

# minutes



Meeting ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY SELECT COMMITTEE

Date Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> October 2005 (commencing at 10.30 am)

## Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

## COUNCILLORS

Hon Joan Taylor (Chair)

A Bruce Laughton (Vice-Chair)

Kenneth Bullivant

W J Clarke

Barrie Cooper

V H Dobson

Sybil Fielding

George Kane

Pat Lally

J T A Napier

Ken Rigby

A David Shaw

## MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2005 having been circulated were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Bruce Laughton.

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

## CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY'S REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2005

Councillor Stella Smedley invited questions on the written report. She stated that her response to the Environment Agency on the River Trent Flood Risk Strategy had been as robust as possible, and hoped the Committee would put the Agency under the closest scrutiny. In reply to a question from Councillor Bullivant about any possible extension to the Sherwood Sweeper bus, Councillor Smedley indicated that at the moment the bus was limited to villages in the Ollerton area. It was agreed to note the report.

## RIVER TRENT FLOOD RISK STRATEGY

Councillor Taylor informed the Committee that the Environment Agency would be attending on 30<sup>th</sup> January.

## **BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY INTO THE WORK OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL**

Nick Brown, Group Manager (Sustainability), introduced the report and invited members comments on it. The final version on the report would be presented to County Council on 1<sup>st</sup> December. In reply to Councillor Cooper, he explained that where a task was not an ongoing one, the target date represented the completion of a task. He observed that the target for carbon management was ambitious, with some slippage taking place. Councillor Napier called for a more joined-up approach. He believed the County Council could set a good example, and queried the energy efficiency standards at the PFI schools. Mr Brown replied that a new EU directive set minimum standards from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006, but the County Council could choose to exceed those. He pointed out that the whole life costs of a building should be considered.

Councillor Taylor suggested a detailed review of carbon management. Councillor Clarke agreed that this deserved a closer look. He gave County Hall as an example of a building with poorly controlled heating. Councillor Bullivant referred to sustainability concepts used in buildings at Redlands School, Worksop, and suggested that the Committee might also visit a large school under construction. Councillor Lally referred to the long pay-back period on some energy saving schemes. He believed that exceeding energy efficiency standards could be expensive, and that the County Council should not lose sight of its priorities. Mr Brown indicated that a cost/benefit approach was being considered, with a five year pay-back on investments. Whole life costing would be difficult, given unpredictable variations in fuel prices. In reply to Councillor Taylor, he stated that the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government gave sustainability a priority. He added that the Regional Centre of Excellence had given the County Council a grant to look at sustainable procurement.

Councillor Cooper referred to a reported increase in traffic emissions in West Bridgford. Mr Brown indicated that emissions were increasing generally in the transport sector. This was a complex issue, to which the County Council's approach was to encourage public transport use and improve traffic flows.

It was agreed that the views of the Committee be incorporated into the policy presented to County Council for approval on 1<sup>st</sup> December, and the Committee undertake a view of carbon management.

## **WASTE ARISING**

Malvin Trigg, Assistant Director (Transportation) gave a presentation on the County Council's performance in processing waste arisings. He indicated that Nottinghamshire was in the lowest quartile. He observed that wheelie bins led to the collection of much more waste compared with plastic sacks and that Derbyshire only had four household recycling centres compared with Nottinghamshire's fourteen. Recycling in Nottinghamshire was much improved since 2000, with District Councils encouraged to move to a two bin system. Phase 3 would be a three bin system, which might increase the waste arisings again. At the same time, the County Council campaigned to minimise waste. Councillor Rigby expressed concern about the health implications of fortnightly collections in hot weather. Mr Trigg repeated District

Council advice to wrap food up before putting it in the bin. Jas Hundal, Deputy Director, observed that a three bin system should reduce the amount of waste going to household recycling centres.

### **PROGRESS ON THE PFI WASTE CONTRACT**

Mr Trigg introduced the report on progress with the PFI contract since the appointment of Onyx Environmental as the preferred bidder for the contract. It was planned for the contract to be approved by the County Council early in the new year, and to be completed by March. District Councils were being encouraged to recycle all their waste with the County Council, and to sort waste as required. The benefit for them would be an outlet for their waste over a 26 year period.

Councillor Clarke asked about the location of the recycling centres, given their impact on local communities and the traffic they would generate. He saw a need to measure air quality and direct traffic along specific routes. Councillor Rigby asked about the emissions from incineration. Mr Trigg replied that planning conditions for recycling centres would address the issues raised by Councillor Clarke, while the EU set high standards for emissions from incinerators. Councillor Taylor queried the assertion that there was no need for landfill. Mr Trigg explained that after 2011, this was the case for household waste. However there was still a need to dispose of commercial and industrial waste generated in the area. Councillor Cooper understood that the capacity of the Eastcroft incinerator in Nottingham was to be increased. Mr Trigg outlined the history of the incinerator, and confirmed that the owner wished to increase capacity from 150,000 to 250,000 tonnes per annum. The incinerator would continue to be upgraded to meet emission standards, which were monitored rigorously.

### **MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT – PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT**

The contents and approach used to prepare the pre-submission draft on the statement of community involvement was supported. It was agreed to establish a working group of members be established to be consulted on the preparation of future development plans and other relevant documents in the Minerals and Waste Development Framework. Councillors Dobson, Fielding, Lally, Napier and Taylor expressed an interest in serving on the working group.

### **PERFORMANCE OF CENTRAL NETWORKS IN RELATION TO STREET LIGHTING**

Malvin Trigg introduced the report on the performance of Central Networks for the six months ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2005. He referred to the national standards introduced by OFGEM, and believed it was too early to assess their affect on performance. In response to members' comments about specific problems, Mr Trigg encouraged them to draw them to the attention of OFGEM. Jas Hundal suggested an exercise to match Central Network's records with the County Council's, followed by a letter on behalf of the Authority to OFGEM. Councillor Clarke suggested a press release to encourage the public to report faults. Councillor Cooper referred to complaints about new low light pollution lighting in the Lady Bay area of West Bridgford. Mr Hundal

offered to look into this.

It was agreed to carry out a matching exercise as suggested above, and for the Committee to continue to receive regular reports on Central Network's performance.

### **RIGHTS OF WAY ISSUES IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

Steve Jones, Team Manager (Access) and his colleagues Tim Hart and Rob Percy introduced the report and answered members' questions in relation to current issues affecting the rights of way network in Nottinghamshire. In reply to members, Mr Percy explained that there was no legal right to ride a mechanised vehicle on a footpath or bridleway, and only a taxed and insured vehicle with an MOT could be used on a bye way. Enforcement was a police responsibility. Mr Jones referred to difficulties created by the unclear status of many urban pathways. Councillor Napier suggested creating locations where quad bikes could go.

Councillor Taylor, on behalf of Councillor Mrs Cutts, asked whether members could be given copies of the definitive map for their area. Mr Jones explained that the map was a large scale working document. Any copy would not have the same status, and if on a reduced scale, would not contain the detail necessary. However his team was happy to respond to members' queries. Jas Hundal agreed to remind members of this in the Department's newsletter. The team answered further questions on extending the network and the process for diverting paths.

It was agreed that a further report be presented to the Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> January, giving feedback on the rights of way event to be held on 25<sup>th</sup> November, and with information on modification orders.

### **FORWARD PLAN AND WORK PROGRAMME**

It was agreed to note the Forward Plan and work programme, with the latter amended to reflect the Environment Agency presentation and rights of way report at the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2006 meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.35 pm.

**CHAIR**

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