

**MINUTES of the meeting of the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 19 December 2011 at 7.00pm.**

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**Present:** Councillors James Halden (Chair), Wendy Curtis, Steve Liddiard, Joy Redsell, Tom Kelly and Mike Stone

**Apologies:** Councillor Pauline Tolson

**In attendance:** Councillor Lynn Worrall – Portfolio Holder for Communities, Culture and Leisure  
L. Magill – Head of Public Protection  
A. Murphy – Head of Environment  
B. Newman – Corporate Director – Sustainable Communities  
C. Lambert – Regeneration and Sustainability Manager  
P. McCusker – Communications Manager  
M. Boulter – Principal Democratic Services Officer

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**22. ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

The Committee noted the meeting notes from 22 November.

**23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

a) Interests

Councillor Stone declared a personal interest in relation to Item 4 by virtue that he works for a company involved in the Olympics.

Councillor Halden stated that a colleague may bid for the recycling bring site contract and he had taken legal advice which had confirmed it is not a personal or prejudicial interest. However, he felt he should declare it.

b) Whipping

No interests were declared.

**24. BUDGET 2012/13 – GROWTH AND SAVINGS PROPOSALS**

The Committee discussed the addition of three environmental health officers (CGSG2) and agreed that it was important for the Council to cover all of its statutory obligations. It was clarified that the Council was

not able to check whether food businesses were undertaking appropriate action through pest control companies.

The Committee explored why the growth was being delivered now and not in past years and it was explained that the Council and past portfolio holders had been aware of the growing demand on the service but the savings required to increase staffing levels had never been viable. The demand was now so great that the savings would have to be made regardless. Officers agreed that the increase in staffing was significant but this was often the case when dealing with small teams. Officers added that the growth bid was for environmental health officers in health and safety, and food safety work.

The original growth had been for three officers but through the star chamber process this had been changed to propose two of the officers to be employed next year and one to be employed the year after. The time it took to recruit depended on the HR process and who was employed.

Members learnt that consideration had been given to upskilling the current Food Safety Officer to an Environmental Health Officer, however he undertook important work with medium and low risk businesses. It was also clarified that the team did put on events to help businesses comply with standards although the majority of service requests came from consumers rather than businesses.

Some discussion took place on the Council's responsibilities relating to imported food and it was stated that the Port was responsible for certain areas of enforcement while the Council was responsible for others.

**RESOLVED that the committee agree the growth in principle but have a meeting with the service manager on the week commencing 2 January.**

With regards to the Stray Dogs Services (CGSS4) officers highlighted that a £10,000 saving would be made but the portfolio holder was confident the statutory service would be maintained. The committee was also informed that previous years' underspend had allowed the service to offer further discretionary services, such as chipping dogs, which had proved successful. It was confirmed that with no more underspend available these discretionary services would no longer be funded by the Council, although there were opportunities for funding from other sources, such as the Dogs Trust.

The Committee moved on to the Climate Change Levy (CGSG1) and were told that the growth figure was based upon a model where the greatest demand was placed on the Council. It was expected that the Council required less money to cover costs and that any excess funds would be used to cover the increase in electricity costs due next year.

The Committee requested that energy budget issues were also considered by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Committee were invited to the working group investigating climate change.

The Chair highlighted his concern that the growth relating to street cleansing (CGSG4) followed a £50,000 saving in previous years. He felt that this highlighted strategy issues relating to the service.

The Committee discussed trade waste charges for public events and buildings and the Chair expressed his desire to have a service that organisations and sites opted into rather than being charged for a service that they had to opt out of. During the debate it was stated that schools and playschools were charged waste collection rates although some preferred to pay for private contractors.

The Co-location of Europa Services meant that the Station House would be a marketable asset if the Council so desired and it could be sold or leased for profit.

**The meeting finished at 7.40pm.**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIRMAN**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
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