

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND ENVIRONMENT
CAPITAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM - TOWN HALL
ON 12 JULY 2012**

- Present:** Councillors M Todd (Chairman), G Casey (Vice Chairman),
M Nadeem, Y Maqbool, JA Fox, S Martin, N Thulbourn
- Also Present:** Cllr Lee, Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Strategic
Commissioning
Cllr Sandford, Group Leader, Liberal Democrats
Cllr Elsey, Cabinet Adviser to the Deputy Leader
Sean Hanson, Serco Partnership Manager
Richard Oldfield, General Manager, Enterprise Partnership
Peter Davis, Strategic Client Services
Cllr Nigel North, Cabinet Advisor to the Leader (Environment
Capital)
Rukhsar Khalid, Youth Council Representative
Callum Hurley, Youth Council Representative
- Officers Present:** Steven Pilsworth, Head of Corporate Services
Simon Machen, Head of Planning, Transport and Engineering
Services
Richard Kay, Group Manager Strategic Planning & Enabling
Charlotte Palmer, Climate Change Team Manager
Andrew Edwards, Head of Growth & Regeneration
Kim Sawyer, Head of Legal Services
Osman Hamir, Lawyer
Helen Turner, Lawyer
Paulina Ford, Senior Governance Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

Agenda item – 6 Delivery Strategy for South Bank and Surrounding Areas

Councillor Todd declared a personal interest in that she lived within the area of the South Bank and Surrounding Area.

Agenda item - 7 Environment Capital Progress Report

Councillor Sandford declared an interest in that he was a member of the Board at Peterborough Environment City Trust and would therefore under the new Code of Conduct regulations not take part in the discussion on this item.

3. Call in of any Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Key Officer Decisions

There were no requests for call-in to consider.

4. Interim Report on the Performance of Serco Partnership

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Strategic Commissioning introduced the report. The report provided the Committee with performance data covering customer service performance for the first six months of the partnership compared with the corresponding period for the previous year for information. All targets had shown excellent improvement in performance during the first six months from commencement of contract on 28 November 2011. Council Tax collection rates had also improved.

Questions and observations were made around the following areas:

- Members sought clarification with regard to the number of complaints that had been received for customer service. The report stated that whilst 372,000 calls were received in 2011/2012 and 45,000 customers visited the Walk in Centre there had only been four complaints. Was this accurate. *Members were informed that the report was accurate in that they had received four Stage 1 complaints. Members were also advised that Serco used the same complaints procedure as the Council for recording complaints.*
- Members noted in the report that there was no recording of stage three complaints. *Members were advised that there had not been any stage three complaints and therefore none had been recorded.*
- Procedures surrounding Council Tax Collections. Members were concerned that the automated process for dealing with late payments might trigger court proceedings too soon and cause unnecessary distress by taking away the right of the individual to pay by instalments. *Members were advised that the automated system has trigger points and tolerances built in. An example would be if someone had missed one payment by two days it would be impossible for them to receive a summons. Someone reaching the stage of a court summons would have received several advanced warnings that this would happen if payment was not made. Council Tax teams were in place to recover unpaid council tax but there were also systems in place to assist people in hardship.*
- Was the payment of Council Tax affected by the recent banking problems? *Members were advised that the council had been reasonably unaffected and the systems in place were robust enough to be able to identify which banks the payments were coming from. A recovery run had been completed and tolerances had been put in place for those bank payments that might have been affected.*
- Members referred to the statistics quoted in the report which referred to percentage targets and wished to know what the actual figures were to which the percentages were measured against. *The Partnership Manager did not have the information with him but advised that the numbers of calls and face to face enquiries would be in the thousands.*
- Members wanted more information with regard to the newly acquired Ideal shopping account. *Members were advised that Serco had won a contract with Ideal Shopping which was a Peterborough based TV Shopping Channel company to run a UK customer call centre in Peterborough. The initial team would be for 40 people which would eventually grow to 100. The contract was won because of the partnership with the council.*
- How well was the cost savings element of the Serco contract going? *Members were informed that the core services were transferred at the guaranteed fixed price and the fixed price had guaranteed a level of savings. Serco had signed a change control notice at the time of signing the partnership which would guarantee £20.1M savings over the life of the partnership. That had progressed and was on track and being monitored through a tracker.*
- The Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Strategic Commissioning advised Members that when the council went to market for the contract it was with a view to operating the core services better and cheaper. The council needed help in buying things cheaper but the substantial part of the work was for Serco to help transform the rest of the council and drive out efficiencies. The budget in February had stated £1.8M savings in the current year rising to £6M from next year onwards.

The Chair thanked the Partnership Manager, Cabinet Member and officers for attending and congratulated Serco on a positive report.

ACTION AGREED

The Committee noted the report and the progress that had been made since the Serco Strategic Partnership went live on 28 November 2011.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee recommends that the Serco Partnership Manager provide the Committee with an annual report on progress of the partnership.

5. Enterprise Peterborough

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Strategic Commissioning introduced the report. The report provided the Committee with

- An overview of services over the past 12 months to the end of May 2012
- Highlights and lowlights for the last three months
- An overview of the Key Performance Indicators
- Compliments and complaints over the reporting period
- Workforce relationships and development

Questions and observations were made around the following areas:

- Members were concerned that there was still a high average amount of fly-tipped waste collected per month. *The Cabinet Adviser to the Deputy Leader informed Members that fly tipping was a big problem in the city and that more enforcement was required. There was a need to engage more with the Enforcement Officers and establish what the challenges were for them in obtaining enforcement prosecutions. Enterprise would be working with the councils Operations team to understand the issues and establish a greater working relationship. Better enforcement would reduce fly tipping.*
- The report informed the Committee that there had been a trial of communal skips but that the take up had been minimal. Members wished to know how the communal skips had been advertised and why the take up had been so low. *The General Manager, Enterprise Partnership advised Members that a lot of work went into planning the trial but it had been rolled out hurriedly and could have been communicated better. There were also severe restrictions on where the skips could be placed. The lessons learnt from the first trial would provide better planning for the next trial.*
- A Member advised that during the summer months Anglian Water would be conducting a pilot scheme around educating different communities and Enterprise could contact them to see if they could join them to use this to educate different communities in waste recycling. *The General Manager, Enterprise Partnership informed Members that Enterprise had a Relationship Manager for Anglian Water and he would be meeting with him soon to explore what more could be done with Anglian Water regarding these issues.*
- Members commented that communal skips had been withdrawn eight years ago partly because of contamination, secondly because there had been problems with commercial companies using them to put commercial waste in and thirdly because people were putting recyclable items into the communal skip. These factors would need to be addressed before using communal skips again. *The Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Strategic Commissioning acknowledged that this had been a problem in the past and the communal skips would need to be rolled out in a different way this time and the concerns raised addressed through running the pilot scheme.*

- Cllr Nadeem requested a list of where the 18 unauthorised traveller encampments had been in the city. He also thanked the General Manager, Enterprise Partnership for his swift response to a recent report of fly tipping. *The Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Strategic Commissioning informed the Members that this could be provided.*
- Members noted that street cleansing waste was now being sent to Mid-UK for recycling and wished to know where Mid-UK was based. *Members were informed that it was a business located in Peterborough. The waste collected out of the street bins and the street waste went to Mid-UK for recycling.*
- Members noted that Enterprise were going to invest in a new fleet of waste collection vehicles and wanted to know when this would happen. *Members were advised that the new fleet would arrive in October 2012. They would be new vehicles with the latest technology and would offer a significant reduction in carbon emissions compared to the current vehicles being used.*
- What progress had been made with regard to taking the food waste out of the black bins? *Members were informed that the programme for collection of food waste was moving forward and Members would receive further information on this very soon.*
- The report informed the Committee that due to recent exceptional weather conditions which had resulted in a higher than average rainfall coupled with warmer weather this had created exceptional growing conditions for grass. There had been an increase in StreetCare staff by 20% deployed on grass cutting, weekend and evening working shifts for grass cutting and the delivery of rotary grass cutting machinery. Members wished to know how much the additional measures had cost and what had been the total amount of money spent on grass cutting. *Members were informed that the cost to the council for additional staffing had been nil as it was part of the contract to Enterprise. The exact figures were not available at the meeting but could be provided.*
- Members commented that the Medium Term Financial Strategy had stated that there would be £100k financial savings made by reducing the grass cutting regime but this was now unlikely to happen due to the impact of the exceptional weather conditions. Where would the savings now come from? *Members were advised that the funding for the extra resources for grass cutting had not been provided by the council as this was the responsibility of Enterprise to manage the resources within the funding allocated.*
- Members had noted from the report that there had been a significant increase in staff absence and wanted to know why. *Members were informed that absence was monitored carefully and there were a range of reasons.*
- When will the EasyTreeve System audit be complete? *Members were informed that the EasyTreeve System was a surveying and asset data base software for tree and woodland stock and was a bespoke system. This system was currently being trialled and the data gathered was being shared with the council's team. This information would enable a more robust long term management plan to be put in place.*
- What was the age group of the people undertaking work experience? *Members were informed that work experience was being offered across the age range which included young people still at school, graduates, long term unemployed and ex offenders.*
- Would it be possible to provide Councillors with a schedule of work so that they would know when work was being undertaken by the Enterprise teams in their ward? *Members were advised that it would be difficult to provide a definite schedule as the schedule was very weather dependant and subject to change. This could however be looked into further.*
- How many qualified arboriculturists are there employed by Enterprise? *Members were informed that there were two members of staff on the team who were qualified to undertake tree maintenance and two arboriculturists would be starting week commencing 16 July 2012.*

ACTIONS

- i. The Committee noted the report and the progress that had been made since the Enterprise Peterborough Partnership went live on 1 March 2011.
- ii. The Committee requested that the Enterprise Peterborough Partnership Manager provide the following information:
 1. A list of where the 18 unauthorised traveller encampments were located to be sent to Cllr Nadeem.
 2. The cost of the extra resources and additional measures that had been used to maintain the grass cutting and the total amount of money spent on grass cutting.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee recommends that the Enterprise Peterborough Partnership Manager provide the Committee a report on progress of the partnership in six months.

6. Delivery Strategy for South Bank and Surrounding Areas

The Head of Growth and Regeneration introduced the report which informed the Committee on how the Council would take forward the development of the South Bank and adjoining areas. The South Bank Opportunity Area (SBOA) had been divided into a number of phases:

1. Carbon Challenge (sustainable housing development)
2. Football stadium (redevelopment as community stadium)
3. Fletton Quays (riverside regeneration opportunity)
4. London Road allotments (future development possibility)

The first two phases (Carbon Challenge and the football stadium) were already underway. Therefore the proposed delivery strategy focused on the best way to bring forward the Fletton Quays element as the third phase. This area had also seen major steps forward in terms of land assembly and site clearance; however the economic climate had prevented further progress to date. The fourth phase, London Road, was also included in the proposed delivery strategy so that it could be progressed as and when development opportunities arose, and the option to include further stages of phase 3, the football stadium was also allowed for.

The proposal now was to also include areas north of the river (known as north embankment) and Pleasure Fair Meadows as a fifth phase in the delivery strategy to allow for development where opportunities arose. The proposal therefore was to rename the development area as the Riverside Opportunity Area (ROA).

Questions and observations were made around the following areas:

- Will the Carbon Challenge development be a zero carbon development? *The Head of Planning, Transport and Engineering Services informed the Committee that the Government had changed the definition of what was a zero carbon home because it had become financially unviable to build zero carbon homes. The code had changed to match market reality. The Carbon Challenge development would be the most energy efficient development in the city when constructed. It would probably be equivalent to an old scale 5 plus development but this will be difficult to assess until it had been built and tested.*

- Members were interested in the involvement of ESCO in the Fletton Quays Project. Under Section 4.6 of the Fletton Quays Project initial options appraisal the report had stated that *“the key to the success of Fletton Quays as an integral part of the South Bank Opportunity Area is PCC’s ability to ensure that end users of the scheme purchase energy from PCC’s ESCO, which is a wholly owned subsidiary.”* If ESCO were involved would this dilute the income that the council would receive? *Members were advised that ESCO being part of the project was not critical and if ESCO were not involved PCC would still retain 50% of ownership.*

ACTION

The Committee noted the report and thanked the Head of Growth and Regeneration for an informative report.

7. Environment Capital Progress Report

The Group Manager Strategic Planning and Enabling introduced the report and informed the Committee of some recent changes in the structure of his service area highlighting team changes since 2011/2012. The Group Manager Strategic Planning and Enabling advised that the responsibility for Climate Change now fell within his responsibility and that he would be taking a fresh look at Environment Capital and would be working on pulling together a clear and coherent Environment Capital Policy over the next twelve months. The documents presented to the Committee within the report were:

- **The Environment Capital Delivery Framework** which was still a work in progress and outlined a wide range of policies, strategies and plans.
- **Environment Capital headline targets** which were short term targets to continue the delivery of the Environment Capital ambition.
- **Environment Capital Action Plan 2012-13** which captured some short term actions that were required to ensure momentum was maintained and communications and branding guidelines were reviewed, agreed and adhered to.

Members were informed that a larger package of short, medium and longer term targets would be set as part of a ‘One Planet Living Framework’.

Questions and observations were made around the following areas:

- Members were encouraged to see that the Environment Capital Action Plan now had timescales in place.
- Members sought clarification on the meaning of “Gillian’s Footprint Counts” mentioned in Annex A: Environment Capital Delivery Framework within the report. *Members were advised that this was a film which was developed with Gillian Beasley. It had come about when the council adopted a Carbon Management Plan which was the commitment that the council had to reduce the carbon footprint by 35% as an organisation by 2014. Gillian had been keen to demonstrate to all the employees across the council that in adopting the plan the expectation was that no employee would be expected to do anything that she was not prepared to do herself. The film reflected on elements of Gillian’s lifestyle including how she travelled to work, working in the office and using natural light rather than putting lights on. The film had been shown at all staff briefings and it had been made available to view on the council’s website. It had also received an international green award.*
- Could the officers explain what Climate Change Adaptations have been made? *Members were advised that an Adapting to Climate Change Officer had been put in post for six months with the purpose of bringing the council up to speed on how the council could adapt our own services to cope with the future changes in climate.*
- Will you be working on ways of getting information out to residents? *Members were advised that one of the duties within the Flood and Water Management Act of which*

Peterborough was a lead local authority was that Peterborough would need to produce a Flood Risk Strategy. Part of the strategy would contain a short summary for the public so that they would understand what areas may or may not be at risk and how to prepare for possible flooding. The Environment Agency had stated that Peterborough was leading the way on Flood Risk Management.

- Members felt that more could be done through building control to ensure that residents did not concrete over gardens, drives and grass verges as they felt this did not help with flooding. *Members were informed that another duty that may come into force from the 1st April 2013 was around Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) where the authority would have a duty to check that new developments were safe and sustainable drainage systems were in place.*

The Committee thanked the officers in attendance for an interesting and informative report

ACTION AGREED

The Committee noted the report.

8. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Committee received the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan, containing key decisions that the Leader of the Council anticipated the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would make during the course of the following four months. Members were invited to comment on the Plan and, where appropriate, identify any relevant areas for inclusion in the Committee's work programme.

ACTION AGREED

There being no items identified the Committee noted the latest version of the Forward Plan.

8. Work Programme

Members considered the Committee's Work Programme for 2012/13 and discussed possible items for inclusion. The work programme had the Enterprise Partnership and Serco Partnership programmed to attend the Committee on a Quarterly basis. The Senior Governance Officer advised that it was not the role of the Committee to monitor the contracts as this was undertaken by the council's Contracts Monitoring Team. Members therefore requested that Serco report on performance to the Committee on an annual basis and suggested that the report could come to Committee on the anniversary of the contract. Members requested that Enterprise report back to the Committee in six months time.

Councillor Fox wished to add an item to the work programme regarding passes for carers on public transport. The Head of Planning, Transport and Engineering Services advised that Mark Speed would be the officer to contact concerning this. The Senior Governance Officer would contact Mark Speed to arrange contact with Councillor Fox in the first instance.

ACTION AGREED

To confirm the work programme for 2012/13 and the Senior Governance Officer to include any additional items as requested during the meeting.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 6 September 2012

The meeting began at 7.00pm and ended at 9.10pm

CHAIRMAN

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