

**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.30 pm on 11 JANUARY 2005**

Present:- Councillor A R Thawley – Chairman.
Councillors C A Cant, J F Cheetham, A Dean, C D Down, E
Godwin, B M Hughes and V Pedder.

Also present:- Councillor M A Gayler

Officers in attendance: - A Bovaird, V Borges, D Burridge, R Harborough, M
Jones, J Mitchell, R Pridham and B Stansfield.

E28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Corke and E Tealby-
Watson.

E29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors C A Cant, J F Cheetham, E Godwin, V Pedder and A R Thawley
declared personal interests as members of SSE and drew attention to the
dispensation from the Standards Committee.

Councillors C A Cant, A Dean, B M Hughes, and A R Thawley declared
interests as members of the National Trust and Councillors C A Cant, A Dean,
C D Down, B M Hughes and A R Thawley declared interests as members of
CPRE. Councillors V Pedder and A R Thawley declared interests as
members of LA21.

Councillor J E Menell also drew attention to her interest as a non-executive
director of the Uttlesford PCT.

E30 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2004 were received,
confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

E31 FLOODING ALLEVIATION

The Executive Manager (Development Services) introduced the report, which
updated Members with the progress on flood alleviation projects across the
district. He explained that five out of seven on the list of locations where the
District Council could have a direct impact into flood prevention schemes had
now been completed. The two locations that were unresolved were Anso
Road, Hempstead and Jacks Lane/Smiths Green junction at Takeley. He
informed the Committee that Anso Road flooding was caused by the
inadequate size of the bridge beneath the B1050. He added that this had
been referred to the bridge office at Chelmsford and they were awaiting their
conclusions. He said that the flooding at Takeley had been a problem for

many years and it effected the highway, four houses and the inundation of sewage treatment facilities. He added that Essex County Council (ECC) had prepared a scheme estimated to cost £38,500 to alleviate the flooding in this area. However the bid for funding of the Takeley scheme by ECC had not been successful this year. In order to get this problem resolved it was suggested that Uttlesford District Council implement the scheme prepared by ECC.

Councillor Hughes proposed a motion to accept the recommendation but to include house owners in respect of the construction costs. Councillor Down seconded the motion.

After further discussion it was proposed by Councillor Cheetham and seconded by Councillor Godwin that Home Owners should be taken out of the decision, as they had already had to pay for damage to their land and vehicles due to flooding and this was agreed.

RESOLVED that Members approved the proposal to part fund the flood alleviation scheme for the Jacks Lane/Smiths Green area of Takeley and also to ask Takeley Parish Council for a contribution in respect of the construction costs.

E32

THE UTTLESFORD LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Principal Policy and Conservation Manager introduced the report and explained that the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 replaced the old systems of structure plans, local plans and supplementary planning guidance with a new system of regional spatial strategies and Local Development Framework (LDF). One of the key components of the LDF is to prepare the Local Development Scheme, which sets out the key milestones for the production of the individual LDF documents and considers the resources and management structure required to achieve these milestones. He outlined that the LDS included a statement of community involvement setting out the Council's standard for involving people in the LDS process along with other consultative areas, core strategy that would set out the Council's vision, core policies and the spatial strategy for the future development of the district including the role of rural communities, general development control policies and site-specific policies. He added that once the LDS had been approved it would be made generally available and be posted on the Council's website and would be monitored on an annual basis.

He explained that the LDS was submitted in draft form to Go-East in September 2004 and their comments had been taken into account in the attached draft.

Councillor Thawley congratulated the officers on a clear and precise report.

Member's questioned the role of the proposed working group on master/forward planning in relation to that of the Strategic Development Advisory Group. Councillor Dean was of the view that while the master/forward planning working group was intended to consider the

contribution that such approaches might make the development of the LDF and the resources that would be required by Uttlesford District Council to deliver such approaches, the work of the SDAG was longer-term and strategic in focus: concentrating on the ends – what do we want? – rather than the means – how do we get there? Officers confirmed this view of the distinction between the two groupings.

Following a discussion it was decided that the two Member working Groups proposed would consist of 3 Liberal Democrats, 1 Conservative and 1 Independent.

RESOLVED that the Local Development Scheme be approved with the establishment of two member officer working groups, one to steer and monitor the preparation of Development Plan documents, the second to look at different approaches to preparing site specific guidance.

E33

SERVICE PLANS BUDGETS AND COUNCIL PRIORITIES 2005/06

The Executive Manager (Finance and Asset Strategy) outlined the finalisation of the Committee's General Fund budget for 2005/06 subject to final considerations by the Resources Committee and Full Council. He submitted a report, which contained full details of the base budget, a refined list of spending pressures and proposals to achieve the budget reductions.

He worked through the Committees draft base budget for 2005/06 and explained that total direct costs were now calculated at £2,176,800 with a draft 2005/06 base budget of £2,787,060.

He then explained that the executive management team had re-examined the spending pressures for all Council Committees and at the Council meeting on 14 December 2004 the Executive Managers provided their views on which spending pressures should be agreed and which were for recommendation, deferment or deletion. He then gave a summary of the proposed spending pressures including the one-off pressures for this committee.

He outlined the £62,500 savings/additional income targets for this Committee outlined in appendix 2, which had been agreed at the Council meeting on 14 December 2004 and had been based on the prioritisation approach and the Council's overall financial position.

Councillor Cheetham informed the Committee that the rural route network pilot studies £5,000 charge included in the base budget was now separate from this Committee and should be charged to Transport.

The Executive Manager (Environmental Services) informed the Committee that income could be made through the collection of abandoned vehicles as currently no fee was charged and 400 vehicles were collected a year. She added that the charge of cleaning the market could increase however this may cause friction. Councillor Dean added that the prioritisation process for

refuse and recycling was wrong and they would be unlikely to push for the full saving of £41,000.

RESOLVED that:

1. The base budget for 2005/06 be approved and submitted to the Resources Committee.
2. The proposed approach to spending pressures be approved and submitted to the Resources Committee for retention with a request that they be agreed.
3. The proposed options contained in appendix 2 as amended by other discussions at the meeting be approved and submitted to Resources Committee. These savings to be £6,000 short of the overall savings target due to the effect on services of making the full reductions requested. In addition, the planning grants totalling £13,500 and the previously deferred £3,000 spending pressure for recycling bring sites upgrades be forwarded to the Resources Committee with a request for approval.

E34

FEES AND CHARGES – SAFFRON WALDEN CEMETERY

The Executive Manager (Environmental Services) introduced the report, which explained the current and the proposed revised fees and charges. She highlighted some improvements to the pricing policy that had been identified through a benchmarking exercise. She then introduced Barry Stansfield who supervises the grounds and maintenance contract. He handed out a plan showing where the scattering of cremated remains and traditional memorial area would be.

RESOLVED that Officers investigate additional information on other cemeteries pricing policies and the impact on their income.

E35

TUPE TRANSFER OF RECYCLING STAFF

The Executive Manager (Environmental Services) informed the Committee of the negotiations regarding a Transfer of Undertakings, Protection of Employment (TUPE) of 12 recycling employees, which had been found unworkable. She outlined that the report advised Members of the current TUPE negotiations with staff and the refuse contractor and the revised position for a combined Refuse and Recycling contract to be exposed to tender for five years.

RESOLVED that

1. The negotiations to bring about the transfer of 12 recycling employees be terminated.

2. Consultancy funds of £30,000 identified in the Environment and Culture Service Plan be drawn upon to write a contract specification to deliver the Uttlesford Waste Management Strategy.
3. Officers be authorised to initiate the procurement process for a combined Refuse and Recycling contract with a contract start date of July 2006.
4. A single pass system would not be undertaken at the present time.

E36

WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Services Officer introduced the draft Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Uttlesford District Council. He explained that the document produces the base strategy providing a future waste and recycling plan. He explained that the Council would need to have adopted the strategy by Spring 2005 and be formally produced by the end of August 2005 in order to meet EC legislation.

Councillor A Dean suggested that some form of public consultation should be undertaken so that the public understood. Councillor Cheetham added that Member workshops would be the way forward and suggested one should be arranged in February. She added that the strategy would need to be discussed at Council.

RESOLVED that a workshop be arranged for all members and the Strategy be brought to the Committee for adoption.

E37

PROJECT TEAM FOR ESSEX CONTRACT

Councillor Thawley introduced the item to Members and suggested that a Member Steering Group be set up to advise the Committee on the project team for the Essex Contract.

RESOLVED that a Member Officer working party be set up to include Cllr Thawley, Cllr Pedder, Cllr A Dean, Cllr Cheetham, Cllr Godwin, D Burrige, R Pridham, P O'Dell and M Perry.

The meeting ended at 10.10 pm.