

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 24 March 2005, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Compton (Chairman), Councillors, Mrs Blacklock, Davies, Gill, Hatfield, Sandhar and Smith.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Begg (Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Copping and Short.

865. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest

866. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 February 2005 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

867. **SCRUTINY OF REFUSE SERVICE**

The Committee received a report from the Waste Management Team on the scrutiny of the refuse service.

As part of its work programme for 2004/2005, the Committee had agreed to undertake a review of refuse collection, including an update on the progress made with the introduction of the door to door multi material collection service.

In October 2004 the Committee agreed to investigate three areas of refuse collection over the next twelve months, i.e. performance, waste types and amendments to the current contract.

Three sub-groups had been appointed to focus on different aspects of the performance of the service which included missed collections, new properties, joint working and public perception. An interim report had been submitted to the December meeting and a final report was circulated with the report.

An informal meeting of the Committee had been held on 2 February 2005 to discuss with representatives of Stratford-upon-Avon District Council their processes, and ways of working with regard to refuse collection. The notes from this meeting were attached as an appendix to the report.

In addition to the above, the Committee had also appointed sub groups to investigate and report back to its June 2005 meeting on bulky waste, garden waste and special and clinical wastes.

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A brief guide to the process used for each of these services and the current contract details were circulated with the report.

It was proposed to appoint three Councillors to consider and suggest revisions which Members would like to see included in the next refuse collection contract to be tendered in 2008.

Councillor Mrs Begg and the Strategic Director reported on a recent visit made to Litchfield to discuss the way that that Council operated its refuse collections, and disposals services.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the Waste Management Officer be asked to circulate briefing notes on the investigations by the Sub Groups into waste types, to members of the Sub Groups for approval, and submit the final reports to the next meeting;
- (3) Councillors Smith, Mrs Blacklock or Copping and Hatfield be appointed to consider and suggest revisions which Members would like to see included in the next refuse collection contract, to be tendered in 2008, and submit their final draft report to the June meeting, before submission to the Executive in July 2005; and
- (4) the Waste Management Officer prepare a briefing note of the comparison with the services provided by Litchfield and the important lessons that could be applied in Warwick, for the next meeting of the Committee to consider.

868. ENERGY MANAGEMENT

A report from the Section 151 Officer, Environmental Health, Planning and Engineering and Property Services was submitted on recommendations from this Committee to the Executive on energy management, which had been agreed by the Executive in April 2003.

During 2002, the Committee had received four reports or presentations covering different aspects of the Council's responsibilities with regard to energy management. These included an overview, Home Energy Conservation Act, energy and the local plan and energy conservation in Council offices and buildings.

At their meetings in February and March 2003, the Committee had made eleven recommendations to the Executive which had been agreed by the Executive in April 2003 and were to be taken forward for action during 2003/2004.

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Updates on the progress made in implementing the recommendation were attached as appendices to the report.

The Divisional Environmental Health Officer addressed Members on the recommendations which came within his remit. Reference was made to the need for training for members on the question of energy efficiency.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the Executive be asked to arrange a training session on energy efficiency before a Council meeting; and
- (3) Councillors Mrs Blacklock and Smith meet with the Officers to investigate further the contents of the report, and report to the next meeting of this Committee.

869. HISTORIC BUILDINGS GRANTS SCHEMES IN WARWICK DISTRICT – ANNUAL REVIEW AND REPORT OF MEMBERS’ WORKING PARTY

A report from the Members’ Working Party and Planning and Engineering was submitted on historic buildings grant schemes.

The Council had, for many years, supported schemes of grants to preserve and enhance the historic environment within the District. Details of the schemes which had been successfully operated within the District within the past year were set out in the report. The Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme of Grants would conclude at the end of March 2005.

A report prepared by the Working Group, consisting of Councillors Mrs Blacklock, Hatfield and Smith which had been appointed to investigate the effectiveness of the Historic Buildings Grant Schemes within the District, was set out in the report and would be submitted to the Executive on 29 March 2005.

Members of the Working Group thanked the Officers for their assistance in their investigation and report.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the conclusions of the Members’ Working Group into Historic Buildings Grants be accepted;
- (2) the annual report on Historic Buildings Grants funding be noted; and
- (3) a further annual report be submitted to the Committee in March 2006.

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870. WARWICK DISTRICT TOWNS CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY FORUM (ANNUAL REVIEW)

The Committee considered an annual progress report from Planning and Engineering on the functioning of the Warwick Towns Conservation Area Advisory Forum.

The purpose of the Conservation Area Advisory Forum was to comment on listed building and planning applications within the conservation areas of Royal Leamington Spa, Warwick, Kenilworth and Whitnash. The Forum was made up of four elected Members, one of whom was appointed as Chairman, and representatives of local and national amenity groups and other interested bodies. In 2002 the Forum had been expanded to include Warwick, Kenilworth and Whitnash, as well as Royal Leamington Spa, within its remit, and at that time it was agreed that the length of agendas and the officer time involved in preparing for the meetings would be reviewed annually to ensure these elements remained within acceptable parameters.

A review had been carried out and it demonstrated that the number of applications dealt with on average had remained constant over the year, and that the staff time in preparing the agendas and presentations had remained constant.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the contents of the report be noted and that Warwick Towns Conservation Area Advisory Forum continues in its present format servicing the four towns within the District; and
- (2) since the format and the servicing of the Forum has remained stable, no further annual reports be presented unless changes are required.

871. REVIEW OF PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

Members were asked to appoint three Councillors to meet with the Head of Planning Enforcement to review planning enforcement, and report their findings to the June meeting of this Committee.

RESOLVED that Councillors Davies, Mrs Blacklock or Copping and Gill be appointed to review planning enforcement.

872. ACTION 21 PAST AND FUTURE

The Committee considered a report from Action 21 on the Service Level Agreement which was due to come to an end on 31 March 2005, and the proposed way forward for Action 21's work in Warwick District.

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In 1996, Action 21 had been created in response to the Rio Earth Summit as a network of volunteers affiliated to Warwick District Council with the aim of delivering sustainability objectives at community level. In 2001, Action 21 had been incorporated as a limited company with ten volunteer directors, and at that point, it had begun a new relationship with Warwick District Council working to deliver a service level agreement (SLA) with the support of a fulltime seconded officer. Details of the SLA were set out in the report together with the achievements under the SLA.

From 1 April 2005, Action 21 would continue working with Warwick District Council under a different arrangement. It would be responsible for delivering particular areas of work relating to sustainability, as agreed with certain Council Departments. The Sustainability Officer's post would no longer be provided by Warwick District Council and would be made redundant. Instead the Post would be employed directly through Action 21 Limited. Action 21 would, therefore, deliver work directly for Warwick District Council as a private contractor.

The sum allocated for work delivered by Action 21 in the financial year 2005/2006 would be £20,000.

Details of the work required during 2005/2006 were set out in the report.

RESOLVED that the Committee notes the achievements of the partnership SLA with Action 21, and the new way of working, which would take effect from 1 April 2005.

873. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – THREE QUARTER YEAR RESULTS 2004/05

The Committee considered a report from the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder on the performance management results of the third quarter of 2004/2005.

The regular and systematic reporting of performance results against targets, trended over time and compared with other authorities was a fundamental element of the Council's integrated performance management framework. The performance management framework in turn was a key tool in ensuring the Council stayed focused on what mattered, to ensure it delivered its services efficiently and effectively.

The report provided results, for the period April to September 2004, for all the Corporate Strategy, Best Value and Service Area Plan Dashboard indicators that had been identified for quarterly reporting.

RECOMMENDED that the contents of the report be noted and it be suggested that BVPI176 (domestic violence refuge places) be deleted.

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874. EXECUTIVE MEETING – MONDAY, 7 FEBRUARY AND MONDAY, 28 FEBRUARY 2005

The Committee considered the minutes of the Executive meetings, held on 7 February and 28 February 2005, which came within its remit.

RECOMMENDED that the minutes be noted.

875. END OF TERM REPORT FOR 2004/05 AND WORK PLAN FOR 2005/06

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Director (Environment) on matters considered by the Committee, during the year 2004/2005, and on an initial work plan for 2005/2006.

The Committee was constitutionally bound to report annually to Council on their workings, and make recommendations for future work programmes, and amend working methods if appropriate.

A list of matters considered by the Committee during the course of the current year was circulated with the report, along with a copy of its current work plan.

At the beginning of the year, the Committee had agreed to classify its work into two categories:-

- Select Committee style
- Task and finish group.

Details of the reviews, which had been completed by the Committee during the current year, was set out in the report.

Also set out in the report was a proposed work plan for 2005/2006. (The work plan attached to the report was marked 2004/2005 but referred, in fact, to 2005/2006).

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the list of matters considered by the Committee during the current year be noted; and
- (2) the proposed work plan for 2005/2006, as set out in the report, be re-circulated for clarity to members of Scrutiny for adoption.

876. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS)

The Committee considered the items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Tuesday, 29 March 2005, which came within its remit.

As a result, the following comments were made for forwarding to the Executive:-

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Item 4 – Efficiency Targets and Gershon Requirements

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 6 – Review of Kenilworth Conservation Area

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 10 – Outcome of Scrutiny of Food Safety Enforcement Service

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report but asked the Officers to inform the Executive that the last paragraph of the report should be deleted.

Item 12 – Performance Management – Three Quarterly Year results 2004/2005

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 14(G) – Scheme of Delegation – Fixed Penalty Fine

The Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

Item 14(H) – Coventry Airport

The Committee noted the recommendation in the report.

Item 14(J) – Historic Building Grants in Warwick District

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

(The meeting ended at 9.15 pm)

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