



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL
ON 16 JANUARY 2017**

Present: Councillors Peach (Chairman), C Harper (Vice Chairman),
S Allen, M Sims, S Bisby, A Ellis, M Jamil, E Murphy, N Sandford,
J A Fox

Also Present: Richard Clarke, Parish Councillor Co-opted Member
Keith Lievesley, Parish Councillor Co-opted Member

Officers Present: Simon Machen, Corporate Director, Growth and Regeneration
Lewis Banks, Principal Transport Planning Officer
Peter Garnham, Highway Service Delivery Manager
Jennifer Barrett, Sustainability Project Officer
Charlotte Palmer, Environment Transport & Future City Manager
James Fisher, Wildlife Officer
Jo Morley, Democratic Services Officer
Paulina Ford, Senior Democratic Services Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Cereste, Councillor King and Councillor Brown. Councillor Allen attended as substitute for Councillor Brown, Councillor Bisby attended as substitute for Councillor Cereste.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

There were no declarations of interest or whipping declarations.

3. Minutes of Meetings held on 25 October 2016 and 16 November 2016

The minutes of the Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 October 2016 were approved as an accurate record.

The minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Scrutiny Committees and Commissions – Budget Phase 1 meeting held on 16 November 2016 were approved as an accurate record.

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

There were no requests for call-in to consider.

5. Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference and Work Programme

The Senior Governance Officer presented the report which provided the Committee with an explanation of the new scrutiny committee arrangements including the terms of reference for each scrutiny committee. It was noted that under the new scrutiny arrangements the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee now had the additional responsibility of city centre management, tourism, culture, recreation, libraries, arts and

museums which had been transferred from the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee previously known as the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee. The work programme was also provided with the report which included items outstanding from the Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee which would now come under the remit of this committee.

The report also recommended that the Committee appoint Parish Councillor, Keith Lievesley as a non-voting co-opted member to represent the rural communities. A further recommendation from the Parish Council Liaison was included in the report to appoint a second Parish Councillor Richard Clarke as a non-voting co-opted member.

Members questioned which Parish Councils the nominated Parish Councillors were members of and were informed that Keith Lievesley was the Chairman of Ufford Parish Council and Richard Clarke was a member of Wansford Parish Council. Members felt that two co-opted members rather than one co-opted member would be best to ensure that the views of rural communities were reflected.

All Members were in agreement to the appointment of Keith Lievesley and following a short discussion Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Allen proposed that Richard Clarke be appointed as a second Parish Councillor non-voting Co-opted Member. All Committee members were in agreement with this proposal.

Keith Lievesley and Richard Clarke were both in attendance at the meeting and the Chairman invited them to join the Committee for the remainder of the meeting.

Members then referred to the work programme and queried why the Verge Parking Working Group Report had not been presented at this meeting and were concerned that the working group consisted of only officers rather than the usual cross party membership.

ACTIONS AGREED

The Committee notes:

1. The Terms of Reference for each of the newly established Scrutiny Committees attached at Appendix 1 of the report and in particular the Terms of Reference for the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee.
2. The work programme for the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the 2016/2017 municipal year attached at Appendix 2 of the report and; agreed to review the work programme to ensure it reflects the remit of the Committee as stated in the Terms of Reference at Appendix 1.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Committee recommend the appointment of Parish Councillor Keith Lievesley as a non-voting Co-opted Member to represent the rural area on this Committee for the remainder of this municipal year and the 2017/2018 municipal year. Appointment to be reviewed at the beginning of the 2018/2019 municipal year and then annually going forward.
2. The Committee recommend the appointment of an additional Parish Councillor, Richard Clarke, as nominated by Parish Council Liaison to one of the four available non-voting Co-opted Member positions for the remainder of this municipal year and the 2017/2018 municipal year. Appointment to be reviewed at the beginning of the 2018/2019 municipal year and then annually going forward.

6. Local Transport Plan Programme of Capital Works for 2017/18

The Principal Transport Planning Officer accompanied by the Highway Service Delivery Manager introduced the report which provided the Committee with information regarding the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Programme of Works 2017/18 prior to its submission to the Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development. Members were informed that the Programme of Works did not include a street lighting annex as in previous years due to the LED street lighting programme currently being undertaken as a separate project.

The Principal Transport Planning Officer and the Highway Service Delivery Manager responded to comments and questions raised by Members. A summary of responses included:

- A separate briefing note on street lighting had been provided to members of the Committee. Members were interested to hear more about smart technologies (CCTV/Wi-Fi) that could be implemented alongside any street lighting updates and it was suggested that it be looked at again by the Committee in the next municipal year.
- In response to questions on how improvements were targeted and why a lot of improvements were scheduled for the Eastfield Road area, it was explained that a 'key corridor' approach had been adopted as part of a successful Revenue Funding Bid. The capital improvements to this key corridor would improve access to the College and would encourage more people to walk and cycle along this route.
- It was agreed that the indicative cost of £250,000 for the proposed safe crossing for Ravensthorpe School was a large amount but other alternatives such as the use of a lollipop patrol were not viable as the road was in effect a dual carriageway and there would be safety concerns. Although it was suggested that the crossing would be little used the officer reported that the request had come from the school itself and their investigations confirmed that often young children with their parents were trying to cross the road to reach the bus stop.
- Concern was expressed about the lack of lighting at Junction 20 at the Newborough roundabout while the road works were being carried out.
- It was specified in plans that all new developments required LED lighting to be installed although it may be the case that there was some residual legacy lighting where roads had not been adopted.
- All roads were inspected annually, either mechanically or visually and a score was then given to help decide which roads should be chosen to go on the programme. Often the biggest criteria was the cut-off point as by the time items were costed the budget may have already been exhausted. The Committee was reminded that the road improvement budget for lower grade residential streets had been reduced and therefore decisions were made using a safety approach rather than an aesthetic one.
- Members were advised that Rhubarb Bridge needed to be removed completely as there were safety concerns due to its poor condition. The Council were bidding for external grants to have the bridge removed completely but the cost of replacing it would be prohibitive and therefore consideration was being given to integrating it into the junction.
- When a new estate was built, any pedestrian crossings that were needed would be picked up at the planning stage and incorporated into the planning process as a developer's commitment. Where a need was identified later priority would be weighted in favour of young children if it was near a school for example. The cost of a crossing was put at £100 - £150,000.
- The Rights of Way Improvement Plan budget was from capital funding and the Local Access Forum would consider how it should be spent. There was a separate maintenance budget for waymarkers etc. but the Forum looked specifically for improvements i.e. additional routes, etc. and looked to the Parish Councils to provide suggestions for this.
- It was not known which particular underpasses the Structures Team were currently looking at but the budget of £25,000 would be spent on modest improvements either for

cosmetic or safety reasons. Any associated street lighting costs would be covered by a separate budget. There was no long term policy to remove underpasses altogether and they were often situated on major roads and therefore the costs to remove them were prohibitive.

- The three year programme to replace street lighting also included the update of the electricity infrastructure that supported the street lights. Once this programme was completed the street lights in all wards would be on a central management system and the council would automatically know when a street light was not working. It was critical therefore that the programme was not interrupted by diverting funds elsewhere.
- The proposed cycle lane on Eastfield Road was still out to consultation and it would be a little longer before a decision was made. Eastfield Road currently had mostly double yellow lines and parking restrictions but there were some areas where there were single yellow lines and had business loading areas where parking was legal and where cyclists would potentially have to negotiate parked cars.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee endorse the Local Transport Plan Programme of Capital Works for 2017/18 and recommend to Cabinet for approval.

ACTION

The Principal Transport Planning Officer to provide the Committee with a briefing note on the background to the Safer Journeys to School proposed £250,000 budget allocation for the Greasley Way, North Bretton nr Ravensthorpe Primary School creation of signalised crossing.

7. Environment Policy and Action Plan

The Environment, Transport and Future City Manager introduced the report which provided the Committee with the opportunity to comment on the emerging review of the Council's Environment Policy framework.

The Environment, Transport and Future City Manager accompanied by the Sustainability Project Officer responded to comments and questions raised by Members. A summary of responses included:

- Officers advised that the two plans were due to go out for public consultation for a period of three weeks which some Members felt was too short a timeframe in which to gather feedback. During the consultation, the public would be asked for their views on two areas of the policy which were the target areas and they would also be asked if there were any additional targets that should be included.
- The personalised travel planning information was based on before and after surveys which were undertaken with workforce who were willing to take part. The information was not based on any real time data as at present that level of data could not be captured. Sustainable transport was encouraged within businesses by the provision of electric charging points, showers, cycle parks etc.
- Although the rate of recycling has decreased in Peterborough as a whole, in the areas where the Love Peterborough / Love your Community scheme had been introduced and funding was provided recycling levels have gone up.
- Members commented that some housing developments were being built with no proximity to bus routes even though it was stated within the Sustainable Transport Plan that they should be. Officers responded that in reality it was a complex issue as buses were run on a commercial basis so were only provided where it was commercially viable to do so. In some instances there was section 106 funding for a service but this was often for a limited time period and then commercial considerations would take over. The issue would be looked at to see how improvements can be made.

- Members suggested that the targets for affordable housing could also be put under the Health and Well Being heading.
- Members noted that the Sustainable Transport section of the report made little reference to the use of buses and wanted to see more engagement with the bus companies and that the Council should look at more visionary options for the future like mono rail for example.
- Members questioned the absence of energy efficiency targets for individual homes. Officers advised that the Council could not stipulate that developers go beyond the building regulation requirements for new homes. If the Council did impose stricter energy efficiency building regulations then the additional costs would have to be taken from the Affordable Housing Contribution. The Vista Zero Carbon housing development was provided as an example where the public sector contribution was approximately £40K per house. Economically the bigger return on investment would be to retrofit older homes and the plan identified the need to take up more budgets and look for grant funding to accomplish this.
- Members commented that there seemed to be a lack of bus services in the Boongate/Eastern industry areas which prevented people being able to travel sustainably to their place of work. Officers advised that a full bus service review had been carried out a few years ago and reminded Members that the bus services were predominantly commercially operated and therefore had to be commercially viable.
- The Council were engaging with passenger transport operators about de-dieseling vehicles in the city and although Stagecoach were running better more efficient vehicles they were still diesel. Discussions were taking place with regard to introducing electric charging points for transport provision. Discussions were also taking place with the Head of Regulatory Services to see what other opportunities were available with taxi operators to improve vehicles. It was agreed that there was a need to look at how best to position the Council going forward and the Council was working with Cranfield University to look at transport options and visions going as far forward as 2050.
- Members expressed their hope that the devolved powers through the Combined Authority would deliver major improvements for Peterborough's public transport network as the Combined Authority would have an opportunity to plan public transport and franchising for the whole area.
- Anglian Water were a statutory consultee on the Local Plan to ensure that there was enough water for the amount of new houses that were being built. As Peterborough was deemed to be a water scarce area it could be suggested in the Local Plan to go beyond statutory regulations to reduce the water consumption further per household.

ACTION AGREED

The Committee agreed to note the Environment Policy and Action Plan and requested that the Environment, Transport and Future City Manager note the comments made by the Committee.

8. Biodiversity Strategy Progress Report

The Wildlife Officer introduced the report and asked the Committee to note the progress made against the Council's 2010 Biodiversity Strategy and to make any recommendations with regards to the proposed update of the Strategy.

The Wildlife Officer responded to comments and questions raised by Members. A summary of responses included:

- The intention was not to radically change the Strategy but to refresh and bring it up to date as some of the actions had now been completed. The principles of the original working group would remain as part of the strategy.
- Members sought clarification as to whether any progress had been made to identify and increase the number of biodiversity areas and deliver improvements to them. The officer advised that he continued to work closely with Amey to identify the most appropriate locations but would also welcome feedback from Councillors and Community Groups in identifying appropriate sites that could become biodiversity areas.

- Part of the Wildlife Officers role was to liaise with Parish Councils and Community Groups and assist in signposting them to where they may be able to seek funding and support for wildlife projects.
- Amey were temporarily managing the Eye Green gravel pit since the Wildlife Trust ended its lease. Different options were being explored for a new organisation to take on that responsibility.
- Clarification was sought on which sites were included in the strategy as it seemed to be only sites directly owned by the Council. The Officer confirmed that the strategy only focused on sites where the Council had influence or had direct ownership. The Council did however regularly work with outside organisations that ran wildlife sites and covered the wider green infrastructure.
- Members commended the good work being done by the Farms Estate now that there had been re-investment in them. It was also noted that there had been a reduction in the use of pesticides although Members were concerned at the continued use by Amey of the pesticide, Glyphosate. The limits of its licence had been curtailed by the EU commission and as such Councillors were keen to look at ways of reducing its use.

AGREED ACTION

The Committee notes the progress made against the Council's 2010 Biodiversity Strategy and requested that the Wildlife Officer note the comments made by the Committee.

9. Forward Plan of Executive Decisions

The Committee received the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan of Executive Decisions containing key decisions that the Leader of the Council anticipated the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would make during the course of the forthcoming month. Members were invited to comment on the Plan and, where appropriate, identify any relevant areas for inclusion in the Committee's Work Programme.

ACTIONS AGREED

The Committee noted the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions.

10. Work Programme for 2016/17

Members considered the Committee's Work Programme for 2016/17 and discussed possible items for inclusion.

ACTION AGREED

The Committee agreed to note the work programme.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman advised the Committee that due to Purdah starting on 22 March the date of the next meeting would need to be rescheduled so that it could feed into the Cabinet meeting which had been moved to 20 March. The date proposed was Wednesday, 15 March 2017.

ACTION AGREED

1. The Committee requested that the Senior Democratic Services Officer seek clarification as to why the Cabinet meeting needed to be moved during Purdah as it was understood that the guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government stated that Council business could continue as normal throughout Purdah.

2. The Committee agreed that the meeting should be rescheduled to take place on 15 March 2017.

The meeting began at 7.00pm and ended at 8.31pm

CHAIRMAN