

ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1 NOVEMBER 2012 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, MONKTON PARK, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 1ER.

Present:

Cllr Chuck Berry, Cllr Rosemary Brown, Cllr Trevor Carbin (Substitute), Cllr Nigel Carter, Cllr Christopher Cochrane, Cllr Peter Doyle, Cllr Jose Green, Cllr Alan Hill (Vice Chairman), Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman), Cllr Tom James MBE, Cllr Ian McLennan, Cllr Leo Randall and Cllr Anthony Trotman (Substitute)

Also Present:

Cllr Dick Tonge

25 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Chris Humphries and Stephen Oldrieve.

Cllr Humphries was substituted by Cllr Anthony Trotman.

Cllr Oldrieve was substituted by Cllr Trevor Carbin.

26 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on **30 August 2012** were present. It was,

Resolved:

That subject to substituting 'Task Group' with 'Rapid Scrutiny Exercise' under Minute 22 - Forward Work Programme - subheading, Energy Efficient Homes, to APPROVE the minutes as a true and correct record.

27 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

28 Chairman's Announcements

The Chair, in consultation with the Vice-Chair, announced that the scheduled meeting on 04 April 2013, would be best used to determine or finalize any

recommendations on future topics and approaches that would be forwarded to the new Council in May 2013 for their consideration.

29 **Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements received.

30 **Highways and Streetscene Works Update**

The Environment Select Committee has had a long-standing interest in the Highways and Streetscene Service, receiving a report on options for the Highways and Streetscene Contract in November 2011, and receiving regular updates at subsequent meetings.

Following the reorganization of the Overview and Scrutiny structure, the Committee requested a report highlighting issues within the Highways and Streetscene service which might require further input from Scrutiny.

Peter Binley (Head of Service Highway Asset Management and Commissioning) presented a report with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Cllr Dick Tonge, on the procurement process for the new Highways and Streetscene Works contract which would replace the services currently delivered through a mixture of separate contracts and in-house provision.

Details were provided on the assessment criteria used in the procurement process, including the importance of utilizing the Community Teams to assist the revamped service, and the points raised in the report were reinforced.

A debate followed, where further information was sought regarding the incentives built into the contract, where if a contractor developed and carried out an idea or method which increased efficiency and reduced costs, they would receive a proportion of those savings in reward. It was confirmed that although it was not possible to ensure the contractor lost out financially if they developed and carried out an idea which actually increased inefficiency and cost, the contracts would be reviewed annually to ensure the Council was being best served by its then current arrangements.

The Committee discussed the role of Parish Stewards in assisting the contractors chosen, and how this relationship could be made even more effective and flexible. Details were sought regarding the selection criteria for contractors and the selection process, and it was confirmed the contract could be re-tendered at any time if there is significant underperformance. It was also confirmed the contract was for five years with a possible two year extension.

Members then sought additional information on the operation of the contracted services, including how these would interact with Town Council run services, and communications issues between the public, council officers and contracted staff were raised, including the development and any future use of the Customer Lighting And Roads Enquiry Centre (CLARENCE) system for the public to report concerns. The need to further educate council staff on the

system for reporting concerns and to address technical issues, should it be taken forward further, was also raised.

The Committee also sought assurances regarding any job losses as a result of the implementation of the contract, and it was stated none were expected.

Resolved:

- 1) **In view of the importance of the Council's Highways and Streetscene service to the public there should be regular reports to the Environment Select Committee during the lead in and transition to the new service supplier. The next report to be in February 2013.**
- 2) **That a Rapid Scrutiny Exercise be undertaken to consider the new Community Teams, particularly with regard to their relationship with the Community Area Managers, and also that they should be monitored and progress on their implementation reported to this Committee.**
- 3) **The changes and improvements to be implemented as a result of the new contract should be monitored and reported to ensure that the potential benefits are fully realised.**

31 **Development Services Task Group**

Cllr Trevor Carbin introduced the report of the Development Services Task Group, and thanked officers for their assistance during the work of the Task Group. It was stressed that the transformation of the Development Service was an on-going process, which might require future input from Scrutiny at some stage.

A discussion followed, where details of the continuing transformation process, such as question and answer sessions for Members and planning displays, were raised, along with the need to remain focused on enforcement issues for the service as it changes.

The nature and extent of the work of the Task Group during a period of extensive change within the Development Service was discussed, along with a debate on the conclusions reached.

At the conclusion of debate, it was,

Resolved:

- 1) **To support the ongoing work of the Development Service Transformation Programme;**
- 2) **To endorse the conclusions of the Task Group, and;**
- 3) **To refer those conclusions to the Cabinet Member for Waste, Property, Environment and Development Control Services.**

32 **Forward Work Programme**

The Committee had the opportunity to suggest changes to the Forward Work Programme, recognizing that alterations or additions would require the endorsement of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

The Committee also received updates on all current Task Groups and Rapid Scrutiny Exercises, as attached to these minutes.

It was,

Resolved:

- 1) **To note the Forward Work Programme.**
- 2) **With regards the topic of Low Carbon and Renewables, that a Rapid Scrutiny Exercise be appointed to undertake a fact-finding scoping exercise to identify what form a review of the topic would take and what evidence would be required.**

33 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next scheduled meeting was confirmed as **Thursday 20 December 2012** at Monkton Park, Chippenham.

34 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.15 pm)

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