

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERSHIPS) held as a remote meeting via Zoom on Thursday, 4th February 2021

PRESENT: Councillor D M Tysoe – Chairman.

Councillors T D Alban, S J Criswell, J W Davies, Ms A Diaz, Mrs A Dickinson, D A Giles, Mrs S Smith and Mrs S R Wilson.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors B S Banks and Mrs J Tavener.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Mrs M L Beuttell.

37 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th January 2021 were approved as a correct record.

38 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor S J Criswell declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in relation to Minute Number 40 by virtue of being a Member of Cambridgeshire County Council.

Councillor D A Giles declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in relation to Minute Number 40 by virtue of being a Member of Cambridgeshire County Council.

39 NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st February 2021 to 31st May 2021. Following a query by the Chairman, it was confirmed that the Digital Strategy would be presented to Members after the Core Services Strategy had been finalised and approved.

40 CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Operations (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book) on Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE). Following an introduction by the Executive Councillor for Operations and Environment, Councillor Alban sought reassurance on whether the local constabulary would continue to enforce parking. The Panel were informed that the local constabulary would continue to undertake parking enforcement but that it was likely that requests for enforcement would be made via the Council due to public perception of how enforcement worked. Members were also informed that there was scope for joint enforcement operations, when appropriate.

Councillor Giles asked for clarification of how the money from penalties would be handled. It was confirmed that the Council would put this money towards the service's operating costs. The Council was not legally allowed to make a surplus and, given the rural nature of the District, this was highly unlikely.

Clarification was sought by Councillor Tysoe of how the service would be managed. It was confirmed that for the first two years of operation, the service would remain in-house. After that, an assessment would be made of which model offered best value to the Council. The Panel was reassured that regardless of the structure employed, the same legislative controls would apply.

Following a further question from Councillor Tysoe on whether parking enforcement would take place in the more rural areas of the District, it was confirmed that these areas would receive an appropriate level of service, which would be outlined within the Enforcement Policy. Councillor Criswell welcomed the clarification of parking enforcement for the rural areas of the District.

Councillor Wilson asked whether the Council was acquiring knowledge and experience from similarly profiled local authorities in order to achieve the best service outcomes for the District. The Panel was informed that this was occurring, and that the implementation of CPE was being led by the Head of Operations who had significant experience in this field. In addition, an expert advisor would be appointed to assist with the process.

In response to a question from Councillor Alban on the process for changing the designation of areas, the Panel was informed that the Council would have an agreement from the Highway Authority to enforce the restrictions in existence and that there was no budget for the provision of new restrictions. It was also confirmed that in order to enforce a restriction there would need to be a sign, a line and a traffic regulation order.

Following a discussion on the use of discretion, Councillor Criswell expressed the view that it was important for Civil Enforcement Officers to adhere to the law in order to be consistent. It was confirmed that this would be reflected within the future Enforcement Policy and appeal procedure. In conclusion, the Panel welcomed the proposal to introduce CPE and

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be encouraged to endorse the recommendations contained within the report.

41 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

By means of a report by the Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) proposals relating to electric vehicle charging were considered by the Panel. Members were informed that the Council was reviewing what charging points could be installed based on existing power supply. The Panel was recommended to support option 3, in which the Council would offer a charging service at the rate of £0.29 per kWh.

Following a question from Councillor Alban on whether the number of charging points would meet the demand, the Panel was informed that the number of charging points proposed was based on the results of a survey. It was explained that the proposal was proportionate and would involve installing a prudent number of points and monitoring usage.

Councillor Alban then queried whether the Council could work with Town and Parish Councils in order to install electric vehicle charging points on their property. It was explained that the Council did not have the necessary in-house expertise to do this but could put Town and Parish Councils in contact with the experts that worked with the Council on the proposal.

In response to Councillor Dickinson's question on the company the Council was using, it was explained that consideration was being given to procuring an operator to provide the power supply as well as the charging points.

Following a question from Councillor Wilson, it was confirmed that car parking charges were applied to those vehicles occupying the electric vehicle charging bays in addition to electric vehicle charging fees. It was also confirmed that electric charging bays would be the same size as regular bays.

The Chairman asked about the tariff options identified. In response the Panel was informed that the proposed tariff would ensure there would be enough income to recover all capital and operational costs in a suitable timescale. Having expressed support for the proposals and the preferred tariff of option 3, it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be encouraged to endorse the recommendations as outlined within the report.

42 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was presented to the Panel.

Chairman