

## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Sustainable Development, Planning and Transport Committee** held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth on 13 March 2018 from 7.30pm to 9.01pm.

Present: Councillors Stephen Giles-Medhurst (Lead Member, Economic Development, Sustainability and Transport), Martin Trevett (Lead Member, Housing, Planning and Strategic Schemes), Peter Getkahn, Paula Hiscocks, Angela Killick, Joan King, David Coltman, David Major, Steve Drury, Reena Ranger and Sarah Nelmes (for Cllr Kate Turner).

Also Present: Batchworth Parish Councillor Patrick Heanen.

Officers: Nigel Pollard, Section Head for Finance  
Kimberley Grout, Head of Housing Services  
Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services  
Claire May, Head of Planning Policy and Projects  
Peter Simons, Senior Transport Planner  
Sarah Haythorpe, Principal Committee Manager

### **Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst in the Chair**

#### **SD28/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Kate Turner with Councillor Sarah Nelmes as the substitute Member.

#### **SD29/17 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

None received.

#### **SD30/17 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman advised the Committee that the report on the Bus Service Review had not been available 5 clear working days before the meeting. The Chairman ruled that the report was of sufficient urgency to be taken as the Council had to agree the funding for the bus routes by the end of March.

#### **SD31/17 BUDGET MONITORING**

The Committee received a report on Period 10 (January) budget monitoring for the Council Committees.

In response to Member questions on the budget areas for the Committee it was advised that:

- the revenue variance of £301k was a positive variance;
- the capital variance of £957k was a positive variance (the money was to be re-phased for 2018/19);
- the car park restoration funding (£30k) would be used to undertake maintenance work and inspections. A list of the car parks would be circulated to the Committee.
- The variances on the homelessness budget showed the current position not what might happen in the future.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

**SERVICE AND FINANCIAL PLANNING 2018-2021**

Members received the service plan for Economic and Sustainable Development. The Head of Planning Policy and Projects advised the Committee of the following amendments to the service plan:

Performance Indicator ESD05 – Conservation Areas – the description to read: Percentage of Conservation Areas in the local authority area with a character appraisal undertaken within the last 5 years.

Performance Indicator ESD10 – Home Energy Conservation Authority Report actions – the target in 2017/18 and 2019/20 to be changed to not applicable.

Performance Indicator ESD11 CO2 reduction from local authority operations the target for the current year and future years to be read “Target of +/- 5% of 1738 tonnes of CO2e

The notes for ESD05 to read: “This indicator measures the percentage of Conservation Areas in the District that has a Conservation Area Character Appraisal that has been updated within the last 5 years. This is also reported in the Annual Monitoring Report, which is published every December. The percentage is calculated by dividing the number of conservation areas in the District with character appraisals undertaken within the last 5 years against the total number of Conservation Areas within the district. The percentage increase assumes a rolling programme of two new Character Appraisals being prepared every year. For 2016/2017 seven out of the 22 Conservation Areas had character appraisals dated within the last 5 years.”

ESD09. This indicator measures the vacancy rate for the eight Retail Allocations (Rickmansworth Town Centre, South Oxhey, Abbots Langley, Chorleywood, Croxley Green (Watford Road), Rickmansworth Moneyhill Parade, Croxley Green (New Road) and Maple Cross) that are identified as Primary/Secondary Frontages and Local Shopping Centres in the Council's adopted Site Allocations LDD. The percentage is calculated by the number of vacant units against the total number of units. Site visits are undertaken by the Council at the end of the monitoring year (31 March). Only 2.6% of units in the District were vacant as at March 2017. (This excludes South Oxhey Regeneration Area). The National Average Vacancy Rate is between 12% and 14% (Retail Study 2012) and 10% across the SW Herts area (Draft Retail & Leisure Study).

ESD10. The council's Home Energy Conservation Authority Progress Report 2017-2019 was approved at the Sustainable Development, Planning and Transport Committee in March 2017. The report is on the council's website: <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/home-energy-conservation>. Report published every 2 years. Next report due March 2019.

ESD11. This indicator monitors the CO2 reduction from local authority operations during each financial year (1 April to 31 March). Table 1 in the council's Green House Gas Emissions Report 2016/2017 shows a 1.5% increase in overall emissions compared to the previous year. This was due to Hertsmere Leisure changing energy suppliers. There is a target range because of outside variances that we have no control over. The report is on the Council's website: <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/climate-change>.

**RECOMMENDED:**

That the Service Plan be recommended to Council subject to the amendments above being incorporated into the Service Plan.

## **SD33/17 BUS SERVICES REVIEW**

This report proposed updates to the Council's current strategy following recent notifications of changes to the commercial public bus services that would affect Abbots Langley, Leavesden, South Oxhey and Carpenders Park. In addition, Members were being asked to consider continued support for a trial service operated by Hertfordshire County Council. Full details on the proposed changes were included within the report.

The Council's current bus support strategy was set in November 2015, following consultation of all Local Ward Councillors to determine local priorities for the services that it supports, to make sure that these reflect routes that are considered to be most important to people who live, work or travel in the District.

The changes announced by commercial operators will affect the bus service R8 from Abbots Langley to Watford, the 318 between Abbots Langley to Hemel Hempstead and the W19 service from South Oxhey to Watford.

It was noted that the passenger figures for the Route 318 had showed only 4 passengers per journey but that the data was not very comprehensive as the operator had chosen not to supply its passenger data to the County Council. On the W19 route, this was the only bus which went around the whole of South Oxhey and was important for commuters, shoppers and children at school.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Martin Trevett, moved the following recommendations:

On the W19 route to replace services to make commuting feasible (three services a day, one early morning before 7am and two early evening returning from Watford between 3.30pm and 6.30pm) at an estimated cost of £27,230;

On Route 318 to not replace the commercially discontinued services;

On Route 8 to replace the commercially discontinued services and to provide one return journey each weekday at an estimated contribution of £12,700 and to request HCC to investigate combining this service with another infrequent shopper service running nearby and serving similar streets, with a decision on this to be agreed by the Director, DCES in consultation with the Lead Member.

In response to Member questions the Senior Transport Planner advised that:

On the W19 service the 18 month trial for the evening journeys would finish in May and the data would then be provided on how well the service had been used.

On the passenger figures provided, the commercial bus companies were not obliged to provide this data but under the Buses Act the bus operators would be required to share this data.

A Member stated that on Route 8, 2.9 passengers per day was disappointing, and did not provide good value for money, so why were the Council funding this service from the cycling budget. The Senior Transport Planner advised that the money from the bus budget had been transferred towards the cycling strategy but this was now not required therefore would be transferred back to the bus budget. The overall budget was £86k with £23k transferred back into the buses budget.

On Route R8 this was a shopper service which was expensive between £5.22 and £6.22 per passenger. Consideration could be given to funding a second Dial a Ride bus. Elements of the subsidy had been withdrawn in 2014/15 for the 318 and as it was not a peak time service the bus operator had not been keen to continue running the service.

Setting up the use of a taxi service would be very expensive and could be open to misuse. Taxi credits had been introduced in other Districts but had been withdrawn as they were too expensive. A Member advised that Watford Rural Parish Council had introduced £2 vouchers which had been very successful but were now oversubscribed.

Councillor Angela Killick, seconded by Councillor Paula Hiscocks moved an amendment that Officers explore the possibility of alternative options for shopper type bus services. They did not feel that Route R8 offered value for money. Both the proposer and seconder of the motion agreed to include this amendment.

On being put to the Committee the motions were all declared CARRIED the voting being as follows:

On the W19 route – agreed unanimously.

On the 318 service - agreed unanimously.

On the R8 service agreed the voting being 7 For, 1 Against and 3 Abstentions.

Officers explore the possibility of alternative options for shopper type bus services – agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee delegates authority to the Director, DCES, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, Planning and Strategic Schemes and the Lead Member for Economic Development, Sustainability and Transport, to negotiate with the County Council over provision of a contribution for additional services to replace commercially discontinued services on:

- a) Route W19 to replace services to make commuting feasible (three services a day, one early morning before 7am and two early evening returning from Watford between 3.30pm and 6.30pm) at an estimated cost of £27,230;

- b) Route 318 to not replace the commercially discontinued services;
- c) Route R8 to replace the commercially discontinued services, to provide one return journey each weekday at an estimated contribution of £12,700 and to request HCC to investigate combining this service with another infrequent shopper service running nearby and serving similar streets, with a decision on this to be agreed by the Director, DCES as set out above and in consultation with the Lead Members; and
- d) That Officers investigate further the feasibility of a shopper routes and report back to the Committee in due course.

**Councillor Martin Trevett in the Chair**

**SD34/17 SERVICE AND FINANCIAL PLANNING 2018-2021**

The Committee received the Housing Services service plan. The Head of Housing Services advised the Committee that an additional risk had been added with regard to Legal challenge to contracting out of homeless reviews which had been considered by the Committee in February and ratified by Council.

RECOMMENDED

That the Service Plan be recommended to Council.

**SD35/17 SERVICE AND FINANCIAL PLANNING 2018-2021**

The Committee received the Regulatory Services Service Plan. With regard to Performance Indicator DM09 (Percentage of planning application decisions that are overturned at appeal by PINS each quarter) this was a new Government target implemented from the end of 2017. The Council were on schedule to meet the target for the end of March 2018. Members asked that the actual number of appeals be included and the department statistics be published in the Members' Information Bulletin once a year.

RECOMMEND:

That the service plan be recommended to Council subject to the amendment above.

POST MEETING NOTE:

Planning Appeals For 2016/17

28.57% (49 appeals, 14 allowed/35 dismissed)

**SD36/17 DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR A NEW PARKING STRATEGY**

Further to the decision to enter into a parking partnership with Hertsmere BC (HBC) to provide the Council's civil parking enforcement service, HBC were invited to take the lead in developing a Parking Strategy, which will act as a framework for more detailed decisions on new parking schemes and parking enforcement within the District.

Whilst the strategy was intended to identify revenue generating opportunities for the Council's parking services the fundamental objectives of the strategy would be to mitigate adverse impacts arising from traffic congestion on local

businesses and the community. The main objectives would be to reduce dangerous and inconsiderate parking, support local businesses by introducing charges that on the one hand allow shoppers to access shops but discourage all-day parking by commuters/employees, assist local commuters and businesses by providing employer/employee parking permits and at the same time discouraging parking in surrounding residential streets. These measures will improve conditions in residential areas and controlled parking zones (CPZs) and assist off-street parking where Council car parks add value for money for their users.

This report sets out the approach which would govern the vision, objectives and targets of the strategy and details the key stages and timeline of the actions required to complete the development of the strategy and implement and review. The report also gives details of schemes which will be progressed whilst the strategy is being developed.

Councillor Martin Trevett moved, seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, the recommendations with an additional recommendation that there should be no delay in progressing the parking management programme.

Members welcomed the report but stated there was a need to have a data management plan, why had the Working Party not been consulted on the viability.

The Head of Regulatory Services advised that:

- The development plan would evolve over the next year and the schemes would be investigated and brought back to the Committee before any consultation on specific schemes takes place.
  - Income generation would be looked at across the whole of the District to identify opportunities with every Ward considered as each Ward had different parking pressures.
  - Other schemes already in place would be considered for all the 13 wards.
  - All historic data would be made available to Hertsmere BC. The purpose of the plan was to devise an action plan then take schemes forward for consultation.
  - This was a stand-alone document on income generation and was not part of the parking programme.
  - Hertsmere BC was familiar with the parking issues in Three Rivers and would be deploying Officers on all the roads in the District which had restrictions. There would be an opportunity to meet HBC parking officers by appointment and they could also be contacted out of hours.
  - The action plan would include all 13 wards, including Rickmansworth.
  - In Carpenders Park baseline data had already been undertaken prior to the South Oxhey development taking place.
- On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED the voting being 8 For, 1 Against and 2 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To proceed with the formulation of a Parking Strategy as detailed in the body of this report.
- 2) The final strategy to be presented back to this Committee for consideration and approval.
- 3) HBC to expedite the strategy.
- 4) All existing and identified parking schemes to continue to be progressed.

**SD37/17 WORK PROGRAMME**

Members noted the work programme and noted that the work programme would be incorporate in to the new Committee work programme for the Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted.

**CHAIRMAN**