

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT
SCRUTINY PANEL
HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH ON 2 OCTOBER 2008**

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

Also present: Councillor Fitzgerald, Cabinet Member for Environment

Officers in attendance: Mike Heath, Director of City Services
Amy Brown, Lawyer
Paulina Ford, Research and Projects Officer
Martin Whelan, Partnership and Parish Support Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of absence were received from Cllr North.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 July 2008

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2008 were approved as a correct record.

4. Use of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles

The Panel received a report on the potential use of the hybrid and electric vehicles within the Councils operational fleet. The report detailed the advantages and disadvantages of using these types of vehicles, as well as the environmental impacts and links to the Environment Capital agenda.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Clarification was sought on the relative cost of the vehicles – Officers confirmed that the whole life cost of electric vehicles was much greater than conventional vehicles. The Panel was advised that the differential was less significant in London where electric vehicles are exempt from the congestion charge.
- The need to try the different types of vehicle was acknowledged, however concerns were raised over the limitations of the various technologies.
- Members drew attention to the diagrams circulated and questioned whether the designs would be vulnerable to vandalism or theft due to lack of doors. Officers confirmed that the designs were examples, and that the companies could alter the configuration to suit the needs.
- Are the vehicles liable for road fund licence? Officers confirmed that the vehicles needed to be licensed, but that the value of the licences was zero.
- Members asked whether any thought had been given to using the conventional Renault electric vans. Officers explained the limitations and

problems of using these vehicles, and drew particular attention to the problems faced in France.

Members agreed that it was appropriate to go ahead with a trial of the vehicles.

5. Role of Peterborough City Services and Environment & Community Services

The Director of City Services presented the report outlining the role of the two departments.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Do the City Council undertake de-gassing of fridges? Is it possible to reuse the gas? – Officers confirmed that “de-gassing” was undertaken when necessary, but that it was not possible to reuse old gas.
- How will the new management structure affect the arrangements? – Officers advised that City Services would migrate into an ALMO over the next 18-24 months, which will increase the flexibility of the Service to bring in additional income.

6. Executive Decisions

The Panel considered and noted the report

7. Forward Plan – 1 October 2008 to 31 January 2008

The Panel considered the latest version of the Forward Plan. Cllr Fitzgerald was invited to address the committee in order to answer some of the questions raised.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Cllr Fox requested an update on the status of the Parking Review decision notice. Members were advised that the decision notice was currently being finalised, and that there had been significant revision since the last meeting. The Panel agreed to consider the implications at a future meeting. Cllr Fox reiterated her previous concerns in relation to visitor and disabled drivers. Members were provided with an update in relation both issues.
- Clarification was sought on the crematorium item. Cllr Fitzgerald commented on the item and provided an update.

ACTION AGREED:

The Panel noted the Forward Plan.

8. Work Programme

The Panel agreed the current work programme. The Panel was advised that there would an update on Travel Choice at a future meeting.

The meeting began at 7pm and ended at 7.56pm.

CHAIRMAN

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