

ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

Meeting held on Tuesday, 9 June 2015 at the Council Offices,
Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr D.E. Clifford (Chairman)
Cllr Sophia Choudhary (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr M.S. Choudhary
Cllr Sue Dibble
Cllr D.S. Gladstone
Cllr G.B. Lyon
Cllr J.J. Preece
Cllr L.A. Taylor
Cllr D.M. Welch

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Cr. D.E. Clifford be appointed Chairman for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Cr. Sophia Choudhary be appointed Vice-Chairman for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th March, 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman

4. THE ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

The Panel received the revised and updated Environment Improvement Strategy, together with a presentation from Ms. Helen Lolley, Environmental Health Manager Pollution/Environmental Control. Ms. Lolley explained that the Environment Improvement Strategy had been introduced in 2008 in response to new powers to deal with environmental problems. The Panel was reminded that, in response to a notice of motion to Council, they had made seven recommendations to Cabinet in November, 2013. Six of these had been addressed and implemented and the seventh recommendation - to update the existing three core strands of the strategy (education, cleansing and enforcement) was still outstanding.

The Panel was updated on the progress with the six recommendations:

- (1) To make spitting an offence using Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's). The Panel was informed that no FPN's had been served to date as it had been difficult to catch people committing such offences.
- (2) Financial rewards for reporting fly tipping – one case was to be heard in Court on 2nd July, 2015.
- (3) Officers to be encouraged to serve FPN's – figures had shown that this had been happening to a greater degree than before.
- (4) Numbers of residents using the discounted bulky waste service to be recorded – figures had shown that 30% had been using the service.
- (5) Free bulky waste collections on certain days in the year – it was reported that an increase in incidents of fly tipping had been recorded.
- (6) Restaurants to record vehicle registration numbers on packaging – this was being used in McDonalds. Following legal advice McDonalds had now stopped this practice so this had not been taken up by Rushmoor.

With regard to the seventh recommendation, Members had requested added emphasis to education, communication and engagement initiatives, maintaining and improving the environment and enforcement and publicity of offenders.

The Strategy had been updated to reflect the Panel's recommendations and changes to legislation. The revised Strategy had also been rebranded to help people identify more with where they lived. The need to build on current partnerships had also been recognised and a communications plan was being developed alongside the Strategy. Pre-campaign work included the development of branding, involvement with local businesses, the police and other stakeholders, as well as school and community initiatives.

The Panel was updated on current issues and these included fly-tipping, particularly in Cherrywood, on both public and private land. It was reported that the problem had initially been reduced but incidents were now recurring so enforcement and prevention activity was being resumed in that area. Littering, dog fouling and abandoned vehicles were also issues. Ms. Lolley assured the Panel that new legislative powers would enable the Council to deal with issues using an alternative approach. New legislation included Public Space Protection Orders and Community Protection Notices which had already been considered in a number of areas within the Borough.

With regard to enforcement and publicity of offenders, it was reported that 70 Fixed Penalty Notices had been served during 2014/15 for littering and dog fouling. To date 48 had been paid at the lower rate of £50 and four successful prosecutions had taken place for failing to pay. The revenue from the fines had been used to fund further environmental improvements, for example the

purchase of a device to remove chewing gum. The Panel was also advised that Rushmoor had been publicising prosecutions of offenders.

In the future it was envisaged that further improvements would be made through:

- (1) Channel Shift which would enable improved reporting and feedback and 'Confirm Connect' - which would allow for mobile working and the mapping of hotspots.
- (2) A caged vehicle had been ordered which would allow small fly tips to be collected immediately. This was a new vehicle which replaced one of the existing vans which had come to the end of its lease.
- (3) Improvements would be sought through the new contract for waste/grounds cleansing:
 - to direct resources where they were needed, not where scheduled;
 - to add provisional items within the contract for street washing and gum removal in the town centre areas; and
 - the Social Value Act; the Council would be exploring how the contractor could add value socially, environmentally and economically, with school talks, organising and supporting community litter picks and working with local companies to co-ordinate volunteer days for bulb planting for example.

The Panel **NOTED** the presentation and **AGREED** that:

Action to be taken	By whom	When
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Environmental Health Manager would report back on the following issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the possibility of initiating a 'Clean Street Award' which could be presented to residents by the Mayor, in conjunction with the Farnborough Civic Society; and - the possibility of extending bulky waste collection discounts for benefit claimants. 	Ms. Helen Lolley/ Contracts Manager	August, 2015

5. THE DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

The Panel received a presentation from Louise Piper and Katie Bailey, Planning Policy and Conservation Managers on the Council's draft Local Plan which was out for consultation from 8th June, 2015 until 20th July, 2015. The draft Local Plan had been developed in discussion with the cross-party Local Plan Member Steering Group for Rushmoor and would contain strategic policies, detailed development management policies and site allocations for the period up to 2032. The Plan would also incorporate a refresh of the policies in the Council's Core Strategy.

The Panel was informed that the Plan set out Rushmoor's housing targets for the period 2011 and 2032. Whilst the Panel was informed that evidence suggested that 470 houses per annum would be required, initial capacity work had suggested that 390 homes per annum would be deliverable within the Borough. In the first instance, endeavours would be made to address the resulting shortfall of 1,600 homes in discussions with other housing market area partners (Hart and Surrey Heath). Evidence also identified a need for 197 affordable rental properties per year and recommended that between 35 – 40% of new homes delivered should be affordable homes.

In relation to the town centres, the key strategic policy framework for development in Aldershot and Farnborough was set out in the Core Strategy and this had been updated in the Local Plan. Key changes included more emphasis on family focussed leisure and entertainment uses and the evening economy and the promotion of linked trips. The policy for the North Camp District Centre sought to maintain the role and vibrancy of the area, to support local and specialist retail functions and promote the vibrant evening economy whilst protecting local community uses, improving accessibility through traffic management and improved cycle and pedestrian linkages and to support the retention of car parking facilities.

With regard to employment, the Council's Core Strategy allocated 21 key employment sites within the Borough. Following a number of changes in national planning policy and local priorities, the draft Local Plan set out the Council's revised approach.

The Panel was advised that during the consultation period documentation was available on line at www.rushmoor.gov.uk/newlocalplan. Town centre exhibitions would be taking place as well as drop in sessions arranged at the Council Offices. There would also be further opportunity for comment in early 2016 on the draft submission version of the Local Plan, followed by an examination in the Summer of 2016, and adoption of the Plan by the Council in late 2016.

The Panel **NOTED** the presentation.

6. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PANEL AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel received a presentation from Mr. Ian Harrison, Corporate Director on the Panel's areas of responsibility.

The Panel was informed that the Environment Panel's portfolio included Planning and Building Control, the promotion of the economy and regeneration within the Borough, Street Scene Services, Environmental Health and other matters relating to the letting and monitoring of major contracts and Council by-laws.

The presentation also outlined those areas recently scrutinised by the Panel with a view to potential items for future scrutiny during the 2015/16 Municipal Year. On considering the areas suggested, the Panel agreed that the following items should be a priority for the current year:

- Parking strategy, including parking policy for new developments and town centre parking
- Waste recycling and grounds maintenance contract arrangements
- Markets
- Bus services
- Review of the Borough's cycling infrastructure
- Pest control, weeding and litter in Aldershot Town Centre.

The Panel requested budget information in relation to the Panel's specific portfolio to help decide which items should be prioritised and **AGREED** that:

Action to be taken	By whom	When
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Panel Members would be invited to the next Mid-Cycle Meeting to finalise the work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year. 	Panel Administrator	June, 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two of the 2015/16 Panel meetings would be earmarked for Princes Hall, Aldershot. 	Panel Administrator/ David Phillips	June, 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairman would write to Stagecoach to request their attendance at a future meeting to discuss local bus services. 	Chairman	June, 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairman would write to Hampshire County Council to express the Panel's concerns relating to the reduction in operating hours during weekday evenings for the Farnborough Waste Recycling Centre at Eelmoor Road, Farnborough. 	Chairman	June, 2015

7. APPOINTMENTS FOR 2015/16

(1) Mid-Cycle Meetings –

It was agreed that Cr. L.A. Taylor would attend the mid-cycle meetings in 2015/16 as the representative of his political group, along with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

(2) Parking Task and Finish Group –

It was agreed that Crs. Liz Corps, R.L.G. Dibbs, D.M. Welch and Sue Dibble would comprise the Parking Task and Finish Group during 2015/16.

(3) Farnborough Town Centre Task and Finish Group –

It was agreed that Crs. Liz Corps, P.G. Taylor, M.D. Smith and L.A. Taylor would comprise the Farnborough Town Centre Task and Finish Group during 2015/16 (with Crs. J.H. Marsh, G.B. Lyon and C.P. Grattan as deputies).

(4) Aldershot Town Centre Task and Finish Group –

It was agreed that Crs. Sophia Choudhary, P.I.C. Crerar, B.A. Thomas, D.M. Welch, R. Hughes, A.H. Crawford, Sue Dibble, Jennifer Evans and J.J. Preece would comprise the Aldershot Town Centre Task and Finish Group in 2015/16 (Cr. M.S. Choudhary would act as deputy). Cr. R. Hughes would be invited as required as a Cabinet Member.

(5) Secondary Town Centre Task and Finish Group -

The Panel also agreed that a secondary Town Centre Task and Finish Group should be set up to evaluate what could be done to improve the Borough's secondary towns. The Task and Finish Group would run for a fixed period of one year only and would report back to the Panel with its findings at the end of the Municipal Year when it would be decided if the Group should continue. It was agreed that Crs. D.S. Gladstone, Sue Dibble, L.A. Taylor, G.B. Lyon and S.J. Masterson would be appointed for the current 2015/16 year.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

CLLR D.E. CLIFFORD (CHAIRMAN)
