

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT CAPITAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM - TOWN HALL ON 10 MARCH 2011**

Present: Councillors D Day (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
Adrian Chapman, Head of Neighbourhood Services
Mark Speed, Transport Planning Team Manager
Peter Gell, Strategic Regulatory Services Manager
Cathy Summers, Team Manager - Passenger Transport Contracts and Planning
Charlotte Palmer, Climate Change Team Manager
Claire Boyd, Lawyer - Contracts and Procurement
Louise Tyers, Scrutiny Manager

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Arculus and Morley. Councillor Goodwin, the Conservative Group Substitute had also sent her apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 January 2011

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2011 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. Local Transport Plan Capital Programme of Works 2011/12

The report presented the Draft Local Transport Plan Capital Programme of Works for 2011/12.

Each financial year the Council was awarded an allocation of funding from central Government to spend on transportation schemes and capital maintenance of the road network. To ensure this money was spent effectively the third Peterborough Local Transport Plan (2011–2016) (LTP) had been developed and was due to be considered by Full Council in April 2011. The Council had considered a range of transport solutions to best address local problems, meet the growth aspirations of the City and integrate the Governments 'national transport goals' agreed at national level by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Department for Transport (DfT).

The LTP3 contained a broad five year capital allocation for each generic transport intervention. A more detailed capital programme of works had been produced for the first year of the LTP3 period (2011/12).

The Government, as part of their October 2010 Spending Review, announced a radical simplification of the local transport funding mechanism moving from 26 separate streams to just four as follows:

1. A local sustainable transport fund (capital and resource).
2. Major Schemes (capital).
3. Block funding for highways maintenance (capital).
4. Block funding for small integrated transport improvement schemes (capital).

The local sustainable transport fund and Major Scheme grant were subject to a bidding process, whereby local authorities would have to submit robust applications to obtain funding. The block allocation for highways maintenance for each local authority was calculated through a needs based formula. This was based on several factors including: total road length by classification and condition; the number of bridge structures and whether they required significant maintenance or strengthening and the number of street lighting columns over 40 years old. The block funding for small integrated transport improvement schemes was also calculated through a needs based formula. This was based on the following factors: supporting development in less prosperous areas; road safety statistics; public transport patronage; traffic congestion; accessibility and tackling pollution.

The Council had been awarded a total of £4,762K transport settlement for 2011/12 and as with previous years the allocation was not ring fenced. The Council has continued to support the road network by allocating £716K of corporate capital funding, which had been added to the unringfenced transport settlement and allocated to prioritised schemes. The Council had also allocated some corporate resources into specific schemes as outlined in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Committee was asked to consider the draft Programme of Works and to make any appropriate recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning.

Questions and observations were raised around the following areas:

- The current terms of reference for Neighbourhood Councils stated that they would agree the schedule of works however the Programme had already been agreed. When would this be considered by the Councils? *Officers would be attending the upcoming round of Neighbourhood Councils meetings. Going forward this would be an area of work to be delegated out to the Neighbourhood Councils but it is not yet at that stage. Officers were working hard to ensure that in future years this was an area which could be delegated to the Councils.*
- What was the distinction between capital and revenue? *Capital either prolonged the life of an asset or was for building a new asset. This report was about capital allocations.*
- A lot of work seemed to be directed towards the new town areas of the city which were built in the 1970s, did this imply that they were not built to a high standard? *It would be due to wear and tear and what work needed to be done.*
- Where were the planned plug in points for electric cars proposed to be? *The East of England was undertaking a piece of work and were looking at a number of locations, for example city centre car parks. Officers would send out a map of proposed locations.*
- Under the criteria for street lighting, most of the work appeared to be north of the river. *This was solely due to prioritisation. The Medium Term Financial Plan contained a programme of additional works including an automated system and the Committee would be kept updated on progress.*
- A number of street lights were being repaired and then would become faulty again, should these be ones that were prioritised? *If councillors let officers know where these lights were they would pass the information on.*

- Part of the work under integrated transport including upgrading of bus stops and shelters, was this an increase on the money available in previous years? *It was less funding overall.*
- In some parts of the city often three buses turned up at the same time causing problems on those routes. Stagecoach said that it was because buses get caught behind other buses due to congestion, so should this be an area of priority which was pushed forward? *One of the proposed projects was around congestion hot spots and this was an area which we would be looking to tackle as part of that work.*

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee recommends the draft Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 2011/12 to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning.

6. Christmas Park and Ride Service

The report provided information on the Christmas Park and Ride Service for 2010/11.

Peterborough had operated a Christmas park and ride service since 1999. Whilst relatively successful, the service had always operated at a cost to the Council. The table below gave a comparison of usage for the service from its commencement in 1999.

Year	Number of operating days	Number of cars	Number of passengers	Charge
1999	11	3,203	6,843	£1 per car
2000	11	3,249	7,836	£1 per car
2001	9	2,570	5,435	£1 per adult
2002	10	2,392	4,746	£1 per adult
2003	10	2,452	4,954	£1 per adult
2004	9	3,479	8,598	Free
2005	20	5,095	13,960	Free
2006	19	6,560	16,152	Free
2007	19	6,057	17,321	Free
2008	13	3,780	7,149	Free
2009	12	3,361	6,914	Free
2010	15	1,943	3,923	£1 per adult*

* £2.50 family ticket available (2 adults and up to 3 children)

The average number of passengers using the service per day each year fluctuated and this was due to a number of reasons:

- The number of passengers using the service on Sundays was less than on Saturdays. The split of operational days had varied year on year.
- The Town Bridge repair work impacted on ease of access for car users into the city.

However, it was noticeable that charging for the service, whether per person or per car, reduced passenger numbers.

For 2011 there was a net budget of £29k (£35k expenditure, £6k income) to fund a Christmas park and ride service for 2011. The estimated cost in 2010 was £35k, with a contribution of just £3k income received from customers.

There was a need to provide some consistency to the operational days of the service as changing from year to year could be confusing to the users of the service. In addition, the figures demonstrated that charging for the service had a negative impact. Therefore it was proposed to operate the service in 2011 as follows:

Saturdays: 29 October to 24 December - 9 days.
Sundays: 13 November to 18 December - 6 days.

This was consistent with the number of operational days for 2010 and would be the operational period going forward, available funding permitting. It was also proposed that the service operate free of charge, however this would mean a loss of income, which could only be partly offset by a reduction in printing/advertising costs. The remaining shortfall would need to be met from within the Operations Directorate overall cash limit budget.

The provision of a Christmas park and ride service met with the Council's aspirations to become the UK's Environment Capital. The service contributed to the sustainable transport agenda by reducing congestion and ensuring the accessibility of the city centre, therefore reducing CO2 emissions. However, there was a need to further develop the park and ride service within the city. Officers would investigate external funding sources to expand the existing park and ride service. Consideration would be given to an all year weekend operational period or alternatively, so called 'pocket park and ride sites' whereby existing parking provision strategically positioned at points to intercept car users on the outskirts of the city could be used. By careful selection of sites, close to existing commercial bus services, there would be no additional bus service revenue costs associated with the provision of this type of service. The sites could also be designed to encourage multi modal interchange such as car to bus, cycle to bus, car to cycle, 'stride and ride' etc.

This type of provision would then naturally lead to expansion of park and ride as detailed in the council's Long Term Transport Strategy. Any proposals would be subject to a separate appraisal that would consider all the financial and non financial implications.

Questions and observations were raised around the following areas:

- Had officers considered sponsorship of the park and ride buses? *We had tried to secure partnership in the past but had not been successful.*
- Why was there such a big drop between 2007 and 2008? *The number of operational days was reduced and also the Town Bridge had been partially shut so there had been problems with queues into car parks. Those works had improved travel into the city.*
- Would officers be able to provide comparative data with parking at Queensgate for the same period? *We would look to get that data and forward it to members.*
- It has been proven in other parts of the country that successful park and ride schemes run for large parts of the year. The problem with a short scheme in Peterborough was that people changed their habits and then the scheme stopped. The City seriously needs to consider a longer scheme. *It was being seriously considered as part of the Long Term Transport Strategy which included work to secure funding for pocket park and ride sites. In Nottingham they used under utilised car parks including private ones which were close to bus services. Ticketing arrangements would need to be agreed.*
- A problem with park and ride was that often people had lots of shopping bags, had anywhere been considered where people could leave their shopping and collect it before getting on the bus? *In Cambridge some stores kept your shopping and took it to the park and ride site for you. This was something we could investigate here.*
- A comprehensive approach was needed and we needed to look at what we charged for parking in the city centre. It needed to be cheaper to get in your car and drive to park and ride. An imaginative approach was needed. *Part of the LTTS was to bring in park and ride, however the issue would be to encourage people to use it. The City Council did not manage all of the car parks so we could not control all of the charges however it did need an integrated approach.*

- It had been raised previously about charging for walk ons at the park and ride sites. *We were not allowed to compete with commercial services but Stagecoach was happy for us to take on walk ons.*

ACTION AGREED

- (i) To note the performance of the park and ride service for 2010.
- (ii) To note the proposed park and ride service for 2011.
- (iii) That officers look at as a priority the introduction of a permanent park and ride service.

7. Progress Against the Carbon Reduction Commitment and Carbon Management Action Plan

The report provided an update on progress against the Council's carbon reduction agenda from the perspective of our legal obligations under the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme and our Carbon Management Action Plan.

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 carbon emission reductions and applied to all organisations who consumed energy over a set threshold in 2008. The Council's registration as a full participant for the first phase of the scheme was completed in September 2010. The scheme required participants to purchase allowances for each tonne of carbon dioxide emitted at a fixed price of £12 per tonne during phase one, the price would be subject to market variability thereafter. This equated to a requirement for the Council to purchase allowances amounting to approximately £308k p.a during the first phase. Following the comprehensive spending review, the scheme no longer recycled payments to participants depending upon performance. All allowances the Council were required to purchase effectively became a straight forward tax, therefore more than ever the emphasis moving forward should focus upon achieving reductions in carbon emissions.

The Carbon Management Action Plan (CMAP) detailed the mechanisms the Council would adopt to achieve carbon emission reductions arising from energy and fuel consumption and was developed in partnership with the Carbon Trust. The CMAP formally committed the Council to achieving a CO2 reduction of 35% of 2008/09 levels by 2014 which would reduce the Council's financial exposure to risk. Several projects had now been completed and further projects were in various stages of development with just over a quarter of the target still to be quantified. In addition, several other aspects of the CMAP which did not have directly attributable carbon savings had progressed including:

- There was now a clause in all contracts of employments which emphasised the responsibility placed upon all employees to minimise their environmental impact.
- City schools had all agreed to fund a new 'Schools Carbon Reduction Officer' post to support them through the process of developing individual carbon management plans.
- Agreement to develop and launch a compulsory environmental e-learning programme for all employees had been secured alongside the production of a short film starring the Chief Executive to open the training.
- A network of 25 Green Champions had been established across the organisation.
- Environmental awareness was now a key component in the corporate induction delivered by HR.
- A process for ensuring the environmental impact of a project was considered in all Cabinet Member Decision Notices had now been introduced.
- External funding had been secured to establish a £500k ring fenced fund for investing in energy efficient technology.

Over the next 12 months progress would be made against further sources of carbon emissions including waste, water and commuter travel. This had not been possible until now due to other commitments.

In October each year the Environment Agency would publish a league table for the CRC which would rank participants dependent upon performance within the scheme. This would be a publically available document and was a further reason to ensure good performance in order to allow Peterborough to build upon its reputation as the Home of Environment Capital.

Steady progress was being made against the targets laid out in the CMAP but in order for this to continue adequate resources needed to be maintained.

Questions and observations were raised around the following areas:

- How did City Services transferring to Enterprise affect the Council's progress and would this affect our position in future league tables? *City Services would be included within the current financial year but going forward Enterprise would be responsible for their own emissions.*
- In the last league table we were at the bottom did officers expect us to have moved up following the introduction of the various initiatives? *There had not been any league tables published. The report for National Indicator 185 had been published but that was not a like for like comparison, for example we had included outsourced services and some authorities had not. The CRC would be different in that all councils would be submitting the same data.*
- The Town Hall was not a good example of tackling emissions were there any plans to make it a symbol of good practice? *We would be installing real time energy efficiency monitoring which would be shown on the front page of the website. Other plans included options for renewable energy, devices added to the boiler system and also placing reflective foil behind all radiators.*
- Would we be able to take the new Forest of Peterborough into account? *Not at this time, currently the plan only focussed on travel and energy but other elements would be added later.*
- In the Town Hall the heating was on all the time, would it be possible to turn it off at weekends? *The Town Hall system was currently on two zones and was an old system. Improved zoning of the heating would make savings but it was recognised as a problem.*
- Did we build carbon management into the contracts of third party providers? *Contractors were asked about their environmental performance during the tender process and we were working with organisations about how they could be environmentally accredited.*

ACTION AGREED

To receive an annual report on our progress under the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme and Carbon Management Action Plan

8. Neighbourhood Services: Working to Improve the Environment

The report provided an overview of the regulatory service delivery framework within neighbourhoods, as well as proposals for future service delivery.

The Committee had previously considered a report in July 2009 on environmental enforcement and education. That report described a landscape that had since changed quite significantly: neighbourhood delivery was in its early stages; low level littering crimes were enforced through an external contract by a company called Xfor; and resources were higher than they were today prior to the economic downturn. The Committee had debated whether the work undertaken by Xfor should be expanded, however that model had now ceased to

become an option as it had become unviable for Xfor, and they withdrew from the agreement to undertake littering enforcement work for the Council.

The economic downturn had been the driver for greater internal challenge within the Neighbourhoods Division with regards to how services were both structured and delivered. The need to find efficiencies had opened up new opportunities as previous delivery models became unsustainable. Following a formal consultation process in the third quarter of this financial year a consolidation of services fulfilling statutory regulatory duties took place resulting in a new team being formed referred to as 'Regulatory Services'. This team comprised of the following functions:

- Trading Standards
- Environmental Health
- Licensing
- Parking Enforcement
- Environmental Enforcement
- Housing Enforcement
- Internal Health and Safety

Sustainability had been created by removing historical boundaries which had in the past seen officers largely remain within the professional disciplines in which they had always worked. For example trading standards staff would rarely cross over into the field of Environmental Health. Though it had some disadvantages this model was suitable when there had been adequate resources to support largely autonomous functions but continuation of such a model in the current climate would lead to bigger gaps in service delivery and less resilience. By identifying opportunities where staff could become multi-skilled and by investing in their development the service would create a staffing resource that delivered value for money, gave greater resilience, was more flexible, offered increased capacity, and provided increased career development opportunities for staff. Removing boundaries also helped facilitate consistency, and the development of fewer, leaner processes and procedures. Areas currently being developed were the roles of Civil Enforcement Officers (Parking Officers), Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers, Pollution Control and Housing Officers.

A further opportunity to increase both resilience and capacity was the development of the street leader's scheme whereby volunteers work with officers to tackle community problems, and improved communities in general. This accompanied by our strategic approach to work with other partners and Councils such as the East of England Trading Standards Authorities Group, the Six Counties Regulatory Forum, and the proposed joint service arrangement with Rutland County Council to deliver regulatory services also strengthened our position.

By ensuring officers were equipped to utilise the range of regulatory sanctions available to them, as well as possessing the skills to negotiate, persuade and problem solve, they would be able to apply the appropriate measures to address community problems and regulatory breaches. It was proposed to adopt a proportionate approach to regulatory breaches for which a Service wide Enforcement Policy would support decision making. This approach would ensure that a hard line could be taken where necessary while preventing a heavy handed approach where it could be considered inappropriate.

It was proposed that in future that there would be a shift in resource allocation to provide a better balance between a reactive service and one that became more proactive by strategically pursuing objectives to provide longer term improvements. The development of staff to become more multi-skilled would increase the enforcement potential in this area, greater intelligence which would help lead to the identification of offenders would come from the empowerment of street leaders.

Regulatory services had the ability to impact on the environment in many positive ways, for example:

- Air quality monitoring
- Control of polluting processes
- Ensuring effective mitigation was carried out by developers for historically identified contaminated land sites
- Promoting the correct handling of waste to both residents and businesses
- Working with manufacturers in the city to reduce packaging, and encourage smaller recyclable solutions
- Environmental Enforcement
- Tackling vehicle emissions through licensing

Questions and observations were raised around the following areas:

- A councillor gave an example in his ward where a building was covered in metal shutters. How could vandalism be stopped on those type sorts of buildings if we did not spend any money? *There were a number of buildings like that which gave cause for concern and it was about working with partners, ward councillors and the communities in finding a solution.*
- Roman and Saxon Court in Stanground was owned by Cross Keys Homes but was currently empty, did officers work with Cross Keys in these cases? *They were a key partner and it was about how we could work together by sharing powers to solve problems.*
- Did anyone work outside normal working hours to consider problems such as inconsiderate parking at weekends? *Parking Services did look at these cases and if people were aware of a problem they should send an email so it could be picked up and targeted as an area of concern.*
- Parking on verges was a big problem but Highways had previously said that bollards could be ineffective. *Each location needed to be considered individually including the impact on displacement. The Government had recently reminded us of our powers and they would also be undertaking a review of the burdens of enforcement by lifting bureaucracy.*
- Were people charged if rubbish was cleared from their property? *Yes, a charge was put on the property.*
- What areas of the city were covered by Street Leaders? *There were approximately 80 Street Leaders who were very keen to work with us but the scheme did need to be reinvigorated. It was about empowering people to have pride in their communities.*
- It was important that enforcement was also undertaken outside of normal working hours, especially at the weekends. *The team ensure that someone is available to investigate issues when needed.*
- Was there a way to tackle parking on verges on a city wide basis rather than in small pockets? *We would be looking at Dogsthorpe to see if it would be a suitable approach to take wider across Peterborough.*

ACTION AGREED

That a report is brought to a future meeting in early 2012 to provide details of enforcement performance.

9. 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.

The Committee asked for clarification as to what a voluntary partnership agreement for local bus services was. The Team Manager for Passenger Transport Contracts and Planning advised that it was about small value services which supplemented the commercial services and was about getting value for money by bringing better services, vehicles and punctuality.

ACTION AGREED

To note the latest version of the Forward Plan.

CHAIRMAN
7.00 - 9.03 pm

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