they were asked to attend a Mobility Assessment
- Number of Appeals considered when application refused: **49**
- Of Appeals, number successful: **13**
- Number of instances of fraud that we have been made aware of and the outcomes: **We have been made aware of 17 possible instances of misuse and have no information on outcomes (Fraud issues are referred to Parking Enforcement)**
- Average time to process an Automatic application: 5 days (it is difficult to assess the average process time for a 'non-automatic' as we are reliant on the customer supplying further information or agreeing to a date for a Mobility Assessment).
- Number of corporate complaints received about the Blue Badge service for 2013 = **0. Most enquiries are not corporate complaints but are questions about qualifying criteria(i.e. why a badge has not been agreed)**

### **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

**Financial implications and risks:** None – update report

**Legal implications and risks:** None – update report

**Human Resources implications and risks:** None – update report

**Equalities implications and risks:** None – update report

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None