

## ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

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### MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28 OCTOBER 2014 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

#### Present:

Cllr Brian Dalton, Cllr Peter Edge (Chairman), Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Jose Green, Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Magnus Macdonald, Cllr Ian McLennan, Cllr Christopher Newbury, Cllr Jeff Osborn (Substitute), Cllr Linda Packard, Cllr Tony Trotman and Cllr Bridget Wayman (Vice Chairman)

#### Also Present:

Cllr Terry Chivers, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Jonathon Seed, Cllr John Thomson and Cllr Philip Whitehead, Cllr Jerry Wickham

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#### 54 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Dennis Drewett, who was substituted by Cllr Jeff Osborn, and Dr Carlton Brand, Corporate Director.

#### 55 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 September were presented.

#### **Resolved:**

**To APPROVE as a true and correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2014.**

#### 56 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 57 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman explained a motion was brought to Council in July, asking that a 'One Card for Wiltshire' was developed and a briefing note was circulated to members on 20 October on the initiative. A written update from Cllr John Thomson on the progress of the initiative was available to the Committee.

The draft Wiltshire Air Quality Action Plan was considered by Cabinet on 7 October 2014 and was approved in draft form for wider public consultation. A link to the draft Wiltshire Air Quality Action Plan was included in the agenda pack.

The Committee heard it could expect a report on both the results of a public consultation on the use of free bus passes and garden waste kerbside collections at its December meeting, in advance of Cabinet.

**58 Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**59 Response to Flooding in Wiltshire**

**59a Wiltshire Flood Response Operational Plan**

In April the Committee was updated on progress of the comprehensive review of the Wiltshire Flood Response Operational Plan and in September it received the Council's response to the unprecedented flood events that took place between December 2013 and March 2014, following a comprehensive and systematic review of the county's response to these events.

Cllr Jonathon Seed introduced the Flood Response Operational Plan in its draft form, which outlined how the Council would react to future flood events, and the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

Debate and questions on both reports followed, during which it was agreed that, in times of flooding, roles and responsibilities should be clear and effective communication was essential. The Committee acknowledged that whilst the Council was working to reduce the risk of flooding by emptying critical gullies, local communities also had the capacity to reduce flooding in their areas. The funding from central government available to assist homeowners to manage flooding was explained, it was highlighted that the legal responsibility for defending a property from flooding fell to the property owner.

Officers explained the Council was in dialogue with water suppliers who were effectively maintaining water pipes, however more work was needed to seal the sewer system. Cllr Seed confirmed a universal telephone number would soon be available to deal with flooding related issues. The Committee was advised that Flood Wardens would be alerted to a threat to their area and would be essential in encouraging landowners to empty ditches on their land. The Committee advised that parishes should be encouraged to develop an emergency flood plan

Cllr Seed explained he was working with Salisbury City Council and Area Board to address flooding problems. It was confirmed that statistics on page 12 of the Wiltshire Flood Response Operational Plan, detailing properties at risk of flooding, were based on Environment Agency figures for an extreme flooding event, it was agreed that this should be explained in the report alongside a renaming of 'total other small communities'. The Committee promoted the dissemination of the Flood Response Operational Plan and Local Flood Risk Management Strategy to town and parish councils. It was suggested that the flood reports could further examine groundwater issues and include links to Environment Agency maps and the Committee agreed the reports should make clear the responsibilities of property or land owners and the Council for managing flooding.

The Committee felt that highways, planning conditions and permissions should be linked to flooding, it was highlighted that there was often confusion over who should manage factors which contribute to flooding. Some members emphasized that joined-up thinking to coordinate hedgerow, grass and gully maintenance was necessary. It was confirmed that gullies highly likely to flood had been identified and the emptying of them had been prioritised.

The Committee thanked Cllr Seed and officers for their work and thorough reports.

**Resolved:**

**To endorse the Wiltshire Flood Response Operational Plan.**

**59b Local Flood Risk Management Strategy**

Wiltshire Council was the Lead Local Flood Authority for the county and had prepared a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy to describe its approach to flooding and how it would work with other organisations. Public consultation was being carried out on the proposed Strategy, the deadline for responses was December.

The Committee considered the proposed Wiltshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy as detailed in the previous item.

**Resolved:**

**To endorse the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.**

60 **Highways Contracts - Annual Review of Service**

The Committee received an update from Cllr Jeff Osborn on BBLP's progress with addressing outstanding issues for the Council's Highways and Streetscene Contract and on the audit of the contract.

The possibility of upgrading the BBLP radio system was discussed and it was explained that the Task Group would soon begin work on Atkins' side of the contract to better understand their service provision.

Some members expressed concerns over delays in service and the number of apprentices taken on. Councillors noted with concern that less community engagement was achieved than originally expected from the contract and this may worsen with future budget constraints. Workforce constraints were cited as a difficulty.

Questions were raised on methods used to meet output by BBLP and it was confirmed that incentives and penalties were included as part of the contract. Members agreed that work was taking longer than originally hoped however it was improving and BBLP was praised for excellent service recently on unblocking drains. It was suggested that the timetable of works could be examined by the Task Group.

**Resolved:**

**To note the update.**

61 **Gypsy and Traveller Plans**

The Committee received a briefing paper on planning policies for Gypsies and Travellers and expressed the need to make progress in identifying sites for Gypsies and Travellers.

A query was raised over Emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 47.

62 **Updates on meetings with the Executive**

It was explained that a meeting had been arranged with Cllr Fleur de Rhé-Philippe for 25 November 2014 and an update from this meeting would be provided to the Committee at its December meeting.

The Committee received a report detailing meetings of the Committee Chairman and Vice- Chairman with relevant members of the Executive and Associate Directors to develop the Overview and Scrutiny Forward Work Programme.

A verbal update was received on the issues of car parking, passenger transport, flooding and Highways Local Investment Fund and, in particular, it was explained that the Fund had been devolved to Area Boards who could influence highways priorities for future years.

The Committee considered the report on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme.

**Resolved:**

**To endorse the following recommendations:**

- 1. To approve the following topics as the work priorities for the Committee going forward and refer them to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for endorsement:**
  - **New waste contract**
  - **Communications to householders regarding waste and recycling**
  - **Neighbourhood Planning**
  - **Gypsy and Traveller Plan**
  - **Business post-adoption of the Core Strategy**
  - **Investing in highways**
  - **Passenger transport**
  - **Car parking**
  - **Flooding**
  
- 2. To note that the following Task Groups will be coming to a close at the next meeting:**
  - **Community Infrastructure Levy Task Group**
  - **20mph Policy Task Group**
  - **Adoptable Estates Task Group**
  
- 3. To reconvene the Waste Task Group, with the addition of a new member on account of Cllr Alan Hill stepping down from the Task Group, to look at communications going to householders on waste collections and recycling and an in- depth look at the Hills Annual Report.**
  
- 4. To note that Military Civilian Integration and Local Enterprise Partnership Task Groups will be overseen by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee at least during the early stages.**

**63 Forward Work Programme**

**Resolved:**

**To note the Forward Work Programme.**

64 **Task Group Update**

The Committee considered updates from the Task Groups.

Cllr Tony Trotman updated the Committee on the CIL Task Group, in particular highlighting its concern over how CIL money would be disseminated to towns and parishes without Neighbourhood plans in place.

**Resolved:**

**To note the updates.**

**To reconvene the Waste Task Group to examine communications going to householders on waste collections and recycling and take an in-depth look at the Hills Annual Report.**

65 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

66 **Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting would be 9 December at a later time of 2pm.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.35 pm)

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