

# **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Date:** 5 December 2016

**Venue:** East Northamptonshire House, Cedar Drive, Thrapston

**Time:** 7.30pm

**Present:** Councillors: Richard Lewis (Chairman)  
Glenvil Greenwood-Smith (Vice Chairman)  
Steven North (Leader of the Council)  
Glenn Harwood MBE (Deputy Leader of the Council)

Tony Boto Dudley Hughes JP  
Val Carter Andy Mercer  
Roger Glithero JP Sarah Peacock  
Marika Hillson Philip Stearn

## **295. WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed Frank Harrison, the new Health Protection Manager, to his first meeting of the Committee.

## **296. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Brackenbury, Wendy Brackenbury and Helen Harrison. Councillor Dudley Hughes sent apologies for his late arrival.

## **297. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **298. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

## **299. QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.3**

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.3.

## **300. MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES**

### **a) Personnel Sub-Committee – 14 November 2016**

The minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 14 November 2016 were received (see pages 238 to 240).

### **301. COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANTS**

The Community Partnerships Manager presented a report which made a number of recommendations from the Member Panel on awarding Community Support Grants for 2017-20.

The themes for the Community Support Grants 2017-20 were:

- Debt management
- Counselling and support
- Community transport

Five applications had been received for the Grants, two for debt management, two for counselling and support and one for community transport. Four of the applications progressed to stage 2 of the process.

The Panel had recommended the award of Community Support Grants to the following:

- Debt management – Community Law Service (Northampton and County)
- Counselling and support – Service 6
- Community transport – Serve and Volunteer Action Oundle consortium

The Member Panel had also had discussions with the Scrutiny Committee Panel that had been set up to review public transport in East Northamptonshire and which had identified a number of issues as part of their review. In light of this, the applicants for the community transport theme were asked to set out what additional work they would do if more financial resources were available. At its meeting on 9 November 2016, Scrutiny Committee resolved to recommend to this Committee that the grant for community transport be increased by £5,000 for 2017/18, with a further review for 2019/20 to see if demand had increased significantly.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Equality Implications relating to the report be noted.
2. That the award of the Community Support Grants for 2017-20 for each of the themes be approved.

*(Reason – to continue with the implementation of the Community Support Grants as approved by this Committee.)*

#### **R.16 RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:**

That an additional £5,000 for the community transport theme grant be approved.

*(Reason – to increase capacity in the community transport theme grant to meet the demands of the service in the future.)*

### **302. DRAFT HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY**

The Housing Strategy and Delivery Manager presented a report which sought approval to release the draft Housing Allocation Policy for formal public consultation.

There had been a number of changes to wording and to the ordering of the document, including:

- A new section had been added to cover the new Right to Move Regulations
- A new section had been added on shared ownership
- Owner-occupiers and applicants with sufficient income or assets to purchase a property would now generally be excluded from the register and a maximum income restriction of £60,000 imposed. There would be exceptions, but applicants would be subject to a much more rigorous financial assessment. The restrictions would also apply to older owners (60+) although their potential needs for specialist accommodation and the relative availability and costs of this would also be taken into consideration.

The consultation period would last approximately two months and any comments and views would be incorporated into the final version of the policy. Any implications of the Homelessness Reduction Bill, which was currently going through Parliament, and of further welfare reform changes would also be incorporated. The final version of the policy would be brought back to this Committee in March 2017 for consideration. It was anticipated that once the necessary IT changes had been implemented the new policy should be in force from 1 July 2017.

There would be some one-off costs involved as a result of necessary changes to the on-line housing register to take account of the policy amendments and these had been estimated at around £10,000. As this was a one-off cost, it was suggested that the most appropriate source of funding would be from reserves. Full details would be included in a further report to the Committee following the consultation period and once any further legislative requirements had been identified.

During discussion, Members sought clarification as to the term 'immediate family'. Concern was also expressed at using reserves to fund the changes and there may be a need to look at other ways of funding during the budget setting process.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Equality Implications relating to the report be noted.
2. That, subject to the amendments identified, the Draft Housing Allocation Policy 2017 be approved for full consultation.

*(Reason – to accord with legislation and to ensure the fair allocation of affordable housing.)*

**303. MODEL LICENCE CONDITION AND GUIDANCE FOR DOG BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS 2016**

The Health Protection Manager presented a report which considered the adoption, in full, of the new Model Licence Conditions and Guidance for Dog Breeding Establishments 2016, associated with the provision for licensing animal boarding establishments under the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963.

The new Model Licence Conditions aimed to improve the administrative management of each establishment and raise the standards of welfare for the boarded animals and safety for the public and animals. They required an improvement in the minimum acceptable standards permitted in all licensed establishments to a prescribed standard. The changes

applied mainly to the requirements for documented staff training and animal safety and welfare provision and for some structural changes for the kennels, exercise areas and site drainage.

New licence applications would be expected to meet the Model Licence Conditions prior to the granting of a licence whilst existing establishments would be permitted a reasonable and graduated period to comply. In exceptional cases, where full compliance was seen as prohibitive, managed exemptions would be considered.

The proposed period for graduated introduction of the conditions was:

- Up to 2 years for the documented procedures for staff training and animal safety and welfare;
- Up to 5 years for the minor structural alterations to the kennels;
- Up to 10 years for the significant structural alterations required to meet the standards for drainage, kennelling and exercise arrangements.

Consultation had been carried out involving all of the existing licenced animal boarding establishments during August and September 2016 and most responses showed support for the new Model Conditions. The area of concern was the timescales for implementation; however, the proposed graduated implementation addressed this concern.

In response to questions, the Health Protection Manager confirmed that a member of his staff had animal welfare experience and they would be involved in the assessments, including agreeing the length of time for changes to be made. It was also confirmed that similar conditions applied to those premises which held Wild Animal licences.

It was moved, seconded and agreed that the period of graduated introduction of the conditions be amended to:

- Up to 2 years for the documented procedures for staff training and animal safety and welfare;
- Up to 3 years for the minor structural alterations to the kennels;
- Up to 5 years for the significant structural alterations required to meet the standards for drainage, kennelling and exercise arrangements.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Equality Implications relating to the report be noted.
2. That the Model Licence Conditions and Guidance for Dog Boarding Establishments 2016, with the associated implementation timetable as amended, and managed exemptions be adopted.

*(Reason – to accord with legislation.)*

#### **304. THE SMOKE FREE (PRIVATE VEHICLES) REGULATIONS 2015**

The Health Protection Manager presented a report which considered a proposal to authorise suitably qualified and experienced enforcement officers to enforce the provisions of the Smoke Free (Private Vehicles) Regulations 2015, made under the Public Health Act 2006.

The Regulations required that private vehicles carrying a child were smoke free, and local authorities were required to take enforcement action against anyone found to be smoking whilst a child was present in a vehicle. The primary responsibility to detect and enforce lied with the Police as they had powers to stop and search moving vehicles, although it was expected that local authorities would work alongside the police to undertake targeted interventions including working with schools and community groups to raise awareness of the law.

The Regulations permitted the enforcement authority to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) or to proceed to prosecute the offence. Guidance suggested that FPNs should be used for initial offences whilst prosecution should be used for repeat offenders or those who refused to accept the FPN.

During discussion, Members felt that the new Regulations were intrusive and unworkable. Officers confirmed that enforcement would take place during the course of other activities; however, policies had not yet been agreed for enforcement. It was also confirmed that the Regulations only covered cigarette smoke and not vaping smoke.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Equality Implications relating to the report be noted.

**R.17 RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:**

That provision is made in Part 3.2 of the Constitution (Scheme of Delegation) to authorise the following officers to enforce the provisions of the Smoke Free (Private Vehicles) Regulations 2015:

- a. Environmental Health Officers
- b. Environmental Health Technical Officers
- c. Environmental Protection Officers
- d. Licencing Enforcement Officers
- e. Health Protection Officers
- f. Waste Management Officers

*(Reason – to accord with legislation.)*

**305. COLLECTIONS ARRANGEMENTS FOR WASTE ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT**

The Waste Services Manager presented a report which proposed a number of options for the ongoing provision of collections for Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE).

In April 2015, the Council was awarded a grant from the WEEE Distributor Take Back scheme of £30,000 to implement a pilot collection scheme in the district. The 'Rag and Phone' Service consisted of a series of pop up bring sites for members of the public to deliver their WEEE to. It was estimated that the WEEE which householders disposed of using the service could be up to three hundred tonnes per year, but the scheme had only yielded approximately 10 tonnes over the year of operation.

The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013 stated that producers were responsible in making provision and underwriting the costs of collection of electrical and electronic products on the market and this was usually discharged by way of Producer Compliance Schemes. The schemes were managed by companies who facilitated the

collection and disposal of WEEE and the retailers paid towards the operating costs, meaning local authorities who provided collections should have been able to access disposal arrangements at no cost. However, changes to the way in which the quotas for disposal were allotted meant that some of the operators of the compliance schemes had met their allotted quotas early. The impact of this for local authorities was that disposal arrangements could be terminated with little or no notice should a scheme operator have reached their allotted tonnage for collections.

The following three options were considered:

- Option 1 – a weekly collection service, which alternated between north and south collection routes and enabled residents to bring their WEEE material to the vehicle
- Option 2 – reinstate a network of bring banks in locations around the district enabling residents to have ongoing access to drop off locations for WEEE
- Option 3 – no service provision. Residents could utilise the bulky collection service, or access the Household Waste Recycling Centre to dispose of their WEEE items

During discussion, Members stated that it should not fall on the Council to pick up the cost when a company had met their quota. There was a need to educate the buying public on the free disposal arrangements with manufacturers and to encourage companies to make buyers aware.

**RESOLVED:**

That Option 3 is the preferred option for the future delivery of WEEE collections.

*(Reason – to ensure efficient and effective delivery of service.)*

**306. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ENFORCEMENT POLICY UPDATE**

The Waste Services Manager presented a report which updated the Environmental Services Enforcement Policy Statement to include the new legislation for the microchipping of dogs and unauthorised deposit of waste following the approval and delegated responsibility agreed at previous meetings of the Committee.

The following additions would be added to the policy statement:

**Appendix F – Waste, Litter and Dog Control**

**The Unauthorised Deposit of Waste (Fixed Penalties) Regulations 2016**

F3.7 From May 2016, in accordance with the above regulations, an individual committing an offence as described in section F3.3, may have the opportunity to discharge any liability to conviction for an offence by payment of a fixed penalty of £400.

F3.8 Where there is an offence committed as described in F3.3, the officer will consider the nature and scale of the waste accumulation and potential costs for removal. Where accumulations are likely to cost in excess of £400 for removal, offences will be considered significant and will no longer be suitable to be discharged as described in F3.7.

## **The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015**

- F6.9 Any person who keeps a dog has mandatory responsibility with regard to microchipping and registering the details of the keeper and the dog, with an approved microchip database. Section 13 of the regulations makes it an offence for the keeper of a dog to fail to;
- Microchip a dog within twenty one days of being serviced with a notice to do so.
  - Update the keeper details where the ownership of a dog has changed
  - Implant a microchip unless they have completed an approved training course for that purpose
  - Update the Keeper details within seven days of being served with a notice to do so.
  - Obstruct an authorised officer from arranging microchipping for an unchipped dog.
- F6.10 Failure to comply with a notice is an offence punishable on summary conviction with a fine of £100.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the amendments to the Environmental Services Enforcement Policy Statement be approved.

*(Reason – to ensure that officers maintain consistency with previous decisions.)*

### **307. DRAFT ECONOMIC GROWTH, TOURISM AND REGENERATION STRATEGY 2017-2020**

The Executive Director presented a report which sought approval to publish the Draft Economic Growth, Tourism and Regeneration Strategy 2017-2020 for consultation with key stakeholders and local businesses.

The previous Economic Development Strategy had been adopted in June 2013. Since then there had been considerable changes in the national and local economic context, including the Brexit decision and the proposal that local government would retain 100% of local business rates. Growth would still continue to provide benefits for local people including a lower than average unemployment level, a market for businesses and income for councils to support the provision of local services.

The emphasis on the potential for the development of the visitor economy continued from the previous strategy, recognising that the combination of the accessibility and range of our countryside, wildlife and heritage was a strength that could further support the rural economy. Recognising the importance of our town centres to the local economy and communities, the draft strategy reflected the changing retail environment which had affected the viability of our town centres and detailed how the Council would support town councils or others who had developed a vision and action plan.

The draft Strategy outlined the priority areas for action as follows:

- Creating a mix of high quality employment opportunities and helping jobs growth exceed housing growth
- Town centre revitalisation
- Boosting the skills base of local businesses and communities in the area
- Increased tourism spending and job creation along the Nene Valley and in our rural areas

- Effective business development support (focused on SMEs and increasing NNDR)
- Identifying and meeting local infrastructure needs
- Making the most of ENC assets to assist local economy

A high level action plan would be developed for inclusion in the final strategy.

In response to questions, the Executive Director clarified that the key sectors for growth detailed in the strategy were the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) priorities and not ENC's, and she would make that clearer in the Strategy. It was also noted that historically Irthlingborough was once a mining town and this would also be included in the Strategy.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the draft Economic Growth, Tourism and Regeneration Strategy 2017-2020, as amended, be approved for consultation.
2. That comments received during the consultation process will be brought before the Committee in March 2017, when the final Strategy is presented for approval be noted.

*(Reason – to enable the effective implementation of the related outcomes in the Corporate Plan.)*

**Chairman**



# Personnel Sub-Committee



## Minutes of a Meeting held on Monday 14 November 2016 at 10.30am, East Northamptonshire House, Thrapston

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Councillors:</b>	Roger Glithero (Chairman) Wendy Brackenbury Glenn Harwood MBE Steven North Sarah Peacock
	<b>Officers:</b>	Katy Everitt                      Head of Resources and Organisational Development Julia Smith                        Head of Customer and Community Services Richard Hadden                Revenue Manager Michelle Drewery                Finance Manager

### **1.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 An apology for absence was received from David Oliver (Chief Executive).

### **2.0 MINUTES**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 19 September 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1 No declarations of interest were made.

### **4.0 QUESTIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 10.3**

4.1 There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.3.

### **5.0 WORKFORCE STATISTICS**

5.1 The Sub-Committee reviewed data concerning staff sickness, turnover and the number of staff employed, particularly the impact of long-term absences on the overall sickness levels.

- 5.2 The Sub-Committee remained concerned at the sickness absence statistics, particularly absences resulting from stress, and noted that additional work continued to be carried out by fewer staff. In this context, Members questioned whether the current service levels provided in some service areas were sustainable and could be maintained in the future without adversely affecting staff welfare.
- 5.3 Comparative sickness absence data had been obtained for other District and Borough Councils in the East Midlands which indicated that ENC was between the lower quartile and the average for the region. Whilst providing useful comparisons, Members considered that attention should be focussed on ENC's sickness absence data and the reasons behind sickness absences.
- 5.4 Sickness absence was being monitored more closely and all Members of staff who reached "triggers" set out in the absence policy had their absences reviewed.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**6.0 HEAD OF ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT POST**

- 6.1 The Head of Resources and Organisational Development reported that costings were being obtained from recruitment agencies for advice on the advertising of the post, psychometric testing exercises and candidate searches and it was likely that interviews would take place early in the New Year.
- 6.2 As the post was at head of service level, members of the Sub-Committee would be required to serve on the recruitment panel.

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillors Roger Glithero, Glenn Harwood, Steven North and Sarah Peacock be appointed to serve on the interview panel for recruitment to the post of Head of Economic and Commercial Development.

**7.0 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED:**

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business because exempt information, as defined under paragraphs 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, may be disclosed.

**8.0 PROPOSED REVENUES RESTRUCTURE**

- 8.1 The Revenue Manager presented proposals for restructuring the Revenues team to recognise improved working practices, procedural efficiencies and a reduction in resources required due to the closure of two magistrate courts.

**RESOLVED : That**

- i) the consultation process with staff relating to the proposed new structure for the Revenues team be approved.
- ii) the Head of Customer and Community Services, in consultation with the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Personnel Sub-Committee, be authorised to make the proposed structure changes subject to the results of the consultation process.
- iii) should redundancy costs be incurred in the 2016/17 financial year, these be met from reserves and the funds used be restored to reserves from the salary budget in the 2017/18 financial year and the relevant post deleted from the establishment with any remaining salary budget relating to this post removed from 2017/18 once the funds have been restored to reserves.

*(Reason: To ensure the Revenues Team has appropriate resources to maintain its level of performance with a leaner and more efficient structure)*

**Chairman**