



Minutes

TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 21 July 2015, in Mezzanine Room 2, County Hall, Aylesbury, commencing at 10.00 am and concluding at 11.40 am.

This meeting was webcast. To review the detailed discussions that took place, please see the webcast which can be found at <http://www.buckscc.public-i.tv/>
The webcasts are retained on this website for 6 months. Recordings of any previous meetings beyond this can be requested (contact: democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mrs P Birchley, Mr T Butcher, Mr D Carroll, Mr W Chapple OBE, Mrs A Davies and Mr P Gomm

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ms K Fisher, Mr A Fyfe, Mrs C Gray (Secretary), Wells and Mr W Whyte

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Lesley Clarke.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 June were agreed as a correct record.

In the Minutes there is an action relating to the Cabinet Member for Transportation. A report was tabled titled the Local Area Forum TfB Scheme Delivery Review and was presented by Simon Dando, TfB. There were a number of recommendations within this paper.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



The recommendations were follows:-

- Increase the current resources to address the backlog.
- Establish and publish the programme to address the current schemes
- Formalise the communication advising customers of the impact
- Ensure the applied fees are clear and visible to customers
- The Budget Estimate sheet should be amended to show the different project phases in the correct sequence
- Each phase should clearly indicate whether that project element is a quotation to undertake work or a provision to determine a budget
- The scheme management protocols should be amended to a 'gateway' approach allowing budget estimates to be updated at each gateway point
- The contingencies and risk should be detailed within a scheme register and included within the budget estimate
- The process of scheme change needs to be formalised with the customer to aid understanding and avoid confusion in changing scheme outputs/costs/
- Ensure that the fee breakdown is transparent on budget estimates.
- Provide visibility of the supply chain partners approach to undertake the work.

During questions the following points were noted:-

- £10m of the capital programme next year will be delivered through a new market testing tender process which will help provide TfB client with valuable market intelligence, aid benchmarking and help the client access value for money. The cost for £10million worth of schemes had come back at £6.9 million so there is flexibility in providing additional works. Tenders would be awarded from mid-August to November. A Member commented on the open market being cheaper and the response was that there were risks in going to the open market with less stringent rules and regulations.
- A Member expressed concern about contingency. This was in line with Her Majesty's Treasury recommendations. The contingency percentages tend to relate to generic non-specific project delivery risks and are intended to determine a budget level and are not applied as actual cost. A detailed breakdown would be given on each Project.
- Concern was expressed about the right of an automatic extension of the contract if satisfactory KPI performance is delivered. This had been removed but an extension to the contract could still be awarded based on satisfactory performance.
- A Member asked if LAF schemes could be combined with maintenance in the same area to co-ordinate both programmes and to make savings. Simon Dando agreed to review this although it was complex with delivery dates and extensive consultation, which was sometimes required by LAFs.

Action: Simon Dando

- Concern was expressed about disrupting major roads with patching work and whether it was better value for money to resurface the road with the disruption to local businesses.

Simon Dando was invited back in six months time to give an update on the implementation of these recommendations.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman advised that a presentation was held in High Wycombe last week in respect of legal highs which was an issue also noted at the recent full County Council meeting and will come back to this committee.

6 FLOODING IN BUCKS 2013-14: LESSONS LEARNED

Tricia Birchley took the Chair for the Flooding Inquiry. Karen Fisher, Strategic Flood Management Team Leader, Andrew Fyfe, Resilience Manager and Simon Dando, Transport for Buckinghamshire were welcomed to the meeting. The aim of the Inquiry was to ensure that the lessons learned from the 2013-14 flood experiences would lead to improved responses from the Council and relevant partners in the event of flooding incidents in the future.

Karen Fisher provided information for Members on the statutory duties for the Council as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) which were outlined on page 12 of the agenda.

The main points of the presentation were as follows:-

- A good example of follow up work from the flood investigations is on the Willows Estate in Aylesbury where the District Council, County Council, Environment Agency, Town Council and Thames Water with local residents have worked together to deliver a trash screen on the river, some flap valves on outlet pipes and some temporary defences and pumps to be deployed in a flood situation. Repair and Renew Grants were pooled together to increase resources for the locality and there was a launch day in September.
- The Cabinet Member referred to the DEFRA funded Pathfinder Project in Chesham called Flood Smart which has raised flood awareness and established a Flood Action Group and some innovative advice from planners on how to consider flood/drainage issues during the planning process.
- The Cabinet Member sat on a Regional Flood Committee and Buckinghamshire was covered by two companies Anglian and Thames Water.
- 17 flood investigations were carried out following on from Winter 2013/14. The Council have a responsibility to write reports but not follow up action. However, this is undertaken on a systematic basis to help partnership working. Page 13 of the agenda shows work undertaken with partners and page 14 work undertaken with the support of communities.
- A piece of work has commissioned by Jacobs to provide detailed maps of ground water and chalk valleys which have been given to communities, TfB and planning authorities. These maps have helped steer a decision against development in Monks Risborough.

- The Council is a statutory consultee in relation to planning applications and 50 have been received since mid-April which equates to 160 a year. The Council only have resources for this quantity. It was important to enforce conditions on planning applications to control flooding but this remains the responsibility of the Districts as LPAs.
- The Marlow Flood Alleviation Scheme was going ahead with some initial road raising and the Project will last 3-4 years.
- The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy does not have to be revised until 2018 but this is being undertaken during 2015/16 financial year because of changes in legislation and updating the sustainable drainage information.
- Funding was a key issue as resources in the team were limited. Other pots of funding would need to be found for delivering schemes on the ground and there were also opportunities to look at charging for aspects of the work but the Council was not able to charge for statutory responsibilities.

During discussion the following points were noted:-

- Policies were key documents in terms of steering good decisions for planning and highway issues. They also helped in the provision of the right materials. Good advice needs to be made available for residents and also developers in order not to increase flooding risk. Local Area Forums could be used to promote good practice e.g. permeable paving.
- There were no real powers in terms of legislation. There was a previous proposal under Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) of not approving planning permission unless the drainage had been approved but this was not taken forward. Instead drainage parts of a development are being reviewed as part of planning applications with Buckinghamshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) now being statutory consultees.
- It was important that the Flood Team was involved in Section 106 negotiations.
- Proactive enforcement by the Sustainable Drainage part of the Team would be welcomed. Kent and Essex were putting in place a maintenance team to deal with SUDs but a business case would be required with the ability to charge.
- Reference was made to having a web map for farmers to show the impact of flooding on surrounding areas and the importance of maintaining water courses once a flooding event had occurred. There needed to be a strategic view of flooding (across boundaries) so that problems were not caused elsewhere and for other organisations to build up relationships with farmers as sometimes the Council was seen as an enforcer. Some farmers could sacrifice parts of their land for flooding to aid local communities but there were no financial incentives for them to take this forward.
- There was a statutory responsibility to having an asset register to show flood risk areas which could be put on the website.
- It would be helpful to have “shovel ready” schemes available in case there were delays to other schemes in the area. There was a discussion about whether the Council was best placed to deliver these schemes with its local knowledge. There will be some

innovative techniques investigated in a number of locations across the County including the Hughenden Valley with regard to land management and low level bunds.

- Previously when the flooding had occurred and residents rang Thames Water they were put through to an answering machine and no response was received for a few days even when there was a discharge of raw sewage. Thames Water commented that it was not their responsibility but it was unclear where the responsibility lay. Karen Fisher confirmed that it needed to be the responsibility of Thames Water. It would be helpful to question them at the September meeting on this issue and the fact that they had the specialist equipment to deal with raw sewage.

Action: Committee Adviser

- In terms of the action plan from the Section 19 flood investigations at the end of the report Members asked that this be updated by the end of August with clear priorities using the traffic light system and to have clear deadlines. Karen Fisher informed Members that the Council did not have powers to ensure that these actions were carried out by partners. It would be helpful to have information on what the Council can influence.

Action: Karen Fisher

- A Member who attended the Planning Committee at District Council level commented that he had not been briefed or ever discussed drainage issues relating to planning applications.
- An early warning system was crucial.
- In terms of the impact of flooding on vulnerable people the Resilience Manager reported that he had close links with adult social care and children services who worked with him in response to the emergency plan. Community emergency plans were essential to mitigate the growing gap between the increased scale of hazards and the reduction in resources. The Council would provide support to those communities.
- Transport for Bucks worked closely with the Flood Team in prioritising work where there was a flooding risk e.g. cleaning gullies.

There was a further Meeting on 8 September 2015 to obtain Inquiry Evidence from residents and key partners.

7 SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme noted.

8 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 8 September 2015 at 10am

CHAIRMAN