

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT CAPITAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM - TOWN HALL ON 15 JULY 2010**

Present: Councillors D Day (Chairman), Arculus (Vice-Chairman), N North,
B Rush, J A Fox and N Sandford

Also Present: Councillor S Dalton, Cabinet Member for Environment Capital

Officers Present: Paul Phillipson, Executive Director Operations
Robert Beaumont, Lawyer
Louise Tyers, Scrutiny Manager

1. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Morley.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

The following declarations of interest were made:

Item 5 – Environment Capital – The Next Steps

Councillor Sandford declared a personal interest as he was a member of PECT who were mentioned in the report.

Item 8 – Revised Biodiversity Strategy

- Councillor JA Fox declared a personal interest as she was a member of the Biodiversity Working Group.
- Councillor Rush declared a personal interest as he was a member of the RSPB who were mentioned in the report.
- Councillor Sandford declared a personal interest as he was a member of the Biodiversity Working Group.

3. Minutes

3.1 11 March 2010

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2010 were approved as a correct record.

Gresley Way Street Lighting

Councillor Sandford advised that the street lights at Gresley Way were still out and this was an unacceptable position. The Executive Director of Operations advised that he was disappointed that Councillor Sandford had not been kept updated on the position and he would ensure that an update was provided to Councillor Sandford.

3.2 10 June 2010

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2010 were approved as a correct record.

4. Call In of any Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Key Officer Decisions

There were no requests for call-in to consider.

5. Environment Capital - The Next Steps

The report provided an update on the progress of Environment Capital and the next stages in developing and launching the approach.

In adopting the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) the Council had committed itself to becoming the UK's Environment Capital. Environment Capital had widespread support which had been achieved through clear political direction and the efforts of a committed, cross-sector Environment Capital Partnership. Significant building blocks had already been put in place including the SCS, Local Area Agreement, the creation of an Environment Capital Cabinet portfolio and the Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee itself. The approach also had the support of Opportunity Peterborough and of the wider business community as represented by the Economic Development Partnership.

There would be significant advantages in maintaining the current momentum in driving forward the Environment Capital agenda as it played a key role in driving the city's economic development, supported sustainable growth and provided a focus for building strong and supportive communities. Peterborough must continue to position itself as an environmental leader and enhance its reputation as a result. It must continue to build on the Environment Capital culture within the Council and throughout wider city stakeholders and the next stages must also include a range of projects and activities aimed at supporting the Environment Capital agenda. The Committee had previously seen early drafts of the city wide Development Plan which would be updated and improved as part of this work. The Council and other partners also needed to be aware of the impact of their activities and decisions on the environmental and wider sustainability agendas.

The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council together with the Cabinet Member for Environment Capital were committed to launching the Environment Capital approach this autumn and three work streams had now been established:-

Stakeholder Engagement: The Director of Environment Capital with support from GPP colleagues was working with partners to galvanise support for and input to the Environment Capital approach which would build and maintain a common approach and culture. This would involve delivering a clear definition, an outward facing prospectus and a briefing document aimed at all city ambassadors. To succeed, Environment Capital must also deliver improved outcomes for local residents and communities.

Policy Development: This would include the replacement of the Council's Environment Policy (2000) with a newly developed Environment Capital Policy which would form part of the Council's Major Policy Framework. A draft of this Policy would be brought to the September meeting of the Committee prior to its consideration by Council. The Policy would seek to ensure that Environment Capital principles were a consideration in all services, strategies and policies. The sustainable growth of the city would be supported by an Environment Capital Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which would drive sustainable developments across the city building on the Environment Capital Core Strategy policy.

Marketing: A newly formed team was leading the development of a marketing strategy to ensure that the new approach enhanced the city's regional, national and international profile. This profile would, in turn, support inward investment and economic development.

The city was currently leading on some areas of work and had received global recognition for its unique "Peterborough Model". This was a project being delivered through collaboration

with IBM, Royal Haskoning and Green Ventures to create an accessible on-line tool for visualising the city's environmental performance. As a result of this and other initiatives, the city was gaining a significant reputation for its environmental experience and credentials.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Members were committed to the aspiration of becoming the Environment Capital but when would we declare ourselves as the Environment Capital? At the recent LGA Conference a display implied that we were already the Environment Capital. *We were in the early stages of the process and one of the strands of work was around marketing and we needed to leave issues such as terminology, concept, logo and launch to the experts. We had not made any presumptions on what we should call ourselves. The display at the LGA Conference was a decision taken at the time but the Peterborough Model was the focus of the stand.*
- When Jonathan Porritt visited Peterborough last year he advised that we should not market an aspiration. No details of an assessment process were mentioned in the report so how would we be assessed? *The process was not just a marketing exercise and there was real substance behind it. Jonathan's organisation, Forum for the Future, had developed a Sustainable Cities Index for larger cities and when we compared ourselves against that Index we came out mid-way. We were in discussions with the Forum to see if they would work with us to develop an Index for smaller cities.*
- If we were going to call ourselves Environment Capital then we needed to be at the top of the Index not mid-way down. We needed to be getting the city behind us as not all residents knew about Environment Capital. *The Citizens Panel had recently shown that more than 50% of people had heard about Environment Capital but it was accepted that they may not understand what it was. School children did know about our aspirations and we were trying to engage with them more.*
- Not everything we did would be measurable. There was a lot of work which was already going on which we were not shouting about, including the Eco-Schools Challenge. We were in discussions with City Services about working with primary schools to grow and plant trees from acorns and conkers.
- What was the Peterborough Model and how much did it cost, what were the benefits and with whom were we gaining a reputation? *The model was a way of showing environmental data and Phase 1 had used Google Earth to show data for environmental businesses. Phase 2 would include utilities and we were hoping to make real time information available. The benefits were collaborative working across the city as currently all of the utilities companies had separate plans and the model would enable all decision makers to be able to see how the city operated from an environmental perspective and this would lead to more effective decision making. The public would also be able to see how much energy was being used and they would then be able to make more informed choices on their lifestyles. We were being asked to speak at conferences and at other cities on the Model, which would always be called the 'Peterborough Model' regardless of where it was being used. It had been featured in the New York Times newspaper twice and had also been included within technical magazines. Phase 1 had cost £30k and Phase 2 would cost £70K which was being jointly funded by the City Council and Opportunity Peterborough however the other partners had also put in substantial resources.*
- What was the latest position with regard to food waste collections? *The funding was not currently available to take it forward but it was still something we would like to do.*
- Whilst members supported encouraging school children to grow trees it was a concern that shrubs and trees continued to be removed throughout the city. *Some trees were being delivered for planting this autumn. However it was concerning that over 1000 trees had been removed at the development for the new hospital and officers were looking to try and claw back some money to replace the trees that had been removed at that development.*

- It was noted that performance in meeting the targets for recycling was falling, why was this happening? *A lot of it was down to changes in packaging with manufacturers using less material. People were also making more choices about the type of packaging that they bought. The issues with the level of performance were common across the UK however the amount of waste going into the black bins was reducing.*
- Were officers and members aware of the Italian way of collecting food waste? In Italy food waste was placed in a central point in each street and collected daily. *We were not aware of that scheme and would raise it with the appropriate officers. We currently did not have the infrastructure in place to deal with food waste.*

It was moved and seconded that before the City Council declared Peterborough as the Environment Capital, agreed criteria should be met and an independent assessment should be undertaken. On being put to the vote this was agreed unanimously.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended to the Cabinet Member for Environment Capital that before the City Council declares Peterborough as the Environment Capital, agreed criteria should be met and an independent assessment should be undertaken.

6. Peterborough's Christmas Park and Ride Service 2010

The report provided an update on the arrangements being made for this year's Christmas Park and Ride Service following the recommendations made at our meeting in February 2010. The recommendations we had made were:

- (i) to increase public confidence in the park and ride service it needed to run for a longer period up to Christmas; and
- (ii) a small charge should be imposed on the park and ride service so funds could be used to increase the period the service ran for.

A budget of £29,000 had now been allocated to the Christmas 2010 park and ride service and over recent years the service had operated for varying numbers of days. Passenger numbers on Saturdays were higher than on Sundays and usage was usually low at the beginning of the service and increased steadily before dropping off towards the end. Based on 2009 costs, the proposal for the 2010 service was to operate on nine Saturdays and six Sundays, therefore operating from Saturday 23 October to Saturday 18 December and Sunday 14 November to Sunday 19 December. The total estimated cost of providing the 2010 service was £29,428 plus any additional inflation costs.

The aim of the service was to attract car users away from the city centre but in recent years the Council had been criticised for not allowing walking passengers to use the service. Officers had looked at the park and ride charges for a number of other cities in the region and all made a charge. It was therefore being proposed to introduce a fare of £1 per adult passenger with a total estimated income of £9,948 but to be cautious an income of £7,500 should be achievable. This additional income would be used to supplement the £29,000 budget to enhance the 2010 service on three additional Saturdays at a cost of approximately £4,800, cover any contract inflation increases and also to promote the service. Due to budgetary constraints, the service had not been well publicised in previous years and this income would provide an opportunity to enhance the promotion of the service, particularly given that there was a significant change to the service by way of introducing a charge.

The operation of the service was at the goodwill of Diligenta and Perkins who provided their car parks at Lynch Wood and Eastern Industry free of charge. These sites had now been confirmed for this year.

Teresa Wood advised that it had recently come to the attention of officers that the Queensgate Centre would be offering free car parking on Sundays and this meant that we now had to consider the viability of the charge we planned to introduce on Sundays.

Observations and questions were asked around the following areas:

- The impact of Queensgate offering free parking on Sundays would clearly have an impact on the park and ride service. *This situation was giving cause for concern and we would have to give further consideration as to whether we continued with charging for Sundays.*
- It was clear Sundays would be an issue and a number of possible options for Sundays were considered, including:
 - abolishing the charge for Sundays
 - charge 50p instead of £1
 - not to run the service on Sundays and increase the number of Saturdays
 - run the Sunday service until Queensgate starts offering free parking in December.
- Had providing the service on a Friday been considered, especially during December as this was often a day that people went out to do their Christmas shopping? *We could look at providing the service on Fridays in future years but we may need to look at operating from different sites as the current provision was able to be delivered because the car parks were not in use at weekends.*
- Had running the service on a number of Saturdays in the New Year been considered to cover the sales period? *We had tried this in past years but it had proved unsuccessful.*
- Had you considered using City Services buses and drivers to provide the service? *The current operators had been selected following a competitive tendering process in 2008.*
- Would people who held a concessionary bus pass have to pay the £1 charge? *Concessionary pass holders would not be charged the fee. Anyone would be able to use the service if they paid the charge, including foot passengers and cyclists.*

Officers would take away all of the comments made and would consider the best option for delivery of the service.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning decides on the best approach for delivering the Sunday Christmas Park and Ride Service within the ethos of an environment capital.

7. Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme

The report presented details of the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Energy Efficiency Scheme, specifically the Council's responsibility to register as a full participant in the Scheme.

The Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Energy Efficiency Scheme was an obligatory emissions trading scheme which covered non-energy intensive users in both the public and private sectors. It was a central part of the UK's strategy to achieve the carbon emission reduction targets set out in the Climate Change Act 2008. Organisations who consumed energy over a set threshold in 2008 were required to participate in the scheme and purchase allowances to cover their emissions. The scheme consisted of overlapping phases of which each started with a qualification year, a 'Footprint year' and Footprint report, and then Annual Reports, sales and surrender of allowances and revenue recycling. Registration for the first phase of the scheme started in April 2010 and must be completed by the end of September

2010. The Council was required to register for full participation in the scheme because it met the qualification criteria.

The Scheme covered all carbon dioxide emissions generated by an organisation's consumption of energy, namely electricity, gas and oil. Sources of emissions included within the scheme were administrative offices, schools, leisure centres, and day care homes, whilst transport related emissions, domestic emissions and emissions related to certain types of street lights were excluded. The CRC also required that emissions from tenants were included where the landlord (PCC) was counterparty to the energy supply contract. This would include certain PFI and joint ventures where the Council was counterparty to the energy contract or is the majority

The costs of the scheme included:

- Registration fee: £950
- Annual subsistence charges: £1,290
- Allowances

For phase 1, allowances would be purchased from the Government at £12 per tonne of carbon dioxide emitted. This would cost the Council around £300k p.a. In subsequent phases of the scheme, allowances would be traded on a secondary market between participants, so the price would be subject to market variability.

The CRC scheme carried substantial civil penalties for non-compliance with the scheme:

Reason	Financial penalty	Other
Failure to register	£5000 plus £500 per working day	Publication of non-compliance
Failure to submit footprint report	£5000 plus £0.05 per day per tonne of carbon dioxide emitted	Publication of non-compliance
Failure to submit annual report	£5000 plus £0.05 per day per tonne of carbon dioxide emitted	Publication of non-compliance Administrator will block transfer of allowances out of participants account Bottom ranking in Performance League Table
Incorrect reporting	Fine for £40 per tonne of carbon dioxide incorrectly reported where the margin of error is greater than 5%	Publication of non-compliance
Failure to surrender allowances (Performance Commitment)	Fine for £40 per allowance that should have been obtained and cancelled	Must obtain and surrender outstanding balance of allowances ASAP Publication of non-compliance Administrator will block transfer of allowances out of participants account
Failure to keep adequate records	Fine of £5 per tonne or carbon dioxide of total emissions reported in most recent annual report	Publication of non-compliance

In addition, there were criminal penalties, including imprisonment for up to 3 years and fines up to £50,000, for falsification of data or non-compliance with enforcements.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- If schools decided to become academies, would they become responsible for reducing their own emission levels or would they still be included within our registration? *They would be included within our registration as that was what was detailed within the Act; however this may change with the new government.*
- What year would be our footprint year? *It would be this year, 2010/11.*
- Is the Scheme one which would encourage us not to do anything? *This was something that we would need political direction on. A session would be held with Members in September to discuss views on where we should be aiming as a Council.*
- Are there a number of quick fixes we could introduce now? *We had made an application to the Salix Fund for funding which if we could show a carbon reduction we would not have to pay back. It was about changing the opinions of people as there were lots of opportunities across the Council to reduce our emissions but we were constrained by the finances available.*
- It should be of concern that in some areas printers, computers and photocopiers were left on at all times and also heating was left on all day and over the weekend. *Discussions with Property Services had indicated that it would cost around £5m to get the Town Hall up to a high environmental standard so individual parts of the building would be looked at when they were being refurbished. Improvements could include automatic lighting, solar panels and mini wind turbines. Officers had also advised that it would be more expensive to switch the heating off at the weekend.*
- Part of the problem was to ensure that there were proper controls on radiators and heating systems. *The advice was to keep buildings at a minimum temperature but the buildings needed to be properly insulated. The Council had a very old estate and a priority would be to insulate and double glaze the buildings. There was lots of good work already being undertaken in the design of new build.*
- There was a need to rationalise and reduce the number of offices used by the Council. *An Estates Review was currently underway and would look not just at the Council's estate but also at all government owned buildings across the city.*
- There were now 23 Green Champions in place and officers would use them to spread the message to all members of staff.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended to the Cabinet Member for Environment Capital that the Council completes the registration process for the CRC in line with the legal requirements under the Climate Change Act and CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme Order 2010.

8. Revised Biodiversity Strategy

The report presented the updated Biodiversity Strategy for the Committee to consider prior to its consideration by the Cabinet and Council.

The proposed update had previously been considered by the Committee in September 2009 and following that meeting the Committee recommended to Cabinet that it:

- (i) endorsed the Biodiversity Strategy prior to its consideration by Council as part of the Major Policy Framework; and
- (ii) considered the requirement for additional resources during the development of the Council Budget for 2010/11 alongside other budget pressures.

Prior to being presented to Cabinet the Strategy had been considered by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) where concerns had been raised in respect to the additional cost of using hand held hedge cutting tools (petrol hedge cutters) instead of the mechanised cutting of hedges and shrubs in the bird nesting season. In light of those concerns the Strategy was referred back to the Committee to consider possible amendments regarding manual cutting prior to resubmission to Cabinet. CMT also recommended that the Strategy

should be separated into two documents, a concise report for Cabinet and a main policy document. Further updates had now been made to the Strategy in light of those recommendations including removing the policy with respect to works during the bird nesting season. It was proposed to refer this to Peterborough City Services to lead on its progression separately from the Biodiversity Strategy.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Whilst Members broadly supported the Strategy, the Bird Nesting Policy was important and it should be brought back to the Committee once it had been revised.
- There seemed not to have been much progress on the specific actions from the 2004 Strategy, for example creation of new areas of wildlife interest. The Annual Review reports must have clear statements on progress of the specific actions. *The Annual Report would be laid out by headings and it would clearly show what progress had been made.*
- Did planning have to adhere to the Strategy during its consideration of planning applications? *Planning were included in the Strategy and did have to comply with the Biodiversity Duty, however this was effectively already contained in Planning Policy Statement 9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. This rather than the Biodiversity Strategy would be the best reference to use in dialogue with planning.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) endorse the revised Biodiversity Strategy prior to its consideration by Council as part of the major policy framework; and
- (ii) consider the requirement for additional resources during the development of future Council budgets alongside other budget pressures.

ACTIONS AGREED

- (i) To endorse the updated Biodiversity Strategy and the measures outlined within it, which will replace the existing 2004 Strategy;
- (ii) To receive annual progress reports against the updated Strategy.
- (iii) To request that the Commercial Services Director lead on the development of the draft policy for works during the bird nesting season separately from the Biodiversity Strategy. Support to be provided from the Council's Officer Working Group for Biodiversity as required; and
- (iv) To request that the Commercial Services Director bring the final draft of the policy to a future meeting of the Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee when it has been revised.

9. Scrutiny Big Debate - Issues Paper

The report advised the Committee of the outcomes of the Scrutiny Big Debate event which was held in February 2010.

The Big Debate had involved an investigation by the four Scrutiny Committees in to how the economic downturn had affected the City in terms of its aspirations for growth, levels of crime, requirements to support vulnerable people and its credentials for environmental sustainability with particular reference to transport. It was a pioneering piece of work that had been designed and delivered in consultation with the Centre for Public Scrutiny.

The scope of the review for this Committee had been to look at how Peterborough should counter the affects of the economic downturn to ensure delivery of the sustainable transport elements of the Local Transport Plan. The event had been held at Buckle's Solicitors on 2

February 2010 and involved a panel of representatives from various organisations who gave their personal perspectives on the future of sustainable transport in Peterborough and who were then challenged on those views by the audience. The event provoked lots of discussion and there had been a significant amount of positive feedback from attendees. Following workshops which were held on the evening a number of issues were suggested to take forward for further work. The Committee were now asked to delegate to the Group Representatives consideration of which items should be added to the Committee's work programme.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Due to the current budgetary constraints how realistic was the prospect that the suggestions could be taken forward? *Looking at the list there could be some quick wins but some would cost more money and would have to be considered alongside other pressures.*
- Possible areas of future work suggested included:
 - Introducing subsidised fares for young people
 - Introducing the availability of cross ticketing on all bus operators
 - Improving disabled access in the city and on public transport
 - Allowing cycles to use bus lanes around the city
 - Encouraging walking, cycling and the use of public transport to school, including introducing Bikeability into schools
 - Trialling the use of electric vehicles in the city
- Whilst supporting the suggestion of 20mph zones outside all schools across the city, how enforceable would it be? *The Executive Director advised that it would be virtually unenforceable due to the lead in drivers required before entering 20mph zones.*
- Could signs be used during school times showing 20mph and then the normal 30mph during other times? Schools where there was a danger should be targeted.
- Whilst the suggestion of providing a cycle bridge over the railway line at the station was probably not practical, the provision for cyclists over the existing Crescent Bridge needed drastic improvement. *It was felt that often cyclists were treated as second class citizens on the roads and for new road developments we were always looking to try and include a cycle path as part of the infrastructure.*
- Travelchoice were doing a lot of excellent work in encouraging people to walk, cycle, use public transport and car share.
- It was important that the Council led by example, including around charging officers and members for parking permits, particularly as charging had been included within the Council's budget. *The Executive Director advised that parking permits were a contentious issue which would involve a change to staff terms and conditions. Lengthy and productive negotiations had been held with the Trade Unions and the Council would be looking to progress with permit removal very soon as part of formal negotiations. We were looking at ways to support staff through the changes including introducing a supported cycle purchase scheme.*
- Removal of councillors' permits did not require a change in terms and conditions and could happen quickly. *The Cabinet Member gave her view that while she would be happy to pay for her permit she would not like to see it removed as she did not want to be worrying about whether her parking ticket would run out whilst she was in a meeting.*
- A number of ideas from the Big Debate were already progressing and officers would provide an update on what was happening.

ACTIONS AGREED

- (i) To note the outcomes from the Scrutiny Big Debate.
- (ii) To delegate to the Group Representatives consideration of which items should be added to the Committee's work programme.

- (iii) To receive an update on the progress of the outcomes at a future meeting.

10. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The latest version of the Forward Plan, showing details of the key decisions that the Leader of the Council believed the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would be making over the next four months, was received.

ACTION AGREED

To note the latest version of the Forward Plan.

11. Work Programme

We considered the Work Programme for 2010/11.

A referral had been made from the Gunthorpe, Paston, Walton and Werrington Community Committee that the Committee look at the issues around flytipping at Norwood Lane.

ACTION AGREED

To confirm the work programme for 2010/11.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 9 September 2010 at 7pm

CHAIRMAN
7.00 - 9.40 pm