

ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 JUNE 2014 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Rosemary Brown (Substitute), Cllr Brian Dalton, Cllr Tony Deane (Substitute), Cllr Dennis Drewett, Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Jose Green, Cllr Mollie Groom, Cllr Bob Jones MBE (Substitute), Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Magnus Macdonald, Cllr Ian McLennan, Cllr James Sheppard and Cllr Philip Whalley (Substitute)

Also Present:

Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Jeff Osborn, Cllr Toby Sturgis and Cllr Philip Whitehead

28 Election of Chairman

Resolved:

To appoint Councillor Peter Edge as Chairman of the Environment Select Committee for the forthcoming year.

29 Election of Vice-Chairman

Resolved:

To appoint Councillor Bridget Wayman as Vice-Chairman of the Environment Select Committee for the forthcoming year.

30 Election of Chairman (Meeting Only)

Resolved:

To appoint Councillor Tony Deane as Chairman of the Environment Select Committee for this meeting only.

31 Membership Change

It was noted that following the meeting of Council on 13 May 2014 there had been the following changes to membership of the Committee:

Removed as Full Members: Councillors Alan Hill, Horace Prickett, Rosemary Brown

Added as Full Members: Councillors Jacqui Lay, Christopher Newbury, Linda Packard

Removed as Substitute: Councillors Nick Watts, Jacqui Lay, Stephen Oldrieve and Christopher Newbury

Added as Substitute: Councillors Trevor Carbin and Rosemary Brown

32 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Peter Edge, Bridget Wayman, Christopher Newbury and Linda Packard.

Councillor Edge was substituted by Councillor Rosemary Brown.

Councillor Wayman was substituted by Councillor Tony Deane.

Councillor Newbury was substituted by Councillor Phillip Whalley.

Councillor Packard was substituted by Councillor Bob Jones MBE.

33 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 April were presented for consideration, and after discussion it was,

Resolved:

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

34 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations.

35 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no announcements.

36 **Public Participation**

There were no statements or questions submitted.

The Wiltshire Core Strategy, in development since 2009, is intended to set out the largest part of the Local Development Framework for Wiltshire, a series of policy documents setting out the council's spatial vision, key objectives and the overall principles for development in the county, including location of strategic sites for new housing and employment development and the policies with which planning applications will be assessed.

Following consideration by the Environment Select Committee on 11 June 2012, the Core Strategy was approved by Council on 26 June 2012 for submission to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for formal examination. The examination in public by a Planning Inspector took place between May and July 2013, and a consultation on proposed modifications concluded in October 2013. This was followed by a procedural letter from the Inspector setting out six matters with the Core Strategy which they felt required further modifications in December 2013.

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Property, Waste, Councillor Toby Sturgis, delivered an update on the continued progression of the Wiltshire Core Strategy along with the Spatial Planning Economy Manager.

It was stated that following additional modifications to address the comments of the Inspector, a further 700 comments had been received on the new consultation that was required as a result. These included comments on wind turbines, allocation of housing in specific towns, the updated housing requirements county wide, proposed bypasses in certain locations and the development of neighbourhood plans. It was intended that the Council's response and proposals would be forwarded back to the Inspector by the end of June 2013, who could request further comment or modifications if deemed necessary.

The Committee then questioned the Cabinet Member and Officer on aspects of the Core Strategy and the process of its adoption. There were some concerns raised about the highly technical nature of some of the officer comments sent to Parish Councils for comment which made it difficult at times to understand, and that future consultations could perhaps include frequent summary sections in plain language to clarify matters. In response it was stated that every attempt was made to simplify the language used, although some use of complex technical language was unavoidable, with requests for Parishes to contact their Wiltshire Councillor or the officers for assistance if certain sections were hard to understand.

There were queries on the status of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy which was in place while the proposed Core Strategy for the whole county was unadopted, and the need for the council to robustly defend planning decisions made on this and other extant policy documents, although it was noted that the National Planning policy Framework was a more recent national policy document, which might be given more weight by an Inspector during an appeal.

There were additional queries and comments on neighbourhood plans permitting some limited development to meet local needs of housing and employment in villages if they established that need in their plans, and it was confirmed that the council presumed all development sites were economically viable and so could be subject to Section 106 legal agreement contributions, unless a developer could prove it was not viable to make such a contribution.

Resolved:

To note the update from the Cabinet Member.

38 Task Group Updates

The Committee considered written updates from established Task Groups as detailed in the agenda pack.

There were additional comments on the following Task Groups:

Adoptable Estates - It was noted that there had been great difficulty in meeting with developers to discuss the matters raised, which would be detailed further once the Task Group made its final report.

Highways and Streetscene - A meeting had been set for 25 June to specifically consider the grass cutting section of the contract in light of recent and continuing problems with that aspect of the contract, with the entirety of the contract to be assessed at a later date. It was confirmed all members would be invited to make contributions to the considerations of the Task Group.

20mph Task Group - Clarification was sought on the number of 20mph zones that each Area Board could designate, 2 per year, as well as issues on repeater signage in zones, and natural highway speed limitations impacting more on average speeds than the imposition of a restricted speed zone in an area which might not be appropriate for it.

Waste - It was confirmed that as requested at its meeting on 10 December 2013, a further meeting had been made with Dr Alberry, who had delivered a presentation to the Task Group, and the possibility of looking into the Green waste policy was noted.

Dr Carlton Brand, Corporate Director, noted that there was a lot of work being undertaken in the Waste Service which the Task Group could assist with and welcomed their continued and future involvement.

39 Forward Work Programme

The existing Forward Plan was noted, and it was agreed that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman should meet with Cabinet Members and Associate Directors to identify future outcomes and policies which scrutiny involvement could contribute to in the next year.

40 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 2 September 2014.

41 **Urgent Items**

A question was raised about whether the Gypsy and Traveller Plan should be considered at the Committee.

(Duration of meeting: 10.35 am - 12.15 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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