

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee:	Stronger Place Select Committee	Date:	Tuesday, 5 July 2022
Place:		Time:	7.00 - 7.55 pm
Members Present:	Councillors R Balcombe (Chairman), R Bassett (Vice-Chairman), S Heather, I Allgood, P Bolton, H Brady and J H Whitehouse		
Members Present (Virtually):	Councillors R Pugsley		
Other Councillors:	Councillors N Avey, N Bedford and H Whitbread		
Other Councillors (Virtual):	Councillors H Kane, S Kane, A Lion and J Philip		
Apologies:	S Heap, J Jennings, C McCredie and R Morgan		
Officers Present:	L Kirman (Democratic Services Officer), A Buckley (Higher Level Apprentice (Internal Communications)), J Warwick (Interim Acting Service Director (Contracts)) and A Small (Section 151 Officer)		
Officers Present (Virtually):	V Messenger (Democratic Services Officer)		

1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Chairman made a short address to remind everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the internet, and would be capable of repeated viewing, which could infringe their human and data protection rights.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

In the absence of the Vice Chairman, the meeting appointed Cllr R Bassett as the Vice Chairman for the duration of the meeting.

3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The Committee noted that Cllr Janet Whitehouse would substitute for Cllr McCredie.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.

5. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

That the notes of the meeting held 15 March 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE & WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee requested confirmation of the date that the sustainable transport update would be brought to the Committee.

The Committee noted the Terms of Reference and the Work Programme.

7. LITTER STRATEGY

J Warwick (Acting Service Director (Contracts)) introduced the Litter Strategy and advised the Committee that the Strategy would support the commitment to Government's Litter Strategy for England, the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (2019), and reflected residents desire for a clean and healthy environment free from litter, fly-tipping and dog waste. The Litter Strategy set out the legal duty, accountability, and enforcement actions. The Council would continue to work in partnership with a range of voluntary groups, other authorities and partners to prevent litter and would continue to support national initiatives. The Committee were informed that five litter picks had been completed and seventy-two bags of litter collected during the Great British Spring Clean. There had also been sixteen applications for support for equipment for litter picks, fifteen of these had been completed.

Members of the Committee suggested:

- the strategy lacked specifics including aims and objectives
- the document could be improved through the realignment and strengthening of sections.
- the enforcement section should be strengthened and could contain details of FPN, the use of mobile CCTV and other relevant actions.
- the document could have more detail on the education programme.
- closer liaison with Town and Parish Councils and adjacent authorities.
- area wide impacts could be considered through a multi-agency approach.
- proactive enforcement in prioritised areas should be used.
- a balance between education and enforcement was required to ensure an effective strategy.
- information relating to special bulky collections and other service provided could be included.
- the litter strategy should be set in the wider context of the waste hierarchy.
- that the Council could lobby for higher levels of fines for litter and fly-tipping offences.

Members of the Committee also challenged:

- why rural areas were not included in the street cleansing standards report.
- the appropriateness of overall volumes of waste as a KPI for littering and requested alternative measures including number of fly tips and number of fixed penalty notices issued.
- how this strategy aligned with the Essex specifically in relation to the restrictions on civic amenity sites and commercial waste, which the committee felt exacerbated the number of fly-tips.

Members of Cabinet emphasised the need for a litter strategy and suggested that the comments made by the Select Committee would strengthen the Strategy, before being considered by Cabinet.

The Committee were advised by J Warwick that:

- waste collected in litter bins that contained dog waste could be separated and cleaned for recycling at the Edmonton facilities
- weeds formed part of the standards of street cleanliness, the responsibility fell to Essex CC who contracted EFDC to carry out weed spraying. The budget provided by Essex CC had been reduced and this had limited the number of sprays per year, the chemicals used for spraying had also been restricted. A schedule of weed spraying could be supplied on request.
- there was regular dialogue across Essex through the Essex Waste Partnership Board. Work had commenced on a new waste strategy for the county, and further details on what materials the tips would accept, including building waste, and the booking system in use would be clarified and circulated.
- any fly tips reported would be cleared.

The Committee acknowledged and thanked Biffa for the regular street cleansing work.

Action: The Committee requested that the strategy was reviewed, strengthened, and refined. The revised strategy would be circulated to members of the Committee for direct feedback before presentation at the next Stronger Place Select Committee.

Resolved

The Committee recommended that the Litter Strategy should be reviewed and presented at the next meeting of the Select Committee,

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee noted that the date of the next meeting would be 13 September 2022.

CHAIRMAN