
INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES

of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Tuesday 17 March 2019 between 7.30pm to 8.23pm

Councillors present:

Stephen Giles-Medhurst (Lead Member for Transport and Economic Development)	
Steve Drury (Lead Member for Infrastructure and Planning Policy)	
Margaret Hofman	Peter Getkahn
Tony Humphreys	David Raw
Joanna Clemens	Phil Williams (for Cllr Singer)

Officers Present: Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services
Nigel Pollard, Interim Head of Finance
Sarah Haythorpe, Principal Committee Manager

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst in the Chair

IHED 36/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joan King, Reena Ranger, Andrew Scarth, Stephanie Singer (substitute Member Councillor Phil Williams).

IHED 37/19 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development Committee meeting held on 7 January 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

IHED 38/19 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

None received

IHED 39/19 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Steve Drury declared a non pecuniary interest in the petition regarding Dickinson Avenue, Croxley Green, as he knew the lead petitioner.

TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

IHED 40/19 TO RECEIVE TWO PETITIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 18

THE COMMITTEE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING TWO PETITIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 18

The Committee received the following two petitions under Council Procedure Rule 18. Both petitions were presented by the Lead Petitioner for each petition.

Proposed Controlled Parking Zone – Dickinson Avenue, Croxley Green

The petition had been signed by 56 residents and stated:

'to stop the introduction of the permit parking proposals in our road. We note that adjoining roads, Yorke Road and Dickinson Square, are no longer to be included in a permit parking zone. We therefore declare that we, too, do not want our road to be included in a permit parking zone'.

In response to the petition the Chairman advised that 59% of households in Dickinson Avenue had responded to the CPZ consultation.

57% of the households who responded to the Council's official survey had requested being included in the proposed Croxley CPZ, which is in contradiction to the petition and the fact that Dickinson Square has not at this stage been excluded.

Dickinson Square is also subject to a further survey having also wanted from the Council's consultation to be included in the proposed CPZ. The decision was taken in conjunction with Ward Councillors to re-consult with the residents of Dickinson Avenue to ensure the decision made was robust.

The third question relates solely to Dickinson Square which may still be included in the CPZ. If the results come back that the residents do not wish to be included in the permit parking proposals then they would not be included."

POST MEETING UPDATE:

The figures quoted have been checked in relevant reports and the first figure should read 56%.

To petition had been signed by 31 residents but since it was received this had now been increased to 45 signatures. The petition highlighted the following:

"Restrictions had been added by Hillingdon Council in the surrounding roads of Moor Park Road and Grove Road to discourage people who wish to avoid paying station car park charges parking there. This has impacted on Sandy Lodge Way and some of the surrounding roads with regard to road safety and has raised accident and traffic risks in Sandy Lodge Way.

The Chairman responded that the Council had not been consulted by Hillingdon Council with regard to the introduction of its parking changes. Unfortunately there are a large number of other areas which were being considered by the Council for controlled parking zones, one of which was Croxley Green. Controlled parking schemes take a long time to progress so we are unable to offer an immediate solution. This petition would be added to the work programme for Council Officers to consider as they progress through it. There would not be an immediate proposal to consult with residents and do a detailed design. The Croxley Green scheme had taken 3 years to get to the stage we are at now. He was not saying this would be the case for Sandy Lodge Way but he did not wish to raise the residents' expectations that a scheme would be introduced immediately. Officers would look at what could be feasible as soon as it is practicable. He could not promise when an initial consultation would be undertaken. The Council could not just react when a petition is submitted but had to undertake house to house

consultation on any proposals to ensure residents were supportive and that the proposals were robust.

RESOLVED:

Noted receipt of both the petitions and that letters would be sent to the Lead Petitioners confirming receipt.

IHED 41/19 BUDGET MONITORING (PERIOD 10)

This report covered this Committees financial position over the medium term (2019 – 2023) as at Period 10 (end of January).

The Period 10 comprehensive Budget Management report has already been presented to the Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 9 March 2020 which sought approval to a change in the Council's 2019 - 2023 medium-term financial plan.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

IHED 42/18 SERVICE PLANNING 2020/2023

Regulatory Services

A Member asked for details on the projects which had been shaded out. The Head of Regulatory Services advised that they were Environmental Health projects within the remit of the Leisure, Environment and Community Committee. The service was provided by the Environmental Health team at Watford.

A Member referred to Page 15 where it mentioned “High Performing, Financially Independent Council” and asked for clarification. The Head of Regulatory Services advised that this was a theme of the Corporate Framework which was agreed by the Council. With Government funding reducing going forward it was about the Council being able to continue to provide high performing services and balancing the books in terms of our financial income and expenditure.

A Member referred to Page 19 and the words “unauthorised advertisement procedure” and asked for clarification. The Head of Regulatory Services advised that there were a number of adverts around the District which are erected without the relevant consents. Officers had identified a process which required getting consent for various charity event adverts, however there was still a number of private adverts which went up without consent i.e. scrap cars. This project was about introducing a new procedure to deal with these unauthorised adverts.

A Member asked about street naming and numbering procedures. It was often difficult to find a property with only a house name and no number and wondered if there was any legislation which requested properties had a house number. In addition the Member asked about the cycling and walking strategy. The Chairman advised that in Abbots Langley new street nameplates had been put in areas where the road numbering system was not clear. If the Member came across a new development where it is very unclear which parts of the road had which numbering let officers know and they can investigate and possibly provide assistance with additional street nameplates. The Cycling and Walking Strategy was a joint Strategy between Three Rivers, Watford and the County Council and he was hoping to be in a position to announce the commissioning of that in the next week or so.

The Head of Regulatory Services advised that street naming and numbering was essentially in relation to new developments. Requests came into the Council for street naming and numbering as the responsible authority. It was not thought there was any legislation to require you to display a house number. It was the Council's responsibility to put up the street plates. The Cycling and Walking Strategy is an existing Strategy which a number of cycling and walking projects are identified and progressed. A report comes to the Committee every few years and was due to come back in November. An objective of the Corporate Framework was to produce a revised Cycling and Walking Strategy.

In response to a Member question on the GIS Officer, the Head of Regulatory Services advised this was to be a new post. The Member asked what efficiencies we would be getting from the role, what type of training would be done and would it be for all officers and to what purpose.

The Head of Regulatory Services advised that GIS stood for Geographical Information Systems which was software/applications used to provide data in a spatial way essentially by mapping. A growth bid was submitted but had not been successful. This project was about moving forward. The Council have GIS but it was a fragmented system. Certain departments use it very regularly like Environmental Protection and Enforcement, Parking and Transport and the Planning Policy team. The Council did not have a corporate overview of that system and there was a lack of technical expertise due to the absence of having a dedicated officer. We are looking to try to identify how we use GIS, what we need to do technically to support it, bring it up to a required level, know exactly what maps we have got and then look at how we use the mapping system.

A Member asked for clarification on the verge hardening programme and also if the Council had looked at park and ride schemes. There seemed to be a lot of places where people were parking to commute from the stations so could we direct them to a parking area. The Chairman said verge hardening referred to grasscrete with the Council having an extensive programme of verge hardening schemes across the District. The South West Herts Growth and Transportation Plan was about developing a corporate strategy with Herts County Council on possible options for park and ride but was much more directed to the urban areas such as Watford, Stevenage and Hemel.

Economic and Sustainable Development (note only the unshaded areas of the Performance Indicators)

A Member asked about the housing land supply which was given in years 2 and 5 and wished to understand this unit. The Chairman said that the 2 years was 2018/19. The Government required Council's to have a 5 year supply of housing.

A Member asked about the job descriptions/titles for the different roles and the skills required and asked what would happen if the Council could not get the skills. If someone left would that cause some disruption and would every job cause disruption to the service. Normally some jobs were more critical than others.

The Head of Regulatory Services said Officers were asked to include in the Service Plans the roles within their teams and what the single points of failure were if officers left. A number of the roles in the Council were very specialist and some of those specialist roles were within the Planning Policy team. Their main function at the current time is the local plan, associated survey work and projects. What they have done is highlight the roles and the experience and skill set required and advise what would happen if you don't have succession planning. There is a continued recruitment crisis in planning and these roles apart from the CIL role are planning specialist roles. For CIL they use a specialist piece of

software and the Officer needs to understand how the software works. The details of the jobs were provided in seniority within the team starting with the Head of Service.

Details on the vacancy level and turnover of staff at the Council was provided in the Budget Monitoring report to Policy and Resources Committee

POST MEETING NOTE:

Staff Vacancy Monitoring

A major risk of non-delivery of service is where key staff leave the Council's employ and there is a delay or difficulty in recruiting suitable candidates to fill the vacant post. The table below summarises the level of vacancies at the end of January 2019 with a detailed analysis provided by HR at **Appendix 3**.

Committee	No of Posts Vacant
Leisure, Environment and Community	5
Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development	5
Policy & Resources	15
Total	25

The percentage of vacant posts at the end of January is 7% when compared against the total number of 342 Council posts. Although there are 25 vacant posts this equates to 19.9 FTE's as some posts are part time. In some cases, vacant posts will be covered by agency staff to ensure service delivery.

Housing Services – no questions.

RESOLVED:

To note and recommend the Services Plans to Council.

IHED 43/19 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received the work programme.

The Chairman said given other external pressures in the current climate it maybe that some reports may slip depending on other constraints on officers' time, the effects of COVID-19 and other emergency planning the authority may have to undertake.

A Member said that COVID-19 was not listed on our risk register and was something we need to include.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted.

CHAIRMAN