



Minutes

TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 7 March 2017, in Large Dining Room, Judges Lodgings, Aylesbury, commencing at 10.00 am and concluding at 11.50 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

Mr D Carroll (Chairman), Mrs A Davies, Mr P Gomm and Mrs J Teesdale (Vice-Chairman)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr A Fowler, Ms J Hancox, Mrs K Sutherland, Mr W Whyte and Ms R Wileman

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Mrs A MacPherson, Mr B Roberts and Mr T Butcher.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Phil Gomm advised that 'Link Road A' detailed on the 'Aylesbury 2013-2033: Current Plan' presentation slide bordered a piece of land that he owned.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th January were agreed as a correct record.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No questions.



5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman expressed his thanks to those who had worked on the Sustainable School Travel Inquiry and advised that this would be submitted to Cabinet in the near future.

Mr Gomm wished to thank Mrs Kama Wager for the background work she had conducted on the Inquiry.

6 COUNTRY PARKS - 10 YEAR BUSINESS PLAN

The Chairman welcomed Mr Warren Whyte, Cabinet Member for Environment; and Mr Andrew Fowler, Head of Country Parks and Green Spaces.

Mr Whyte, provided the Committee with an update on the business planning strategy for the County's Country Parks. Key areas covered were:

- Country Parks were now self-sufficient and were a contributor to the revenue of the service.
- The decision from 18 months ago to keep the team in-house was key to its success and allowed the business plan work to flourish.
- Maintaining the distinctive character of the different parks was essential in order to provide different options for residents.
- 93% of visitors to Langley Park lived within a 30 minute drive and many were dog walkers. The demographic of Black Park visitors was very different
- Over 23,894 visitors taken part in Park Run at Black Park over the previous 9 months.
- In response to a question regarding what improvements the additional staff members had provided, Mr Fowler explained that the staff members had been essential to the delivery of commercial activities and in improvements in marketing and publicity.
- Discussions were ongoing between Mr Fowler and Mrs Wileman regarding the most appropriate location for a new Country Park within the County; and a strategic needs analysis would also utilise population data to provide further insight on this matter.
- The Thames Side Preservation Trust had been working with Wycombe Rangers to investigate the potential development of Marlow Pits.
- In response to a question regarding a new facility being built at Black Park; Mr Fowler explained that a feasibility study had been conducted and found that the cost of the building would exceed £4,000,000 therefore this had been put on hold. However, the provision of indoor facilities was still being investigated in order to maintain high visitor numbers across all seasons. Mr Fowler explained that he would be holding discussions with Mr Whyte around the aesthetics of such a building.
- In response to a question from Mrs Davies, Mr Fowler explained that the targeted income revenue for this year from film locations was £130,000 and it was likely that £110,000 would be achieved – however in a good year, income of £300,000 was possible.

- Mr Whyte explained that as the Country Parks were free to enter, the revenue generated from the car parking charges were the main revenue stream for the parks; and that all revenue generated from these charges was invested directly back into the Parks themselves. Signs would soon be erected in the Parks to inform visitors of this. The Parks currently operate a fixed daily tariff: £3.50 at peak times (weekends and bank holidays) and £2.50 per day off-peak; although the implementation of a variable tariff was also being investigated.
- Mr Whyte explained that another trip to the Country Parks would be organised for the Members as part of their induction after the County Council Elections in May 2017.
ACTION: Mr Whyte
- In response to a question, Mr Fowler explained that the lowest score they had received from a recent customer satisfaction survey was 67%; and that the reason for this was a perceived lack of dog and litter bins in Langley Park. Mr Fowler advised that the average customer satisfaction rating stood at 97%.

The Chairman thanked both Mr Whyte and Mr Fowler for attending the Committee and for the information they had provided.

7 GROWTH AGENDA IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

The Committee was provided with a presentation from Ms Rachel Wileman, Head of Strategic Plan and Infrastructure and Mrs Joan Hancox, Head of Transport Strategy.

Ms Wileman provided the Committee with the following information in addition to her presentation:

- The deadline for responding to the consultation on the Housing White Paper was 2nd May 2017.
- The County Council needed to understand the impact on its services – both strategic and day-to-day services as a result of the growth agenda.
- Aylesbury, Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils are currently working on their respective Local Plans. The County Council is awaiting information from Aylesbury Vale District Council regarding their sustainability appraisal work relating to the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP). This was expected to be submitted to Cabinet in May/June with a decision expected to be made in December 2017. A decision on Wycombe District's Local Plan was expected to follow the same timescale as the VALP.
- The Government had proposed the implementation of an expressway through the National Infrastructure Commission as part of their commitment to an Oxford to Cambridge growth arc, stretching across Aylesbury Vale. The County Council is working with the Strategic Alliance regarding this; with the County's preference being that the expressway would connect Oxford, Haddenham and Aylesbury before connecting with the Stoke Hammond bypass. The benefit of this would be stronger links with the M40 and the opening up of some key housing sites along the corridor. It was noted that the Green Belt restrictions in Aylesbury Vale would restrict potential growth around Wendover.

- Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils had completed their consultations on preferred options, and, of the 15 preferred options listed, the County Council raised concerns with 5 of the sites due to Green Belt and transport issues.
- Officer groups were now working with Business Units through a Corporate Working Group (CWG). Alongside this, the Growth Board, including key Cabinet Members, ensured that Members had input and were kept up to date on progress.

Mrs Hancox provided the Committee with the following information in addition to her presentation:

- The County Council had used projected growth figures provided by the District Council in order to predict what the impact of growth would be on the highway network. The Council had developed its Transport Strategy through to 2033.
- In Wycombe, the impacts of housing growth on the A40 and around Princes Risborough which may require a relief road, were being carefully considered. Discussions were also underway with Highways England regarding congestion at the Handy Cross roundabout and A404/M4 corridor issues.
- The Committee was told that Buckinghamshire could be considered the epicentre for national infrastructure schemes such as HS2, East-West Rail, Cross Rail, proposed Oxford to Cambridge Expressway, proposed Western Rail Link to Heathrow, potential Heathrow expansion and the M4 'smart' motorway project.
- Strategic planning work needed to take into account the priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Board up to 2020/21. Population growth would have a significant impact on demand for Health & Social Care services and it was important to address the prevention agenda to reduce future demand on acute services.
- Mr Whyte voiced the importance of the County Council trying to influence the national programmes and explained resources had been allocated this matter, such as the recruitment of officers to provide strong technical advice.
- Mrs Hancox explained that Highways England was expected to publish their Road Notification Studies in March 2017 and that this would be an appropriate time to highlight to Highways England issues that needed addressing, such as road noise and air pollution.
- Mrs Wileman and Mrs Hancox confirmed that the matter would be raised with Public Health for further investigation.

ACTION: Ms Wileman & Mrs Hancox

- Mrs Hancox advised that the Housing White Paper included funding of critical infrastructure, which would require an innovative, creative thinking approach and integrated financial understanding.
- It was noted that the County expected to see a 25-30% growth in traffic over the next 20 years excluding additional traffic arising from housing growth.
- In response questions, Ms Wileman agreed to investigate whether the HS2 line would have a station in Aylesbury and the developer funding of the slip-road on the Eastern Link Road, Aylesbury.

ACTION: Ms Wileman

- It was noted that Slough Borough Council had not engaged with the County Council prior to public consultation on their Local Plan Issues and Options consultation draft. Ms Wileman explained that the Cabinet Member for Transportation, Mr Mark Shaw, would be meeting with his Slough counterpart to discuss the proposed northern expansion of 5,000 homes into South Bucks.

The Chairman thanked the Officers and Cabinet Members for their continued work on this matter and for the information they had brought to the Committee. The Chairman proposed that the Select Committees should undertake further scrutiny of the preparations for growth across the Council, as all service areas would be affected.

8 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on 21st March 2017.

CHAIRMAN