

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF GOVERNANCE SELECT COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2017
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.15 - 8.08 PM**

Members Present:	N Avey (Chairman), G Chambers (Vice-Chairman), R Bassett (Vice Chairman of the Council), N Bedford, L Hughes, H Kauffman, B Rolfe, D Stallan (Chairman of the Council) and D Wixley
Other members present:	J Philip
Apologies for Absence:	L Mead and B Surtees
Officers Present	N Richardson (Assistant Director (Development Management)), S Hill (Assistant Director, Governance) and J Leither (Democratic Services Officer)

27. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

There were no substitute members at the meeting.

28. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the last meeting of the Select Committee held on 3 October 2017 be agreed as a correct record.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made pursuant to the Member's Code of Conduct.

30. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Select Committee received a report from the Assistant Director (Development Management) regarding the Governance Select Committee's Terms of Reference and Work Programme 2017/18.

RESOLVED:

That the Terms of Reference and the Work Programme of the Select Committee for 2017/18 be noted.

31. PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARY REVIEW

The Select Committee received a report from S Hill, Assistant Director, Governance regarding the Parliamentary Boundary Review which was being carried out in England. He advised that the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) had been tasked to carry out a review of constituencies and report to Parliament in September 2018. The brief from Parliament was to reduce the number of constituencies and

therefore MPs in England from 650 to 600. The aim for the new constituencies in England was to ensure that every new constituency had approximately the same number of electors, with no fewer than 71,031 and no higher than 78,507.

On 17 October 2017 the BCE had published their revised proposals and all of the representations received during the secondary consultation. The final consultation on the revised proposals would end on the 11 December 2017, this was the final consultation before the BCE report to Parliament in September 2018. The changes would not take effect until the next General Election in 2022.

Essex

In the County of Essex the BCE proposed changes across the County, in particular to the constituencies in South Essex. The BCE had made revisions to seven of the seventeen constituencies in the County and an additional change of name to one further constituency. The existing constituencies of Chelmsford, Epping Forest and Thurrock remain unchanged as in the initial proposal.

Epping Forest

Epping Forest remained unchanged.

Harlow and Brentwood and Ongar

In order to meet the new equitable elector numbers, the seats of Harlow and Brentwood and Ongar had been suggested to change and the new constituency would include the Epping Forest wards of Hastingwood, Matching and Sheering Village, Moreton and Fyfield, North Weald Bassett, Roydon, Lower Sheering and Lower Nazeing.

Members were asked to consider if they would:

- (i) support the proposals for no change to the Epping Forest Constituency;
- (ii) wish to submit any other observations on the proposals affecting residents; and
- (iii) authorise officers to submit comments to the BCE before the deadline. The BCE have specifically asked that where proposals were supported that those representations were made to the BCE.

Councillor Stallan stated that these changes were very confusing to residents as in 1997 North Weald Bassett (NWB) was a part of the Epping Forest parliamentary constituency, then in 2010 the parliamentary boundary changed and NWB then became a part of Brentwood and Ongar, now it would seem there are proposals for another boundary change and North Weald Bassett would be a part of the parliamentary constituency of Harlow even though the district was in Epping Forest.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Assistant Director, Governance be authorised to submit the following comments to the Boundary Commission for England, supporting the no change proposals relating to the Epping Forest Parliamentary Constituency:

“That the proposals seek to transfer an area which currently sits in the Ongar and Brentwood constituency to the Harlow constituency. This area includes North Weald Bassett. Residents of this area were subject to change during the last boundary review when they moved from Epping Forest to Brentwood and Ongar. This time they are being linked to Harlow, and whilst they understand the reasons why the commission have made this change in relation to the latest proposals, members of the Select Committee are of the view that this area does not have the connection to Harlow and that the town looks to Epping as its associated community and administrative centre; and

That members of the Select Committee noted the enlargement of the Harlow constituency and changes to the boundaries generally in this administrative district and have asked for it to be noted and conveyed to the BCE that they hope these proposals were not the precursor to changes to the Districts administrative boundaries at any point in the future.”

32. SUBMISSION TO DECISION ON PLANNING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The Select Committee received a report from N Richardson, Assistant Director (Development Management) who advised that at the last meeting of the Select Committee on the 3 October, the Committee received a report regarding the Key Performance Indicators 2017/18 – Quarter 1, in respect of planning application turnaround times, which showed that the targets set were being achieved

Councillor Knapman, who was a substitute at the meeting of the Governance Select Committee on the 3 October, asked if these statistics were accurate, as he understood more to be instances of applications getting near to the 8 week deadline, withdrawn then re-submitted a few weeks later and the 8 week deadline would start again.

The Committee asked for a report to be brought to this meeting with further detail from Officers, as the Assistant Director of Governance (Development Management) was not present at the meeting on the 3 October.

Mr Richardson advised that there were 1,714 planning application decisions issued over the last year and it was noted that 40 of these had been withdrawn by the applicant with no resubmission made, 24 had been refused planning permission and 32 had been withdrawn and then a revised/new planning application had been submitted which represented just over 1.4% of the total. Therefore the instances of applications getting near to the 8 week deadline, withdrawn and then resubmitted were very low.

However, running through all the planning applications in this time period, the grounds for refusal, some of which have been committee reversals made by members, have then been the subject of negotiation with officers and in most cases a more positive decision on a resubmission was made through a fresh planning application.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Select Committee noted those planning applications resubmitted following a previous application being withdrawn or refused planning permission were a very small percentage of all planning decisions made; and

- (2) That the quarterly return of the three planning application type Key Performance Indicator (KPI) was accurate and in line with the KPI criteria and measures set by the Department of Communities and Local Government.

33. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2017/18 - QUARTER 2 PROGRESS

The Select Committee received a report from the Assistant Director (Development Management), regarding the Key Performance Indicators 2017/18 – Quarter 2 Performance.

The Local Government Act 1999 requires that the Council make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions and services were exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

As part of the duty to secure continuous improvement, a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) relevant to the Council's services and key objectives, were adopted each year by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee. Performance against the KPIs was monitored on a quarterly basis by Management Board and Overview and Scrutiny to drive improvement in performance and ensure corrective action was taken where necessary.

A range of thirty-two (32) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2017/18 were adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee in March 2017. The KPIs are important to the improvement of the Council's services and the achievement of its key objectives and comprised of a combination of some former statutory indicators and locally determined performance measures. The aim of the KPIs were to direct improvement effort towards services and the national priorities and local challenges arising from the social, economic and environmental context of the district, that are the focus of the key objectives.

The overall position for all 32 KPIs at the end of Quarter 2 were as follows:

- (a) 25 (78%) indicators achieved target;
- (b) 3 (9%) indicators did not achieve target,
- (c) 4 (13%) indicators performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator; and
- (d) 26 (82%) of indicators were currently anticipated to achieve year-end target, 3 (9%) were uncertain whether they would achieve year-end target and a further 3 (9%) were anticipated not to achieve year-end target.

There were 5 KPIs which fell within the Governance Select Committee's areas of responsibility. The overall position with regard to the achievement of target performance at Q2 for these 5 indicators were as follows:

- (a) 4 (80%) indicators achieved target;
- (b) 1 (20%) indicators did not achieve target;
- (c) 0 (0%) performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator; and
- (d) 4 (80%) indicators were currently anticipated to achieve year-end target and a further 1 (20%) indicator was uncertain whether it would achieve year-end target.

The 'amber' performance status used in the KPI report under agenda item 7, appendix 1, identified indicators that had missed the agreed target for the quarter, but where performance was within an agreed tolerance or range. The KPI tolerances

were agreed by Management Board when targets for the KPIs were set in March 2017.

The Select Committee was requested to review Q2 performance for the KPIs within its areas of responsibility. The full set of KPIs was also considered by Management Board on 15 November 2017 and the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee on 16 November 2017.

Councillor N Avey advised that he had concerns regarding GOV008 and the percentage of planning applications refused by Council Members against the recommendation of the planning officers and were then granted permission on appeal. He stated that this needed to be looked at more closely by the Select Committee and requested that a report including examples of recent appeal decisions issued by the Planning Inspectorate be brought to the Select Committee at its meeting on the 27 March 2018.

S Hill, Assistant Director, Governance advised that he was writing a report regarding a review of the planning processes due to the Local Plan which would go to a future meeting of the Constitution Working Group.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the Key Performance Indicators 2017/18 for Quarter 2 Progress Report be noted; and

(2) That a report of the Planning Appeals Performance be brought to the Governance Select Committee at its meeting on the 27 March 2018.

34. CORPORATE PLAN KEY ACTION PLAN 2017/18 - QUARTER 2 PROGRESS

The Select Committee received a report regarding the Corporate Plan Key Action Plan 2016/17 – Quarter 2 from the Assistant Director, Governance.

The Corporate Plan was the Council's key strategic planning document, setting out its priorities over the five year period from 2015/16 to 2019/20. The priorities or Corporate Aims were supported by Key Objectives which provided a clear statement of the Council's overall intentions for these five years.

The Key Objectives were delivered by an annual action plan with each year building upon the progress against the achievement of the Key Objectives for previous years. The annual action plans contained a range of actions designed to achieve specific outcomes and were working documents and therefore subject to change and development to ensure the actions remained relevant and appropriate and to identify opportunities to secure further progress or improvement.

The Corporate Plan Key Action Plan for 2017/18 was adopted by Council at its meeting on 27 September 2016. Progress in relation to all actions and deliverables was reviewed by the Cabinet, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the appropriate Select Committee on a quarterly basis.

There were 50 actions in total for which progress updates for Quarter 2 were as follows:

- (a) 42 (84%) of these actions had been Achieved or were On Target;
- (b) 2 (4%) of these actions were Under Control;

- (c) 6 (12%) were Behind Schedule; and
- (d) 0 (0%) were Pending.

There were 8 actions that fell within the areas of responsibility of the Governance Select Committee. At the end of Quarter 2 these were:

- (a) 8 (100%) of these actions had been Achieved or were On Target;
- (b) 0 (0%) of these actions were Under Control;
- (c) 0 (0%) of these actions were Behind Schedule; and
- (d) 0 (0%) of these actions were Pending.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Plan Key Action Plan 2017/18 Quarter 2 Progress Report be noted.

35. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no reports for recommendation to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

36. FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that the future meetings of the Governance Select Committee for this municipal year would be on:

06 February 2018; and
27 March 2018.