



PLACE SELECT COMMITTEE

Wednesday 27 March 2024 at 10:30am

COUNCILLORS

Mike Adams (Chairman)
Tom Hollis (Vice-Chairman)

Richard Butler	Sue Saddington
Anne Callaghan BEM - Apologies	Roger Upton
Penny Gowland	Jonathan Wheeler
Kane Oliver - Apologies	Elizabeth Williamson
John Ogle	

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Steve Carr for Councillor Kane Oliver
Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle for Anne Callaghan

OTHER COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Scott Carlton
Councillor Neil Clarke MBE
Councillor Sybil Fielding
Councillor John Lee
Councillor John 'Maggie' McGrath
Councillor Sam Smith

OFFICERS

Mick Allen	-	Group Manager, Environment and Resources
Martin Elliott	-	Senior Scrutiny Officer
Derek Higton	-	Interim Corporate Director – Place
Sue Jaques	-	Flood Risk Manager
Gareth Johnson	-	Traffic Manager, Highways and Transport Group
Katherine Harclerode	-	Democratic Services Officer
Mark Walker	-	Interim Service Director, Place and Communities
Gary Wood	-	Group Manager, Highways and Transport

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2023, having been circulated previously, were confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Kane Oliver (Other Reasons) and from Councillor Anne Callaghan (Other Reasons).

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. CRIME AND DISORDER STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a report introduced by the Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Health, which outlined the Crime and Disorder Strategy refreshed in January 2024, in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Regulations 2009. This Strategy was also known as the Community Safety Agreement. The structure, governance arrangements and membership of the Safer Nottinghamshire Board were noted. The Cabinet Member was joined by the Programme Manager for the Safer Nottinghamshire Board.

In the discussion that followed, members sought additional clarification of the forum for public scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The Chairman noted the established Police and Crime Panel which is the forum for public scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Health and the Programme Manager for the Safer Nottinghamshire Board for their attendance.

RESOLVED 2024/01

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That a further progress report on the delivery of the crime and disorder strategy be received at a future meeting of the Place Select Committee in its role as the as the Council's Statutory Crime and Disorder Committee, as defined by the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009.

5. RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEMES: CURRENT POLICY AND PROCESSES

Consideration was given to a report introduced by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Group Manager of Highways and Transport, and Traffic Manager in respect of the County Council's approach to resident parking schemes, including current processes and proposals.

In the discussion that followed, Members raised the following points and questions:

- Support was expressed for a more rapid process where there was widespread desire for a scheme to be put in place.
- Members sought to understand how long each of the stages of the process takes. For example, it was felt that Stage 4 consultation was not always necessary. This was not a statutory requirement. Where consultation efforts were duplicated, this added considerable time to the implementation timeline.
- Petitions had been a tool for gathering evidence of support for schemes to be implemented.
- It was felt that a formal petition process should be explored as part of the process for resident parking schemes.

- It was noted that the City of Nottingham had implemented measures to help reduce the number of cars within the city centre that could be explored in a town centre context elsewhere in Nottinghamshire.
- Residents unable to park outside their homes often request schemes to be implemented just outside the boundaries of an existing scheme, suggesting that consideration should be given on a wider strategic level rather than lane by lane.
- It was felt that more enforcement officers were required to enforce the scheme.
- Student HMOs and unoccupied homes were not responding to the consultations, making it more difficult for the permanent residents to obtain a scheme.
- Partnership with police and impact on businesses should be considered as part of the implementation of any scheme.
- Discrepancies among districts and boroughs regarding the approach taken to the consultation phase of the fee setting process was an area of concern.
- Support was expressed for involving elected members in the process to infuse local knowledge in the considerations around potential schemes.
- More information was requested regarding the context around any requests received by the Service for removals of schemes.

The Chairman noted Members' expressions of interest in doing further work on this topic and noted that while an application was in process it was not always possible to have complete visibility of how the application was progressing.

In response to the points raised, the Cabinet Member and officers provided the following responses and information:

- It was noted that striking the balance around the right amount of consultation was difficult, because each person had a different expectation of how much consultation was appropriate.
- A number of requests in 2010-2011 had been received regarding removal of schemes around the time that the fees were introduced. Schemes were removed in areas where the original reasons for people parking there were no longer there, such as following closure of a large employer.
- Members requesting specifics around applications for particular schemes were offered additional detail regarding the progress of these outside the meeting.

The Chairman thanked the Members for their contributions to the discussion and the officers for providing the information through the report and through their attendance at the meeting.

RESOLVED 2024/02

- 1) That the report be noted.

- 2) That the following issues raised by the Committee in its consideration of the report on Residents' Parking Schemes be progressed:
 - a) That further scrutiny work be undertaken through the establishment of a task and finish group to consider in detail possible amendments to the processes that could provide further efficiencies to the delivery of future residents' parking schemes.
 - b) That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, in consultation with officers create a scope that will determine the work of the task and finish working group.

6. SECTION 19 REPORTS: EASTWOOD FLOODING SEPTEMBER 2023 & STORM BABET FLOODING OCTOBER 2023

Consideration was given to a report presented by Councillor Neil Clarke, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, along with the Interim Corporate Director of Place, Flood Risk Manager, the Interim Service Director for Place and Communities, and the Group Manager Environment and Resources. The report described the unprecedented extent of flooding that had led to the production of Section 19 Reports which were submitted for public scrutiny in accordance with the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

The presentation accompanying the report, including the Section 19 reports, set out the context of the severe flooding events of September 2023 and October 2023 and the emergency response that was mobilised by the County Council and its key partners, including Town and Parish Councils, Volunteer Wardens, Emergency Response Teams, and the Environment Agency. The Cabinet Member acknowledged the devastating experience for the families and businesses affected by the flooding. Following Storms Henk and Storm Babet, record levels of the River Trent had been seen. The Cabinet Member expressed thanks to the officers and teams who were involved in the response. Volunteer groups also played an important part to help their communities and neighbours during the response and in the ongoing work to enhance resilience within communities.

The presentation established the scale of the impact of the floods across Nottinghamshire which had affected approximately 1200 properties. The Local Resilience Forum had coordinated the response, with the focus of protection of life and also protection of property. Section 19 Reports were to be viewed as a checkpoint on a journey to improved flood resilience. Flood Risk reduction measures would be implemented via a multi-agency approach with the Council as a coordinating member within this partnership.

Particulars of the response were noted including mobilisation of staff by Via during the response. The pressure on the road systems caused by the volumes of water were described. The Council's active programme of gully clearances had also targeted areas where there had been flooding. It was noted that during the height of the events when rivers and pipework were full, the gullies had discharged water. The approach to highway drainage had been reviewed and extra resource added within these activity areas including ditch clearance. Community volunteers had also received training and equipment. The range of potential next steps to promote resilience were also described. Communities had been consulted and drop-in sessions had been delivered

as part of the work toward flood risk reduction. The mental health support needs of residents affected by floods were also considered.

In the discussion that followed, Members raised the following points and questions:

- It was felt that the Environment Agency had responded with new modelling but had not implemented solutions due to the cost.
- It was noted that in many properties, flood defences had been in place, yet ground water had risen through the floors of homes.
- More information was requested regarding work with owners of land in riparian zones regarding performance of clearance responsibilities.
- It was important to pursue non-return valves for pipework with the relevant partners.
- Communications with residents around the dangers of ignoring road closure signs were also felt to be important.
- Some residents felt that flooding events were becoming more frequent, which produced growing anxiety among property and shop owners.
- The responsiveness of Severn Trent Water was felt not to have been satisfactory for some residents. Members reported arranging a meeting with Severn Trent Water representatives in three weeks.
- Additional opportunities to discuss solutions with partners as part of the scrutiny process were welcomed.
- It was felt that developers owed compensation to residents within flooded areas.
- The distinction was made that some properties were not breached but were still adversely affected by the extent of the flooding.
- Officers and flood teams were thanked for their response and the regular telephone updates from the communications teams had enabled Members to pass along important information.
- Members requested to be kept informed of the Council's programme of ditch and gully clearances.
- As part of the Council's role as lead authority coordinating the multi-agency response, it was hoped that a good example would be set by ensuring that any Council-owned properties with gullies discharging flood waters were addressed.
- It was felt that current enforcement powers and funding were insufficient to address the problems.
- Clarification was sought regarding the consultation requirements on District Councils relating to new planning applications.

- The impact of the activity by drainage team members to resolve issues with drains within communities was noted, and it was felt that the Environment Agency needed to change its level of response.
- Successes were noted, as some properties which had flooded in the past but did not flood as part of these events due to the remedial support from the Council and its partners.

In response to the points raised, the Cabinet Member and officers provided the following responses:

- It was incumbent on all planning authorities including the County Council to ensure flood risk is considered in all processes where consideration is being given to building new developments.
- Water inclusion strategies were being considered as part of solutions to build back better in acknowledgement of the reality of facing floods.
- Blocked drains were cleared quickly, and gullies on record as being previously blocked during the events had been addressed through targeted mobilisation of additional resource for this purpose.
- Property owners needed to ensure green waste was disposed of responsibly, and property buyers with riparian responsibilities needed to have full awareness of this prior to buying. Often property owners were unaware of their responsibilities.
- Natural Flood Management work by DEFRA was in development to help control the flow of flood water so that the drainage system could better cope with events.
- The unprecedented nature of the flooding events was reiterated, as well as the resolve of the Council to provide as much resilience as possible.
- The Cabinet Member had personally attended the sites of the flooding and had seen both the scale of the devastation as well as instances of successful flooding defences at work.
- It was noted that many riparian property owners fulfilled their responsibilities, but where this was not the case, Lead Flood Authorities currently did not have the enforcement powers which were needed.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for their attendance and noted that specific issues relating to Members' localities could be raised directly with the Service.

RESOLVED 2024/03

- 1) That the work (as detailed in the officer's report) that has taken place in response to the flooding incidents in Eastwood in September 2023 and across Nottinghamshire in October 2023 be endorsed.
- 2) That in accordance with Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and the Council's Lead Local Flood Authority responsibilities, that the Section 19 Reports, as attached as appendices to the officer's report, be approved and published.
- 3) That the work of the Council's Flood Risk Management Team in working with communities impacted by flooding be commended.
- 4) That the following issues raised by the Committee in its consideration of the Section 19 Reports (Eastwood September 2023 and Storm Babet October 2023) be progressed:
 - a) That the scope of the scheduled task and finish review of the Council's preparation for and response to the flooding caused by Storm Babet should be expanded to include the work that is being carried out to prepare for and mitigate against the impacts of future flooding events.
 - b) That all members be provided with regular updates on gully cleaning schedules and are advised when gully cleaning work has been completed.

7. OUTCOMES OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES

Consideration was given to a report presented by Councillor Nigel Moxon in respect of the findings and recommendations from a recent scrutiny review of Household Waste Recycling Centres. The review took a deeper look at the impact of the proposed changes to the HWRC network and its operating context. The review emphasised the need for an adaptable Service that could respond to the changing needs of residents and to new legislation around recycling. The key findings and recommendations were summarised, and Members who contributed to the review were acknowledged.

The Members who undertook the review were:

- Councillor Nigel Moxon (Chairman)
- Councillor Richard Butler
- Councillor Anne Callaghan BEM
- Councillor Robert Cordon
- Councillor Jim Creamer
- Councillor Tom Hollis

The Chairman noted the cross party working that had been done during the review process and the development of the recommendations contained in the report.

Summarised below are the points and concerns raised by Members during the discussion that followed:

- Members expressed support for enhanced usability of the HWRC sites and welcomed the consideration of traffic patterns and road safety within the findings and recommendations.
- Members expressed support for the Service to be more adaptable and sustainable over the long term, with ability to increase recycling rates.
- Members expressed disappointment that the outcomes of the 2022 strategic review of the HWRC network had not been published as requested.
- Additional assurances were requested that Service improvements rather than financial considerations had been the main focus of the review.
- Members expressed concerns regarding any potential future reduction of the number of sites through potential closures of smaller sites.
- Members noted the potential 'supersites' had not yet been officially identified. Concerns relating to specific areas for potential supersites were noted, as it was felt that the implementation of supersites might reduce access to sites closer to home for some Nottinghamshire residents.
- Members expressed concerns that if residents had to drive farther to get to a local recycling centre, this would have an impact on the environment.
- The Chair reaffirmed the non-partisan role of the scrutiny review to consider the overall provision of the HWRC Service across Nottinghamshire.
- Additional assurances were requested regarding whether any current HWRC sites were being considered for possible closure.
- The attention being given within the report to the serious road safety implications of current sites caused by queues of traffic was echoed by Members, emphasising the importance of safe access and traffic management.
- New housing developments contributed additional traffic pressure due to increased public use of sites.
- Accessibility by foot and bicycle as well as local provision for small metal and glass as part of a pocket recycling scheme were felt to be important considerations within any future HWRC Service configuration.
- Members expressed support for the findings of the review that more work would need to be done within the Service to determine the appropriate action to be taken regarding any particular site.

In response to the points raised in discussion, Members who participated in the review provided the following additional information:

- The Chairman of the review group provided assurances that the emphasis had been on making the Service better rather than reduction of costs, as it was

understood there would be costs associated with building any so-called 'supersites'. The intention was to reduce overall journey time, even though this sometimes meant travelling farther.

- It had been noted that whilst the review group had visited the HWRC sites on a relatively 'quiet' day, they were still busy. The site visits had been valuable because upon seeing the most efficient sites, Members found that the differences between sites could be appreciated.
- Insights gained from the experience of touring the HWRC sites as part of the review project were described. It had been seen that HWRC site issues could not be easily solved.
- Members had found that it was quicker to attend a better designed site farther from home than to attend the nearest site.
- Members affirmed that the focus of the review process had been on the needs of residents foremost.

RESOLVED 2024/04

- 1) That the recommendations from the scrutiny review of the Household Waste Recycling Centre network, as set out in the report, be endorsed, and referred to Cabinet for consideration.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to an outline programme of scrutiny work, including upcoming review items. An additional meeting would be arranged to allow additional time for full discussion of all the items on the work programme.

In discussion, Members requested further information regarding the organisations were allowed to use Council facilities to conduct surgeries or drop-in sessions.

RESOLVED 2023/05

- 1) That the Work Programme be noted.
- 2) That Committee Members make any further suggestions for consideration by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for inclusion on the work programme, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member(s) and senior officers, and subject to the required approval by the Chairman of Overview Committee.

The meeting closed at 1:29 pm.

CHAIRMAN