

AT A MEETING of the ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on Tuesday, 11 June 2013.

PRESENT

Chairman:

p Councillor Sharyn Wheale

Vice-Chairman:

p Councillor Geoff Hockley

Councillors:

p Graham Burgess

p Roger Huxstep

p Adam Carew

a Rupert Kyrle

p Charles Choudhary

p Peter Latham

p Shaun Cully

p Steve Rippon-Swaine

p Philip Fawkes

p David Simpson

p Edward Heron

p Mark Staplehurst

Also in attendance:

Councillor Sean Woodward, Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Rupert Kyrle.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code.

Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

3. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Committee held on 22 January 2013

were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. **DEPUTATIONS**

No deputations were received at this meeting.

5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed Members that were new to the committee and encouraged Members to attend relevant briefing sessions. Members were reminded that there would be an induction session for new Members on 13 June, and a Member briefing session on 18 June which would include an item on Hampshire's Minerals and Waste Plan.

Members were informed there was planned to be a briefing following the Full Council meeting on 18 July on prioritisation of minor highway works, and on 3 September Members were invited to attend their local Highway Area Offices (in Totton, Hook, Bishops Waltham or Petersfield) for a session on how Officers work in partnership with Amey to deliver local highway services.

In addition, each year the Economy Transport and Environment Department runs Highway Area workshops for local County Councillors and the relevant District Portfolio Member, to give Members the opportunity to help prioritise schemes within the overall Highway Capital Programme. These were due to be held on 4 November (for Highway Area North and East) 7 November (for Highway Area West) and 14 November (for Highway Area South).

6. **NEW ADMINISTRATION: INTRODUCTION TO SCRUTINY**

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Policy and Governance on the role of scrutiny at the County Council. (Take in presentation, Item 6 in Minute Book)

Members received an overview of scrutiny functions and the remit of the committee. Members heard:

- That the role of scrutiny was broader than simply holding the Executive to account for decisions. Policy review and policy development was an important way in which the select committees could influence and seek improvement.
- That it was important to prioritise topics for scrutiny to ensure the time the committee spent was

focused on areas where it was most likely to add value
In relation to the Call In process, Members queried what a quorum of the committee would be. It was noted this may have changed as the membership of the committee had increased. This would be confirmed with the Monitoring Officer and notified to Members.

Quorum be confirmed and notified to Members

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be noted.

7. **NEW ADMINISTRATION: INTRODUCTION TO KEY SERVICES SCRUTINISED BY THIS COMMITTEE**

The Committee received a verbal summary from the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment of the functions provided by the Department, which were within the remit of the committee.

Members heard:

- That the Economic Development function now sat alongside the Environment & Transport functions, which supported a clear link with strategic infrastructure planning. The County Council would be working closely with the Local Enterprise Partnerships covering Hampshire, and mindful of the different needs of north, central and south Hampshire.
- The Highways section managed over 5,000 miles of roads including maintenance. Potholes were a problem across the country following two bad winters, and the County Council had re-launched 'operation restore' to address this. However, the longer term emphasis remained on planned maintenance under 'operation resilience' as part of the strategy to improve highway conditions.
- Passenger Transport services included home to school transport, subsidised bus services, adult social care transport and community transport.
- Planning – the Department dealt with the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan, planning for new schools, inputting to District Council Local Development Frameworks and identifying infrastructure priorities linked to the Community Infrastructure Levy
- The County Council is a waste disposal authority, and takes part in the Project Integra partnership alongside District Councils which are waste collection authorities. The County Council had a long term contract to dispose of waste with Veolia, which had provided three energy recovery facilities in Hampshire on a long term pay back basis through the contract. The County Council kept under review the approach to waste, with regard to the optimum balance between recycling rates and incineration of waste for energy production.

- Energy was an area the County Council was increasingly becoming involved in, with regard to energy efficiency and demand reduction, and whether it would be beneficial to the County Council to supply its own energy requirements, in view of energy security issues.
- Environmental protection was also part of the Department's remit, with particular new responsibilities around flood risk management.

A Member commented on the link between bus subsidies and economic development, due to people using bus services to get to work, or when job seeking.

RESOLVED:

That the Director be thanked for the useful introduction to the work of the Economy Transport and Environment Department.

8. **LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment on the Local Flood Risk Strategy for Hampshire. (Take in report, Item 8 in Minute Book)

Members heard:

- That it was a requirement of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 that the County Council prepare a Local Flood Risk Strategy, as part of the Council's new statutory role as Lead Local Flood Authority.
- That the County Council was only responsible for 'ordinary' water courses, as the Environment Agency was responsible for potential flooding from main rivers
- A consultation had been undertaken on the draft strategy. There had not been a high volume of feedback, however this may reflect the fact that flooding was not a significant issue for large parts of Hampshire. The feedback received had been useful and had been taken into account in the strategy.
- Various impacts had been considered in the assessment that identified the top twenty highest risk wards, for which action plans had been developed
- The Environment Agency had produced a guide on simple actions land owners living beside natural watercourses can take to help prevent flooding entitled 'living on the edge – a guide to your rights and responsibilities of riverside ownership' which was circulated to Members in attendance
- Funding bodies such as the Environment Agency regional flood and coastal committees would in future look to the priorities contained in the Local Flood Risk

Management Strategy when considering funding applications for schemes designed to mitigate flood risk

- This strategy was not the only involvement the County Council had with flood risk; the Council would also be developing Surface Water Management Plans for each District Council area, and had other related duties for example maintenance of ordinary water courses
- The Hampshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy had been agreed by the Environment Agency, District Councils and the relevant water companies

Following questions, Members heard:

- That the strategy had a fifteen year life span, however it would be reviewed within that time e.g. if new data becomes available
- That as part of the consultation on the strategy, a letter was sent to the clerk of every Parish Council, and adverts were placed in local press, in order to publicise the consultation
- In future (once regulations come into force, anticipated October 2014) major planning applications will be required to include a flooding assessment. The County Council will have to be consulted as Lead Flood Risk Authority, and would be able to comment on whether planning applications appropriately considered flood risk
- In 2014 the County Council will also be responsible for establishing a SuDs (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) Approval Body (SAB) that will have to approve all surface water drainage schemes prior to construction. If the SuDs aspect of a development is not approved by this body, the development will not be able to go ahead.
- Lead Flood Risk Authorities were under a duty to cooperate. This would assist with management of cross border issues such as the management of water courses that spanned more than one local authority area
- District Councils are under a duty to act consistently with the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, and water companies have a duty to have 'due regard' to the Strategy
- That the County Council had investigated the option of using porous material when resurfacing highways to assist with drainage, however this was not considered a good option at present as the material was not hard wearing and required replacing frequently

Members requested that the final version of the Strategy include the date it was agreed and when it was due to

be revised, a glossary of terms and acronyms, and a map of rivers in Hampshire. The Chairman also requested that the District level flooding leaflets (prepared by Emergency Planning) the Committee had sight of previously, be circulated to new County Councillors for their information.

District level
Flood advice
Leaflets be
circulated to new
Members

The Recommendation set out below was put to the vote and carried with one abstention (Cllr Adam Carew)

RECOMMENDED:

That the Environment & Transportation Select Committee commends the Hampshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy to the Executive Member for Economy Transport and Environment for formal adoption by the County Council.

9. **FUTURE SCRUTINY OF FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment on a proposal to hold a scrutiny event focused on flood risk management. (Take in report, Item 9 in Minute Book)

Members heard:

- That the proposed event could cover a range of flood management issues, for example improving partnership working in relation to flooding. Other flood risk authorities could be invited to attend such as the Environment Agency and District Councils.

Members made the following suggestions:

- To avoid simply using the format of presentations – preference to include a variety of approaches e.g. workshops
- Importance of appropriate representation from organisations invited – those that are knowledgeable about the topic, but also senior enough to represent the organisations and inform decisions
- To provide those attending with background information in advance, with the aim to avoid repeating the same ground on the day, to maximise the time available on the day
- That Members have the opportunity to provide input regarding what information would be useful

The Chairman invited Members to contact the officer who had provided the report with any further suggestions.

RECOMMENDED:

That a Flood Risk Scrutiny Event take place in the Autumn, as described in the report.

That the Chairman agree the detailed arrangements for the Event on behalf of the committee.

Arrangements be made for a Flood Risk Scrutiny Event

10. **'A BOARD' POLICY**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment on progress since the adoption of a policy on A Boards in April 2012. (Take in report, Item 10 in Minute Book)

Members heard:

- That meetings had been held with Hampshire District Councils (except the New Forest who declined) to alert them to the policy, however none had chosen to take up the optional licensing scheme.

Following questions, Members heard:

- That A Boards are prohibited on the highway, however the County Council does not enforce this unless it receives complaints.
- That a task and finish group of this committee looked into the issue in 2012
 - If complaints are received, the County Council will remove all the A Boards in the area concerned
 - Members recognised that A Boards were useful for traders, and that if used with common sense should not be a problem
 - That a licensing scheme had been identified as good practice, so that in areas where A Boards were being used excessively, their use could be managed
 - That District Councils were best placed to run such a scheme, as they already had local presence in town centres

RESOLVED:

That the feedback from Borough and District Councils is noted.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Director of the Economy Transport and Environment Department write to the Hampshire District and Borough Councils to remind them about the Council's policy with respect to A Boards.

A Letter be sent to District and Borough Councils

That given the lack of interest from District and Borough Councils to take up the option to issue permissive

licenses, the committee supports the existing position that County Council enforcement action only be pursued if and when complaints are received about A boards causing obstruction.

11. **A3 ZIP BUS PRIORITY CORRIDOR WORKING GROUP**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Policy & Governance on the work of the A3 ZIP Bus Priority Corridor working group. (Take in report, Item 11 in Minute Book) An updated version of the action plan was tabled.

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that steps had been taken to consider and address the issues raised, and that the Member Working Group was satisfied with the actions taken.

That no further update be required on this topic.

12. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chairman went through the Committee's forthcoming work programme (Item 12 in the Minute Book).

The following amendments were agreed:

- Highway Maintenance Management Plan – to be scheduled for the November meeting of the Committee
- Grass Verge Parking – It was anticipated the views of the working group that looked at this would be picked up through the revised policy, which will form part of the Highway Maintenance Management Plan.
- Weeds on the highway – the Chairman has requested that an initial report outlining the current arrangements be brought to the November meeting.

The following additions were agreed:

- Term Highway Contract 2013/14 – to include the highway Key Performance Indicators being reviewed in light of a new IT monitoring system
- A Motion at Full Council about Fracking was referred to this committee for investigation and report back to County Council. That this topic be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the committee (in November).

- Potential future area of interest: (from Cllr Carew) Potholes – cost to the County Council of responding to claims compared to the costs of repair

Topic be removed from work programme

RESOLVED:

That the Committee's work programme be approved subject to any amendments made at this meeting.

Work Programme
be updated

That a briefing is held for Members prior to the next Committee meeting, anticipated to cover: fracking, an update on departmental efficiency savings plans, and a pre briefing for the planned flooding event.

Arrangements be
made for a
briefing

Chairman, 5 November 2013