

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15 March 2016

5.30 - 7.30 pm

Present: Councillors Gawthrope (Chair), Perry (Vice-Chair), Gehring, Pitt, Ratcliffe, Robertson and Smart

Executive Councillor for Environment and Waste: Peter Roberts

Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport: Kevin Blencowe

Officers:

Director of Environment: Simon Payne

Project Delivery and Environment Manager: John Richards

Environmental Health Manager: Yvonne O'Donnell

Committee Manager: Claire Tunncliffe

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

16/1/ENV Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Baigent, Gillespie and C Smart.

16/2/ENV Declarations of Interest

No declarations were declared.

16/3/ENV Minutes

Minutes of the meetings held on 12 January 2016 were approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendment (deleted text ~~struck through~~ and additional text underlined) on page 18 of the agenda pack regarding item 16/48/ENV.

In response to the Committee's comments the Project Engineer and Senior Engineer, Streets and Open Spaces, noted the Committee's ~~advice~~ direction that the Queens Green proposal be removed from option 4 and should not be further investigated. ~~This related to the proposal of providing new remote provision on Queens Green.~~

16/4/ENV Public Questions

There were no public questions.

16/5/ENV Shared Services - Building Control Business Plan**Matter for Decision**

To consider the business plan for the shared Building Control Service.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

- i. Approved the business plan for shared Building Control Services attached at Appendix 1 of the Officer's report, with two additional recommendations to be included in the plan.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Director of Environment.

The report outlined that Cambridge City had become the Employing Authority for Building Control on October 1 2015. All impacted staff from Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils had successfully transferred under TUPE to their new employer.

The three councils had previously agreed that the achievement of the following outcomes constitute the primary objectives of the sharing services:

- Protection of services which support the delivery of the wider policy objectives of each Council
- Creation of services that are genuinely shared between the relevant councils with those councils sharing the risks and benefits whilst having in place a robust model to control the operation and direction of the service
- Savings through reduced managements costs and economies of scale
- Increased resilience and retention of staff
- Minimise the bureaucracy involved in operating the shared service
- Opportunities to generate additional income, where appropriate

- Procurement and purchasing efficiencies, and
- Sharing of specialist roles which individually, are not viable in the long-term.

Since October 1 2015, each shared service had been working to review staffing structures, working practices and overall service provision in order to deliver the desired outcomes of the shared service partnership, as outlined above.

A key part of the service reviews had been the development of a set of forward-looking business plans that set out the key priorities, objectives, activities and measures of success for each service. These could be found at Appendix 1 of the Officer's report.

It was recommended that the business plan be endorsed to enable the shared service to work to an agreed direction and deliver an agreed set of objectives. In the event that there were any revisions to the business plan that were due to operational matters a decision will be made by the Director of Environment (or successor) in consultation with the Executive Councillor.

In response to Members' questions the Director of Environment said the following:

- i. The £50,000 savings referenced in the report would be made across the three Councils based on an existing cost formula, with approximately £20,000 saving to the City Council.
- ii. The intention would be to move two of the hubs in the next two months and would further be reviewed over the next twelve months to ensure that the optimum arrangements were in place.
- iii. Further detail of how the benefits would be measured would be collated by Officers.
- iv. A schedule was currently being produced to harmonise the fees across all the Councils and the City Council would not subsidise the shared building control services.
- v. Services were being delivered in accordance with building regulations and each Council's climate control and sustainability policies.
- vi. The new arrangements allowed for the expansion of best practice, such as the employment of apprentices, recruiting of permanent staff, development and training which it was hoped would bring young people to the industry, of which there was a shortage.
- vii. Acknowledged that all figures needed to be transparent and clearly show a breakdown of the cost to the City Council.

- viii. Recognised that the speed of service was an important factor and further details could be provided on this matter.
- ix. Acknowledged there would be a risk to ICT when transferring to a single system to support the shared service.
- x. Staff would be encouraged to use remote working and access information on site rather than visit the office.
- xi. Greater risk was employment of staff; currently there were seven permanent positions which needed to be filled.
- xii. Error to say the project was time limited.
- xiii. Agreed to ensure that on the matter of learning across the three Councils that more detail was included in the business plan.
- xiv. Cambridge City was the only Council to be part of the 'Considerate Contractor Scheme' of which there was a cost. Agreed to put the suggestion forward that Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Council both sign up to the scheme.

Councillor Robertson proposed that the business plan be amended to include speed of service.

Councillor Gehring proposed that the business plan be amended to include point of learning across the shared service.

Members **resolved (nem com)** to accept both the recommendations.

The Committee **unanimously resolved** to endorse the recommendation with the two additional recommendations to be included in the plan.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation and two additional recommendations to be included in the plan.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

16/6/ENV Silver Street Public Conveniences Improvement

Matter for Decision

To consider the outcome of work to determine suitable options for further more detailed investigation, to include consultation with the public to improve the

existing City Council provided public toilets located beneath the Silver Street river bridge approach.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Environment & Waste.

- i. Agreed to the results of the scoping exercise on the various options identified in the Officer's report, and support further development work (including detailed design and public consultation) on potential variations around Option 2 (street level on existing site).

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Project Delivery Team Leader which referred to improving the existing City Council provided public toilets located beneath the Silver Street river bridge approach.

The report outlined the difficulties and challenges faced in maintaining and operating the existing facilities, and the poor level of service they offered to users. It also identified a number of constraints and potential opportunities associated with various options for their improvement.

Investigation and scoping work had been undertaken on a number of options as outlined in the Officer's report. This had involved the production of architectural concept drawings and a technical appraisal of the opportunities and constraints associated with each option, an indication of the likely costs involved in taking each forward and the views of key stakeholders including planning, conservation and heritage interests.

In response to Members' questions the Project Delivery and Environment Manager and the Executive Councillor for Environment and Waste said the following:

- i. If it would be possible to secure a site in the Mill Lane redevelopment would look to secure a nil cost to the City Council but this would be in

- consultation with the developers. It was not known when the redevelopment would begin.
- ii. Officers are liaising with key stakeholders regarding the diversion of the sewer run.
 - iii. To obtain consent to build above the existing sewer run within a 5 to 6 metre distance requires approval and consent.
 - iv. As the canopy for the disabled toilet was currently over the sewer run it was hoped that there could be a possibility to attach the new building to the canopy which would be in the 5 to 6 metre exclusion zone and no diversion needed.
 - v. A smaller building would have less impact to the area and a reduction in the number of cubicles should reduce the cost.
 - vi. The Equality Impact Assessment would continually be updated during the entire process.
 - vii. Option 3 of the Officer's report would mean that the existing underground space couldn't be re-used to any great extent.
 - viii. There was no guarantee that Queens Green would continue to be used as a coach stop but the existing site was a natural walk way to visit various sites.
 - ix. Any income from the kiosk would be a token income.
 - x. Cubicles would meet all equality requirements.
 - xi. New facilities at street level would be kept in the shroud of the willow trees on Silver Street to soften the impact as far as practicable.
 - xii. Fewer cubicles would equate to lower cleaning costs.

The Committee **unanimously resolved** to endorse the recommendation

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor and (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

16/7/ENV Business Regulation Plan 2016/17

Matter for Decision

To consider the Business Regulation Plan 2016/17

Decision of Executive Councillor for Environment and Waste

- i. Approved the Executive Summary of the Business Regulation Plan 2016-17, and by implication the full report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Environmental Health Manager.

The report outlined Cambridge City Council's responsibilities for enforcing food hygiene and health and safety enforcement in its area, and was required to produce an annual plan clarifying how this would be achieved. The Business Regulation Plan needed to clearly define the objectives permitting the Council to fulfil its responsibilities for the year, and confirm that it had committed sufficient resources to facilitate this work.

As the Plan was a large document an executive summary had been produced as Appendix A which identified all of the key aspects of the full report, which was available to view in full, and if approved by committee would imply approval of the full Plan.

In response to Members' questions the Environmental Health Manager said the following:

- i. Regulations outlined who were the enforcing authorities responsible for the investigation of an accident, whether it was the Health and Safety Executive or the City Council.
- ii. The City Council were responsible to investigate all accidents and complaints concerning Officers, shops, railway, small factories, small manufactures and building merchants.
- iii. Confirmed there was only one category A premises for food (restaurant) which meant the premises were inspected every six months due to poor standard. Those premises in category B were inspected every twelve months, category C premises were inspected every eighteen months. These standards had been set by the Officers inspecting the properties based on the high risk food served, hygiene and management.
- iv. The City Council was currently promoting a healthy eating campaign working with public health colleagues. Officers had attended seven community events to promote this scheme; in conjunction with the public

health reference group making a contribution to a weight management initiative.

- v. Guidance and mentoring to all food business was available if requested.
- vi. Housing Officers would inspect kitchens in student accommodation as the kitchen was part of the living quarters.
- vii. Invited members of the committee to join Officers when undertaking inspections.

The Committee **unanimously resolved** to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

The meeting ended at 7.30 pm

CHAIR