

**Minutes of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny
Committee meeting held on 2nd July 2009.**

Present:

Councillors:

Martyn Ashford
Penny Bould
Chris Davis
Joan Lea
Barry Lobbett
Phillip Morris- Jones
Dave Shilton
Ray Sweet
Helen Walton
John Whitehouse
Chris Williams

Also Present: Councillors Alan Cockburn, Peter Fowler and Chris Saint

Officers	Liz Firmstone	Financial Services Manager
	Paul Galland	Strategic Director
	Andy McDarmid	Environmental management and Performance Manager
	Kevin McGovern	Operations Manager
	Roger Newham	Chief Transport Planner
	John Scouller	Head of Skills Tourism and Economy
	Martin Stott	Head of Environment & Resources.
	Jeff Welsby	Interim Group Manager
	Paul Williams	Scrutiny Officer
	John Wright	Committee Manager

1. Election of Chair

Resolved that Councillor Phillip Morris- Jones be elected Chair for the meeting

2. General

(1) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from David Bryden, Les Caborn and Mike Doody

(2) Members Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Councillor Bould declared personal interests as

- A disability access consultant trading as Access Unlimited/Penny Bould
- A member of Friends of the Earth
- A member of Warwick District Tree Warden Network
- A member of GMB Trade Union

- A member of NUJ trade Union

Councillor Whitehouse declared personal interests as

- A member of Friends of the Earth
- A member of Sustrans

Councillor Lea declared a personal interest in any matter relating to Project Transform as a member of the Regulatory Committee

(3) Minutes

- (i) The Minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17th March 2009 were noted.
- (ii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9th April 2009 were noted.
- (iii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23rd June 2009 were agreed and signed as a correct record

3. Disability Access

Councillor Bould stated that in her view

- All people attending meetings should be greeted on arrival.
- They should be asked if they have any disabilities which may impair their ability to understand the meeting e.g needing line of sight for speakers in order to lip read.
- If necessary individuals should be offered appropriate seating to allow them to fully understand and if appropriate contribute to the meeting.

She referred to the work that had recently been undertaken in the Council Chamber to improve accessibility and suggested that it was a shame that the Council had decided not to proceed with a fuller refurbishment. In response Councillor Cockburn stated that the Council was continually working to improve facilities in it's buildings to ensure they met the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. He stated that the decision not to refurbish the Council Chamber had not been made on political grounds.

4. Public Question Time

No public questions were submitted.

5. Effective Scrutiny - Scrutiny Officer

Paul Williams, Scrutiny Officer gave a presentation to members on effective scrutiny and the development of a work programme.

6. Challenges and Opportunities For Next 12 Months - Portfolio Holder(s)

Councillors Cockburn, Fowler and Saint each gave a presentation to the Committee on the challenges and opportunities for the next 12 months.

The issues identified by Councillor Saint for the Leisure, Culture and Housing portfolio holder included

- Planning including minerals extraction, waste disposal
- Libraries
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Single Integrated Regional Strategy
- Country parks
- Tourism

The issues identified by Councillor Fowler for the Economic Development portfolio holder included

- Helping local business – assisting and enabling
- Skills agenda – tackling the issue of Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET)
- Economic Assessments – working within the sub region
- Regeneration projects
- Narrowing the gaps – reducing areas of deprivation across Warwickshire

The issues identified by Councillor Cockburn for the Environment portfolio holder included

- Transport and highways
- Highways maintenance
- Project Transform
- Grass cutting
- Rugby Western Relief Road
- Flood Management
- Climate Change

Members sought clarification on a number of issues arising from the presentation including

- The operation of the new Highways depot structure
- The need for funding for any additional role the Council is asked to perform relating to flooding prevention
- Kenilworth Station
- The timetable for Project Transform

Resolved that the report be noted

7. Full Year Directorate Report Card 2008/09 (April 2008 – March 2009) (Report previously scheduled to be presented to the former Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

The Committee considered a report on an analysis of the Environment and Economy Directorate's full year performance for 2008/09. It reported performance against the key performance indicators as set out in the Directorate Report Card.

Members were informed that in future performance information would be presented in a different manner. Reporting would be by exception and report performance that was below target or in excess of 10% above. Improvement Plans would need to be prepared for such measures.

Paul Galland informed members that a common sense approach would be taken towards the reporting of performance data and if Members or the Strategic Director felt that there were additional areas of performance that needed to be drawn to members attention which would not normally be reported he would ensure members were made aware of them

Resolved that the report be noted

8. Full Year Directorate Report Card 2008/09 (April 2008 – March 2009) – (Report previously scheduled to be presented to the former Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

The Committee considered a report on an analysis of the Environment and Economy Directorate's full year performance for 2008/09. It reported performance against the key performance indicators as set out in the Directorate Report Card.

Members were concerned that much of the data set out in the report was out of date and were informed that much of the information related to performance indicators that the council was required to monitor by the government. In future a range of sources would be used to gather information which would be as up to date as possible and would provide a realistic view of local performance

Resolved that the report be noted.

9. Progress report on the Budget and Savings Plan for the Environment and Economy Directorate

The Committee considered an update on the progress being made by the Environment and Economy Directorate in delivering its savings targets and balancing its budget. The Directorate was facing a savings target of £3.903 million for the year rising to an estimated £5.686 million by the end of 2011/12. To date the Directorate had identified savings of £4.8m in the first year which was a combination of one off payments and long term sustainable savings.

Members complimented the Directorate on progress made to date in identifying saving and expressed support for the one off sums which had been requested from the Council's reserves to cover exceptional costs relating to street lighting energy and winter maintenance.

Resolved that the Environment and Economy Directorate's progress to date in balancing its budget and delivering its savings plan be noted and endorsed.

10. Workshop

The Committee broke into a workshop session to identify priority issues for the Committees annual work programme. The following issues were identified

Update Reports

- Project Transform.
- "20's plenty" 20mph pilot.
- Vehicle restrictions at Household Waste Recycling
- Concessionary travel for young people

Policy Development

- Local Transport Plan 3
- Engagement with Voluntary Sector - Youth

Light Review Work

- Maximising the Value For money in regeneration projects
- Surveys of employment levels on industrial estates to get employers to create more jobs.
- Keresley Village – Potential regeneration area
- A444 Diamond in Nuneaton - Highways

More Detailed Review Work

- Review of effectiveness of new County Highways structure and change from 5 to 2 area offices.
- Review of street lighting pilots and energy efficiency measures.
- Speed limit review on A and B roads - review of impact on casualties.
- Waste minimisation.
- Climate change and Carbon Reduction Commitment - what has been achieved so far?
- Bus services now compared to before de-regulation - impact on access to schools, jobs, etc.
- Impact of housing growth on jobs, environment, etc
- NEETS
- Skills and young people
- Potential delivery mechanism - 'Slivers of time' initiative
- Access to Training/Roles of key public sector providers
- Identifying support initiatives and how they link together

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Chair

The Committee rose at 12.30 p.m.