

AT A MEETING of the ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on Tuesday, 3 April 2012.

PRESENT

Chairman:
p Councillor Sharyn Wheale

Vice-Chairman:
a Councillor Geoff Hockley

Councillors:

a Ian Beagley	a Rupert Kyrle
a Adam Carew	p Steve Rippon-Swaine
p Vaughan Clarke	p Elaine Still
a Mark Cooper	p Marilyn Tucker
p Edward Heron	p Alan Weeks

Councillor Mel Kendal, Executive Member for Environment and Transport, was also in attendance.

106. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Ian Beagley, Adam Carew and Mark Cooper.

107. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that, where they believed they had a personal or personal prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, they should normally at the time of the debate declare their interest, and having regard to the circumstances described in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the County Council's Code of Conduct, consider whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 12 of the Code.

Councillor Edward Heron declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest following discussion under Agenda Item 6 as he is a New Forest District Councillor, and declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest following discussion under Agenda Item 7, as he is a Member of the Project Integra Strategic Board.

Councillor Steve Rippon-Swaine declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest following discussion under Agenda Item 5, as he is a New Forest District Councillor.

Councillor Elaine Still declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest following discussion under Agenda Item 6, as she is a Basingstoke and Deane Borough Councillor.

Councillor Marilyn Tucker declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest following discussion under Agenda Item 6, as she is a Basingstoke and Deane Borough Councillor.

Councillor Sharyn Wheale declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest following discussions under Agenda Item 6, as she is a Hart District Councillor.

108. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Committee held on 17 January 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

109. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that an urgent item had been added to the Environment and Transport Decision Day due to take place at 2pm on 3 April 2012 on the 'Bikeability Contract'. That Chairman stated that she had been consulted regarding this item in accordance with Regulation 16 and was happy for the Executive Member to consider this report.

110. **ENERGY STRATEGY**

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment and Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services on the Energy Strategy. Members heard:

(Take in presentation)

- That energy is a key focus for the County Council, due to: its large cost to the taxpayer; the need to secure access to it for the long term; and, its impact on climate change and legally-binding emissions reduction targets,.
- That the County Council spent in the region of £4.2 million on it's core estate energy bill in 2011, a cost that will increase over the next 10 – 20 years. Modelling the likely cost of energy going forward allows the Council to plan key objectives for the future.
- That primarily the County Council will need to continue to put in place plans which reduce the amount of energy used within the core estate and schools. Energy efficiency measures, such as putting in place plans to change behaviours and improve equipment, are part of the solution. Therefore the County Council are looking at

the business case for an energy performance contract, which would provide funding for such measures to be implemented.

- That the County Council will also be looking to renewable energy as a potential energy source, which may also have the potential for the County Council to generate revenue through the creation of jobs and the selling of leftover generated energy on the open market.
- That in order to explore such renewable energies, the County Council will be looking to initiate a range of pilots and feasibility studies.
- That implementation of the large scale solar photo-voltaic cell programme was on hold following the decision of Central Government to halve the Feed-in Tariff rate. Although a legal challenge to this decision had been won in the High and Supreme Court, the changes were still in place, and meant that the payback and return for Hampshire County Council would be greatly reduced over the original business case if the programme were to go ahead.
- That other approaches to the business case prepared had been explored, but these had ultimately not been in accordance with the County Council's guidelines.
- That the situation relating to large scale programmes involving solar photo-voltaic cells would continue to be monitored, as the price of units were continuing to fall, and changes may occur in the industry which would lead the County Council to re-look at it's business case.

Following questions, Members heard:

- That the length of time taken to agree the business cases were so because the County Council needed to comply with European Union procurement laws.
- That individual buildings under the County Council's portfolio could be fitted with solar photo-voltaic cells with an agreed business case for each unit.
- That the energy strategy approved by Cabinet aims to provide an overarching framework to work to which encompasses the various ways forward which could secure the County Council's energy needs for the future.
- That Hampshire County Council are currently bidding with partners to receive funding from the European Union to lead on the Modelling Shared Energy Services (MOSES) project, which could take forward some of the work described in the energy strategy.

111. **'A BOARD' POLICY**

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment on the proposed 'A Board' policy. Members heard:

(Take in report)

- That this policy will aim to regulate the placement of 'A

- Boards' on the public highway.
- That the policy was formulated on the best practice described within evidence collected, which focused on the procedures of comparative highway authorities.
 - That the number of 'A Boards' displayed on the public highway is increasing owing to the tough economic climate, consequently the number of complaints received by the County Council is also increasing.
 - That complaints regarding the placement of 'A Boards' are dealt with locally primarily, in order to find an amicable local solution. Should no solution be agreed, the County Council, as the Highways Authority, is able to remove 'A Boards' deemed to be obstructing the public highway.
 - That options other than the policy proposed were explored, such as a voluntary trader scheme, but were rejected owing to the minimal impact they were estimated to have.
 - That District and Borough Councils would have the responsibility, should they adopt the policy, to put the licensing scheme in place. Initial conversations had been held with Hart, Test Valley and East Hampshire District and Borough Councils, and further meetings had been planned with these and others in the County.
 - That it was hoped that all District and Borough Councils would adopt the policy, in order to have an equitable policy across the Council.

Following questions, Members heard:

- That discussions would be held with the District and Borough Councils to agree the particulars of the policy, for example the size and type of 'A Boards' allowed, and how licensees would be able to display their permits.
- That the policy is similar to best practice from Staffordshire County Council. Staffordshire have also produced a document which combines together all of the policies held by the authority relating to the streetscene. This could be something that Hampshire County Council looks to do in the future.
- That the Hampshire County Council, as the highway authority, is a statutory consultee on planning matters heard by District and Borough Councils, which may include seeking permission for larger A Boards to be positioned on private land.
- That Hampshire County Council will continue to have the responsibility for dealing with, and removing if necessary, obstructive A Boards that do not have a licence.
- That leaflets have been drafted for traders which explain the new 'A Board' policy.
- That a time frame for implementation has not yet been agreed owing to initial discussions still ongoing with District and Borough Councils.

- That the 'A Board' policy is an enabling policy, and is not meant to be used as a zero tolerance policy on 'A Boards'.
- That Hampshire County Council has taken legal advice as to whether powers for licensing 'A Boards' can be devolved down to Parish and Town Council level. The advice given is that licenses must be issued by District and Borough Councils.

RESOLVED:

That:

1. Engagement should be undertaken with all District and Borough Councils on the proposed policy. That this engagement includes the formulation of an implementation timetable.
2. The implementation of the 'A' Board policy should be reviewed six months after adoption.

112. **PROJECT INTEGRA**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment on the review of Project Integra. Members heard:

(Take in report)

- That currently the responsibilities for waste in Hampshire are split between the County Council, as the Waste Disposal Authority, and the District and Borough Councils, as the Waste Collection Authorities.
- That these Authorities all recognise the importance of working together as one, and in partnership with the Unitary Authorities of Portsmouth and Southampton. This is the driving force for Project Integra.
- That Project Integra was last reviewed by the Audit Commission in 2005, and therefore the partners agreed that a further review should take place, beginning in 2010. The purpose of the review was to ensure that the strategic direction of Project Integra matched those of the partner authorities in relation to waste management and recycling, as well as to ensure that funding and resources were being efficiently utilised.
- That the review reported in 2011, where supplementary recommendations were made by Hampshire County Council. These were agreed by the strategic board of Project Integra in 2012.
- That the Project Integra action plan for 2012/13 is currently being drafted. A copy of this will be made available to Committee members.

Following questions, Members heard:

- That Hampshire County Council is initiating partnership

work with the 'SE7', but will also be looking to other neighbouring authorities to see how we can work with and on behalf of other Councils.

- That commercial waste is one of the priorities of both Hampshire County Council and Project Integra, and strategies around the use of Household Waste Recycling Centre for commercial waste are due to be considered by the Executive Member for Environment and Transport later in 2012.

RESOLVED:

That

1. The Committee notes that scrutiny of Project Integra will now be undertaken by each of the authorities within the partnership.
2. The Committee keeps 'Project Integra' on the work programme for future scrutiny.

113. **'CO-ORDINATION AND REGULATION OF ALL WORKS ON HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S HIGHWAYS' RECOMMENDATION MONITORING**

The Committee received an update on the recommendations made by the 'Co-ordination and Regulation of all works on Hampshire County Council's Highways' scrutiny review group. Members heard:

(Take in report)

- That once the 'Code of Conduct/Good Practice' document is signed by the various statutory undertakers, highways term contractors and highway authorities, a website will go live which provides the public with these details.
- That the highways term contractor, Amey, has agreed to move to first time reinstatements whenever possible.
- That new contracts for HCC works now include provisions and conditions similar to those applied to utility companies.
- That new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) submitted to the Department for Transport include a provision for recording first time reinstatements and other compliance matters, both for utility and HCC works.
- That all upcoming major utility works are now published on the Members portal.
- That the streetworks manager and team members have been involved in the planning for diamond jubilee street parties and have reduced red tape for street party road closures.

Following questions, Members heard:

- That a few statutory undertakers are considering not

signing up to the 'Code of Conduct/Good Practice' document, citing that they already carry out the good working practices contained within the document, or that corporate policy prevents them from signing up to local agreements.

- That all road closures and diversionary routes are agreed in a joint process between the highway authority, the relevant District or Borough Council, and the works promoter. Routes chosen are the shortest wherever possible, but are dictated by national policy; e.g. that traffic from 'A' road closures must not divert onto lesser classes of road.
- Advance signage warning motorists of the closure of roads are usually displayed to the public one week in advance.
- That Hampshire County Council, as the highway authority, seeks to work closely with the Highways Agency on any road closures, should disruptions be likely to occur from either's works.. Discussions between the Highways Agency and Hampshire County Council occur as early as possible.

That Committee wished it to be noted that they were very satisfied with the work that had commenced following their recommendations to the Executive Member for Environment and Transport.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee receive a copy of the 'Code of Conduct/Good Working Practice' document when finalised.

114. **'PARKING ON GRASS VERGES, FOOTPATHS AND PAVEMENTS' WORKING GROUP**

The Chairman informed the Committee that Members of the working group had met twice since the January 2012 meeting of the Select Committee. Members had received the current 'parking on grass verges, footpaths and pavements' policy, and had heard evidence from various stakeholders.

Members had agreed at the last meeting of the working group for officers to explore various engineering solutions and types of enforcement in relation to parking on grass verges, footpaths and pavements. Members would meet again later in the year once this work has been undertaken.

115. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chief Executive presented the Committee's forthcoming work programme (Item 10 in the Minute Book).

RESOLVED:

That the work programme is agreed.

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Chairman, 12 June 2012