



Minutes

ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND LOCALITY SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND LOCALITY SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE HELD ON FRIDAY 6 DECEMBER 2013, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 2, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 9.45 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 11.20 AM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr T Butcher, Mr S Lambert and Mr W Whyte (Chairman)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr S Boddy, Ms N Glover, Ms S Griffin (Secretary) and Ms K Wager

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Bill Chapple, David Carroll, Bill Bendyshe-Brown and Phil Gomm.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the Wednesday 6 November 2013 were agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendment;

Page 2 – Environmental Response – Sustainable Travel Scheme
Nigel Simms to be amended to Jim Simms

Matters Arising

Environmental Response – Green Deal



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Bucks County Council has purchased £35,000 in shares in the Community Interest Company and there is the officer time of 0.4 full time employment.

The Green Deal will be on the Work Programme for the ETL Committee for 2014.

A meeting to discuss the EU bids and funding with the relevant officers is being re-scheduled due to a clash with the TfB review.

Action: Warren Whyte

Details of the full bid made by BCC for EU funding is to be provided.

Action: John Lamb/Kama Wager

Minutes of the Strategic Management Board

The minutes of the last meeting of the Board have been circulated but are not particularly helpful. This is to be pursued in terms of how much information the Committee needs to monitor.

Customer Focus Project

The project is ongoing and is on the Committee Work Programme for 2014. One of the recommendations in the report is for the Committee to receive regular updates. The statistics report is to be circulated to Committee Members.

Action: Kama Wager

Grass Cutting update

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning and Transportation has provided details of the legislation and statutory requirements for hedge cutting and grass cutting on highways, the statutory requirements of the products that can be used for weed spraying and the weed spraying programme. This document is to be circulated to Committee Members.

Action: Sharon Griffin

Summary of the findings reports being compiled for Cabinet is to be sent to Committee Members.

Action: Ruth Vigor-Hedderly / Sean Rooney

Section 106

A meeting has taken place with the Lead Officer. The Committee has agreed the next steps in the paper presented at the November meeting. A summit is being arranged for late January to look at developing a robust process with the relevant stakeholders i.e. roles and responsibilities and the development of member involvement. The next step is to schedule a working group which would include members of the Environment, Transport and Locality Services and Finance, Resource and Performance Select Committees, Service Area Officers and the Cabinet Member.

Travel Bucks Strategy

The completion date for the Community Transport review being carried out by Community Impact Bucks is still awaited. The focus of the review is predominantly on access to Health Care Services for vulnerable people. The report findings can be fed into the Committee work programme.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman explained that the Environment, Transport and Locality Services Select Committee concluded its inquiry into the Transport for Buckinghamshire (Ringway Jacobs contract).

The draft report will be presented Cabinet on the 13 January 2014 subject to agreement from the Committee.

The Committee have been invited to attend a Key Performance Indicator workshop by the County Council client team and the Cabinet Member to review the KPIs for 2014/2015 and to submit the names of two members of the Committee to join the workshop.

The Chairmen of the Select Committees have been invited to attend the Budget Scrutiny meeting at the beginning of January. The areas for the ETL Select Committee will be dealt with on the 8 January 2014. The Chairman is to be advised of any questions to be raised.

Action: All

6 TRANSPORT FOR BUCKS INQUIRY : DRAFT REPORT

Members of the Committee were referred to the draft report which presents the findings of the inquiry into the Transport for Buckinghamshire (Ringway Jacobs) contract.

The inquiry started on the 24 July 2013 and has been a significant piece of work for various members of the Committee.

The Chairman thanked Kama Wager, Policy Officer, for her time and effort in producing a succinct and detailed report.

Twelve recommendations have been made. Recommendation 1 captures a number of the various internal reviews (the external consultant review of TfB, the internal BCC Communications and Customer Focus review and the new role for the Local Area Technicians) which have happened within the County Council since the inquiry was undertaken by the ETL Select Committee. Rather than duplicate recommendations that have come out of those reviews, the monitoring role of the Environment, Transport and Localities Committee has been encapsulated in this recommendation.

The remainder of the recommendations are focussed on more specific elements or the management of the contract.

During discussion, the following comments were made;

- The report is a considerable piece of work which covers everything the Committee wanted it to in terms of the investigation and is distilled and focussed. The involvement and work from the Cabinet Member and Transport for Buckinghamshire with this Committee along with has been welcomed. How will the Cabinet Member take the report forward?
- With regard to recommendations for member led systems, recommendation 5 in particular is very important as at the moment both of these points are currently hidden from strategic view. If the County Council is spending a large amount of the budget on member led road maintenance issues, what happens to the rest of the budget and the priorities?
- An understanding of KPIs and the contract extension is also very important.

- Recommendation 11 – the contractual obligations for 3% efficiency savings - how will this be managed through the contract? The impact of this is awaited as this is linked to the Medium Term Plan (MTP), the budget process of the County Council. It is about making sure that the two areas are mirrored and work together (the MTP and the contract period).
- The recommendations encapsulate the key themes and concerns raised during the process.
- The recommendations are succinct and to the point. The issue is the outcomes of the recommendations need to be seen as results on the ground as well as improvements and ensuring that value for money is being received from the contractor particularly as it is probably the largest contract the County Council has.
- The review has shown that the contract is adequate and does what it needs to do but there are some key points of the contract need to be refined. Contract management is fundamental from both the client and the contractor perspective.

Members of the Committee agreed that the draft report is to be presented to Cabinet subject to any minor amendments.

7 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members discussed future topics for the Work Programme for 2014.

The following areas for further work were proposed;

The Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP)

Examining and assessing the role of LEPs with the County Council. There is the anomaly in Buckinghamshire of two LEPs covering part of the county. There needs to be an understanding of the current and future funding, accountability, influence and how they inform the County Council's strategic decision making process on infrastructure and development.

It is important that both Members of the Committee and members of public understand what LEPs are as there is a degree of democratic accountability as this is public money. There needs to be assurance that the money is spent in the right way and the outcomes benefit Buckinghamshire residents.

Public Transport

Ensuring public transport is fit for purpose, future demands, the impact of funding cuts, rural isolation and integrated transport networks.

There may well be a reduction in funding for public transport from the County Council in the forthcoming financial year. It is important that services provided that are subsidised by the County Council respond to the needs of those using the service i.e. in Chalfont St Giles there is no bus service to Chalfont & Latimer train station. Some routes are historic but employment etc has changed over a period of time.

Crime and Disorder

The ETL is the designated crime and disorder Committee. As part of the work programme an update will be received from the Community Safety Team on the community safety arrangements across Buckinghamshire.

S106 – improving local opportunities and local input from members.

Work needs to take place with other bodies to ensure improvements in the infrastructure and S106 to maximise value for money. There needs to be procedures in place to ensure this happens.

Members of the Committee agreed that scoping proposals should be requested for LEPs, public transport and S106 with the option of including additional items as a one off review.

8 PAPERS FOR INFORMATION

Members of the Committee were referred to papers included in the agenda pack for information;

Hydraulic Fracturing

The report on Hydraulic Fracturing is to be circulated to all Members.

Action: Kama Wager

Options Paper for Members to consider and comment on options for the next steps;

1. The Committee resolves to do no further on fracking and to pass the information papers on to Cabinet for their consideration;
2. The Committee do no further research and pass the information papers on to Cabinet with a covering letter of Committee recommendations (e.g. that the redrafted Minerals Plan references fracking, and that any further in depth research is led by the Cabinet Member at the appropriate time).
3. The Committee receive further information from the service areas and decide whether to commission any further research on fracking and subsequently pass any views of recommendations on to the Cabinet Member.

Members of the Committee agreed to take forward option 2.

An update on the Minerals Plan and the time frame for the review will be requested for the February meeting of the Committee.

Action: Kama Wager

As the current Minerals Plan runs until 2016, a six month timeframe is to be added to the plan.

Action: Kama Wager

Flooding Strategy update

It is important to note that this Act is about local flooding as defined as flood risk from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses not river flooding.

Clarification is needed on household insurance issues such as responsibility for the maintenance of the riparian, water courses, surface flooding etc and the County Council responsibility in terms of drainage and gully's which affects residents and is not mentioned in the information paper.

An issue to be addressed is what is the impact on the Environment Agencies flood maps and insurance.

9 WASTE AND RECYCLING UPDATE

Stephen Boddy, Lead Officer Waste Business Unit was welcomed to the meeting.

Mr Boddy referred members to the Household Waste and Recycling Centre (HWRC) Service and Waste Acceptance and Access Policy Project (WAAP) update report and highlighted the following key points of the paper;

Place Portfolio attended the July meeting of the Committee and provided updates from a number of the different areas of the service. This included the general background to the Household Recycling Centre Service that is currently provided by Buckinghamshire County Council.

BCC has a statutory function as a waste disposal Authority to provide one or more HWRC's where Buckinghamshire residents can recycle and dispose of their own household waste.

There are currently 10 Household Recycling Centres across the county. Five of these centres accept waste from traders as well as residents. The WAAP defines who, how and what quantities of waste will be accepted at each of the sites.

The key objectives of the project are;

- To control the deposit of illegal trade waste by limiting free access to HWRC's, and encourage alternative routes for legal trade waste disposal
- Ensure Buckinghamshire residents have appropriate access to the County's Household Waste Recycling Centres to dispose of their own Household Waste free of charge;
- The provision of an appropriate level of non-statutory services for example the provision of facilities for the disposal of DIY.
- Achieve MTP Savings of £50k, £100k & £150k over the next 3yrs.
- Ensure fly tipping does not increase once a proposed policy has been implemented

Historically there have been problems with companies bringing waste into recycling centres for free which is obviously at a cost to the Buckinghamshire tax payer.

The current policy is that there are restrictions on those using trailers or commercial vehicles bringing in six items DIY waste in any one month.

Current situation

Since July the baseline survey has been completed. There is a range of data (customer, pricing and site usage data) that has been built up into a model. The report includes a high level summary of the six areas which have been looked at and the options to potentially change the way the service is delivered in the future.

One option includes trying to incentivise the customers and give them an extra reason to use the services and to give them a financial reward to bring the waste into the site. A broader reward system is currently being looked at and to try to link this in with other areas in Council Services.

There are currently restrictions on certain types of items that can be brought into the sites which is being reviewed. This needs to be approached in a flexible way to continue to provide a service to residents. If an individual has more material than is allowed for disposal, one approach could be the introduction of a level of pay as you go charging which allows customers to top up their allowance.

The pricing structure of the Trade Waste Acceptance Policy is being reviewed to ensure it is competitive compared with other services. The possibility of whether the acceptance of trade waste can be broadening out onto the other sites is also being looked into.

The project has assessed how the cost to BCC of waste compares to other counties and whether there is the appropriate level of access to sites. The modelling at the moment suggests an above average service provision for the sites.

Usage of sites is another key area being looked at. It is important to understand who is using the sites. Analysis has been done from the Customer Satisfaction survey to identify how many

out of county residents are using the facilities and an assessment of the potential savings should it be possible to recoup some of the cost.

Overall 39 options have been developed from a strategic and operational level. The next step is to complete an analysis of the options which will include looking at the impact on recycling performance, the potential impact of a change to fly tipping and whether it affects the current policy or not.

A number of combinations of options will be drawn together in a short list with the aim of proposing this as a project to the Board early 2014.

Members of the Committee were asked if they would like to be part of the workshop in January/February to review the combinations of short listed options that are being proposed as a project.

During discussion the following questions were asked and points made;

Restricting access to waste sites could by implication encourage people to fly tipping. Zero tolerance is needed but by making waste disposal more difficult, the system is open to becoming abused. The County Council need to make sure that people can legitimately tip at waste sites and that waste disposal doesn't become so prohibitively expensive that fly tipping is done.

Entry to some waste sites can be restricted by queues when people turn up at the same time on particular days/ times. There needs to be thought about how this is organised. On some sites (Amersham) there are can and recycling banks outside the centre that appear to be run by Chiltern District Council which look very untidy. The rest of the site is run by BCC. At that particular site Chiltern District Council have one of their 'bring' facilities immediately outside the HWRC which appears to be historically the way site has developed. When the site has been taken out of commission, BCC have offered to bring this facility inside the HWRC temporarily to continue access. The understanding is that District Councils make their own decisions on where to place the 'bring' sites. They have the responsibility and ownership of the waste provided by the customers. As a County Council we try to ensure the contractors keep the sites as tidy as possible.

There needs to be some innovative thinking around fly tipping. The HWRC services were concerned about fly tipping. One of the reasons there are five trade waste facilities is to ensure provision is made to allow traders to dispose or recycle waste in an authorised way. The County Council does not have a statutory obligation to provide this. There needs to be the balance of enforcement and management. As part of the process the possibility of making similar facilities available across a broader range of HWRC's is being looked into which might reduce the likelihood of there being fly tipping.

In Buckingham fly tipping is a growing problem as there are a large number of student lets and every few months there is urban fly tipping of household furniture such as bed and sofas which the District Council will not collect. Landlords do not have access to easy trade waste. If an individual is renting a house then they are required to clear the house before they move on and do so, then this waste is household waste and the householder in that scenario could bring their own waste to a HWRC and depending on where they live, could also access District Council bulky waste collection facility. If the individual vacates the tenancy and the landlord has to clear out the house, the same waste is technically classed as commercial waste and it is being cleared as part of running a business. The landlord or someone else they may employ to dispose of the waste is dealing with trade waste which can be brought to one of our trade sites or a commercial facility. The HWRC in Buckingham does not accept trade waste at the moment.

As part of the review is the distance to travel to a waste facility and those who do not have access to a vehicle being looked at? The review includes looking at spread of the sites across the county. The map included with the agenda pack (page 65), shows where the sites in Buckinghamshire are currently situated. There is propensity for sites in the south of the county as opposed to the north. Statistical analysis carried out to date shows that there is a higher density of sites versus density of population compared with others. With regard to distance from a waste facility, 93% of households are within a travel distance of 20 minutes of an HWRC, 98% are within 30 minutes. An annual survey has recently been conducted in conjunction with the contractor on the sites (1900+ people) which included asking how long it currently takes them to get to a waste site. The analysis has also shown that some people can travel to two sites within the same amount of time. HWRC services are provided for customers to bring their waste to a HWRC.

What is more important, getting the waste into a recycling facility and getting the revenue from moving this on into the system or charging the householder to bring their waste to a facility? In each of the options the net overall benefit is very clearly being looked at including the risk of any fly tipping. The County Council want to encourage their customers to recycle for the benefit of increasing the current recycling rate. A financial incentive could be difficult as a lot more recycling would need to be delivered into sites to offset the incentives that would be paid out. These are two different areas of the services. The charging element would relate to non- statutory services. DIY waste is technically construction and demolition waste not household waste. The County Council does not have a statutory duty to provide a service for the disposal of DIY waste but they provide the service of allowing six bags to be brought to a site in any one month. This is currently being reviewed.

How are these arrangements being monitored? The current contract requires contractors to monitor the current permit scheme. If an individual has a van/trailer they are required to obtain a paper permit before they are able to bring DIY/green waste into the site. The contractors are obliged to ensure that anyone using a van/trailer has that necessary paperwork with them.

The community skip schemes run by some the District Councils are coming to an end. Is there going to be a review on the affect this could have on HWRC sites? Such services would be provided by District Councils. The focus of this project is on household waste recycling service but this issue can be taken away and the question asked. If the service is taken away by the District Council this might encourage individuals to bring the waste to HWRCs.

Action: Stephen Boddy

With regard to the proposed reconfiguration of the HWRC sites, what level of consultation will take place with partners, District Councils and residents should the closure/change in hours go ahead? The project is currently at the stage of the options being assessed. The proposal is to carry out some more detailed modelling of a long list before a formal consultation with a range of partners which have been identified. One of the questions in the Customer Survey asked members of the public for their opinion on a range of areas of this project i.e. did they think it was a good idea to try to incentivise residents to deposit their waste or whether we should ensure that the disposal of waste is only free of charge to Bucks residents as a significant element of site usage is taken up by people from out of county. One of the key areas being looked at is the development of some arrangements already in place with neighbouring authorities i.e. Slough and Hertfordshire where residents are able to use Bucks facilities and arrangements are in place to re-coup the cost.

The research mentions nearly 2000 customers were surveyed. What percentage of this figure are visitors to Bucks waste sites and was the survey conducted at particular sites on particular days? The percentage of customers can be reported back to the Committee.

Action: Stephen Boddy

Surveys were carried out across each of the 10 sites. Three or four of the sites were surveyed at any one time over a whole month of weekends covering both trade and householders. The

annual survey was completed at the end of November. The raw data will be received shortly and will be broken down to look at the levels of customer satisfaction across a range of areas and to look at customer responses to the questions about this project.

Is there a case for the position of the sites being inappropriate due to population size of Buckinghamshire and this model being more appropriate for other counties and is there an extra cost to the Authority to find out statistics on who uses the sites (residents/out of county). One of the models being looked at is the range of customers using the HWRCs from both in and out of the county and the potential shift of waste from one place to another. Each waste stream has individual costs. The net benefit of changing that part of the service is worked out. The customer survey provides postcode data which helps to identify which customers are Buckinghamshire residents.

Has the Energy from Waste plant been factored into the project in terms of would have an impact on customer use and the management of bio mass etc? When this project reaches the stage of further modelling of options that the County Council would like to take forward, the model will then be over a number of years and will take into account the Energy from Waste facility.

Has the option of improving HWRC facilities by locating it elsewhere been considered as well as the possibility of having a super site? The project is broad ranging looking to deliver an overall positive outcome to residents. One of the options consultants are being asked to model is if we were starting from scratch where would the waste sites be located in Buckinghamshire to provide the best overall coverage and what the type of site would we look to develop i.e. the site at Aston Clinton is on a different scale to the site at Buckingham. The County Council is conscious that if there was a reduction in services at some of existing sites, the remaining sites would need to be able to manage the shift of waste.

Buckinghamshire currently send waste such as plastics to Wales for recycling. As part of this research is there the opportunity for that level of recycling to take place nearer to the county? The contract management team work with contractors to try and broaden the range of waste accepted. Whether this is existing or new waste we are conscious of trying to find the outlet in as close proximity to Buckinghamshire as possible. The waste business is complex and specialist facilities are needed to take certain forms of recycling.

Members of the Committee agreed that they would like attend the workshops. An invitation and further details are to be circulated to Committee members in January 2014.

Action: Stephen Boddy

10 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 4 February 2014 in Mezzanine 2, County Offices, Aylesbury. There will be a pre-meeting for Committee Members are 9.30am.

Proposed dates for 2014

Tuesday 4 March

Tuesday 8 April

Tuesday 13 May

Tuesday 17 June

Tuesday 2 September

Tuesday 14 October

Tuesday 18 November

CHAIRMAN