

ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT THE KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Rosemary Brown, Cllr Dennis Drewett, Cllr Peter Edge (Vice Chairman), Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Jose Green, Cllr Bob Jones MBE (Substitute), Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Magnus Macdonald, Cllr Ian McLennan, Cllr James Sheppard, Cllr Tony Trotman and Cllr Bridget Wayman (Chairman)

Also Present:

Cllr Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, Cllr Jonathon Seed, Cllr Toby Sturgis and Cllr Philip Whitehead

39 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Brian Dalton and Mike Hewitt. Councillor Dalton was substituted by Councillor Bob Jones MBE.

40 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2016 were presented for consideration and it was,

Resolved:

To approve and sign as a true and correct record.

41 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

42 Chairman's Announcements

Through the Chair there were the following announcements:

- 1) On 15 March 2016 the Cabinet received the final report of the Housing Board. Details were provided on its activities December 2014-November 2015.

- 2) Details were provided of meetings between the Chairman, officers and the Executive regarding issues related to the planning service. It had been noted at the Management Committee that any scrutiny involvement or review of the service should be led through the Environment Select Committee.

43 **Public Participation**

It was raised by a member of the Committee that there was an issue with planning applications and the designation of 'virtual pavements' and details were sought on how many of these existed in the county and what they involved. It was stated the questions should be referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

44 **Waste Service Changes Task Group Final Report**

On 27 October 2015 the Environment Select Committee asked the Waste Task Group to investigate the impact of reduced Household Recycling Centres' hours and traffic management issues and to investigate the impact of the new green waste collection service particularly in relation to fly-tipping. Evidence was collected by the Task Group as detailed in paragraphs 7-10 of the report.

Councillor Jose Green, Chairman of the Task Group, presented the final report, outlining the key findings and recommendations made by its members. It was emphasised that the council's Household Recycling Centres were not designed for commercial disposal of waste, and the task group had looked at the effectiveness of the existing centres and policies, and potential impact from service changes such as changes to opening hours and location of sites.

A total of 18 recommendations had been made to the Cabinet Member, including ensuring a minimum of 11 HRCs, to continue to monitor opening times to ensure they cope with demand, to explore the possibility of a redevelopment of the Churchfields depot in Salisbury, improved signage, links with charities and supporting the implementation of the Van Permit Scheme to reduce disposal of commercial waste.

The Committee discussed the report and its recommendations, noting concerns about the lack of awareness of individual householder responsibility for waste on their properties and waste licensing in general. Mini recycling sites operated at commercial sites were discussed as alternate locations, along with questions on the response times to reporting of asbestos and other materials. It was requested the Cabinet Member update the committee on policies and procedures regarding asbestos collection.

At the conclusion of debate, it was,

Resolved:

To endorse the recommendations of the Task Group to the Cabinet Member:

- 1. That the council ensures that a minimum of 11 HRC's are retained and operational.**
- 2. To acknowledge that the advantages of reduced opening hours at HRCs include providing time for HRC staff to remove and replace full waste containers.**
- 3. For the council to monitor the usage of HRC sites in the future in order to determine whether the new opening times are fit for purpose and capable of coping with the demand.**
- 4. To explore the possibility of funding a redevelopment of the Churchfields depot through the CIL by placing it on the Regulation 123 list; and for consideration to be given to using CIL to fund the development of any new HRCs.**
- 5. For any future HRC site development or redevelopment to take into account proximity to businesses in order to avoid incurring negative impacts from the HRC site.**
- 6. To ensure that all signage at HRCs is appropriately chosen to ensure that customers are well guided through the site, and that the number and type of signs at entrances and exits avoids creating "sign blindness".**
- 7. To install "percentage recycled" signs at all HRC's, as demonstrated at Warminster HRC, and to expand the statistics to illustrate the savings achieved as a result of recycling.**
- 8. To provide relevant HRC workers with high visibility jackets which clearly state that they are able to assist customers with queries.**
- 9. To support the implementation of the Van Permit Scheme in Wiltshire scheduled for 4th September to reduce the number of small businesses illegally disposing of commercial waste at Wiltshire HRCs.**
- 10. To improve current and further links with companies and charities, such as the Repair Academy link with HRCs to improve the recycling of bulky goods which can be repaired or reused.**
- 11. To promote "bring bank sites" and awareness of the items which they are able to accept to help reduce the demand on HRCs and prevent potential fly-tipping.**
- 12. To create a communication strategy that raises public awareness of what can and cannot be disposed of and the processes required, as**

well as ensuring they are aware of the cost and impact of abusing the system.

13. To continue promotion of the garden waste collection service, with a focus on promotion to those who were previously signed up but have not renewed online using their personal renewal number.
14. To utilise Area Boards as a form of communication for key information regarding HRC's, further waste changes, and the promotion of garden waste collection, recycling, and composting.
15. To support Wiltshire Council's relations with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust in order to promote the benefits and awareness of recycling and composting.
16. To explore the purchase of further covert camera recording units for the enforcement of fly-tipping.
17. To promote the installation of signs as a fly-tipping deterrent in relevant areas and hotspots.
18. For the task group to continue to monitor the implementation of the mobilisation plan for the HRC contract with Hills Waste Management.

And That the executive response from the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Operational Property and Waste be provided at the next meeting of the Environment Select Committee;

45 **Housing Allocation Policy**

The Housing Allocation Policy helps deliver the council's aim to create stronger and more resilient communities by focusing on local homes for local people. At the request of the Committee, the Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding, Councillor Jonathon Seed and the Associate Director, Adult Care Commissioning and Housing, James Cawley, were in attendance to provide an update on the latest data on the policy and figures for the housing register.

It was stated the policy had been successful in prioritising housing in communities for those with a connection that community, and that figures could be broken down by community area or individual parish. Details were provided on the bandings clarifying the need levels of those on the register, and the numbers being houses in the past year.

The Committee discussed the update and sought additional details from the Cabinet Member, including procedures to identify long term empty homes, the accessibility of housing board agendas and minutes and the impact of housing refugees. It was agreed further details would be provided after the meeting

clarifying if the change to empty houses being subject to the same rates had had an impact upon their number, and it was stated refugees had been initially placed in hard to let properties and so not appreciable effect on the register.

Resolved:

To note the update on the Housing Allocation Policy.

46 **Gypsy and Traveller Plan Update**

The Gypsy and Traveller Strategy was published in 2010 to bring together a range of services and responsibilities as they engaged with Gypsy and Traveller communities within Wiltshire. The Strategy had now been refreshed, including the creation of an action plan to provide support for the council's aims to create resilient communities among Gypsy and Travellers and the settled populations.

Steve Maddern, Head of Health Improvement, presented the report outlining the key actions proposed including the continued monitoring of the Strategy to be reported to the Committee.

The Committee discussed the draft Strategy, and in response to queries it was confirmed once ratified specific timeframes would be developed for the proposed action plan and an implementation plan prepared, and that the council had been working with the Canal Trust to include the Boating community. It was also noted the refreshed Strategy was to be referred to simply as the Traveller Strategy.

Resolved:

- a) **To approve the refreshed Strategy.**
- b) **To note the implementation and monitoring of the Strategy will be undertaken by the Traveller Reference Group, who will be accountable to the Committee**

47 **Task Group Update**

Updates were provided on the Task Groups overseen by the Environment Select Committee, as detailed in the agenda papers and including the following:

Highways and Streetscene Task Group

It was stated 19 out of 22 Parish Stewards had been recruited, and that information on the role of the stewards would be resent to councillors to enable people to be aware of their role. The October meeting of the Committee would contain an item on Highways, and the Cabinet Member in attendance, Councillor Philip Whitehead, encouraged all councillors to set an example by using the MyWiltshire App to report highways concerns.

Public Transport Review Task Group

The Task Group would consider the Public Transport report before its consideration by Cabinet on 11 October 2016, and meet following Cabinet to discuss its decision.

Resolved:

To note the Task Group updates provided.

48 **Forward Work Programme**

The Committee considered the proposed Forward Work Programme including suggestions arising from the meetings between the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Executive, as detailed in the agenda papers and including any review of the planning service.

A meeting had been held between the Chair of the Committee, Alistair Cunningham and Cllr Toby Sturgis to discuss planning services. It was noted at the last meeting of Overview and Scrutiny planning should fall under the remit of the Environment Select Committee.

Resolved:

1. **To approve the proposed Forward Plan.**
2. **To notify Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee of the intention to investigate establishing a Planning Services Rapid Scrutiny and to begin scoping and forming a terms of reference.**

49 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 20 October 2016.

50 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 3.00 - 5.05 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Natalie Heritage, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718062, e-mail natalie.heritage@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115