

ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 MARCH 2018 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cllr Derek Brown OBE, Cllr Matthew Dean, Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Peter Fuller, Cllr Sarah Gibson, Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Tony Jackson, Cllr Ian McLennan, Cllr Nick Murry, Cllr Brian Mathew (Substitute) and Cllr Stewart Palmen (Substitute)

Also Present:

Cllr Richard Clewer, Cllr Richard Gamble, Cllr Jerry Kunkler, Cllr Tom Rounds, Cllr John Thomson, Cllr Bridget Wayman and Cllr Philip Whitehead

14 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bob Jones MBE and Steve Oldrieve, who were substituted by Councillors Stewart Palmen and Brian Mathew respectively.

15 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved:

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2018, subject to the following being added to minute 8 – Local Provision on Public Transport – Rail:

‘It was noted that the report did not include a reference to either Pewsey or Bedwyn Stations being recognised as commuter stations in the Council’s Core Strategy. The Committee were informed that the Local MP and residents, who use the rail services from these stations, considered the stations as major commuting stations.’

16 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

17 Chairman's Announcements

The Chair made the following announcements:

1. Members' visit to Hills Waste plant depots

The Committee was advised that Hills Waste Services (HWS) had offered to receive a visit by members at their facilities as detailed below:

- Mechanical biological treatment (MBT) plant, Northacre, Westbury
- Materials recovery facility (separating plastic bottles and cardboard), Porte Marsh, Calne
- Landfill site, waste transfer station and household recycling centre, Lower Compton, Calne
- Composting facility and household recycling centre, Parkgate Farm, Purton Waste transfer station, Amesbury

Resolved:

To arrange a visit to the Committee's preferred site out of those detailed above, on a date to be agreed.

2. A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down Road Scheme:

The Committee noted that the report for the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down Road Scheme was not available for this meeting due to the Consultation only commencing on 8 Feb and responses requiring further time to consider fully.

A Briefing Note, incorporating the results of the public consultation, would be circulated towards the end of March 2018 to early April 2018 ahead of the publication of the consultation results to the public and the Cabinet's April meeting. Any feedback from the Committee would be incorporated into the Cabinet report.

3. Draft Waste Management Strategy:

The Committee noted that this item had been deferred until the Committee's next meeting in May 2018, due to tight timescales to provide the report to this meeting and the recent severe weather presenting an additional hurdle to progressing the report.

18 **Public Participation**

The Chairman explained the rules of public participation and invited the following to make their statements and ask questions:

- i. Marie Hillcoat – Statement, attached as an appendix to the minutes, about the Forward Work programme and in particular about the Waste Contracts Task Group.

The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste agreed to respond to the comments and issues raised in the statement.

ii. Cllr Brian Mathew asked the following question:

Following the Cabinet member for Health's (inc Public Health) & Social Care, very welcome letter concerning the proposed Advanced Thermal Treatment facility - Ref: JW/PT/ WK201802542

We would like to know if Hills have as requested submitted a permit application so that an open and considered consultation process in relation to the ATT plant can be undertaken well before any construction phase commences.

The following response was provided by the Director of Waste and Environment:

Hills Waste Solutions (HWS) have previously set out their estimated timetable for submitting the environmental permit application during quarter two of 2018. They have a programme to prepare and submit the application. This involves a significant amount of technical information from a number of sources and the work takes time and diligence. HWS have estimated that construction will commence in summer/autumn 2018.

The Environment Agency has undertaken to carry out a public consultation as part of their process for determining the application. This is for the Environment Agency to programme regardless of the date of submission of the application.

Cllr Mathew asked a supplementary question about the release of particulate matter in exhaust fumes at the proposed ATT plant in Westbury. He asked if the Council was aware of wet filtration and suggested that this system needed to be a part of the plants construction.

iii. Harriet James asked the following question:

I am a member of the Westbury Gasification Action Group. We are opposed to the plan to build a waste incinerator in Westbury or anywhere else. I'd like to ask about Air Pollution in Westbury. It's related to Cllr. Matthews' comments.

Air quality in Westbury is already poor because of pollution from heavy traffic and other industries.

National Planning Policy for Waste states that waste planning authorities should consider the cumulative impact of existing and proposed waste disposal facilities on the well-being of the local community.

The Environment Agency has told us that they cannot include particulate matter smaller than 2.5 microns in size in the permit conditions for the incinerator, so we'd like to know who is responsible for monitoring the fine particulate matter below 2.5 microns as this has been implicated in particularly bad health effects under new research which has happened since the incinerator was given planning permission. So, there was a Public Health England guidance issued to Directors of Public Health particularly outlining that these micro-particulates were the dangerous ones. And I want to know whether the MBT plant is at the moment capable of filtering these micro-particles below 2.5.

I also wanted to ask if the Environment Committee could ensure that the Council starts monitoring cumulative air pollution in Westbury, not just traffic pollution.

The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste agreed to respond to the questions.

- iv. Chris Walford asked a question about the support the Council could provide to a group of community volunteers in Warminster who are proposing a food waste collection service in the town. He asked if the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste would meet the group and whether there would be any possibility of the Council helping to fund the project.

The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste confirmed that she would meet the group to discuss their proposals, however, due to the latest budget position, the Council would not be able to offer any funds towards the project.

The Cabinet Member also agreed to provide an update to the Committee at its next meeting.

The Chair thanked members of the public for attending to speak and ask questions.

19 **Annual National Highways and Transport Network Survey Report**

The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste presented a report about the National Highways and Transport (NHT) survey and how the information is used by the Council.

The Chair welcomed Sharon Andrews, National Highways and Transport Network Account Manager, to the meeting.

The Committee was informed that the Council had taken part in the NHT public satisfaction surveys since 2008, and during this time, the surveys had proved helpful in identifying trends and provided an opportunity to compare public satisfaction results with those of other authorities.

The Head of Highways Asset Management and Commissioning explained that the surveys had been posted to members of the public using a random probability sampling methodology and the results were weighted to ensure that the achieved sample was fully representative and better reflected the known population profile. Wiltshire received a higher response rate compared to other authorities in 2017. It was noted that the information obtained from the surveys helped inform benchmarking being undertaken with other authorities through various groups and that it is proposed to continue the Council's participation in the surveys in future years.

The following matters were raised during the debate:

- The response rates in Wiltshire and stability of public perception.
- The differing highway challenges faced by urban and rural authorities.
- The use of emerging technologies and materials on highways to provide long term savings and increasing safety standards.
- Public perception of pot holes.
- The ongoing process to combat litter and the impact of Clean up Wiltshire Campaign.
- Promotion and introduction of best practice amongst authorities.
- Breakdown of information relating to specific communities in Wiltshire.

The Committee noted that public satisfaction with many aspects of road maintenance levels in Wiltshire had remained stable, against a background of reducing budgets and staffing levels since 2008.

Resolved:

- i) To recognise the value of the NHT survey in helping to understand public satisfaction regarding highway services.**
- ii) To support the continuing participation of this Council in the NHT survey.**
- iii) To thank Sharon Andrews for attending this meeting.**

20 **Streetworks and Utilities Management**

The Committee considered a report of the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste, outlining how street works by utility companies and others are managed by the Council.

The Committee was reminded that during their Executive Annual Meeting on the 'Highways and Transport' portfolio, it had requested information about how streetworks operate in Wiltshire, to help the Committee's understanding of the partnerships between the Council and Utilities Management companies.

The report highlighted detailed information about the highway network in Wiltshire, the Councils responsibilities in managing the highway network, including reinstatements of the highway and inspections of works undertaken by utility companies. In addition, the report contained information about the new Highways Infrastructure Management System and how the Council engaged with national policy.

The following matters were raised during the debate:

- The quality of reinstatements and the materials used to match existing materials.
- Introduction of new powers to encourage streetworks during quiet periods.
- Guidelines on 'Ghost Works' where works had commenced then been left unattended for a period of time.
- Examples of the use of universal conduit to house services pipes and cables alongside pavements.
- The coordination of Council streetworks to coincide with utility companies.
- Repairs to street lights and future use of LED lights retro-fitted to existing lighting columns.
- Suitability of diversion routes during works to major roads, for example the A303 and proposed works at Stonehenge, and the impact on trade in town centres.
- Dropped kerbs for residential properties.
- The new Highways Infrastructure Management System (HIAMS) and how it provides mobile working for street works technicians, and links to the Councils website providing improvements to the information available to the public.

The Head of Highways Asset Management and Commissioning informed the Committee that temporary reinstatements may be left for six months and that the utility company only guaranteed the reinstated surface for two years. After this time, responsibility for the reinstated surface became the responsibility of the Council. It was noted that in some instances reinstated surfaces start to fail with a short space of time. It was suggested that Parish Councils check the reinstatement works after a period of eighteen months and report any defects to the Highways Engineers. This would then enable the responsibility of a reinstatement repairs to be with the utility company.

Resolved:

- i) To acknowledge the high number of works activities and notices on the highway network dealt with annually by the Council's street works team.**
- ii) To recognise the efforts made by the Council's Network management team to balance the competing demands for the limited road space on the highway network.**

- iii) **To support the efforts being made to provide better information to the public through the website and the introduction of more mobile working for the street works team.**
- iv) **To encourage the engagement of the Council's street works team in national working groups and with the Department for Transport.**
- v) **The Chairman to ask the Committee in one year's time whether they would wish to review how HIAMS has impacted on streetworks and, if so, an item be added to the Committee's Forward Work Programme.**

21 **Reduced Road Casualties 2016**

The Committee considered a briefing note of the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Highways, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, European Structural Investment Fund, Canals and Military Civilian Integration, providing an update about the data from recorded road traffic collisions in 2016, with a summary of the accident prevention/reduction activities undertaken by the Council and its partners.

The Committee was reminded that during their Executive Annual Meeting on the 'Highways and Transport' portfolio a discussion was held about the Council's promotion of the 'Staying Alive' campaign for road users and cyclists. It was noted that this was the nineteenth report highlighting the progress of the Wiltshire and Swindon Road Safety Partners towards reaching the 2020 casualty reduction target adopted by the Wiltshire and Swindon Road Safety Partnership.

Officers responded to questions about the Council's spend on road casualties compared to the base budget for Highways; and performance comparisons between local authorities in relation to the reduction in the number of killed and seriously injured casualties.

Resolved:

- i) **To note the 2016 road traffic collisions report.**
- ii) **To receive an update from the Head of Service – Sustainable Transport, following discussions with Somerset about the recent reduction achieved in killed and seriously injured casualties in the county.**

22 **Updates from Task Groups and Representatives on Programme Boards**

The Committee received updates on recent activity for the following Task Groups:

- i) The Council's Playing Pitch Strategy

The Committee received an update from the Cabinet Member for Communities, Communication, Leisure and Libraries about the

development and delivery of actions following the adoption of the Wiltshire Playing Pitch Strategy (WPPS) in February 2017.

The report highlighted that the WPPS was endorsed in 2017 by Cabinet following the Environment Select Committee input into the Strategy at their meeting on 13 December 2016. The Committee agreed to receive annual updates on the development of the Strategy. In addition, the report indicated that the WPPS supplemented the Local Plan with regard to the protection of open spaces and assuring that appropriate facilities are constructed in the right place. The WPPS works in partnership with developers to guarantee funding for these open spaces.

The Cabinet Member for Communities, Communication, Leisure and Libraries referred to the allocation of developers S106 monies to three key projects detailed in the report. He explained that the Council is working closely with the Wiltshire Football Association about the provision of six 3G pitches, and that two Wiltshire rugby clubs had been identified in the Rugby Football Union National Facilities Strategy to receive financial support for development. He also gave an update on a recent meeting between representatives from Wiltshire Council, South Wilts Grammar School for Girls and Salisbury Athletics and Running Club. Copy attached to these minutes.

The Committee was informed of the Strategy's Implementation Group membership, noted their input into the annual report and how the allocation of S106 monies was being replaced by Community Infrastructure Levy monies. In addition, the Committee discussed the differences and potential influences for the funding of different sports, including football and hockey. It was suggested that Ministry of Defence (MOD) sporting facilities could be made available for community use. The Cabinet Member confirmed that he was in discussions with the MOD about this matter.

Resolved:

i) To note the update about the development and the delivery of actions following the adoption of the Wiltshire Playing Pitch Strategy in February 2017.

ii) To agree that no further overview and scrutiny engagement, by way of an annual update, is necessary, unless the topic becomes a matter of public interest again.

ii) Waste Contracts Task Group

The Committee were reminded that following their Annual Meeting on the 'Waste Portfolio' it was agreed that a Waste Contracts Task group be established and this was endorsed by the Committee at its meeting on 21st November 2017.

The Chair of the Task Group and Senior Scrutiny Officer explained that the first meeting of the Task Group was held on 27th February 2018 and that the Task Group had decided to present a report to the Committee requesting delegated authority to endorse a particular option of the Waste Service's Marketing Plan, as tight timescales may not allow the Task Group to report their findings to the Committee prior to the sign off of the Marketing Plan.

The Chair referred to the public statement at Minute 18 above, relating to the Waste Strategy Task Group and their desire to present evidence to the Task Group. He explained the role of the Task Group, how they operated and the preparation of recommendations for consideration by the Environment Select Committee. He further indicated that the public were invited to lobby the Cabinet Member and Portfolio Holder and that the public views would then be considered as appropriate by the Task Group.

Resolved:

- i) To support the Waste Contracts Task Group receiving the requested additional information around pricing, before giving their support to a particular option identified within the Waste Service's Communications Strategy;**
- ii) To endorse the Waste Contracts Task Group's approach that, in order to help protect the environment, it is imperative that communications about changes to waste services collection be as effective as possible.**

23 Forward Work Programme

The Senior Scrutiny Officer introduced the Committee's Forward Work Programme, asked for confirmation about how to progress a number of items and provided updates on the following areas:

- Position Statement on the Council's ECO Strategy
- Emissions and the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan
- Re-Commissioning of Housing Service Support Contracts

In considering the Council's ECO Strategy, it was suggested that the report be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee, to enable the appropriate Cabinet Members and Director to be in attendance and respond to comments and questions.

Resolved:

- i) To request information relating to: air quality and the emissions issues around waste management processes; an explanation on air quality management plans; the process when areas of**

- Wiltshire exceed are quality limits; lessons learned from part of the County to the other in regard to minimising poor air quality.
- ii) To defer consideration of the ECO Strategy to the next meeting of the Committee.
 - iii) That the Forward Work Programme be updated to reflect the changes detailed above.

24 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

25 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 1st May 2018 at 10.30am.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 1.20 pm)

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Environment Select Committee 13th March 2018

Public Participation:

With the formation of the Waste Contracts Task Group and the awaited publication of the draft Waste Strategy there are still opportunities to make strong decisions on Wiltshire's path toward a sustainable future. A 'deep dive' is indeed needed to understand the environmental and social consequences of a strategy that seeks to change behaviour and recover value from waste.

Many of us have already dived in and now know the term, Waste Hierarchy. Many people involved in the campaign against the proposed incinerator in Westbury, know it too. They are asking questions, looking at the science, at planning, at what it means to win a contract from Wiltshire Council.

Which councillors here know and understand the technology planned? Their knowledge of incineration will lead to the best decisions. Councillors should rightly question not only the finer points of labelling bins which are significant but also the costs of entering into contracts requiring oversight and scrutiny.

For example, to dig into the proposed contract with Hills - do councillors know the effect the treatment of bottom ash from the incinerator will have on gate fees? I trust committee members to be informed on costings. And to know that ash may become subject to the same controls as for natural and secondary aggregates ie., heavy metal removal from incinerator stock. Wiltshire Council does not currently publish the gate fees so I cannot form my own opinion.

As council tax payers we want to be as involved as our councillors so that partnerships can thrive. The partnership I have with Hills Waste Recovery is an unequal one – I do not charge for sorting out my recycling, my goods, or for carrying them to the kerbside. I pay Hills to take my recycling and then to process it for the company's profit. What direct return do I receive in this transaction or 'contract'? The income I receive is not tangible to me as a council tax payer. My labour, my time has not been costed. I would work even harder if I knew this exchange meant income generation for the council and services for other Wiltshire residents.

We urge councillors and officers to further engage with the public and delve into terms like the circular economy, income generation, regional waste disposal, joint procurement and finally, to fully apply the Waste Hierarchy.

Marie Hillcoat

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Cllr Thomson statement regarding Salisbury Athletics Track

Representatives from Wiltshire Council, South Wilts Grammar School for Girls and Salisbury Athletics and Running Club met to explore new solutions to enable the athletics track to be used by the school, the athletics and running club, and other users.

The meeting was productive and both long and short term options were discussed and further work is now underway to take these options forward.

A second meeting has taken place and received an update on this work and discussed and agree the next steps.

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