

minutes



Meeting ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

Date Monday, 10th January 2005 (commencing at 10.30 am)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with `A`

COUNCILLORS

Andy Freeman (Chair)
V H Dobson (Vice-Chair)

	John Bell		J T A Napier
	Kenneth Bullivant	A	Mrs Nellie Smedley
	W J Clarke	A	Mrs S Smedley
	Yvonne Davidson		P Tsimbiridis
A	Stan Heptinstall MBE		Keith Walker
	Richard Jackson		

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor T H Butler
“ Martin Brandon-Bravo

MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 29th November, 2004 having been circulated were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

Apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs N Smedley
(on other County Council business)

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

REPORT BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FOR THE PERIOD NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2004

After Councillor Butler had introduced the report, members made comments and asked questions. Councillor Smedley noted the recent success of Local Transport Plan (LTP) settlements in recent years, and the difference which they had made to the County. She asked about the possibility of the Ollerton

roundabout being included in the plan. Councillor Butler recognised the problems at the Ollerton roundabout, and indicated that it would be considered for inclusion in the next LTP. Such matters were being considered by an all party panel, before submission to Cabinet and to the County Council in June for approval. Councillor Clarke was disappointed by cuts in stopping services on the Nottingham-Lincoln railway line, and urged the promotion of train usage. Councillor Butler replied that the authority had worked hard on rail strategies, and would convey Councillor Clarke's ideas to the people involved.

Councillor Tsimbiridis observed that illegal parking was a problem throughout the County, leading to broken pavements. Councillor Butler offered to consider a campaign on the matter. He stated that the authority would like to employ its own traffic wardens, if monies were available. Councillor Clarke asked about the criteria for interactive speed limit signs, and suggested a possible location. Councillor Butler offered to share the criteria with members, but emphasised that there should be good grounds for prioritising schemes. Councillor Heptinstall believed that careful consideration was needed for the location of signs.

In reply to a question from Councillor Brandon-Bravo, Councillor Butler stated that recycling credits were a rapidly changing scene. He believed that in the long-term, it would make most sense for one authority to collect and dispose waste. Councillor Heptinstall pointed out that district councils should be encouraged in their work on recycling credits. Councillor Butler responded that the County Council worked closely with districts, but that it would be inefficient to leave arrangements as they stood at the moment.

SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANS

Phil Rankin, Group Manager (Services and Safety) introduced the report, and highlighted a great deal of progress made over a short period. He circulated copies of a newsletter and leaflet for schools, which were commended by members. He indicated that the performance targets were optimistic, and depended on continuing funding for capital grants and School Travel Plan Officers.

Councillor Napier asked about the involvement of governors as well as head teachers. Councillor Freeman replied that the Steering Group had considered this, but the head teachers on the Steering Group had not been positive about governors' level of interest. Councillor Tsimbiridis observed that a change in travel to school patterns was needed, but would be difficult to achieve. In reply to Councillor Brandon-Bravo, Mr Rankin stated that the integrated bus service in West Bridgford was likely to start in May, but no date had been fixed.

Councillor Heptinstall asked how achievements were being monitored. Pam Shaw, Team Manager, Road Safety, replied that there was quality assurance from regional and national levels, and the authority's own annual surveys of each scheme. This enabled support to be targeted where it was needed.

Councillor Freeman commented that information received by the Steering Group had shown that car use crept back up after a scheme had been introduced. However, the new School Travel Plan Officers would be able to offer continued support. He expressed disappointment with the poor local and national press coverage of Walking to School Week.

CONSULTATION ON A REVISED UK CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME

Nick Brown, Group Manager (Environmental Strategy) introduced the report on the Government's consultation on the UK Climate Change Programme. He drew attention to the sectors of the economy which were performing best and worst in terms of greenhouse gas emissions. He circulated a draft response from the County Council, with the suggestion that this be considered in detail by the Sustainability Sub Group before submission to Cabinet. However, he invited comments from members during and after the Select Committee.

Councillor Napier wondered whether achieving the UK targets would make any difference in a global context, what the consequences of global warming would be, what lifestyle changes people needed to make, and whether nuclear power should be a consideration. Councillor Stella Smedley agreed this was an important issue for society, but said there should be a focus on where one could make a difference. Nick Brown referred to the Council's community leadership role.

PERFORMANCE OF CENTRAL NETWORKS IN RELATION TO STREET LIGHTING

Phil Rankin presented the first of the monitoring reports which the Committee had requested. He stressed the continued need to tighten standards and improve response times. He answered a number of questions from members, and confirmed that reports on road accidents would record if street lights were not working.

WORK PROGRAMME

As a possible topic for scrutiny, Councillor Davidson suggested the proposed landfill sites and whether they exceeded probable need, given recycling targets. Jas Hundal, Deputy Director of Environment, offered to cover this in the forthcoming report on the Minerals Local Plan. Councillor Smedley suggested looking at the effect of traffic on larger rural villages, and Councillor Freeman suggested broadening this to consideration of the items to be included in the next Local Transport Plan.

The meeting closed at 12.05 pm.