

Environment Sub-Committee

5 October 2016

Present: Councillor B Burdis (Chair)
Councillors J Cassidy, D Drummond, E Hodson,
M Huscroft, F Lott, W Lott, T Mulvenna and M Thirlaway.

E22/10/16 Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors G Bell, L Bell and G Madden.

E23/10/16 Substitute Members

The following substitute members were reported:

Councillor J Cassidy for Councillor L Bell
Councillor T Mulvenna for Councillor G Madden.

E24/10/16 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

E25/10/16 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2016 be confirmed.

E26/10/16 Recording Public Rights of Way on the Definitive Map and Statement

Consideration was given to a presentation which provided an update on the actions taken by the Authority to ensure that all the Public Rights of Way in the Borough were properly recorded in advance of the 1 January 2026 deadline, set under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, for all rights of way which existed prior to 1949 to be recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement. The Sub-committee had previously considered this matter in 2014/15 and had presented a report to Cabinet setting out a number of recommendations by which the Authority could ensure that the rights of way were recorded. Cabinet had accepted all of the recommendations (Minute CAB08/06/15 refers) and the Sub-committee was given an update on the actions which had been taken to implement the agreed recommendations.

It was noted that work had already commenced on two areas of the Borough to prepare the various routes on the existing Definitive Maps and Statements to be incorporated into a single Definitive Map and Statement for the Borough. Work had also commenced to incorporate all of the unrecorded rights of way which were on Council owned land in those two areas on to the Definitive Map and Statement.

The Sub-committee was advised that as part of the technical partnership's annual service plan there was a requirement for an annual programme of rights of way to be added to the Definitive Map and Statement. This would ensure that all rights of way would be recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement before the 2026 deadline.

Reference was also made to the digitisation of the Definitive Map and Statement so that it could be available on the Authority's website. It was noted that work was ongoing which was anticipated to be completed by the end of 2017.

The Sub-committee was also advised that work was ongoing to develop a corporate approach to the maintenance and promotion of the rights of way network.

The Chair thanked the officers for their report.

It was **AGREED** that the report be noted.

E27/10/16 Paperless Meetings

Consideration was given to a report which set out the current system for the production of reports and agendas for the meetings of the Authority including Council, Cabinet and the various other Committees and Sub-committees. It was noted that paper copies of agendas and reports for the various meetings of the Authority were produced and sent to the members involved in the specific meeting. These agendas were either delivered to the home address of each member or alternatively made available for collection at the Council's offices. In addition copies of the agenda and reports were published on the Authority's website, apart from those which were classed as exempt under the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). A number of copies of the agenda and reports were also made available for use by members of the public at the meeting. The cost of printing agendas and reports for the various meetings of the Authority amounted to approximately £24,000 in 2015/16.

It was noted that some members of the Authority made use of a tablet or other electronic device to access agendas and reports at meetings although it was acknowledged that the current method of producing agendas was not particularly user friendly.

The Sub Committee was advised that the Authority was currently undergoing a significant transformation in the way that it delivered services to the residents of the Borough. Much of this transformation centred around the provision of facilities for residents to be able to access the Authority's services themselves and at a time and place convenient to themselves. As part of this transformation the Authority had undertaken a review of the IT systems used within the Authority and had identified a number of systems where the use of technology could be used to deliver improved services for residents. It was explained that some of these systems would be rolled out over the next few months, with priority given to those systems which would deliver the most significant benefits. When the implementation of these systems had been rolled out consideration could then be given to the introduction of systems such as the provision of electronic reports and agenda which would deliver less tangible benefits. It was noted that the provision of additional software might be required to facilitate the roll out of electronic agendas and that there might also be a need to provide appropriate support and training for members, and officers, on making best use of the new technology.

Members questioned whether the current WiFi network had sufficient capacity for electronic agendas and reports to be used during meetings. It was explained that the capacity available was more than ample for the increased intended use. Members also suggested that if a trial of the systems for the use of electronic agendas and reports was required then the Sub-committee would be happy to participate.

It was suggested that an update on electronic agendas and reports be presented to a future meeting when further details are available.

The Chair thanked the officers for their report.

It was **AGREED** that a further briefing be presented to a future meeting of the Sub-committee.