

ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.30 pm on 16 June 2011

Present:

Councillor William Huntington-Thresher (Chairman)
Councillor Ellie Harmer (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Reg Adams, Simon Fawthrop, Julian Grainger,
David Hastings, Samaris Huntington-Thresher,
Nick Milner, George Taylor and Stephen Wells

Also Present:

Councillor Peter Fortune and Councillor Colin Smith

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF ALTERNATE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillors Kathy Bance and Ian Payne.
Councillor Simon Fawthrop attended as alternate for Councillor Ian Payne.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman declared a Personal Interest at item 7c of the agenda as a nomination to membership of the Countryside Consultative Panel. The Vice-Chairman also declared a Personal Interest at item 7c as a nomination to the Leisure Gardens and Allotments Panel.

3 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

There were no questions to the Committee.

4 MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5TH APRIL 2011

The minutes were agreed.

5 QUESTIONS TO THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS ATTENDING THE MEETING

Three questions had been received from Mr Colin Willetts for written reply and one question had been received from Mr Andy Wilson for written reply. The questions and replies are at **Appendix A**.

6 ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO - PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Members were provided with Decisions of the Portfolio Holder taken since the Committee's previous meeting on 5th April 2011.

7 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF REPORTS TO THE ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER

A) PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2010/11

Report ES11056

The 2010/11 provisional outturn for the Environment Portfolio recorded an overspend of £7,006k. This included variations for capital charges and inter-committee recharges of £6,126k so leaving a variance of Dr £880k against the controllable budget of £34,120k representing a 2.58% variation. This was after allowing for transfers to and from central contingency for the waste underspend of Cr £701k and the recession monies to cover the £185k net shortfall of parking income. This compared with a projected Dr £777k variation previously reported to the Committee in April, the main reason for the overspend being the adverse weather conditions during the winter months.

Details were also provided on how the 2009/10 earmarked reserve of £1m for Residents Priorities had been spent. Similarly the latest position was also provided on how the 2010/11 earmarked reserve for Members Priorities was being spent. This indicated that £823k was spent before 31st March 2011 with the balance of £177k related to orders for works that had been raised but not yet completed.

A number of comments were made by Members. In connection with information on the latest position for expenditure against the 2010/11 earmarked reserve for Members Priorities, Councillor George Taylor suggested that schemes agreed by the Portfolio Holder be shown by ward as well as by road. Noting expenditure of £121k for carriageway pothole repairs, drainage and road marking renewals, Councillor Taylor also enquired of the predicted extent of pothole repairs. The Director explained that this was difficult to answer in detail. Survey work was currently being undertaken so it was possible to provide an indication. Spend on reactive work would comprise £400 to £500k and the Department for Transport had provided additional funding.

Councillor Grainger explained that he and Councillor Peter Fortune (Portfolio Executive Assistant) had started to look at the problem of pot holes. The Chairman explained that a Highways Assets Working Group would be proposed and suggested that the work of Councillors Grainger and Fortune could feed into the Group.

Concerning the fraudulent use of Blue Badges, Councillor Wells referred to an audit inquiry into the problem and enquired whether the Committee could take a report on the matter from the Council's auditors. Councillor Peter Fortune indicated that that he had been looking into the problem with Councillor Diane Smith - including enforcement of the scheme - and would be happy to report to the Committee. The Portfolio Holder encouraged more liaison with the Committee on the matter along with an assertive role against fraud. He felt that a campaign should be launched by the Council against the problem. Councillor Simon Fawthrop suggested that it might be helpful for the work of Councillors Fortune and Diane Smith to be considered at Audit Sub Committee first where both the ACS and Environment PDS perspectives could be considered. Councillor Fawthrop offered to speak further with Councillor Wells on the matter following the meeting. Councillor Fortune commented that there was no finish date scheduled for their work.

Councillor Samaris Huntington-Thresher highlighted additional works at £35k being carried out to the borough's trees following damage caused by the weight of snow last winter suggesting that such expenditure should be taken into account in future years. The Head of Parks and Greenspace indicated that the backlog on tree work had caught up separately from the snow damage although the current position was not a major problem.

On snow clearance the Chairman enquired whether a conclusion had been reached on whether one or two gritters should be held. The Assistant Director (Street Scene and Green Space) explained that nine gritters were held with one spare. A Unimog vehicle was also used for deep snow clearance and there were a further six vehicles on which gritting attachments could be placed.

The Vice-Chairman asked how figures were used to predict what measures are taken for next winter. The Director explained that the views of Members would be sought in the coming autumn. Current salt stocks were also at full capacity and the Director referred to the work of Street Friends. A lot had also been learned over the past three years.

In concluding the item the Chairman expressed his unease at additional costs of £20k incurred for business rates at the incineration site used by the Council which was outside of the borough.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to endorse the 2010/11 provisional outturn position for the Environment Portfolio.

**B) CHISLEHURST AND ST.PAUL'S CRAY COMMONS
CONSERVATORS - NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION**

Report ES11063

Approval was sought for the appointment of two nominees to serve on the Board of the Chislehurst and St Paul's Cray Commons Conservators to 30th

June 2014 as the term of office for two Conservators had expired. There was no requirement in this case for the nominees to be frontagers.

There was also a vacancy on the Board resulting from a mid-term resignation. There were no additional nominations and it was proposed that the Board of Conservators be given authority to appoint a suitable new member in due course, should a volunteer with the necessary skills and attributes present themselves. Any appointment would need to be ratified following the next annual nominations report to the Portfolio Holder in 2012.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:

- 1) appoint Mr Ian Leonard and Mr Peter Woodward to serve on the Board of Conservators for the next three years until 30th June 2014 and**
- 2) record the vacancy that exists and authorise the Chislehurst and St Pauls Cray Commons Conservators to appoint as and when a suitable candidate volunteers, reporting such details at the next nomination report to the Portfolio Holder in 2012.**

C) APPOINTMENTS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE CONSULTATIVE PANEL AND THE LEISURE GARDENS AND ALLOTMENTS PANEL 2011/12

Report RES11029

Nominations for the Countryside Consultative Panel comprised Councillors Julian Benington, William Huntington-Thresher, Gordon Norrie and Richard Scoates and nominations for the Leisure Gardens and Allotments Panel comprised Councillors Ellie Harmer, Sarah Phillips, Harry Stranger and Michael Turner. *(Note: since the meeting and before decision taking it was proposed that Councillor Kathy Bance also be included on the Membership of the Leisure Gardens and Allotments Panel).*

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to confirm the 2011/12 Membership of the Countryside Consultative Panel and the Leisure Gardens and Allotments Panel based on the nominations recorded in Report RES11029.

D) ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO PLAN 2011/14

Report ES11065

Members considered a final draft of the Environment Portfolio Plan for 2011/14 including information on 2010/11 performance.

Concerning the number of illegal fly-tipping incidents for 2010/11 recorded at page 5 of the draft plan, advice had been provided to the Chairman indicating that the figure quoted of 2886 probably exaggerated the scale of the problem due to a trialled change in definition of fly-tipping in the first half of the year

which was discontinued; the data from the second half of the year indicated that the long-term trend of a decline in fly tipping had therefore continued.

With reference to the 2010/11 performance for *Condition of Footway Surface* at 18% (page 8) it was indicated that this figure was a sample-based estimate; a report on footway conditions would be provided in the autumn. The Assistant Director (Customer and Support Services) explained that definitions of principal and non-principal roads for the performance indicators at page 8 would be circulated.

Referring to the commentary on transport improvements at pages 3 and 4 of the draft plan Councillor Grainger preferred to see (reduced) "*journey times*" rather than "*congestion*" which he felt could lead to anti-car measures. Councillor Grainger also referred to improving the flow of traffic through pinch points.

Referring to page 10 of the draft plan Councillor Grainger asked that the term "*lower carbon emissions*" be replaced with "*less energy*" and referring to page 11 Councillor Grainger asked whether the provision of cycle storage facilities could be included as he understood cycle theft to be a particular concern for cyclists. For school travel plans Councillor Grainger also asked how the effectiveness of such plans were measured.

Responding, the Assistant Director (Customer and Support Services) suggested that reference to "*journey times*" rather than "*congestion*" be included in the draft plan for next year. Reference to improving traffic flow through pinch points could also be made then. Use of the term "*carbon emissions*" was used in reports to the Executive covering this area, for example on carbon tax. To include reference on cycle storage it would first be necessary to ensure resources for the provision - the reference could then be looked at for next year. Concerning school travel plans Members were advised that many aspects were examined not solely how children went to school.

The Portfolio Holder endorsed comments from Councillor Grainger about use of the term "*carbon*". He indicated that he would be looking to consider textual changes at approval stage of the Plan. The Portfolio Holder added that his personal view was not to have a Portfolio Plan but instead focus on outcomes. The Assistant Director (Customer and Support Services) indicated that provision of a Portfolio Plan adhered to Council corporate policy. Some National Indicators had been removed and some had survived upon which the Council was still required to publish its performance. However targets were no longer set by Government. Performance expectations were now exclusively local matters to be set by Bromley Members.

Referring to page 4 of the draft plan Councillor Wells was glad that the London Permit Scheme had been successfully introduced to Bromley. He highlighted that street works were taking place in Beckenham high street from June to November which would be for the third time in three years and Councillor Wells expressed his wish to see enforcement action taken.

Councillor Samaris Huntington-Thresher referred to the performance indicator for the percentage of children travelling to school by car noting that a target had been set at 31% for 2011/12 to 2013/14. In commenting on the target Councillor Huntington-Thresher felt there should be an aim to reduce the number of car journeys. The Assistant Director (Customer and Support Services) explained that the 2010/11 target was set as part of the Local Area Agreement and explained the background to it. The actual outturn had been at 31% and without additional investment a more demanding target could not be confidently set - it was a matter of holding the current position.

Councillor Huntington-Thresher also highlighted the targets for people killed/seriously injured in road accidents (NI 47). The Assistant Director advised that road safety targets should not be based on a single year's experience. The Assistant Director recommended the Portfolio Plan targets for consistency, which would be the most demanding in London. He highlighted an amendment to paragraph 3.7.3 of Report ES11065 explaining that the final sentence should read: "*The long-term objective proposed is to achieve, by 2020, a 35% reduction in injuries compared to the mean casualty rate over the period 2006/10*".

The Portfolio Holder suggested that there were a number of factors in the case of road safety that could contribute to lower road casualty figures; he felt that if targets were required then it was necessary to have trends.

Referring to a street scene matter, Councillor Taylor highlighted a concern that had been passed to him by a resident involving the non-removal of wheelie bins from the edge of property curtilages. The resident had asked whether there could be a requirement for the bins to be removed within 24 hours of waste/recycling collection and Councillor Taylor referred to an inclusion of action in the Portfolio Plan for the removal of wheelie bins to maintain the street scene. Members were advised that waste operatives had commented that the matter was not a big problem and if such reports were received waste advisers would visit the residents concerned. There had not been many complaints on the issue but it could be looked at with Member agreement if it was seen to be a problem. The Chairman suggested that the Federation of Residents Associations be approached for their response in the first instance and this was agreed.

Concerning street and environmental cleanliness, Councillor Fawthrop commented that his level of graffiti reporting had diminished and he felt that if there was now less graffiti there would be opportunity for more pro-active cleaning. The Chairman commented that pro-active cleaning had increased and it was possible to obtain figures. Responding, Councillor Fawthrop confirmed that he would be interested to see figures.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to take account of comments expressed by Committee Members in:

(1) agreeing the scope, aims and outcomes proposed in the Portfolio Plan, taking into consideration the budget for 2011/14 which had already been agreed; and

(2) agreeing the specific milestones and local performance expectations set out in the Plan, taking account of performance during 2009/10 and 2010/11.

8 MINOR TRAFFIC/PARKING SCHEME REPORTS TO THE ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER

A) ST. PHILOMENA'S SCHOOL - PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

Report ES11059

St Philomena's RC Primary School had requested the installation of a crossing facility in Chelsfield Road, St Mary Cray outside of the school.

Detailed design issues, such as the extent of anti-skid surface for the approaches and precise locations of the Belisha beacons would be for the Director to decide at detailed design which was subject to an investigation of the statutory utilities under the footway.

In discussion Councillor Taylor commented that he expected to see more information on matters such as footfall level for the proposed zebra crossing, a cost benefit analysis and accident data. Councillor Grainger also conveyed an expectation to see more evidence and Councillor Adams felt that there ought to be an evidence based report in support of the scheme.

The Chairman referred to the report at item 10 of the agenda on "*Selection, Design and Consultation Policy*" and advised that a total of six consultation responses had now been received all of which favoured the scheme. Councillor Fortune commented that St Philomena's school was in favour of the scheme.

Councillor Taylor was concerned about the scheme setting a precedent. The Portfolio Holder indicated that if a school was content and provided support for such a scheme in place of a School Crossing Patrol it made good sense. Councillor Fawthrop expressed support for the recommendation.

RESOLVED that Portfolio Holder be recommended to agree the plan to install a zebra crossing on Chelsfield Road near the entrance to St Philomena's School, as illustrated in drawing labelled ESD10805-1 and explained in section 3.9 of Report ES11059.

9 REVIEW OF RANGERS, COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES AND STRUCTURAL CHANGES TO THE PARKS AND GREENSPACE SECTION

Report ES11066

Based on the outcome of the Council's budgetary exercise for 2011/12 and the inclusion of the Countryside Service formerly within the Renewal and Recreation Department a significant restructuring within the Parks and Greenspace section of the Streetscene and Greenspace Division was proposed. Additionally the current external security contract was being considered to see how it could support such proposals. Report ES11066 identified the impact of the recommendations and the financial implications of the proposed changes including savings and redundancy costs.

The review looked at Parks Services based at Churchouse Gardens, Bromley, Crystal Palace Park Rangers based at Crystal Palace Park and the Countryside Service and Educational facility at BEECHE, High Elms. The review also identified other areas within the current Parks and Greenspace section where there might be an overlap or logical co-joining of services or responsibilities and the review sought to amend the general structure, management and reporting lines.

There had also been a review of permanent work places to best meet the needs of the service going forward although the report highlighted that this would still need considerable development following the review in the context of accommodation and the way services best served customers. There was no current presumption that any or all of the existing three locations would be decommissioned.

The new service within Parks and Greenspace would be comprised of the following service areas: Contracts, Community and Development and Ranger Services. At no additional cost to the Authority, Ward Security would be based at and patrol Crystal Palace Park and would undertake locking duties at night. Report ES11066 also anticipated the key areas likely to be affected as a result of staff and overall revenue reduction.

In discussion Members sought clarification on aspects of the proposals. Concerning the provision of a reduced on site Ranger support for volunteer groups Members were advised that there would be less time for Rangers to spend with volunteers particularly in a mentoring type capacity. For Crystal Palace Park there would not be a permanent Ranger presence at the Park and Rangers would operate from the middle of Bromley going out to the parks. Buildings for the Rangers would be maintained at Crystal Palace Park, Churchouse Gardens and High Elms. Ward Security would also patrol at Crystal Palace Park.

Concerning staff numbers associated with the old and new staffing structures it was explained that the total FTE staff complement would be reduced from 46 to 39 and an oral breakdown was given on FTE staff numbers against each designation highlighted in the existing generic staff structure at Appendix A to Report ES11066 and to the existing staff structure for the Countryside Service (including BEECHE educational facility) at Appendix B to the report.

Responding to an enquiry on whether there were special reasons for a static Ranger service at Crystal Palace Park and in consideration of the use of the Park for purposes such as educational visits, Members were advised that there were 156 park and open space sites in Bromley with Crystal Palace Park being the only site having a static complement of (six) Rangers. There were a number of events and skills required at Crystal Palace Park and Rangers would travel from other park sites in the borough to Crystal Palace Park. It was also confirmed that there was no intention of losing prestige events at the park with support for such events continuing to be undertaken by Rangers who would be brought in. There would be fewer Rangers but they would work more flexibly.

Referring to a current designation of “*Health and Wellbeing*” within the existing generic staff structure, an enquiry was made on whether the responsibility was covered elsewhere in the new staff structure or whether the position would be lost. The Head of Parks and Greenspace indicated that the Health and Wellbeing role was important; he indicated that the role would be taken forward in future under the Development and Community Manager with the post not being lost. The Member also enquired how many Rangers there would be in the new structure and whether reduced on-site Ranger support to volunteer groups might cost the Council more long term. In response it was confirmed that there would be a loss of seven staff. The new Ranger structure would comprise two Ranger teams based on skills and geography headed by a Rangers Services Manager; each team would have two senior Rangers and there would be five Rangers in each team. Concerning support to volunteer groups Members were advised that Friends activities would be controlled by the Development and Community Manager. There would be a reduced amount of time spent in the field with volunteer groups and the skills of Rangers would be used elsewhere.

Concerning the financial position, the Chairman urged the Portfolio Holder to continue with efforts to see Crystal Palace Park become a regional park. It was located on the corner of the borough and should be supported by other boroughs not just Bromley reflecting a community facility the burden of which should be spread across residents from a number of boroughs. The Chairman also asked that the Head of Parks and Greenspace respond to written comments provided for the meeting by Councillor Kathy Bance. Councillor Grainger also asked for the Portfolio Holder to consider the impact on the Friends Groups when discussing further with the Head of Parks and Greenspace.

Commenting on the report and comments made, the Portfolio Holder expressed his genuine sorrow for the individual staff being made redundant and commended officers for minimising the impact of a painful decision. He supported the Chairman’s comments concerning a sharing of the burden for funding Crystal Palace Park highlighting too that it was on the corner of the borough and funded solely by Bromley Council. As a minimum, the Portfolio Holder commented that an approach on the matter would be made at GLA level.

On support for Friends groups the Portfolio Holder commented that contact had been received from an individual who was keen to step in and the Portfolio Holder envisaged more people becoming involved.

RESOLVED that the Director of Environmental Service's proposals for restructuring within the Parks and Greenspace Section be noted together with the implications for a reduction in service area delivery and a reduction of seven full time staff equivalents.

10 SELECTION, DESIGN AND CONSULTATION POLICY FOR TRAFFIC SCHEMES

Report ES10185

In relation to traffic schemes in the Borough Members considered a report on matters concerned with scheme selection, design and consultation procedures. In accordance with paragraph 3.33 of Report ES10185 examples of public consultation were also made available for Members.

Responding to comments from Councillor Adams on a need for data collection that was based on a common sense approach and related to accidents for which reduction measures could be developed, the Head of Traffic and Road Safety briefly summarised the approach to identifying problems for potential safety/accident reduction schemes. This included reference to a cost-benefit approach for difficult and costly remedies. The Traffic Engineering Manager indicated that accidents had to be treatable in an engineering sense to be considered for schemes.

Councillor Grainger welcomed the report as a forward looking document and supported the approach to carry out much of the design work for schemes in-house. Referring to a more pragmatic approach now in place for identifying accident and congestion problems as well as Member and resident identified priorities, Councillor Grainger referred to a list of requests being made available to inform priorities and for data on non accident injuries also being provided. Additionally Councillor Grainger referred to treatments correlating to accident records. He also advocated a development in the use of white H bars.

In order to ensure that Member priority schemes remained prominent Councillor Samaris Huntington-Thresher suggested that when reviewing LIP funded schemes for priority it was important to have sight of the Member list of priorities at the same time and by ward.

The Head of Traffic and Road Safety welcomed more Member input early on. It was hard to achieve with the time lines but greater flexibility in spending TfL funding (to identify schemes that were a priority for Bromley) meant that it was possible to accommodate Member priorities more. He suggested that an extra step in the process was necessary and Councillor Huntington-Thresher felt

that this could comprise a better description (of priorities) at the start and the provision of more detail.

On consultation responses for parking schemes and in the context of what the responses related to, Councillor Huntington-Thresher advocated the reporting of both response percentages and actual numbers. Noting that some consultations referred to the disclosure of the name and address of those responding, Councillor Huntington-Thresher suggested that this provided a disincentive to respond and where residents had no view on a scheme the Councillor felt that residents should be asked to respond with this information. Councillor Huntington-Thresher also felt that some consultation documents for large schemes could be daunting and suggested that such letters might be made more succinct.

Councillor Adams enquired whether it was possible for residents to be able to respond electronically and Councillor Fawthrop highlighted an electoral registration communication as a possible example for such an approach and using a code to indicate a response. Also, a yes/no tick box could sometimes be used to secure a response but comments in a comments box provided more helpful information.

In cases where there was a 50/50 split from residents in a road Councillor Fawthrop felt that it was better to seek further clarification from residents rather than implement a scheme in full – in such circumstances he felt that it was better to leave the *status quo* rather than proceed with a scheme.

The Chairman suggested that it would be for Members to indicate the proportion of favourable responses necessary to proceed with a scheme where it was finely balanced. Councillor Grainger suggested that room for comment be made on each element of question. Councillor Fawthrop suggested that for a long road it was necessary to split the road into sections.

Responding to points made, the Head of Traffic and Road Safety felt that it was necessary to look at more use of email and internet for consultation responses. Yes/no tick box responses provided a quantitative outcome to consultation but comments were also helpful; these could be amalgamated. The Head of Traffic and Road Safety also suggested that rather than have a specific proportion of favourable responses necessary to proceed with a scheme e.g. 60/40 it would be preferable to include all responses and present them to the Committee. The Chairman indicated that he would work with the Head of Traffic and Road Safety to produce a summary paper for circulation to Committee Members.

Concerning vehicles displaced by parking schemes Councillor Grainger indicated that it was not possible to be sure where displaced vehicles might go but it would be helpful to have an estimate of the number of vehicles that would be displaced. The Chairman felt that this should be part of the customer impact section of reports.

RESOLVED that the selection, design and consultation methods, set out in this report be noted and the Chairman works with the Head of Traffic and Road Safety to produce a summary paper on consultation matters for circulation to Committee Members.

11 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME, MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND CONTRACTS REGISTER

Report ES11058

Members considered a work programme for 2011/12 along with progress on requests from previous meetings and a summary of contracts related to the Environment Portfolio.

For the work programme the Chairman advised that a report on the Cleansing Contract (Tender Award Recommendations) earmarked for the 13th September meeting would not be ready. As such it was agreed to cancel the 13th September meeting and arrange a new date for Tuesday 4th October 2011. For the Committee's work programme in the autumn the Chairman also asked for an item reviewing winter maintenance to be included.

In place of the Committee's meeting on 13th September Members were advised of proposals to hold a presentation by the Environment Agency on Flood risk and mitigation in the borough.

The Committee also considered its Working Groups for 2011-12 agreeing to continue the Waste Minimisation and Transport Statement Working Groups and to commission a new working group on Highway Assets. The Chairman explained that budgets for appropriate Performance Centres would be considered amongst matters to be looked at by each Working Group.

For the Transport Statement Working Group the Chairman advised that a draft of the final Local Implementation Plan (LIP) would be considered by the Group before consideration at the Committee's meeting on 19th July. Development of a Transport Policy Statement would then follow.

The Chairman also advised that the Highways Assets Working Group would include consideration of matters concerned with Street and Snow Friends and footway and carriageways as well as matters concerned with street lighting, street signage and energy efficiency.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the work programme be noted and an item reviewing winter maintenance be added for the autumn;**
- (2) the Committee's meeting on 13th September 2011 be cancelled and a new date arranged for Tuesday 4th October 2011.**

(3) the Waste Minimisation Working Group continue into 2011/12 with a membership comprising Councillors William Huntington-Thresher, Samaris Huntington-Thresher and Reg Adams with Councillor Lydia Buttinger approached to confirm any continuing membership for 2011/12;

(4) the Transport Statement Working Group continue into 2011/12 with a membership comprising Councillors William Huntington Thresher, Nicholas Milner and Julian Grainger;

(5) a new Working Group be commissioned to consider matters related to highway assets with a membership comprising Councillors William Huntington-Thresher, Samaris Huntington-Thresher, Julian Grainger and David Hastings;

(6) progress related to previous Committee requests be noted; and

(7) a summary of contracts related to the Environment Portfolio be noted.

12 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

13 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5TH APRIL 2011

The exempt minutes were agreed.

14 ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO - PREVIOUS DECISION

Members were provided with a Part 2 Decision of the Portfolio Holder taken since the Committee's previous meeting.

15 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE

A) CHISLEHURST ROAD BRIDGE REPLACEMENT - CONTRACT AWARD

Report ES11068

Members considered the results of a recent tender exercise to procure a replacement for the Chislehurst Road Bridge which was weak and weight restricted to 7.5 tonnes.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR WRITTEN REPLY

Questions from Mr Colin Willetts

1. Would the Portfolio Holder spray heavy weed growth back edge of footway directly outside Nos 31-43 Longbury Drive? and ii) at the lower end of Pops Alley (from entrance- 70 feet in) adjacent Nos 244 Chipperfield Road? and iii) along back edge of public car park in Longbury Close?

Reply

Longbury Drive, Longbury Close and Pops Alley were sprayed in April and all were inspected again on 25th May with die back evident. They will be routinely sprayed again as the growing season progresses.

2. The Little Chislewick Residents Association have been informed of the imminent closure of the public toilets in Cotmandene Crescent; could the Portfolio Holder tell us if there has been an alternative nearby location earmarked for public use i) if so, where? & ii) presuming there is a nearby location, is this facility up to scratch for public use?

Reply

i) At Cotmandene Community Resource Centre, 64 Cotmandene Crescent and Ozzie's Diner, 80 Cotmandene Crescent.

ii) Both are.

3. Could the Portfolio Holder on behalf of The Little Chislewick Residents Association take the necessary action i) for the cutback of prominent overhanging branch vegetation above the bus stop adjacent 1 Grays Farm Cottages ? & ii) for the cutback of prominent overhanging branch vegetation obstructing road signage adjacent the pelican crossing on the southbound side along Sevenoaks Way (apparently earmarked for removal by end of May 2011)?

Reply

The cut back was completed in mid June 2011 as planned.

Question from Mr Andy Wilson

4. Bearing in mind the 18 month bridge closure on the A208 Orpington Road starting in October 2011, could the Portfolio Holder 'suspend' any decision to end the employment of our school crossing guards at Leasons Hill/ Chipperfield Road & at Grays Farm in Sevenoaks Way until the completion of the project as an added road safety precaution due to the considerable increase in traffic movements along these roads brought about by this diversion ?

Reply

I can confirm that the needs of schools affected by the diversionary route for Chislehurst Bridge will be closely assessed over coming months.

The Meeting ended at 10.18 pm

Chairman