



meeting **ENVIRONMENT STANDING SELECT COMMITTEE**

date **4 April 2005**

agenda item number

13

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

PROGRESS REPORT ON HIGHWAYS AGENCY TRANSFERS

Purpose of Report

- 1 To further update the Select Committee of the progress on negotiations to transfer the Highways functions back to the County Council, from Gedling and Rushcliffe Borough Councils, following the decision of these Councils to cease to be the County Council's Agent for highway services.

Background

- 2 Members will recall the previous report in September 2004 which advised of the decision to replace the current Highways Agency arrangements with the District Councils of Mansfield, Ashfield, Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe with a "Manage and Operate" Partnership. Whilst Mansfield, Ashfield and Broxtowe confirmed their participation in the partnership, Gedling and Rushcliffe decided to opt out. A Steering Group, led by Brian Duff, was set up to manage the transfer of the highways functions which would no longer be undertaken by Gedling and Rushcliffe back to the County Council by April 2005. The total number of staff transferring to the County Council from these two agents under TUPE is 29.

Progress

- 3 Since the previous report to the Select Committee, joint negotiations have been continuing on a regular basis to resolve staff transfer, operational and management and procedural issues. The purpose of these negotiations is to ensure that all issues are identified and resolved to allow a 'seamless' transfer of the service on 1 April 2005.
- 4 In order to accommodate transferring staff amendments to the structure and establishment of the Department's Highways Division have been approved. The total number of staff required is 41 which is greater than the 29 transferring as the Districts had a number of vacancies and only those staff

'substantially employed' in the service were eligible for transfer. Recruitment to the vacant posts is underway.

- 5 The transferred staff and those recruited to the vacancies will be based in the Highways Division South offices at Gamston and in additional office/depot space created on the Rolleston Drive complex.
- 6 I am pleased to report that negotiations with both District Councils have gone well and are nearing completion. Agreement has already been reached on all major issues and current discussions are primarily focusing on publicity and changes in contact information. Appropriate leaflets, posters, press releases etc are currently in draft form and arrangements are in hand for the final versions to be issued towards the end of March.
- 7 The objective of transferring the Highways Service formally to the County Council from both Rushcliffe and Gedling Borough Councils on 1 April 2005 will be met.

Peter Webster
Director of Environment