
Minutes of the meeting of the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee, that was held in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford on Thursday, 16 March 2023

Present:

Members:

Councillor A Goggin	Chairman
Councillor D Blackwell	Vice-Chairman
Councillor J Fleming	
Councillor P Gadd	
Councillor R Moore	
Councillor J Newport	
Councillor L Scordis	
Councillor M Skeels	
Councillor M Steel	Vice-Chairman
Councillor M Vance	
Councillor S Barker	Substitute
Councillor M Platt	Substitute

Officers:

Jason Searles	Head of Strategic Development and Compliance
Katy Chambers	Circular Economy Development Manager
Justin Styles	Design Manager
Daniel Maclean	Highway Liaison Team Leader
Justin Long	Senior Democratic Services Officer (clerk to the meeting)
Emma Hunter	Democratic Services Officer

Cllr Malcom Buckley, Cabinet Member for Waste Reduction and Recycling
Cllr Lee Scott, Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport.

Welcome and Introduction

Cllr Alan Goggin, the Chairman of the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee, welcomed those in attendance.

1. Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

The report on Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received, and it was noted that:

1. The membership of the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee was as shown in the report.
2. Apologies had been received from Cllr Dan Land and Cllr Holly Whitbread. Cllr Susan Barker and Mark Platt were substituting for them respectively.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 January 2023 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman, subject to the clarification that Cllr Jane Fleming was in attendance.

The Matters Arising report was noted and following points were agreed:

- Responses to the consultation on the cycling strategy would be covered when the draft strategy is considered by the Committee later in the year.
- The Chairman would clarify with officers which highways KPIs could be presented for scrutiny.
- Enquires would be made with officers on the s106 process and the perception that Essex Highways demanded less for sustainable transport provision compared with contributions for improvements aimed at car traffic.

3. Questions from the Public

There were no questions from the public.

4. Work Programme

The updated Work Programme was noted.

Following discussion, it was agreed to add the following items to the Work Programme:

- Community Safety (general update including the work of the Safety Advisory Group)
- Road Hierarchy Strategy Review (including links to 20mph policy and wider sustainable transport initiatives)
- Economic Growth (update on activity to attract high-quality jobs to Essex and retain graduates)
- Infrastructure Funding Statement.

5. Performance Update

The Committee received report PSEG/08/23 relating to performance update for the *Everyone's Essex – Our Plan for Levelling Up the County: 2021 – 2025* strategy.

It was noted that the only performance indicator under PSEG's remit marked with a 'Red' RAG Rating was *Replacing streetlights (mainly residential roads) in Essex with new LED lights*.

It was agreed that the outcome of the Scrutiny Board's discussion on the issue of asbestos at King Edmund School (Rochford) would be report back to the Committee.

6. Booking System Trial at Recycling Centres

Cllr Malcolm Buckley introduced the report (PSEG/09/23) and a presentation which can be found [here](#).

Members were invited to ask questions and provide comment. Key points raised during this discussion included:

- Operational issues regarding the trial including the booking system, appointment process, slot availability, staffing and managing sites.
- It was agreed that data on missed appointments (from the Rayleigh trial) would be shared with the Committee.
- It was confirmed that there had been a 13% reduction in waste tonnage (made-up of a reduction in both recycling and general waste) at the Rayleigh site during the trial, but other (non-trial) sites had also seen reductions albeit smaller. It was agreed that figures on later would be shared with the Committee.
- The implications of the transfer of waste from the recycling sites to kerbside collections.
- ECC were willing to discuss reciprocal arrangements with other local authorities where agreements were not already in place (London authorities, Southend, Thurrock).
- The development of 'Re-use' options on sites was being actively considered.
- One of the key aims of the trial was to improve the overall user experience at the sites.
- The cost of the trial was contained in existing budgets and further information would be circulated to the Committee. If the trial became permanent, then more bespoke technical options might be needed.
- On the evaluation of the trial, the Committee agreed that it would like to see the following information presented: a site-by-site breakdown of the trial; details of public responses (not just an officer summary); accessibility impact including for elderly residents and those not online; baseline (pre-trial) information for the sites on issues such as congestion; fly-tipping statistics (public and private land); and an assessment of air quality/climate impact.

7. Local Highway Panels

Cllr Lee Scott introduced the report (PSEG/10/23) and summarised the final responses to the recommendations of the LHP Task and Finish Group.

Key points raised during this discussion included:

- It was reported that ECC had been awarded £5.4million in the recent Budget to repair potholes. The Cabinet Member was awaiting details but reported that the additional funding would alter some of the responses contained within his report in light of these additional funds.
- Clarification was given on the role of the Chairman's Panel alongside the ongoing autonomy of individual LHPs on issues such as meeting formats, membership and schemes chosen.

- Following the announcements in both the ECC and the Government Budget, additional monies would be given to LHPs with full details to be confirmed.
- Concerns were raised about the proposed mechanism for residents to suggest schemes to LHPs and subsequently it was agreed by the Cabinet Member that this idea would not progress.
- Information would be provided to members on the validation process for schemes and how this would not necessarily need to happen via LHPs.
- It was agreed that a report on LHPs would be brought back to the Committee in approximately six months' time
- It was agreed that in the coming weeks a briefing session would be organised for Committee members on LHP funding for the coming financial year and to answer any outstanding questions. As a part of this, the Terms of Reference for the new LHP Super Panel would be circulated to Committee members.
- The Cabinet Member reported that a new member-led pothole scheme was being designed.
- The Committee expressed concern about any proposals for the member-led pothole scheme to go through LHPs. Members expressed further concern about the lack of pre-decision scrutiny of the new member-led pothole scheme and noted that the Committee had not reviewed the success of the existing scheme.
- Officers confirmed that the new tracking tool for members to monitor LHP schemes would be available from April.
- Officers further confirmed that the training on LHPs referenced in the report would be devised and ready in April.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee noted that the next scheduled meeting would take place on Thursday 20 April 2023, 10:30am at County Hall.

9. Urgent Business

No items were raised.

Chairman