

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
8 November 2011 (7.30 - 9.50 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group Jeffrey Brace (Chairman), Dennis Bull, Peter Gardner and Garry Pain

Residents' Group John Mylod (Vice-Chair) and Barbara Matthews

Labour Group

**Independent Residents
Group**

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors David Durant.

All decisions were taken with no votes against.

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

13 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 September were agreed, subject to the following comments, and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Peter Gardner had sent apologies for the meeting, and these had been omitted from the minutes.

14 OLYMPIC ENFORCEMENT 2012

The Committee received a presentation on the Olympic Branding Enforcement from William Adams, the Trading Standards Operational Manager. The Committee were informed how the Games would be protected through the education of traders and business and through intelligence gathering. Enforcement would include the sale of fake tickets, counterfeit merchandise and any other scams associated with the Olympics.

Trading Standards departments nationally were working in partnership with the London 2012 Intellectual Property Crime Unit, Metropolitan Police, Customs and Excise, Sponsors, Stakeholder and Industry Groups. New laws were in place for the Olympics and these included:

- The Olympic Symbol Protection Act 1995.
- The London Olympic Games and Paralympics Games Act 2006.
- Advertising and street trading regulations Framework in the vicinity of Olympic events.
- An exclusion zone around the venues in the UK.
- Measures to prevent ambush marketing

The Committee were informed that the protection was important as the Government predict that £2 billion of merchandise will be sold of this the Government will receive 20% of the revenue. This is to be used as a legacy for the games, and without it taxpayers will all have to pay for any loss. The committee were concerned by this and felt that the protection was important.

The officer explained that Trading Standards were working closely with local Bed and Breakfast and Hotels in the area to ensure that rates were correct and there were no scams. Members asked how details of the protection would be publicised. Officers explained that they would have regular updates in the Romford Recorder, Living and on the Website.

The Committee were informed that through the London Regional Asset Recovery Team, any fly-pitchers could be apprehended and given a warning. If they were found to be selling again, then any profits/ money they had on them would be confiscated, as it is assumed to be criminality profit. This could go further and private property could also be seized, including cars, belongings and homes.

Under existing laws, in relation to Toys, electrical goods and the sale of alcohol to young people, there was a big concern around counterfeit toys. A recent case found toy cars being sold, with 90% higher lead chromium in the paint. If this got into a child's body, it would be there forever.

Over the period of the Olympics, Trading Standards Officer would have the powers of arrest, and search warrants could be used. There would be an Olympic Magistrates Court which would be open 24/7, to deal with any issues.

Members asked if there was any counterfeit merchandise already appearing. Officers advised that they had seen shirts, shorts, trainers and pin badges. They envisaged this becoming more common as Christmas approached.

Members asked if there was any additional funding for staff and resources. Officers explained that although sponsors had already agreed that they could provide storage and transportation of goods, any additional duties in other areas, would have to be paid for by that area.

The Committee thanked the officer for the informative presentation and asked for an update in 6 months time.

15 SOLAR PANEL PRESENTATION

The Committee received a presentation from the Energy Strategy Manager, on Solar Panels, which were installed on the roof of the Town Hall. The Committee were informed that they ran on a Feed-In Tariff; however the generation tariffs were changing as of 11 December 2011 and multi-installations would be counted essentially as one roof (i.e. Town Hall, Library, School etc.) This would reduce the Feed-In Tariff which the Council got back by approximately 10%. The Committee were concerned that because of this reduction, companies who had previously offered free installation of solar panels were no longer providing this service.

The Committee requested that officers write a letter to the Energy Minister stating that there is now no incentive for people to purchase/install solar panels, if the pay back was reduced significantly.

The Committee discussed how the Solar Panels would assist with the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC), given that each panel had to be in place for 25 years. The Committee agreed that Academies would be in situ for at least 25 years, however officers stated that there was no real control over academies, and there was a consultation on the CRC being carried out with Schools and Academies. Members requested the details of the feedback to be circulated.

Officers explained that before a house can install solar panels it has to be "C rated" and have all other insulation measures in place first. Given the cost implication and the very low Feed-In, the Government were conscious that only people who install/buy the solar panel systems could afford to pay out for them. There was criticism that the benefits were therefore only being gained by those that could already afford the system.

The Committee were shown details of the types of consumption information that officers could monitor, and that could be made available should the Committee wish to include this on future agendas. Members were keen to see more information on consumption use, and to make recommendations for further savings.

The Committee discussed the details of other energy saving schemes that had been put in place, and requested that details on Smart meters be provided for a future meeting.

16 BUDGET VARIANCE REPORT

The Committee was due to receive details on the Budget Variance Report, however the Chairman informed the Committee that the Leader of the

Council had stated that all budget related items should only be dealt with by Value OSC and this item would not therefore be discussed. Some members felt that this was not transparent scrutiny and stated that they would raise this with the Leader and at Full Council.

17 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Head of Streetcare tabled Performance Information Packs with details about the service's performance. This included details on Flytipping, Abandoned Cars, Tonnage of Household Waste, Missed Collections of Waste, together with information from Public Protection on service requests responded to within 5 working days, noise complaints responded to within 5 working days, and Non-Compliant Food Inspections.

The Committee asked about arrangements for nuisance vehicles, and if the cars were crushed. The Head of Streetcare agreed to circulate details on the procedure.

The Committee discussed other issues about waste and asked for further details on the gasification plant at Frog Island which had been agreed at Regulatory Services.

Officers explained that the information given for the Gullies Cleared indicator was often caused by the sewers not coping with the amount of rainwater, given that they are so old. This was the responsibility of Thames Water. Officers agreed to provide a map of where gullies start and sewers start.

Chairman