

Minutes of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 28 June 2007.

Present:

Members: Councillor Ken Browne (Chair)
“ Ray Sweet (Vice Chair)
“ John Appleton
“ George Atkinson
“ Gordon Collett
“ Jose Compton
“ Eithne Goode
“ Katherine King
“ Bryan Levy
“ John Whitehouse

Also Present: Councillor Martin Heatley, Portfolio Holder for Environment.

Officers:

Roger Bennett, Strategic Projects Team Leader, Traffic Projects Group, Environment and Economy Directorate.
Graeme Fitton, Head of Transport and Highways, Environment and Economy Directorate
Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator, Performance and Development Directorate.
Malcolm Graham, Head of Transport and Highways, Environment and Economy
Paul Williams, Scrutiny Officer, Performance and Development Directorate
Philipa Young, Team Leader, Road Safety Unit, Environment and Economy Directorate.

1. General

(1) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joan Lea and Sid Tooth.

(2) Members Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Members declared personal interests as district/borough councillors as listed below:

Warwick District Council - Councillor Eithne Goode.
North Warwickshire Borough Council - Councillor Ray Sweet
Stratford District Council - Councillor John Appleton

(3) Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 April 2007

The minutes of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26 April 2007 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

(a) Minute 1 (3) (a) Rugby Western Relief Road - Funding

In reply to a question from Councillor Gordon Collett, Graeme Fitton reported that the "Turf cutting" ceremony for the commencement of the work on the Rugby Western Relief Road was taking place on 11 July 2007.

(b) Minute 3 (a) (4) – Public Access to the Coventry and Warwickshire University Hospital (CWUH).

The Chair reported that a meeting with the Chief Executive of the Health Authority and Margaret Smith, Transport Planner was taking place on 5 July 2007 to discuss public transport access to the hospital.

(c) Minute 10 – Parking on the Parade

Roger Bennett reported that the Traffic Regulation Order restricting parking on the Parade was awaiting DfT authorisation. The Chair reported a letter received from the District Commander, Warwick Police, in response to the Committee's request for more Police attention to address the problem of parking on the pavements on the Parade. The Commander had instructed his officers to pay attention to the parking situation on these roads and to enforce the restrictions.

2. Public Question Time

None

3. Future Work Programme and Items Relevant to the Work of this Committee

(a) Provisional Items for Future Meetings

The Committee noted the future work programme and agreed revisions as follows –

- (1) **September** meeting – Add "Street Lighting" (subject to consultation with the Area Committees being concluded).
- (2) **October** Special meeting – Include flooding alert in the topic "Climate Change and the Impact on Water".
- (3) Add to the **November** meeting –

- (a) Progress of the Waste Partnership and to include comments on the Gateway Review.
- (b) Short presentation on planning application process – Opportunities for Member comment on district council planning applications.
- (c) Public access to Coventry and Warwickshire University Hospital.

(4) Delete from list of **items to be allocated** –

- (a) Rural Strategy Working Group
- (b) Review of the LUMP Scheme
- (c) Environmental Impact Standards ISO14001

(5) Briefing notes to be sent out by Graeme Fitton – Litter and leaf clearance, Grass cutting (Policy and Highways Agency response), and on Japanese Knotweed.

(b) Forward Plan Items

Members noted the Forward Plan items relevant to the work of this Committee.

4. Speed Management Strategy

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy which outlined the draft Speed Management Strategy, which had been revised in the light of comments made by the five Area Committees

In reply to comments Malcolm Graham –

- Advised that the Strategy covered A & B roads only and that, whilst acknowledging Members' concerns about the status of downgraded roads, he referred to SMS 12 which detailed how speed limits on roads not covered by the A&B review would be addressed.
- Advised that speed limits outside schools were covered in the Strategy (SMS 13) although schools were not specifically mentioned.
- Explained that SMS 9 was a policy objective and that, if an Area Committee wished to impose a speed limit in a particular area the engineering work associated with the proposal should enable the scheme to be self-enforcing.
- With regard to the Police response to SMS 11 he undertook to seek clarification on this issue and establish whether Community Police Support Officers were able to enforce 20 m.p.h. speed limits (with the use of hand-held detectors).

The Committee supported the Speed Management Strategy, and recommended that it be forwarded it to Cabinet for approval, subject to clarification of the police response to SMS 11.

5. Review of Parking Policies

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

At its meeting on 26th April, the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on possible changes to the County Council's parking policies. The Committee requested that the draft policies be submitted to Area Committees and other consultees for comment. This report included the comments which had been received and suggestions for some minor revisions to the draft policies. It recommended that they be submitted to Cabinet with a recommendation that the policies be adopted.

An extract from the minutes of the meeting of the Stratford on Avon Area Committee's meeting on 16 May 2007 was circulated to Members.

Councillor Katherine King, seconded by Councillor George Atkinson, moved that the recommendation contained in the report be adopted without amendment.

Discussion ensued and Members' comments were noted as follows –

- (1) That the Policies should be supported.
- (2) That requests to formalise parking on pavements should not be permitted.
- (3) Stratford on Avon Area Committee's support for discouraging footway parking was noted.
- (4) Concern was expressed about the cost of the provision of residential disabled parking bays. The view was expressed that people in receipt of disability allowance, and on a fixed income, should not be further penalised by having to pay a fee for these bays (£80 for a St. Andrews Cross and from £250 and £500 for an official disabled persons parking bay) particularly when they would have no exclusive or proprietary rights over these spaces.

In reply to Members' comments and concerns about footway parking Roger Bennett explained that the draft policies outlined in the report allowed the flexibility to accommodate specific circumstances, which was preferable to a blanket countywide ban, which would be difficult to enforce.

Resolved, one Member voting against, that Cabinet be recommended to –

- (1) adopt the draft parking policies, and
- (2) give consideration to the County Council funding the cost of providing residential disabled parking bays (official and St. Andrews Cross bays).

6. Any Other Business

There were no items of urgent business.

Chair of Committee

The Committee rose at 11.25 a.m.