

**POLICY & RESOURCES and ENVIRONMENT &  
TRANSPORT SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a MEETING held at COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE on FRIDAY, 27TH OCTOBER, 2000.

**PRESENT:** Mrs. V.C.S. Landell Mills (Chairman), Mrs. L.C.S. Bennett, Mr. A.G. Peach, Mrs. M.S.N. Taylor and Mr. D.J. Willmott.

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Minute Nos. 37 and 38 are not within the Sub-Committee's powers and have been referred to the Policy & Resources Committee.

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32. **Apologies** Apologies for absence was received from Mrs. L.P. Morris and Mrs. P. Rugg.

33. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

*Resolved: To confirm and sign the minutes of the Sub-Committee meeting held on 20th September, 2000.*

34. **Development of the Role of Members** The Chairman referred to various initiatives that were currently taking place to assist the development of the role of members in the provision of the scrutiny function. In particular, the following points were noted:-

- The review of the County Council's scrutiny arrangements being undertaken by Frances Taylor and Stephanie Snape from the University of Birmingham.
- The Sub-Committee's desire, as stated at the last meeting, for members to see for themselves, at first hand, problems associated with services that are the subject of scrutiny.
- The possibility of individual members of this Sub-Committee working more closely with officers on investigating certain subjects for scrutiny, where opportunity arises.
- The need to have greater access to independent sources of expert advice to assist the Sub-Committee in performing its scrutiny function.
- The need for training to be organised for members and officers so that their skills can be further improved, in order that the Sub-Committee can fulfil its role in assessing previous performance, developing future policy options and maintaining an overview.

*Resolved: To support the various initiatives being undertaken.*

35. **Best Value Review: Waste Management (Stages 1 and 2)** The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Director of Environmental Services which :-

- set out details of the current Waste Management Service Profile,
- recommended the scope of a Waste Management Best Value Service Review, and
- sought approval to proceed with the programmed Best Value Review of the service.

The Director gave a short presentation on the development of the Waste Management function since the 1974 Local Government Reorganisation and explained the functions of the County Council as Waste Disposal Authority and the four District Councils' responsibility for waste collection. There was thus a clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities of Waste Collection Authorities and Waste Disposal Authorities.

However, the recently issued Waste Strategy 2000 identified the need for there to be effective working relationships between the County and the Districts in order to deliver a comprehensive Municipal Waste Management Strategy. The Best Value Review would challenge the existing arrangements as they operated between the County and the Districts and consider alternative options for service delivery.

It was noted that the County Council was currently developing its Waste Local Plan, in conjunction with Swindon Borough Council, and its Municipal Waste Strategy to 2010. This was, therefore, an opportune time to undertake a Best Value Review of the way the Waste Management Service was delivered to identify options for improvement.

The Chairman introduced Mr. Terry Plenty, external consultant, who explained that his role was to support the Project Manager in the preparation of the Best Value Review. He had gained wide experience from several other local authorities which would be useful in his current work in Wiltshire.

*Resolved:*

- 1) *To agree the scope of the Waste Management Best Value Service Review, to proceed as planned.*
- 2) *To request that, as part of this Review, attention in particular be given to the effectiveness of arrangements for the inspection and monitoring of waste disposal contracts, trends in costs of disposal and up to date information on new options for disposal.*
- 3) *To note that there was currently no information on the amount of waste recycled in Wiltshire, other than for household waste.*
- 4) *To note that the figure for the predicted annual increase in waste generated in Wiltshire had been revised from 3% to 5%, and that this would be incorporated in subsequent papers.*

36. **Best Value Review: County Farms (Stages 1 and 2)** The Director of Environmental Services presented a report which:-

- set out details about the County Farms Current Service Profile,
- recommended the scope of a County Farms Best Value Service Review,
- sought approval to proceed with the programmed Best Value Review of the service, and
- drew attention to farming issues impacting on the County Farms Estate and the tenants.

At the conclusion of the Director's presentation members asked various questions about the size of the Estate, the desirability to continue to provide a County Farms Service and also green issues.

*Resolved: To agree the proposed scope of the County Farms Best Value Service Review, to proceed as planned.*

37. **Best Value Performance Plan March 2000: Update on Progress** The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive which provided an update on the County Council's progress in relation to the Council's Best Value Performance Plan and on other matters relating to Best Value.

*Resolved:*

- 1) *To note the information contained in the report.*
- 2) *To recommend to the Policy & Resources Committee:-*
  - a) *To request information in the future on the Market Towns Bid for Regional Development Agency funding.*
  - b) *To agree that information should be provided in July (for the previous year) and January (for the first six months and an estimate of the likely position at the year end).*

38. **E-Local Government in Wiltshire** Consideration was given to a report by the Chief Executive which identified the key issues the County Council needed to address to meet government targets, set out progress made to date on e-government development within the County Council and also suggested possible ways forward.

It was recognised that e-government was an integral part of the work of the County Council and therefore should be regarded as a top priority.

*Resolved:*

- 1) *To note the continuing development on internal ICT systems and the Focus Project on e-mail and internet access.*
- 2) *To recommend to the Policy & Resources Committee:-*

- a) *To support and facilitate existing and planned developments.*
- b) *To agree that officers continue discussions with Somerset County Council and the South West counties joint e-strategy project but to delay decisions about committing resources until the outcome of the Invest to Save bids are known in December, 2000.*
- c) *To explore in more detail the suggested structure model for e-government development.*
- d) *To appoint Mrs. L.C.S. Bennett to work with an officer group to develop these proposals further.*
- e) *To ask that information point initiatives in the County are added to the list of current developments included in the report.*
- f) *To fully investigate partnership working arrangements with other local authorities (e.g. Liverpool City Council and the Isle of Wight Council) and public sector organisations about developing E-Government Strategy.*

### 39. **Future Work Programme**

#### Resolved:

*To adopt the work programme as set out below as the basis for the Sub-Committee's work until 31st March, 2001:-*

<i>Meeting Date</i>	<i>Best Value Review Items</i>	<i>Topics Chosen by the Sub-Committee</i>
<i>24 November 2000</i>	<i>Stage 2 – Land-Use Planning Stage 4 – Political Structures/ Corporate Governance</i>	<i>e'government</i>
<i>26 January 2001</i>	<i>Stage 4 – Waste Management</i>	<i>Recycling targets and links to Waste Strategy/Waste local Plan</i>
<i>2 March 2001</i>	<i>Stage 6 – Political Structures/ Corporate Governance Stage 6 - Property Stage 4 - Land-Use Planning Stage 4 – County Farms</i>	<i>Rural Transport</i>

(Duration of meeting: 10.30am – 12.45pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Roger Bishton, of the Committee Services Unit, direct line (01225) 713035.

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