

AGENDA

Meeting: Environment Select Committee
Place: Council Chambers, County Hall, Trowbridge
Date: Tuesday 11 May 2010
Time: **9.30 am**
(PLEASE NOTE: the meeting will commence at 9:30am and NOT 10:30am for this meeting only)

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Sharon Smith, of Democratic and Members' Services, County Hall, Trowbridge, direct line (01225) 718378 or email sharonl.smith@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225)713114/713115.

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Membership:

Cllr Chuck Berry	Cllr Alan Hill
Cllr Rosemary Brown (Vice Chairman)	Cllr Chris Humphries
Cllr Nigel Carter	Cllr Tom James MBE
Cllr Brian Dalton	Cllr Ian McLennan
Cllr Peter Doyle	Cllr Stephen Oldrieve
Cllr Jose Green	Cllr Leo Randall
Cllr Mollie Groom (Chairman)	

Substitutes:

Cllr Chris Caswill	Cllr George Jeans
Cllr Peter Colmer	Cllr Julian Johnson
Cllr Nick Fogg	Cllr Howard Marshall
Cllr Russell Hawker	Cllr Anthony Trotman
Cllr Charles Howard	

PART I

Items to be considered while the meeting is opened to the public

1. **Apologies and Substitutions**

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** *(Pages 1 - 8)*

To confirm and sign the minutes of the Environment Select Committee meeting held on 2 March 2010.

3. **Declarations of Interests**

To receive any declarations of personal or prejudicial interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4. **Chairman's Announcements**

5. **Public Participation**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public.

If you would like to make a statement at this meeting on any item on this agenda, please register to do so at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting. Up to 3 speakers are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any agenda item. The Chairman will, however, exercise her discretion in order to ensure that members of the public have the opportunity to contribute.

Members of the public wishing to ask a question should give written notice (including details of any question) to the officer named above by **12:00 noon on Friday 7 May 2010**.

6. **Waste Disposal** (Pages 9 - 12)

A report is attached from the Service Director for Waste Management which provides an update on 2 key waste management projects within Wiltshire – the Mechanical Biological Transport plant in Westbury and the Joint Procurement with Swindon Borough Council.

Proposal

The committee is asked to note the report and comment as appropriate.

7. **Empty Private Sector Homes - Update**

The Committee at its meeting in March considered a report from the Head of Private Sector Housing, which provided an overview of the measures being developed to bring vacant private sector housing back into use. Whilst discussing the report concern was raised that the part time status and salary bracket for the vacant Empty Homes Officer did not reflect the needs of the role and the Committee requested an update on the recruitment for this post. The Head of Private Housing has confirmed that it has been placed on hold temporarily whilst ongoing work takes place with Human Resources. Reflecting the Committee's concerns it has been agreed that the post should be full time and in addition the job specification is being reviewed to increase the attractiveness of the post.

In the absence of an Empty Homes Officer progress has still been made, with questionnaires sent to half the owners of vacant homes.

Proposal

The Committee is asked to note the update.

8. **Housing - PFI Update** (Pages 13 - 28)

The Committee at its meeting on 3 November considered a report on the proposed Housing PFI Scheme in West Wiltshire. It was predicted that contractual negotiations with Silbury Housing Ltd would be completed by March 2010, however this has been extended to July 2010 as detailed in the attached two reports taken to cabinet in March and April respectively.

The portfolio holder for Housing and PFI Project Manager will provide the committee with an update on progress towards finalisation of the agreement.

Proposal

The committee is asked to note the update and comment as appropriate.

9. **Homes 4 Wiltshire Service Review** (Pages 29 - 96)

The Committee will recall that Laura Young, Head of Homes 4 Wiltshire, gave a presentation before its meeting on 3 November. Members noted that a review of the service was taking place and expressed an interest in the results being fed back into the work programme.

The Homes 4 Wiltshire review has now been completed and was approved by Cabinet on 20 April, see attached report from the Service Director for Housing. The Committee is asked to consider the action plan which emerged from the review and outlines the improvement targets up to 2011.

Proposal

To note the report and consider any potential involvement in reviewing the action plan proposals.

10. **Housing Commission - Request to Scrutiny**

The Audit Commission recently inspected the Housing Landlord Services in Salisbury, the results of which will be made public on 13 May. In order to respond to the findings the Cabinet Member, Cllr John Brady, will be forming a Housing Commission to take ownership of making improvements across Housing Services, focusing on the improvement plan for housing.

The commission will include the following membership: -

Cllr John Thomson, Cllr John Brady, Cllr Howard Greenman, Mark Boden, Carlton Brand, Graham Hogg, Bjorn Howard (Group Chief Executive Aster) and John Hinnis (Tenant Panel Chair).

It is intended that the commission will meet monthly for a minimum of 6 months and then bi-monthly depending on progress made.

The Cabinet member has invited a member of scrutiny to sit on the Board. As the first meeting is being held on the 12 May, the chairman and vice-chairman approved an approach to Cllr Ricky Rogers, who was identified as a potential scrutiny representative because of his excellent local housing knowledge and experience of representing scrutiny on similar boards. Cllr Rogers has subsequently volunteered to serve if approved by the Committee.

Proposal

The Committee is asked to nominate a member to sit on the Housing Commission Board.

11. **Climate Change**

The Committee, at its last meeting, considered an update on progress made against climate change objectives. Following debate the Committee resolved:

To recommend to the Cabinet member responsible for staffing that job specifications should include responsibility to the authority's corporate climate change targets.

Cllr John Noeken's response is included below:

Response from the Cabinet Member

Wiltshire Council is committed to ensuring that employees understand their responsibilities regarding protecting the environment. The HR department are currently working closely with the Workplace Transformation Programme, which aims to reduce the number of under utilised desks and improve our office buildings to make them more environmentally friendly.

HR have considered placing a statement regarding climate change responsibilities in the Job Description for each post, but have concern that this would be missed in the already crowded form.

The council currently begins the climate change and carbon management education process in the Employee Guide which is sent to all new staff with their welcome packs. This contains a section on "Being Environmentally Friendly" which includes information on protecting the environment and working towards a greener organisation. This is again comprehensively covered in the e-induction session called "About Us". All new employees should therefore be aware of their responsibilities from the start of their employment.

Whilst at work, we encourage employees to reduce waste by printing double-sided and re-using scrap paper. Employees are provided with recycling opportunities within the workplace and recycling bins are provided in most of our main offices. We encourage employees to use the Car Share scheme to help reduce congestion and we have fuel efficient pool cars for business travel. HR have also introduced the Cycle to Work scheme which encourages staff to purchase a bicycle through sacrificing some of their salary, and using this mode of transport to come to work rather than using their car.

Proposal

The Committee is asked to note the response from the Cabinet member.

12. **Scrutiny of Corporate Plan**

The draft Corporate Plan was considered by the O& S Organisation and Resources Select Committee at its meeting on 25 March, in advance of submission to Cabinet and ultimately Full Council on 18 May. During this scrutiny work the select committee recognised that further detail would emerge from the supplementary departmental delivery plans and the new business plan for the council. The committee felt that future scrutiny work programmes should be aligned to the priorities identified within these documents but with some flexibility to recognise that the plan would be subject to regular review.

The key document for the Environment Select Committee will be the Neighbourhood and Planning departmental delivery plan, which it is hoped will be available for consideration by September.

Proposal

The Committee is asked to note the update and to add the Neighbourhood and Planning Delivery Plan to its work programme.

13. **Forward Work Programme** *(Pages 97 - 102)*

A copy of the draft Forward Work Programme is attached for consideration.

14. **Date of next Meeting**

6 July 2010.

15. **Urgent Items**

Any other items of business which the Chairman agrees to consider as a matter of urgency.

PART II

Items during whose consideration it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed

NONE