



EAST
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Regulatory Services Committee held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on 21st January 2019 at 4.30 p.m.

PRESENT

Cllr Anna Bailey (Chairman)
Cllr David Ambrose Smith (as a Substitute)
Cllr Sue Austen
Cllr Mike Bradley (as a Substitute)
Cllr Neil Hitchin
Cllr Julia Huffer
Cllr Chris Morris
Cllr Carol Sennitt
Cllr Jo Webber

ALSO PRESENT

Julia Atkins – Senior Environmental Health Officer
Jo Brooks – Director Operations
Darren Hughes – Client Officer (Waste)
James Khan – East Cambs Street Scene, Waste Minimisation & Fleet Manager
Liz Knox – Environmental Services Manager
Adrian Scaites-Stokes – Democratic Services Officer
Ian Smith – Finance Manager
Hetty Thornton – Performance Management Officer

45. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

46. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Elaine Griffin-Singh and Hamish Ross.

Councillors David Ambrose Smith and Mike Bradley attended as Substitute Members.

47. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors David Ambrose Smith, Anna Bailey and Carol Sennitt declared prejudicial interests in agenda item number 6, as they were all landlords. Councillor Anna Bailey declared an interest in agenda item number 8, as she was a Director of East Cambs Street Scene.

48. **MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the Regulatory Services Committee meeting held on 5th November 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

49. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcement:

For the second consecutive year, just before Christmas, the Chancellor announced an extra £55 million capital funding for Disabled Facilities Grants. East Cambridgeshire District Council have been allocated £67,394. The additional funding would be used to install level access showers, providing residents with washing facilities to enable them to remain in their own homes. The showers would be installed by the end of the financial year.

Councillors David Ambrose Smith, Anna Bailey and Carol Sennitt left the meeting at this point, 4:34pm. Councillor Julia Huffer took the Chair.

50. **PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

The Committee considered a report, reference T184, previously circulated, that reviewed the Policy to take into account new legislation and enforcement powers.

The Senior Environmental Services Officer advised the Committee that it was being asked to approve the Policy prior to consultation. The Council needed to ensure that it could enforcement landlords to maintain good standards. The Policy was designed to be fair but would allow rogue landlords to be dealt with. New legislation now permitted Local Authorities to issue fines rather than take people to court and any income raised would be used for enforcement. The proposed penalty matrix was as set out in Appendix 1 to the Policy document. Charges could also be made to cover administration and serving notices. So the penalties gave flexibility and allowed for recovery of costs.

Councillor Mike Bradley queried whether the proposed 6 week consultation was enough, as some parish councils owned houses and needed time to consider the Policy.

Councillor Julia Huffer concurred with that concern, as the consultation had to fit in with parish council timetables to give them a chance to respond. She then proposed that the consultation period be held for 8 weeks and the Committee agreed to this amendment.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the draft Private Sector Enforcement Policy be approved;
- (ii) That the Penalty matrix on page 34 be agreed;
- (iii) That it be agreed in principle to introduce a charge to cover the cost of administration and service of notices;
- (iv) That a consultation period of 8 weeks be agreed.

Councillors David Ambrose Smith, Anna Bailey and Carol Sennitt returned to the meeting at this point, 4:39pm. Councillor Anna Bailey resumed the Chair.

51. FUTURE PROVISION FOR THE COUNCIL'S CLINICAL WASTE SERVICE

The Committee considered a report, reference T185, previously circulated, that presented options for the future provision of the Council's clinical waste service.

The Performance Management Officer reminded the Committee that the Council had always offered a free service, which was undertaken by Novus on the Council's behalf. There was also a drop-off service to community pharmacies. However, a recent review was conducted which would result in local authorities becoming obliged to dispose of clinical waste, as NHS England would cease their service. 72 residents were currently covered by the Council's service but it was difficult to judge the impact on the Council under the new arrangements, as doctor's surgeries did not keep records of the people using them. The overall number of people could be as much as 2500. It had been agreed that RECAP (Recycling in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Partnership) would contact General Practitioners, though the Council had also made efforts to contact them.

If the service continued to be offered for free it would give rise to a significant risk of increased costs. If the Council continued to use Novus there would be no charge to the residents, though this option would cost £16K. A monthly collection was usual, but a fortnightly collection may become necessary. This would have to be assessed on an individual basis. Also, £37K would be required for running costs in Year 1. Therefore the new obligation would have an impact on the Council and its staff and residents would have to be informed.

Councillor Julia Huffer noted that in the far south of the district there appeared to be no pharmacies. Therefore the pharmacies in Newmarket should be contacted to participate to help the residents in that part of East Cambridgeshire.

Councillor Sue Austen thought pharmacies would be reluctant to take part for patients who were not theirs.

The Performance Management Officer disclosed that there was already a lot of cross border working, so she would be happy to speak to the Newmarket pharmacies. This could be offered on a reciprocal arrangement. RECAP had agreed the pharmacies that had signed up, with only Burwell excluded though it

was expected to join in the future. If the pharmacies could not take the clinical waste from 1st April then the Council would have to.

Councillor Anna Bailey thanked the officers for the work that had gone into preparing this report. It might be helpful if the proposed letter to residents included pharmacies in Newmarket on the list and map.

It was resolved:

- (i) That Option 1, to continue to work in partnership with Novus and collect clinical sharps waste collections from new collection points at Community Pharmacies and GP dispensing pharmacies from 1st April 2021, be agreed;
- (ii) That, where a resident is housebound due to a disability or any other medical reason and a friend, family member or carer is unable to access a Community Pharmacy or GP dispensing pharmacy, a free household clinical waste collection will continue to be offered quarterly free of charge upon receipt of a doctor's note.

*Councillor Anna Bailey left the meeting at this point, 4:47pm.
Councillor Julia Huffer took the Chair.*

52. QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE WASTE AND STREET CLEANSING SERVICES

The Committee considered a report, reference T186, previously circulated, that provided the Quarter 3 performance report for the delivery of the waste and street cleansing services by East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS).

The Waste Minimisation & Fleet Manager advised the Committee that he was delighted with how the last quarter had gone. The service had dealt with many request to deal with fly tips and had become more efficient, with over 90% cleared within the targets set. The intention now was to tackle the root cause of that problem and this would involve working with other Council departments. Street cleansing also continued to improve with graffiti removal being a focus.

Sick absence was proving to be a challenge, with the existing policy not be effective. During the three months of the last Quarter one driver had been absent the whole time and this had affected the figures. The employees were continuing to grow into their jobs and one had now become a heavy good vehicle driver.

Next quarter the aim was for excellence, which should support the hard work already put in.

Councillor Julia Huffer wanted to thank all the ECSS staff for making a real turnaround from the situation the Council inherited. It was an extraordinary effort and this was due to the dedication of all the staff.

Councillor Neil Hitchin also thanked the people involved in re-building the service. However, he had tried to get some graffiti cleaned up with his Ward on

several occasions without success. It was appreciated that graffiti was not a top priority but he was working with the Police to assist with the problem. The success of clearing fly tips was stunning.

The Waste Minimisation & Fleet Manager thought it unfortunate to hear about the problems in the Ward mentioned, as ECSS wanted to help with all queries it received. New processes and equipment should help the company react quicker and safer. The cause of these problems had to be eradicated.

It was resolved:

That the progress and improvements to service delivery since April the 1st 2018 and the Quarter 2 Performance Report be noted.

43. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered a report, reference T187, previously circulated, that provided budget information for services under the Regulatory Services Committee.

The Finance Manager pointed out to the Committee the underspends on both the revenue budget and capital programme.

Councillor Anna Bailey congratulated the officers on the underspend, as officers were focussed on this and producing results.

In response to Councillor Mike Bradley, the Finance Manager explained that the the underspends could help to balance the Council's budget.

It was resolved:

- (i) That it be noted that this Committee had a projected revenue underspend of £140,000 compared to its approved budget of £3,546,687;
- (ii) That it be noted that this Committee had a projected capital programme outturn of £1,584,849, which was an underspend when compared to its revised capital budget of £795,950.

44. FORWARD AGENDA PLAN

The Committee received its forward agenda plan. The Finance Manager pointed out that there would not be a Budget Monitoring report at the next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 4:58 p.m.