

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday 6 April 2011 (7.30pm – 9:15pm)
Havering Town Hall, Romford**

Present:

Councillors Jeff Brace (Chairman), Nic Dodin, David Durant, John Mylod, Fred Osborne (substitute for Councillor Dennis Bull) and Damian White (Substitute for Councillor Peter Gardner).

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

Chris Layton, Streetcare Co-ordinator, Highways, Mark Lowers, Energy Manager, Sheri Lim, Sustainability Officer and Claire Thompson, Policy Partnership and Performance Manager were also present.

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.

23. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 February 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

24. STREET LIGHTING BRIEFING

The Committee received a presentation on stock of street lighting within the Borough from the Streetcare Co-ordinator, Highways. The officer informed the Committee that there were approximately 20,500 units made up of the following:

- Lighting columns
- Illuminated signs
- Belisha beacons
- Refuge island beacons
- Illuminated bollards
- Unit high reflective bollards

The Committee noted that the current maintenance contract was held by May Gurney; however this would be retendered at the end of October 2011. The pre-tendering was underway and invitations were going out the following week. Officers informed the committee that there were 6-8 companies tendering.

The Committee were informed that they were looking to join an East London Contract (made up of Barking and Dagenham, Waltham Forest, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, and Havering) however the majority of other boroughs were currently tied into contracts, therefore this would now happen in 2014. The officer stated that the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham were currently without a contractor so Havering was tendering in partnership with them.

The Committee raised issues of how the pricing/ timescale would be specified in the tendering process in order to get the best service. The officer informed the Committee that they would specify that a percentage of lighting be working at any one time; if the contractor failed to meet this target, they would reduce the price that they paid. The officer informed the committee that there was one contractor for the repairs and maintenance; however any connection repairs had to be carried out by the energy supplier (EDF) only. The Committee noted that the average outage repair was around 4.9 days, whereas the supplier outage repair time was around 28 days.

The Committee were informed of the inventory issues that needed attention; these included the cast iron columns needing replacing, due to age and condition. The majority of these columns were over 40 years old, and the switches were located at the top of the column, rather than the bottom. The operatives were not able to work at height, and UK Power Networks would no longer maintain an electrical supply to this type of column once it develops a Dead Service. The Committee were informed that where possible Streetcare would replace a new column sited as close to the old one as possible, and arrange for EDF to disconnect the supply to the old and reconnect to the new column. The Committee noted however that in Conservation Areas, it was possible to put back the cast iron columns to keep in character with the area, but they would be refurbished and the switching moved to the bottom of the column.

The officer informed the committee that the concrete columns were cracking around the bracket area and shaft, and whilst some could be sleeved, the rest would need replacing. The Committee were informed that Streetcare were undertaking a Structural Testing programme, testing approximately 3000 columns per year. The testing had shown that approximately 90 steel columns had been given a RED status, which had been confirmed to mean more than 50% of the metal around the root had rusted and these columns needed to be removed. Approximately 1300 had been given AMBER status, and these were required to be retested within three years and could change to RED, resulting in a three year replacement programme. The results had shown that the cost to replace a column was between £1,000 - £1,500.

Members asked what happened with the old cast iron columns once they were removed. Officers informed the committee that the columns were removed by the contractor, and taken away for recycling as this is part of their contract.

Members asked if there were systems in place for motorists hitting and damaging columns. The officer informed the committee that there were systems in place to investigate motoring accidents involving columns, and if the motorist is insured then they pay for the damage to the column, the clearing up of debris and the cost of the call out. Members asked what happened if the motorist was uninsured and if there were any systems in place in incidences such as these. Officers stated that there were no systems currently in place, but they could investigate this with Legal and Finance colleagues.

The Committee were informed about the Energy Saving Initiatives being carried out, these included the replacement of old style Cast Iron columns through the Capital Programme and at the same time, using more energy efficient lanterns and Photocells saving 15% energy. This included the identification of signs that no longer need to be lit in accordance with "The Traffic Sign Regulations and General Direction 2002" and replacing illuminated bollards with Low-Voltage units, use of Non-illuminated versions and some Solar Powered Bollards where appropriate.

The Committee were shown a number of examples where improvements had been made with the use of PL-L (Compact Fluorescent) white light in place of the SOX lighting (Orange Coloured Light), and examples of where cast iron columns needed replacing. The Committee were informed that there was more robust lighting in place and that a saving had been made by illuminating street lights 15 minutes later and de-illuminating 15 minutes earlier. The Committee noted the improvements and the repairs needed.

The Energy Manager stated that the borough currently has 2,200 illuminated signs, of which 650 could now be de-illuminated. However EDF, the supplier, had stated that they would charge at £500 per sign to cap off the power, since this was an unmetered supply, and as an inventory has to be done every year, it had to be declared. This would mean no saving as there would still be live supply at each sign. However there were 128 signs on a private supply owned by the Council Which could be de-illuminated. For all the other signs, it was proposed that the removal of one lamp from each was carried out, and that a photocell be added, as these signs were illuminated 24/7. This would reduce the energy used by three quarters and the photocells would be added to the inventory. This would be a saving of approximately £35,000 a year. The allocated budget for the work would come from the Climate Change budget, and would be a total of £320,000. Members noted that LED lighting lasts for 15 years with a photocell.

The Committee **agreed** that this would be a saving, and **agreed** that a business case be written up to take the proposal forward.

25. CARBON REDUCTION COMMITMENT

The Committee received a presentation from the Energy Manger on the current Carbon Reduction Commitment. The Committee noted that this was a mandatory scheme and the original scheme was that the cost was £12 per

tonne, which was recycled back and this was either +/- 10%. The recycling element of the scheme had been removed, and scheme was based upon the usage in the previous year as to what credits are needed. The Committee were informed that the first year accrued started on 1 April 2011 and ended on 31 March 2012, this would then ensure that money was available for 2012/13.

The Committee were informed that the tonnage use per year in Havering was approximately 33,333 tonnes, which was a cost of £400,000; however, 50% of this was made up of schools usage. At the end of the year, a league table would be produced, however this would not be like for like, and included other private sector industries such as Banks. The officer stated that other Local Authorities may also have different buildings to Havering, and may not have the same number of sports centres or may have air-conditioned buildings; therefore the ranking in the league table would not be comparable.

The Committee were informed that the cost to schools could be deducted from the Dedicated Schools Grant rather than their general fund; however this would not include Academies, although this is included in their footprint report. The officer informed the committee that some schools were opening for community use, this would mean more energy usage out of hours, so would equate to 60% of the total cost.

The Committee were informed that for the first 3 years of the scheme the cost would be £12 per tonne, however in year 4 the credits would go on the open market, and therefore the cost could increase. If this was the case, the Council must forecast forward to agree if they buy more credits and then sell these on for a profit.

26. COUNCIL CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MODEL: REVIEW OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

The Committee received an updated on the Climate Change Action Plan from the Sustainability Officer. The officer stated that the Climate Change Action Plan was a programme of actions for all council departments to work towards in order to reduce energy use. The Committee were informed that in 2008 all council departments adopted a three year plan which ran from 2009 – 2012. The achievement would be to decrease CO₂ emissions by 7% resulting in a reduction of 2000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions by 2012.

The Committee were informed that the nine areas of actions were:

- Housing (Council stock)
- Buildings (Corporate buildings including Town Hall)
- Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (use of Solar Panels)
- Transport (Fuel Consumption)
- Development Planning and Regeneration (Materials used)
- Waste (Improved Recycling)
- Internal Strategic (Corporate Policies)
- Community Engagement (Schools, Businesses, Havering Show)

- Adaptation (Flooding, Heat wave)

The Committee were informed that there were a number of invest-to-save projects in Council buildings and schools, which would enable the Council to recycle back energy savings and reduce the carbon footprint of the council for the CRC. The Committee were also informed about external funding which was available for private households, in the way of loft/cavity wall insulation and boiler replacements. This was available free to people over 70 years old, and at a discounted rate for residents under 70, however this was means tested.

The Committee were informed of the highlights from the Climate Change Action Plan so far. These included all new builds and refurbishments to be energy efficient, energy efficient measures and half-hourly meter data from corporate buildings, electric and hybrid vehicles as part of the fleet management. Other measures included home energy efficiency measures through government grants, and raising awareness among schools, Council staff and residents.

The Committee were informed of the achievements to date; these included £376k spent on invest-to-save projects, with £75k energy savings annually. The Committee felt that this information should be circulated to all members via the Calendar Brief, so they were aware of the savings that the Council are making. There was a Salix grant of £250k which had been allocated to schools, since they make up 50% of the Carbon Reduction Commitment to reduce their consumption. This was on a loan basis, so the school would ultimately pay the money back, which would then be investing in other schools to assist with their consumption.

A member stated that they were a school governor, however were not aware of the Salix grant. Officers stated that they were working with the Headteachers and Bursars for schools. However it was up to the school if they wished to take it any further. The Committee were informed of future projects under the Climate Change Action Plan, and noted the update.

27. SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee agreed to defer this item to a later date.

28. ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11

The Committee received a report summarising the Committee's activities during its year of operation ended May 2011.

The Committee **noted** the Annual Report and authorised the Chairman to **agree** the final version; and **agreed** the report be referred to full Council.

29. REALLOCATION OF WORKLOAD OF PARTNERSHIPS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee received a report on the reallocation of workload of the Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Following the announcement by the Leader of the Council that Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be abolished at the end of the financial year the report invited the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees to consider adding to their work programmes items that were due to be considered in the future by the Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee were asked to “Review of Waste Management Partnerships – Biffa, East London Waste Authority, Shanks. The Committee **agreed** to add this to their work programme for the next municipal year.

30. FUTURE AGENDAS

Councillor Mylod asked that Budget Variance Reports be included in the meetings for the next municipal year. Other items discussed for future agendas included:

- Business Case for LED Lighting programme
- How Schools are being monitored under the Carbon Reduction Commitment
- Energy Efficiency Savings from the Tracker System used on Council Fleet
- Alternative vehicles (LPG)
- Waste Management Partnerships

.....

Chairman

6 April 2011