

Cabinet

Tuesday, 20 December 2016

Attendees: Councillor Tina Bourne, Councillor Mark Cory, Councillor Annie Feltham, Councillor Dominic Graham, Councillor Michael Lilley, Councillor Beverley Oxford, Councillor Paul Smith, Councillor Tim Young

Substitutes:

Also in attendance: Councillors Davies, Harris, Hazell, Lissimore, G. Oxford, Willetts and Warnes

127 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.

128 Have Your Say!

Nicholas Bown addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1). The role of Councillors was to speak for the people, to make a difference and provide community leadership. Councillors needed to consider whether they fulfilled this role and whether they did all they could to help their residents. In particular Councillors needed to consider how they could help the homeless and remember the plight of the homeless over the Christmas period.

In response, Councillor Smith, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that many Councillors across all parties worked very hard. They received their mandate via election by their constituents. Each Councillor was provided with a community budget of £2000 to spend in their ward. In terms of homelessness, the Council had introduced policies to help those in housing need or threatened with homelessness such as the rent deposit scheme and a scheme to help with furniture and white goods. However, the best way of addressing homelessness was to build more housing, particularly social rented housing. The Council was prevented from building Council housing by government policies.

129 Colchester Waste Collection Strategy

The Chief Operating Officer submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member together with minute 96 from the Scrutiny Panel meeting of 12 December

2016.

David Kent addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1). The survey on which the proposals were based had only reached 2% of residents of the borough. In Stanway this would equate to a very small number of households. It was unclear how these households had been selected and whether this was a representative sample. Wheeled bins were not wanted as they were an eyesore and were difficult for the elderly or disabled to move. Concern was also expressed about the reduction in the size of white garden waste sacks.

Former Councillor Peter Thompson addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1). When addressing the Scrutiny Panel he had highlighted the lack of public involvement in recycling and waste management issues. The Council's proposals demonstrated that a combined system of black bag and wheeled bins methods of collection alongside each other was possible. Residents should be able to simply choose which method they preferred. Such a system would be cheaper and would have the advantage of pleasing all residents. The Council needed to approach the issue seriously, with an open mind and put ideas out to open consultation.

Councillor Harris attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Cabinet to express concern that some of those who opposed the introduction of wheeled bins were accused of being opposed to recycling. He had conducted his own survey within Berechurch ward which had shown only 20% in favour of wheeled bins and therefore he did not feel able to support the proposals. A number of streets within the ward were not suitable for wheeled bins so a flexible approach needed to be taken, despite the intention to introduce them across the ward. The introduction of wheeled bins also needed to be tempered to take into account the needs of residents who would be unable to manage them.

Councillor Lissimore attended, and with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Cabinet. A number of the questions she had raised at the Scrutiny Panel remained unanswered. It was unclear how the three bag limit per household for residual waste would be policed. If more sacks were put out, would these be left on the street? In addition, Councillor Lissimore queried how the stocks of white sacks would be monitored. Instead of providing white sacks without charge, it would be more sensible to build in sufficient time on the rounds for white sacks to be properly returned to their properties. No details were provided about the properties that would be receiving wheeled bins. How would the Council deal with those bins that were permanently left out in front of properties?

Councillor Lissimore asked how the changes would increase recycling. Wheeled bins made it easier to hide the fact that households were not recycling. Residents needed more information and better education on how to recycle properly. The consultation had

shown that 82% of residents were happy with the existing service and the Council should seek to build and develop this service. No other Council provided the service in this way.

Councillor Warnes attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Cabinet. He had consulted widely within Berechurch ward on the proposals in the time available. A wide range of views had been expressed. There were a number of residents who were opposed to wheeled bins per se. They were perceived by some as unsightly, smelly and difficult to move. A number of residents were also opposed to the move to fortnightly collections. However, two views recurred throughout the consultation:-

- Black refuse sacks were smelly, vulnerable to animals, unsightly and were put out early by some residents;
- Many of those who supported wheeled bins did so on the basis that they would help them increase recycling.

Wheeled bins would effectively “design out” the faults inherent in black bags. The exemptions policy would accommodate those who found wheeled bins difficult to manage.

Councillor G. Oxford attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Cabinet. Education was key to help residents increase recycling, in particular through schools. One of the main incentives to increase recycling was to reduce landfill tax charges. The scope of the exemptions policy was noted. Facilities to house wheeled bins need to be incorporated into the design of future housing.

Councilor Davies attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Cabinet. The extensive scale of the changes proposed was highlighted. Not all of these were required to meet the aims of increasing recycling and reducing the amount of residual waste sent to landfill. This was compared with the simple “Keep it to 3” campaign run by Swansea Council which had significantly improved its recycling performance. An education campaign was needed. It was the amount of waste that was allowed to be collected, rather the receptacle it was collected from that was key. She suggested that the introduction of the following programme of changes would achieve the Council’s objectives at a cost of £300,000, which was a saving of £566,000 on the administration’s proposals:-

- A limit of 3 black bags of residual waste per household;
- Residual waste to be collected fortnightly;
- 60 litre black sacks printed with recycling information to be provided free;
- Charging to continue for white garden waste sacks;
- The introduction of a second green box for the separation of glass and cans.

In response, Councillor Graham, Portfolio Holder for Waste and Sustainability, responded to the speakers and made the following points:-

- A significant number of responses had been received to the consultation. The number of responses was in line with that received for other major consultations. The administration had also taken account of the views of local ward councillors in their role as community leaders.
- The smaller white sacks was a result of a manufacturing error. The Council would receive some recompense and any resident that wished to exchange the smaller sacks should contact the Council.
- It was not accepted that the involvement of the public on waste issues had been non-existent. A comprehensive communications plan was in place and considerable public engagement was ongoing. This would include engagement with schools to ensure that behaviour change began at the earliest opportunity.
- The views of those who opposed wheeled bins were respected. He did not accept that residents who opposed wheeled bins did not support recycling.
- Wheeled bins would be provided for the property/household, not for the individual resident.
- In terms of concerns about how the implementation of the changes collections would be policed and monitored, the zones teams and collection staff would be responsible. There would be a 6 month soft launch which would give an opportunity for issues and problems to be addressed as they arose.
- Detailed work on the exact properties that would receive wheeled bins and the collection routes would begin once the proposals had been agreed. It would be premature to begin such time consuming work in advance of this.
- There would be no change to way that stocks of white sacks were monitored.
- The Exemptions Policy would be a flexible document which would evolve over time.
- The need to reduce landfill charges through reducing the amount of residual waste was an important driver behind the proposed changes to the service. Equally important were environmental factors and the need to reduce residual waste sent to landfill to protect the environment.

Councillor Graham also explained that the financial implications of the changes had been looked at very carefully, especially in view of the settlement from central government. As a consequence it was proposed to provide a second green box only to those residents who requested it. Many residents either already had a second box or did not require one. This would reduce the cost of introducing the changes by £150,000.

Councillor Graham thanked the officers involved in developing the proposals. The proposals would reduce the amount of residual waste sent to landfill and increase recycling significantly.

Councillor T. Young, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Regeneration, expressed his support and commended the work of Councillor Graham, together with officers, previous Portfolio Holders and the members of the Waste and Recycling Options Task and Finish

Group. Whilst the proposals were a compromise, they would be successful. The administration was keen to improve its performance in recycling and all the best performing authorities had introduced wheeled bins. He was confident that residents who lived in the areas where wheeled bins would be introduced would rise to the challenge and use them effectively. Those who found wheeled bins difficult to manage would be able to request an assisted collection.

Councillor Smith, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, thanked all officer and Councillors for their work in developing the proposals. These were the most significant changes to the waste collection arrangements in a generation. As far as was possible, the system was being adapted to meet the wishes of local residents. The proposals also needed to be considered in the context of the cuts to local government funding imposed by central government.

RESOLVED that:-

(a) The following changes to the way in which the Council collects waste and recycling be agreed:-

- (i) End the provision of free black sacks;
- (ii) Residual waste to be collected fortnightly;
- (iii) A limit of three black sacks for residual waste for areas that do not have wheeled bins;
- (iv) The introduction of a second green box so that glass and cans are separated at the request of the resident;
- (v) Provision of free white garden sacks in areas that will not have wheeled bins from the date of the introduction of the changes;
- (vi) The introduction of wheeled bin collections for specific areas of the Borough; one for residual waste and a second optional bin for garden waste;
- (vii) The continued provision of free clear sacks for recycling materials as at present.

(b) The exemptions policy that will allow households who are unable to reduce their residual waste for example because of the size of the household, to put out additional residual waste and provision of a weekly collection of medical waste be agreed.

(c) The revenue implications set out in the Chief Operating Officer's report be included in the 2017/18 budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast.

(d) As part of the final budget report it be agreed to recommend to Council the inclusion in the capital programme of the capital budget requirements set out in Chief Operating Officer's report.

(e) Subject to appropriate budget provisions being agreed, authority be delegated to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Waste and

Sustainability, for the procurement of the appropriate number of wheeled bins, green boxes and other capital expenditure as outlined in section 12 of the Chief Operating Officer's report to be funded from the capital programme

REASONS

A waste vision was adopted by the Council in 2015 which sets out how decisions relating to waste management will be reviewed:

- Waste is managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy, so that waste is prevented and minimised where possible
- Reuse activity is encouraged in households and businesses
- Recycling activity increases the quantity of recyclable material and produces high quality materials that are required by re-processors
- The environmental impacts of the whole system of waste management are minimised
- The recycling and waste collection service provided by the Council provides value for money for its customers

The key aims of the proposals are:-

- To improve our performance, in particular reducing residual waste and increasing recycling
- To provide a waste and recycling collection service requested by residents

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

To retain the current collection methods and to accept inability to improve recycling or further reduce residual waste.

To introduce wheeled bins across the whole Borough

There are a variety of other options around some of the detail, but the decisions proposed, following careful consideration and analysis, are believed to be those that

- most closely meet the views of the public
- deliver the most benefit in terms of improving performance
- provide the best value for money
- meet the priorities set out in the Waste Vision

The Head of Community Services submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor T. Young, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Regeneration, explained that the Arts Council had extended the National Portfolio Investment Programme Funding to museums. The Arts Council had encouraged Colchester and Ipswich Museums to make an application for Band One funding, which was up to £250,000. Given Colchester and Ipswich Museums record of success, he was confident that it could make a successful application.

RESOLVED that:-

(a) The submission of an Arts Council England (ACE) four year National Portfolio Investment Programme (NPO) 2018/19-2021/22 bid for Band 1 funding by Colchester Borough Council in respect of our Joint Museum Service with Ipswich Borough Council be approved.

(b) Authority be delegated to the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Regeneration to sign off and submit the bid in line with Arts Council England deadlines.

REASONS

CIMS is not currently in receipt of NPO funding and competition will be strong. While there is no guarantee that the submission of a bid will result in an award, continuous improvements and investment in Colchester's heritage is a key part of our Strategic Plan and of importance to residents and visitors. As such the Council feels it is important to seek out and respond to funding opportunities.

Delegated authority to the Head of Community Services provides the maximum time and opportunity for input and work on the final bid submission which is subject to a tight timescale and online portal process.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

To not proceed with an application to ACE for NPO funding 2018/19-2021/22

131 Asset Management Strategy 2016-2021

Minute 140 from the Trading Board meeting of 23 November 2016 was submitted to the Cabinet for consideration, together with the draft Asset Management Strategy dated November 2016.

The Cabinet received a presentation from Fiona Duhamel, Economic Growth Manager, and Elizabeth Simpson, Estates Manager, setting out the Council's property assets and how these were managed to reflect the Council's key strategic objectives.

Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, thanked officers for the work involved in developing the Strategy. The Strategy would help bring business to Colchester, develop community assets, increase inward investment and develop income streams for the Council. The Strategy would be supported by an Action Plan.

Councillor Smith, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Councillor B. Oxford, Portfolio Holder for Customers and Councillor Feltham, Portfolio Holder for Business, Leisure and Opportunities, all expressed their support for the Strategy highlighting in particular how the Strategy impacted positively on residents and linked up with the Council's Community Development, Environmental and Events Strategies.

RESOLVED that the Asset Management Strategy dated November 2016 be approved.

REASONS

The previous Asset Management Plan covered the period 2010-2013 and needs to be updated to set out a strategy for how Colchester Borough Council will manage its assets over the next 5 years.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Not to approve the Asset Management Strategy, or approve it with amendments.

132 Calendar of Meetings 2017-2018

The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member together with a revised copy of the draft calendar of meetings on the Supplementary Agenda.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The draft Calendar of Meetings for the municipal year from May 2017 to April 2018 be approved
- (b) Authority to cancel meetings be delegated to the Chairman of the relevant Committee/Panel in conjunction with the Assistant Chief Executive.

REASONS

The Calendar of Meetings needs to be determined so that decisions for the year can be timetabled into the respective work programmes and the Forward Plan.

Advance notice of the Calendar of Meetings needs to be made available to external organisations, parish councils and other bodies with which the Council works in partnership and to those members of the public who may wish to attend meetings of the council and make representations.

The meeting rooms also need to be reserved as soon as possible so that room bookings can be made for private functions by private individuals, external organisations and internal Council groups.

A formal arrangement needs to be in place for the cancellation of meetings that no longer need to be held.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The proposals in the Assistant Chief Executive's report have largely been devised on the current meeting structure and frequency, it would be possible to devise alternative proposals using different criteria.