

Minutes of the Meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9 June 2005

Present: -

Members of the Committee: Councillor Ken Browne (Chair)
“ Richard Chattaway (ViceChair)
“ Gordon Collett
“ Jose Compton
“ Eithne Goode
“ Richard Hyde
“ Katherine King
“ Joan Lea
“ Bryan Levy
“ Ray Sweet

Also Present: Councillor Martin Heatley, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Councillor Alan Farnell

Officers: Bill Basra, Corporate Review Officer, Chief Executive's Dept.
Roy Burton, Waste Management, PTES
John Deegan, Director PTES.
Graham Fitton, Road Safety Unit, PTES
Nigel Grant, Divisional Fire Officer
Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Dept.
Ian Marriott, Principal Solicitor, Chief Executive's Dept.
Stephen Rumble, Communications Manager, Warwickshire Casualty Reduction Partnership.
Sergeant Mark Steventon, Warwickshire Police Road Safety Unit.
Estyn Williams, Group Manager, Road Safety Unit, PTES

1. General

(1) Apologies for absence

None

(2) Members Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None

(3) Minutes of the meeting of the former Environment and Rural Affairs Overview and Scrutiny Committee held 22 March 2005.

The minutes of the former Environment and Rural Affairs Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 22 March 2005 were noted.

(4) Minutes of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 17 May 2005.

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 May 2005 be agreed and be signed as a correct record.

(5) Remit of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Members noted the remit of the Committee, which was to advise on the development of policies and to scrutinise performance in relation to the environment and transport including highways, public transport, waste disposal, environmental services and sustainability.

2. Public Question Time

None

3. Results of Waste Strategy Consultation

Roy Burton presented the report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy detailing the results of the consultation on Warwickshire's Waste Management Strategy.

Discussion followed on the progress of the Strategy.

Consultation

Members –

- Commented that the workshops had been well received by parish and district councils;
- Expressed concern that the number of responses received to the consultation were disappointing and did not, therefore, represent the views of the majority of Warwickshire residents.
- Suggested that August was not a good time for consultation with County and District Committees and that the timescale should be extended into September to give all stakeholders adequate opportunity of responding;
- Discussed how the consultation could be widened. Other suggestions for expanding consultation included the use of the County Council's website, consideration by the Area Committees and circulation of leaflets/questionnaires on refuse collection days.

Energy from Waste

Members –

- Supported the Energy from Waste concept but said that, for many residents, the issue of concern was incineration and the detrimental

environmental impact of this process and the location of new plants;

- Highlighted the need for collaboration with neighbouring authorities if sites for new Energy from Waste plants were to be built;
- Considered that further consultation should focus on choices of technology and use of the term “incineration” in respect of options relating to the burning of waste;
- Stressed the need for a sustainability appraisal to be carried out on the proposed processes.

In response to Members’ comments John Deegan accepted that there was an issue about the quality of the consultation and on the difficulty of consulting on the energy from waste process. He referred to the technological specification of new energy from waste plants, which were much improved on existing plants. He noted Members’ comments about extending the areas of consultation and the timescale for consulting with district and borough councils.

The Committee resolved :-

- (1) with Councillor Martin Heatley’s agreement, that the final draft Strategy be considered by this Committee before being submitted to Cabinet for approval;
- (2) The Director of PTES be asked to ensure that consultation periods be extended well into September to ensure that all stakeholders have a reasonable opportunity to respond;
- (3) The Warwickshire Waste Partnership be requested to focus any further publication on choices of technology and to use the term “incineration” in respect of options involving the burning of waste;
- (4) The intention that the Forum for the Future carry out a Sustainability Appraisal be affirmed.

4. Road Safety and Casualty Reduction

Estyn Williams presented the report, which had been produced in response to a request for a joint report with input from PTES, Fire and Rescue, Warwickshire Police and the Warwickshire Casualty Reduction Partnership.

During discussion Members –

- Commented on the importance of education on road safety and partnership working and expressed support for the ASTRA project (uniformed officers visiting schools). Concern was expressed that the number of schools visited as part of this project appeared to have reduced.

- Questioned how well the co-ordinated approach was working and its effectiveness;
- Commented on the need for “cultural” change for motorists to drive within the speed limits and the need for enforcement to control excessive speed;
- Highlighted the need for consistency in prioritising of local safety schemes;
- Enquired about the proliferation of signs, for example, “Think Bike” and questioned who was responsible for their erection and the reason why.

In response to the above the officers responded to individual questions and concerns and further explained that –

- The poster sign campaign was being operated over the East and West Midlands and specifically targeted at motorcyclists. The signs were rotated around high casualty sites and linked with targeted enforcement;
- PTES was currently discussing the ASTRA programme with the Police. The view of the Police was that this type of education was more appropriate for selective training through the “Positive About Young People” programme;
- The Partnership was working well together but would benefit from shared targets with the Highways Agency and Police.

During further discussion concern was expressed that the report had already been considered by the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members suggested that road safety issues should be within the remit of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee rather than both the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committees, to avoid duplication, and because this was in Councillor Heatley’s portfolio. It was suggested that this issue should be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group for consideration.

Resolved that the Committee –

- (1) Endorses the Council’s approach to reducing death and injury on Warwickshire’s roads outlined in the report;
- (2) Asks the Director of PTES to -
 - (a) Jointly report with the Police to a future meeting on the ASTRA programme;
 - (b) Invite the Highways Agency to a future meeting to discuss casualty reduction;

- (3) Asks the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group to consider whether it was more appropriate for the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider road safety issues rather than the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to avoid duplication, and as it fell within Councillor Heatley's portfolio.

5. Provisional Items for Future Meetings and Forward Plan Items Relevant to the Work of this Committee

(a) Provisional Items for Future Meetings

Members discussed the Committee's future work programme and –

Resolved that -

- (1) the meeting on the 28 July 2005 be cancelled and that the items scheduled for this meeting be deferred to the 27th September 2005 meeting;
- (2) the report on the BVR of Traffic Management – 6 months Status Review against Service Plan be deferred from the 27 September meeting to the 8 November meeting;
- (3) the report on the Tree Stock Assessment – Progress report, scheduled for the 27 September meeting be referred to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (4) Under the items headed "To be programmed" – the report on Affordable Housing – PSA Agreement (Implication of Government Proposals following the Baker Review in relation to planning policy for housing) to be rescheduled into the Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme.

(b) Forward Plan

Members noted the Forward Plan items relevant to the work of the Committee as follows -

Cabinet – 16 June 2005

Warwickshire Provisional Local Transport Plan 2005. (Five Year Plan) (PTES)
Stepped Change in Public Transport and Park and Ride Provision (SPARK) 'Annex E' major scheme bid for public transport (PTES)
Design Services Partnership Contract (Continuation of Partnering with consultant) (PTES)
Potential railways skills and investment partnership (PTES)

Cabinet – 8 September 2005

Renewal of Management Contracts for Waste –EXEMPT (PTES)

Council – 21 July 2005

Capital Programme for Transport 2005/06 (PTES)

6. Any Other Items

None.

.....
Chair of Committee

The Committee rose at 11:45 a.m.