

AT A MEETING of the ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT  
SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle,  
Winchester on Tuesday, 15 September 2015.

**PRESENT**

Chairman:

p Councillor Sharyn Wheale

Vice-Chairman:

p Councillor Geoff Hockley

Councillors:

p Graham Burgess

p Charles Choudhary

p Shaun Cully

p Philip Fawkes

p Brian Gurden

p Edward Heron

p Roger Huxstep

p Rupert Kyrle

p Peter Latham

p Steve Rippon-Swaine

p David Simpson

p Mark Staplehurst

Also in attendance: Cllr Sean Woodward, Executive Member for Economy  
Transport & Environment

96. **BROADCASTING ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chairman announced that the press and members of the public were permitted to film and broadcast the meeting. Those remaining at the meeting were consenting to being filmed and recorded, and to the possible use of those images and recording for broadcasting purposes.

97. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was noted that Cllr Rupert Kyrle was stuck in traffic and would be slightly late, and that Cllr Roger Huxstep was attending another meeting and would join the Select Committee meeting later.

98. **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 Personal interest in a matter being

considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 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.

99. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

100. **DEPUTATIONS**

No deputations were received at this meeting.

101. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman had no announcements to make on this occasion.

102. **TRANSFORMATION TO 2017 – REVENUE SAVINGS PROPOSALS: ECONOMY, TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**

The Committee considered a report and supporting presentation from the Director of Economy, Transport & Environment, regarding the savings proposals for the Economy Transport & Environment Department developed as part of the Transformation to 2017 programme (see Item 6 in the Minute Book).

Members praised the quality of work undertaken by officers in developing the budget proposals.

Cllr Edward Heron declared a personal interest: that he is a member of a district council that has an agency agreement with the County Council for undertaking highways maintenance activities. He elected to remain in the meeting and take part in the debate.

Members heard that:

- The target for the Economy, Transport & Environment (ETE) Department was to save £14.7 million. The intention was to pursue new ways of working to achieve this in order to minimise the impact on front line services
- It was anticipated the reduction in local government funding would continue beyond 2017
- For the highways service, a new operating model was proposed which would result in a reduction of around 27 staff posts. A digital platform would provide

information to the public without needing to take up staff time, and engineering consultancy could be offered to neighbouring councils to generate income

- For transport & traffic management it was proposed to reduce by 17 Full Time Equivalent posts and to reduce the funding provided to district councils for undertaking services on the County Council's behalf.

Non statutory home to school transport services would also be phased out (tied in with a school year to reduce disruption)

- For waste planning and environment, it was proposed that further savings be sought from the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) budget, as the major waste disposal contract had already been re-negotiated as part of transformation to 2015, so additional savings in this area were difficult to achieve

- It was confirmed that there would be further consultation on any specific proposals affecting HWRCs such as further changes to opening times

- For economic development and the research & resources sections it was proposed to increase cost recovery from those using and benefiting from services such as 'film Hampshire' promotion of sites in Hampshire for filming, and trading in the data the council holds for which there is market appetite

- Public consultation had been undertaken on the potential areas for finding savings. Responses indicated support for dimming streetlights, increasing recycling and reducing non safety led traffic management. These options were being pursued. Making savings from HWRCs was least popular, however this had to be considered due to the scale of savings required from the ETE budget

- Equalities Impact Assessments had been undertaken on the savings proposals and no high impact had been identified. Medium impact had been assessed for the Home to School Transport proposals

Following questions Members heard:

- That the proposed reductions were to revenue spending and that capital budget remained for highway works

- That it was proposed to start charging for providing pre-application advice to developers. It was confirmed that the Council could not charge districts for providing a response where the County Council is a statutory consultee

- That a new contract for managing HWRC sites was being developed and consideration would be given to the County benefitting under the new contract from any commercial opportunities that arise from the materials gathered

- That there had been 2774 responses to the

consultation undertaken; 1229 from individuals, 45 from organisations and 1500 from a targeted telephone survey designed to reach a representative sample of residents. Of those who responded, 48% supported making savings through dimming street lights, 39% supported reducing non statutory home to school transport, and 36% supported reducing non safety led traffic management

Members commented:

- The Chairman noted that for those areas of concern for members she would be requesting further detail be reported to the committee in future as further detail is worked up, prior to future decisions
- Reductions to highway maintenance service levels was identified as a concern, as was reductions to the budget for HWRCs
- Some Members indicated that they did not support the proposals because they did not support the approach of asking all service areas to make the same level of reductions
- Some Members welcomed that the proposals would make the required savings, as required to service the national debt, with minimal impact on front line services

The following recommendation was tabled and carried by majority vote, with the following members wishing it to be noted that they voted against: Cllr Brian Gurden, Cllr Rupert Kyrle, Cllr David Simpson

RECOMMENDED:

That the Select Committee recommend to the Executive Member for Economy Transport and Environment that he approve the proposed savings options contained in the report and Appendix 1, for submission to the Cabinet.

103. **CATCHMENT BASED APPROACH TO FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT IN HAMPSHIRE**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment regarding the steps being taken to develop a catchment based approach to flood risk management in Hampshire (see Item 7 in the Minute Book).

Members heard that:

- The flooding experienced two winters ago had demonstrated that the reality was different to the pre-existing plans. As learning from that experience it had been decided to work differently in order to be able to

Add to work programme to consider further detail at future meetings

respond better in future

- In December 2014 Cabinet approved the development of a catchment based approach to flood risk management
  - Pilots were being undertaken based on the Test river catchment and the Itchen river catchment, working based on river catchment areas rather than local government administrative boundaries. There were good relationships with relevant partners in southern Hampshire, with less well developed relationships in northern Hampshire
  - In the pilot areas a suite of flood mitigation actions was being developed. Most were smaller scale actions due to funding limitations
  - This approach was starting to find favour nationally. It was intended to demonstrate to central government that a catchment based approach was preferable, so that this approach could be taken into account in funding systems
  - It was noted that groundwater flooding was inevitable and the best response was to adapt to be resilient to it, and to be able to manage when it takes place. Consideration was being given to where across a river catchment would be best to hold flood water e.g. agricultural land, to avoid a flood wall in one area simply diverting the water to flood another area further downstream

Following questions members heard:

- That the County Council was now taking a more rigorous approach to use of powers to pursue landowners over their riparian responsibilities
- That the County works with other Lead Local Flood Authorities across County borders, and that the Environment Agency could assist in these cases as they work across County boundaries
- That as Lead Local Flood Authority the County is a statutory consultee in the planning process and would advise against building on flood plains

Members commented:

- That there remained issues where different agencies with responsibilities in relation to flooding did not accept whose responsibility particular incidents were
  - That small scale flooding incidents still have a big impact on those affected
  - That they supported taking a holistic approach to flooding

RESOLVED:

That the Select Committee note the update and support the development of a catchment based approach to

flood risk management.

104. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chairman presented the Committee's forthcoming work programme (Item 8 in the Minute Book).

RESOLVED:

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

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Chairman, 30 October 2015