

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON THURSDAY 15 JANUARY 2009 AT THE BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM - TOWN HALL

Present: Councillors Kreling, North, Fox (JA), Morley, Thacker, Dobbs and Day (C)

Also Present: Councillors Peach and Fitzgerald

Officers Present: Paul Phillipson – Executive Director – Operations
John Harrison – Executive Director – Strategic Resources
Mike Heath – Commercial Services Director
Karen Franklin – Head of Business Support – Operations
Mark Speed - Transport Planning Team Manager
Michael Stevenson - Project Engineer
Martin Whelan – Democratic Services
Amy Brown – Legal
Paulina Ford – Scrutiny

1. Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Whipping declarations

There were no whipping declarations.

4. Minutes from 6 November 2008 Environment Scrutiny Panel

The minutes of the meeting held 6th November 2008, were approved subject to removal of Cllrs Croft, Sandford and Thacker from the apologies.

5. Budget 2009/10

The panel received a report from the Executive Director – Strategic Resources on the budgets proposals for 2009/10-2011/12. The report covered;

1. The grant settlement and consequential “claw back”.
2. The pressures on the budget including the credit crunch.
3. Council Tax proposals at 2.5% and the rationale for adjusting the original projection.

The Panel made the following comments on the budget proposals;

1. Clarification was sought on the timing of the proposed reduction in the workforce. The Director confirmed that it was intended that the initial phase would be complete by 31st March 2009.
2. Clarification was sought on the nature of the work undertaken by the Pest Control Service, and the definition of “non statutory” services. The Executive Director – Operations confirmed that the only statutory service related to the management of stray dogs. The financial challenges of providing the service were outlined.

6. Local Transport Plan Capital Programme of Works 2009/10

The Committee received a report from representatives of Transport & Engineering regarding the proposed Local Transport Plan Capital Programme of Works 2009/10. The report covered the rationale for prioritising and selecting schemes; proposed schemes for 2009/10 and the funding arrangements.

The Panel made the following comments

1. The definition of “haunch” and “slurry seal” was requested. Officers advised that “haunch” related to rebuilding the sides of highways, and “slurry seal” was form of resurfacing.
2. Cllr Fox asked about the process for the construction and sighting for new lamp posts. Mark Speed agreed to provide details in writing.
3. Cllr Thacker sought clarification on the plans for Lincoln Road. Mark Speed agreed to provide details in writing.
4. Cllr Day sought clarification on the process of identifying accident “black spots” and whether there was any mechanism for capturing all accidents not just injuries/fatalities. The Executive Director – Operations confirmed that work was ongoing to provide this data, to allow resources to be deployed in a more effective manner.
5. Cllr Dobbs agreed to send detailed map of an area of concern on Whittlesey Road, Thorney.

7. Executive Decisions

There were no comments raised on he Executive Decisions.

8. Forward Plan

The nature of the Junction 8 signalisation project was confirmed to members in response to a question.

9. Feedback and Update Report

The Panel received the Feedback and Update Report. The Executive Director – Operations provided an additional updated on the parking review

- Concerns of residents and members were raised on a range of issues including cost, access to spaces, commercial/over sized vehicles and availability of permits.
- The process for developing new schemes was outlined, and it was emphasised that they would only be progressed if the residents requested.
- Officers confirmed that not all schemes ran 24/7 and some provided restriction “windows”.

Members were advised that it was hoped to have the review completed and implemented by the end of February. Members also noted that the authority was also undertaking a wider review of enforcement activity.

10. Panel Agenda Plan

The Panel noted the plan.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The Panel noted that the next meeting was on 5 March 2009.

The meeting began at 19.00 and ended at 20.04

CHAIRMAN