



Buckinghamshire County Council

Minutes

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 JULY 2005 IN MEZZANINE ROOM 2, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.02 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 1.04 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr R C Pushman (Chairman), Mr H Cadd, Mrs A C Davies, Mr M Edmonds, Mr A Oxley, Mr M Tett, Julia Wassell and Mr R K Woollard.

CO-OPTED MEMBERS PRESENT

Mrs G A Jones (Wycombe District Council)
Mr A Walters (South Bucks District Council)

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs P Birchley
Mr H G W Wilson

OTHERS PRESENT

Mr G Bartlett Strategic Transport Manager
Mrs K Jones Democratic Services Officer
Mr D Sweetland Policy Officer
Mr S Pope Chilterns AONB Transport Officer

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services reported apologies for absence from Mrs P Lindsley (Mr A Oxley was substituting for this meeting only), Mr Z Mohammed, Mr D Meacock, and Mr J Warder.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Community and Environmental Services held on 22 June 2005, copies of which had been circulated, were agreed and signed as a correct record after Mr A Hill had been included in the list of apologies.

2 MATTERS ARISING

The Policy Officer reported the following:

- 1 Cabinet Member Priorities – a note on priorities will be included in the Work Programme issues paper at the meeting in September.
- 2 Local Transport Plan (LTP) - a question had been raised about the timing of the LTP submission to the Government before the location of development is known. A timetable for the South East Plan was attached to the agenda on page 20 for information.
- 3 Best Value Review of Transportation – a paper had been circulated late for the last meeting. The Policy Officer reported that the Chief Executive had circulated a letter reminding officers that papers had to be circulated five clear working days before a meeting.
- 4 Nominations for Working Groups
Since the last meeting the following nominations had been made:

Community

Environment

Quintin Ings-Chambers
Alan Hill
John Warder
Alan Walters

Chester Jones nominated himself for the Community Working Group.

10.06am Mr D A B Green and Mrs A C Davies joined the meeting

3 WASTE STRATEGY

Mark Tipton, Waste Partnership Officer gave a presentation to the meeting. Members were advised that the aim was to deliver plans on the waste strategy between 2012 and 2014. BCC is a two-tier authority and has responsibility for waste disposal. Waste collection is undertaken by the four districts.

The main drivers for change are the following:

- EU landfill directive and global warming
- UK implementation of the EU landfill directive
- UK Household Waste Recycling Bill

Consequences of change:

- Landfill tax will be increased from £18 to £35 per tonne
- Fines of £150 per tonne would be levied for missing allowance targets
- The total charge to landfill of missing the target is £200 per tonne

Members were advised that currently Bucks recycles 29% of its waste and that the residue is taken to Calvert, Gerrards Cross or Green Farm.

Key Considerations

Waste minimisation	Environmental/health effects
Changes in composition	Reliable data
Inputs from collection	Skills/education
Markets for outputs	Procurement issues
Bankability	Costs compared with options
Planning issues	

Residual disposal options

- Mechanical biological treatment used extensively in Europe
- Anaerobic design.
- Conventional thermal treatment with energy recovery
- Mechanical heat treatment
- Advanced thermal treatment

Members thanked Mark Tipton for his presentation and made the following points:

- The member from Wycombe District Council noted that the cost of recycling was very expensive. She explained that the District councils were being asked to exceed government targets in order to meet the requirements of BCC. Martin Dickman replied that if a District council exceeds its targets allowances would be reduced. He added that BCC was looking at means of supporting the Districts.
- A member commended the presentation and asked if BCC was reviewing the planning policy of the provision of transfer sites. Members were advised that officers were working closely with strategic planners and that the results of the public consultation would be published in August. It was noted that the existing strategy highlights the need for new waste facilities and that further action is due.
- A member asked what happened to business waste and she suggested that more collection points are required. She also suggested that the legislation was 10 years too late and feared that the increase in council tax was not ideal. She asked what plans were in place to achieve targets by weight and noted that currently there was no compost collection in AVDC. Members were advised that DEFRA will be reviewing targeting in the summer. Work was taking place on national campaigns that impact on commercial and industrial waste.
- A member asked what system is in place for disposing of plastic. He noted that the cost of fuel to transport plastic could result in a negative energy balance. Members were encouraged to recycle plastic and it was suggested that they refer to the Wrap website.
- The Member from South Bucks District Council recommended that a decision be taken on collection and disposal because landfill is no longer an option. Members were advised that a report would be presented to Cabinet on 18 July when a decision will be taken on procurement options. It is anticipated that a contract will be awarded in 2007 although a facility will not be in place until mid 2013.
- A member explained that she had recently attended a DEFRA conference and she supported the earlier comments that discussions should have commenced 10 years ago.

- Another member supported the comments about the delays in tackling waste and hoped that recycling could be increased by 50%. He suggested that there were consequences for air quality as a result of these delays. Mark Tipton acknowledged that the response had been slow but added that for the period to 2012 draft strategic implementation goals were in place to which personal and financial responsibilities were attached.
- During a discussion on the disposal options Mark Tipton explained that initially incineration had been pursued as a short-term solution in two out of County locations. Members were advised that the change from landfill was driven not by European policy but that the greatest challenge was global warming. A programme of visits for the Joint Waste Committee have been organised to Italy, Germany, and Norway and that five UK facilities have also been visited.
- In response to a question, Mark Tipton confirmed that industrial waste was not the responsibility of BCC.

The Vice-Chairman suggested that Europe was ahead of the UK in its Waste Strategy programme because of proportional representation. She acknowledged the importance of providing education on waste disposal and thanked the officers for an enlightening introduction. A member asked for copies of the reports of the visits.

4 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2: DISCUSSION

The Chairman welcomed Gary Bartlett Strategic Transport Manager to the meeting. Gary Bartlett explained that the Local Transport Plan (LTP) would be presented to Cabinet on 18 July and that it has already been presented to LAG. The final document will be submitted to Central Government by March 2006.

A member asked if consideration had been given to the impact of the proposed developments along the Tring Road and the area action plans for Aylesbury, Wycombe, Chesham and Amersham. Gary Bartlett replied that the proposals for the Local Development Framework were awaited in Aylesbury. He explained that he would like road casualties to be reduced although it was impossible for them to be eliminated.

The member for Wycombe District Council expressed concern that plans for urban areas were often imposed on the rural areas. She asked for timing on when the plans would be released. Gary Bartlett replied that the anticipated date for Aylesbury was the end of July. The local plans will be developed with the involvement of the District council. He acknowledged that concern has been expressed about the timetable and that there is insufficient time for the districts to comment. Members were advised that announcements about financial settlements would be made in December 2005. In response to a question it was confirmed that formal criteria have been drawn up to guide spending decisions and that casualties are not the only guideline.

A member asked if the LTP would address the weaknesses with cycling. This was the intention because it was seen as a means of trying to address congestion.

12.04pm Mr M Tett joined the meeting

Gary Bartlett also acknowledged the importance of improving air quality and explained that currently there was only one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) on the Tring Road and that this was a consequence of problems with local traffic. Work was taking place to try to mitigate air pollution. There is a requirement that once pollution reaches a certain level the district is required to declare an AQMA. In

response to a question, members were advised that a graduate was preparing a strategy and working with the districts on AQMAs and area where AQMAs might be required because of increasing pollution

Another member expressed concern about congestion on the A4010 and he hoped that an additional road west of Princes Risborough could be considered to join the M40 and link with Milton Keynes or alternatively a new road from the north to the south of the county. He hoped that this could be included in the consultation. This was confirmed. Another member said that new roads were the last option.

During a discussion on congestion, members were advised that each authority is required to nominate a Transport Manager and that Keith Shaw is the Service Manager for Network Management. His role is to coordinate work and minimise delays. There are plans to review the Strategic Network (SN) and the aim is that through traffic such as HGVs will be required to use the SN.

A member suggested that consideration be given to the need for significant infrastructure to support the proposed housing growth in the Aylesbury Vale area. Gary Bartlett acknowledged the need to promote modal shift and added that in the larger areas there was an opportunity for significant modal shift for example red route 9 and Silver Rider.

The Chairman congratulated the team on their achievements as a Highway Authority.

The Policy Officer reported that the first task of the Environment Group would be to look at Congestion. He proposed preparing a scoping paper that could be the basis of a future meeting. The co-opted member for Wycombe District Council suggested that congestion be looked at within the context of the SE Plan. This was noted.

12.25pm Mr A Walters left the meeting.

5 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT IN ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

Shaun Pope Chilterns AONB Transport Officer gave a presentation on Traffic Management in Environmentally Sensitive Areas during which he reported that Area 2 would be signed off on 12 July. The process including public feedback has been monitored. Members were advised that quiet lanes had been introduced on a trial basis in Norfolk and Kent.

The Chairman thanked the officer for his excellent presentation. The Vice-Chairman asked if advertising quiet lanes increased traffic flows. This was not the case because they are so narrow and restrictive. Another member expressed surprise about the delays in introducing 20mph speed restrictions. The Chairman proposed that a letter is sent to MPs asking for their support.

12.49pm Mrs G A Jones left the meeting

During a discussion on the incidences of deer casualties it was agreed that there was a need to try and reduce them.

The Chairman asked if there would be a survey on signage for villages. Gary Bartlett confirmed that there would be an asset management survey and that this would include street furniture. It was noted that some potential quiet lanes have been identified as a result of the speed limit review. Another member noted that the parishes were very hostile to children walking on 60mph lanes and they were pleased that action would be taken soon.

In response to Shaun Pope's observations about the obstacles to innovation put in place by the Department of Transport, the Committee agreed with the Chairman's suggestion to write to the county's MPs to raise this issue.

Members were advised that authorisation has been given for roundels in the central Chilterns area only. Concern has been expressed that with the adoption of the new recommendations roundels will appear throughout the county.

6 RESPONDING TO A MAJOR DISASTER: THE HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS

The Chairman suggested and it was agreed that due to time constraints and the recent London bombings this item be deferred to a future meeting.

7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 28 September 2005 at 10am in Mezzanine Room 1.

**MR R C PUSHMAN
CHAIRMAN**