

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESSEX COUNTYWIDE TRAVELLER UNIT COMMITTEE HELD AT COUNTY HALL, CHELMSFORD AT 10:00AM ON 12 DECEMBER 2014

Members of the Committee present:

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| Cllr Susan Barker | Uttlesford District Council |
| Cllr Roger Hirst | Essex County Council |
| Cllr Richard Moore | Basildon Borough Council |
| Chief Inspector Craig Carrington | Essex Police |

Substitutes and other Members present:

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| Cllr K Hudson | Rochford District Council |
| Andy Stapleton | Essex Fire & Rescue Service |

Also present was:

Stephen Andrews – ECC
Ian Haines – Maldon District Council
Anna Lambert - ECC
Ian Myers – ECC
Jim Nicolson – Thurrock Council
David Poole - ECC

1. Apologies and Substitution Notices

Apologies were received from Cllr Tim Bourne, Cllr Richard Bassett, Cllr Jo McPherson, Cllr Frank Delderfield, Cllr Philip Smith, Mike Gogarty, Deputy Fire Officer Adam Eckley and Shaun Scrutton.

2. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed that Cllr Hirst be elected Chairman of the Committee and Councillor Susan Barker as Vice-Chairman.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

5. Matters Arising

Members were informed that meetings with private land owners have taken place with some interest being shown in the service. It was agreed the package

of support, which is presently in preparation, be an item on a future agenda of this Committee.

The EQIA has been reviewed and updated and is attached to these Minutes for information.

6. Operational Report

The committee received an update from Stephen Andrews, Manager of the Essex Countywide Traveller Unit which focused on key issues relating to health, education, fire, police and unauthorised encampments.

Members also discussed the collection of waste from encampments and Cllr Barker agreed to raise the issue at an appropriate committee.

It was **agreed** that the report be re-issued to include data on all Districts in the partnership, census figures and feedback on how home education is monitored.

7. Finance and Audit Report

The committee received the latest financial report from David Poole, Senior Financial Analyst, ECC.

Members noted in particular:

- The financial update for the six months to 20 September 2014.
- Recommendations for the budget for 2015/16.
- Recommendations for the membership fees for 2015/16.
- The response of the External Auditor regarding the Annual Submission for 2013/14.

Members were informed that:

- 86% of the budget had been used at year end.
- The level of reserve of approximately £100,000 was deemed appropriate. The reserve may decrease once final database costs are known.
- A 10% reduction in both budget and membership fees was being proposed for 2015/16 without any financial risk.

Following discussion it was **agreed**:

- Membership fees will be reduced by 10% for 2015/16.
- The accounts for 2013/14 are accepted and published.
- The External Auditors report be accepted.
- That a report to enable the committee to assess the effectiveness of internal controls be produced for the next committee.

Members requested a more detailed Budget and Business Plan, including performance indicators, for 2015/16 be prepared and circulated for comment prior to any decision on a reduction to the 2015/16 budget.

8. High Level Risk Assessment

The committee received an update from Stephen Andrews, Manager of the Essex Countywide Traveller Unit, and Members noted the Business Risk Assessment and current assessment of risk.

Members **agreed** that a 'good news' profile and list of achievements be produced and shared with Essex Councils.

9. Horse Policy Update

The committee received an update from Stephen Andrews. It was **agreed** that the issues need to be quantified to establish if a joint approach with Essex Police needs to be developed.

10. Renewal of Joint Committee agreement and possible new partners

The committee received an update from Anna Lambert detailing those Councils intending to renew and those indicating an interest.

Members **agreed** that a formal e-mail detailing the benefits of the work of the Unit be circulated to all Essex Councils, Essex Fire and Essex Police, that will also ask for a formal response on the question of renewal from October 2015.

11. Any Other Business

The issue of fly tipping was raised and Members discussed the benefits of an Essex wide service to tackle the problem. Members agreed the way forward was for the production of a Business Plan for their consideration.

Members **agreed** that a Business Plan for 2015/16 be produced and circulated for consideration during January 2015.

12 Date of Future Meeting

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.45am

Chairman