

ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29 OCTOBER 2013 AT ALAMEIN SUITE - CITY HALL, MALTHOUSE LANE, SALISBURY, SP2 7TU.

Present:

Cllr Dennis Drewett, Cllr Peter Edge (Vice Chairman), Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Jose Green, Cllr Mollie Groom, Cllr Alan Hill (Chairman), Cllr Magnus Macdonald, Cllr Horace Prickett, Cllr James Sheppard and Cllr Bridget Wayman

83 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Brian Dalton, Ian McLennan and Rosemary Brown.

Councillor Dalton was substituted by Councillor Nick Watts.

84 **Minutes**

The minutes of the ordinary meeting on 11 June 2013 and the extraordinary meetings on 4 July and 18 July 2013 were presented for consideration. It was,

Resolved:

To APPROVE as a true and correct record and sign the minutes.

85 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared.

86 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no announcements.

87 **Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements submitted.

Jay Gascoigne, Green Infrastructure Strategy lead, delivered a presentation on the development of the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy.

The Green Infrastructure Project was first begun in 2009 in response to the need for a countywide open spaces strategy in light of future development and growth, with recognition on a need for emphasis on multiple benefits of green and open space. The consultation with the final stakeholders concluded in late 2011, and it was noted that Core Policy 52 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy set out the Council's current position on Green Infrastructure.

The Committee was taken through various possible definitions of what constitutes Green Infrastructure, from small scale community assets such as village greens to regional infrastructure via a network of assets throughout the county. With the initial stakeholder consultation concluded, the Committee was informed that the intention was to determine an overall Green Infrastructure Strategy, identifying key themes, issues and priorities to enable the drafting of a Green Infrastructure vision through 2026 and highlighting how these might be delivered with an action plan and a framework to inform Green Infrastructure development across the county.

It was stated that the initial draft of the Strategy was aimed for completion in January 2014, with adoption by Council planned for mid 2014.

The Committee discussed the presentation, as attached to these minutes, highlighting the need for Council services and teams to be deeply involved with the creation of a strategy, as well as the need for close partnership working with outside bodies, and it was confirmed this would be the case.

How any Green Infrastructure would be funded was raised, such as part of s.106 or Community Infrastructure Levy contributions, and possibilities of EU funding, along with the need to emphasise economic benefits of Green Infrastructure, alongside environmental and health benefits.

It was discussed how the Green Infrastructure Strategy would be designed to feed down to local community plans, town and parish council plans, local neighbourhood plans and town masterplans, and it was noted that Area Boards could be used to engage with Town and Parish Councils to identify additional details and Green Infrastructure projects.

In response to queries it was confirmed the strategy would not be a supplementary planning document.

At the conclusion of debate, it was,

Resolved:

- a) **To thank Jay Gascoigne for his informative presentation and early involvement of the Committee with the development of the Green Infrastructure Strategy;**

- b) **To note the progress and direction to date on the Green Infrastructure Strategy;**
- c) **To endorse the continued development of the Green Infrastructure Strategy;**
- d) **To encourage Area Boards to look into potential Green Infrastructure projects for local plans that will be influenced by the strategic level Green Infrastructure strategy;**
- e) **To note the commitment for the Committee to consider the draft Green Infrastructure Strategy upon its completion prior to its consideration by Cabinet.**

89 **Investing in Highways**

Investing in highways is a key priority for the Council. On 22 October Cabinet considered a programme of investment in road maintenance to improve the condition of the highway network in Wiltshire. Three options were suggested in the Highways Report accessible via the link to the Cabinet agenda:

<http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MIId=7213&Ver=4>

Option 1 – Maintain existing conditions (average annual expenditure approx. £12.5 million)

Option 2 – Increase investment to £17 million for six years

Option 3 – Increase investment to £21 million for six years.

The Committee was informed Option 3 had been adopted by Cabinet, and that the option also allowed for the involvement of the Area Boards.

The Committee discussed the decision of Cabinet, welcoming the decision to include Area Boards in identifying areas of work required within their Community Areas. The Committee encouraged officers and the Cabinet Member for Highways and Streetscene to engage with Area Boards at the earliest opportunity, and discussed potential processes for that engagement, such as working through the Community Area Transport Groups (CATGs), but it was noted the procedure had not yet been agreed.

The Committee also welcomed that there was a focus on spreading the additional funding throughout the county in local areas as needed, and not merely with large projects which might affect only certain areas.

After discussion, it was,

Resolved:

To note the decision of Cabinet and await further plans and proposals before determining the most appropriate action from the Committee.

90 Developing the Forward Work Programme

The Chairman detailed the outcome of discussions between himself and the Vice-Chairman with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and separate discussions with Cabinet Members on potential items for the Work Programme for the Committee.

The Committee considered the items, the most appropriate method of scrutinizing them, and which items should be given the highest priority.

It was noted that no additional items as suggested from Councillor induction sessions following the May elections had been included, due to either being outside the remit of the Committee, were not yet developed to the state that would enable the Committee to scrutinize the issues, or would be more appropriately scrutinized by another committee.

At the conclusion of debate, it was,

Resolved:

To approve the proposed forward work programme with suggested priority and method of scrutiny as detailed below:

- 1) **Waste - Task Group (Already Established)**
- 2) **Air Quality (with Health Select Committee) - Task Group (Already Established)**
- 3) **Community Infrastructure Levy - Task Group (Already Established)**
- 4) **Investing in Highways - Committee**
- 5) **Community Speedwatch - Rapid Scrutiny Exercise**
- 6) **20mph Speed Limits - Short Term Task Group/Committee**
- 7) **Parking Review - Short Term Task Group**
- 8) **Adoptable Estates - Task Group (Already Established)**
- 9) **Review of Flood Plan - Rapid Scrutiny Exercise**

91 Task Group Updates

The Committee received updates from the currently established Task Groups as follows:

Waste

Councillor Jose Green provided an update on the progress of the Waste Task Group, which had met twice since the last meeting of the Committee, interviewing officers and other witnesses and meeting with the Cabinet member to identify details of the Waste Management Service that could be improved.

The next meeting of the Task Group would take place on 14 November 2013.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Councillor Bridget Wayman provided an update on the progress of the CIL Task Group, which had investigated the approaches of other Local Authorities as well

as receiving presentations from developers on the approach on the rate to be applied across the county.

The Task Group had met three times since the last meeting of the Committee and the next meeting would take place on 31 October 2013.

Adoptable Estates

Councillor Peter Evans provided an update on the progress of the Adoptable Estates Task Group, which had had one meeting since the last meeting of the Committee. As much of the membership of the Task Group was new, the Task Group had assessed the action plan of the previous membership and would arrange further meetings to further investigate the issues raised.

92 **Urgent Items**

The Committee requested it be recorded that they praised the work and conduct of the Council's Media Relations Team for their continual updates to members and the public regarding the intense storms that occurred on 28 October 2013, and that the Committee's thanks be forwarded to the team.

93 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 10 December 2013.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.00 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Kieran Elliott, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718504, e-mail kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk

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