

meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

date 15 April 2010

agenda item number **7a vii.**

## REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

### REPORT FOR PERIOD JANUARY – APRIL 2010

#### Local Improvement Schemes

- 1 Members will recall that a Member Reference Group has been established to review this initiative and I am pleased to report that the programme will retain its effective, flexible and unique formula and will continue to support a wide range of projects under the broad headings of:
  - better neighbourhoods (general environmental improvements)
  - better countryside (safeguarding biodiversity, rural character)
  - better business (regeneration)
  - better leisure and tourism (promote places of interest)
  - better awareness (promote local 'pride of place')
  
2. Project selection will focus on a number of areas considered to have been under-represented in previous years:
  - rural initiatives
  - market town projects
  - conservation and heritage projects
  - projects that support wider local community involvement and accessibility
  - projects that encourage economic and cultural regeneration and tourism

I anticipate that this approach will deliver a greater number of smaller community projects across the county.

### 3. **Scheme updates:**

- Lee Road in Calverton has benefited from the completion of a £100,000 scheme to resurface the footpaths. The previous paths were paved with uneven slabs causing problems for people with pushchairs and the elderly. The paths have been resurfaced with tarmac and dropped kerbs have been installed to allow residents to park on their drives
- the path from Emmanuel Church on Church View Close to Bestwood Country Park has been resurfaced with attractive Breedon gravel. Vegetation along the route has also been cut back and the drainage has been improved. The Friends of Bestwood Country Park requested the improvements for the benefit of residents and visitors
- A new welcome sign has been installed at the junction of Leamington Drive and Kirkby Road. It was designed by pupils at Leamington Primary school and features pupil's handprints. This complements other schemes in the area including the installation of Billy and Belinda child-shaped bollards outside the school, resurfacing of the pavements on Limb Crescent and red anti-skid surfaces on some of the roads
- extra bollards have been installed around Selston CoE Primary school following local concerns that motorists were parking on the pavements too close to the school crossing thereby reducing visibility for passing motorists and endangering school children
- a steel rocking cradle sculpture has been unveiled in Blidworth to celebrate a centuries old tradition of rocking the baby boy born closest to Christmas day in a special cradle at St Mary's Church. The Rocking Ceremony took place in February and is thought to be unique to the church in Blidworth. The illuminated sculpture is situated at the junction of Dale Lane and Main Street
- a restoration project in the churchyard of St John the Baptist church in Beeston has been completed improving the area for visitors and shoppers who regularly walk through the churchyard. The entrance pillars, arch and path have been repaired, the 1920s lantern has been replaced with a working replica and the Crimean war memorial has been cleaned.

### **Proposed Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) at the Former Rufford Colliery, Rainworth**

4. The Public Inquiry into the proposed Energy Recovery Facility at the former Rufford Colliery in Rainworth re-commenced at Rainworth Village Hall on Tuesday, 13 April and is expected to continue until Tuesday, 11 May.
5. The Public Inquiry initially commenced on 6 October 2009, but was adjourned on 8 October to allow Veolia to carry out further work in relation to nature conservation. This was in view of the fact that the development site, along with a wider area of Sherwood Forest, could possibly be designated as a potential Special Protection Area (pSPA). Veolia has submitted a detailed plan to mitigate these ecology issues, and this is being considered, alongside other evidence, now that the Public Inquiry has reconvened.
6. Members will recall that the ERF is part of the wider Waste PFI Contract with Nottinghamshire County Council.

### **Developer Contributions**

7. Under the Town and Country Planning Act planning authorities can request contributions from developers to mitigate the impact of their development on the local community. These can take the form of financial contributions or works in kind. The Council's Planning Contributions Strategy sets out the policies currently used to request contributions towards the cost of work in areas such as education, highways and minerals and waste. However, in recent years a number of authorities have successfully secured contributions towards public library provision.
8. It is proposed that where a new development will create an additional need for library provision, the developer will make a financial contribution towards the cost of that provision. In some instances where library buildings are large enough to accommodate new developments, contributions may be requested towards the provision of stock and equipment only. I have agreed that consultation should take place with key stakeholders about the introduction of library contributions.

### **Energy Experiment**

9. I am pleased to report that, once again, the County Council joined people across the county and took part in BBC Radio Nottingham's Energy Experiment which took place this year on 24 February. All councilors and employees were asked to make sure that lights, printers, computers and photocopiers are switched off when they left the building and were also

asked to use the minimum amount of electricity at home between 9.00 pm and 6.00 am.

10. As a Council we are committed to reducing our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. By taking part in the Energy Experiment we not only saved money on our energy costs, but also raised awareness of the need to cut energy consumption on a daily basis.

### **Schools Waste Action Club (SWAC)**

11. The Schools Waste Action Club have commissioned comedic duo, MOMO, to inspire young people to recycle their waste. The theatre company specialises in providing educational shows about serious subjects to young audiences and during March they performed in a number of secondary schools around the county.
12. This is the second year that MOMO have been employed by SWAC and they raised important issues in a fun and memorable way, including the amount of rubbish people throw away, the current position with the county's landfill sites and the benefits of reusing, recycling and composting.

### **'Nottinghamshare' Liftshare Scheme**

13. The County Council is encouraging motorists to register with the 'Nottinghamshare' free car sharing website which puts drivers in touch with others making the same journey. Nottinghamshare currently has 1,181 members and last year 440 new people signed up which is the largest increase since the online registration began back in 2002.
14. The website is partially funded by the County Council and is part of the national liftshare scheme. It explains how carsharing works, help drivers to find a carsharing partner and works out how much money they can save. The estimated current annual savings based on registered journeys is 981,358 miles, approximately £205,000 in fuel costs and about 323 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

### **Environmental Conference for Nottinghamshire's Schools**

15. Teachers in Nottinghamshire were invited to a free conference in March to learn how to make their schools greener. The event covered the Eco-Schools programme, school catering, sustainable heating, lighting and power and other environmental topics. The event was organised by the County Council and the East Midlands Regional Centre of Expertise Schools Working Group which is a network to promote education for sustainable development.

**COUNCILLOR RICHARD BUTLER**  
CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY