

**ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

9.30am – 11.25

**PRESENT:** Councillors Ward (Chair), Baker, Herbert, Kightley, Shah, Upstone, Wright and Zmura.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Executive Councillor Reid (Climate Change and Growth)  
Executive Councillor Rosenstiel (Environmental and Waste Services)

**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL****08/ENV/31 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings on 10 July 2007, 8 January 2008, 8 April 2008 and the Special Meetings of 25 September 2007 and 22 May 2008 were approved and signed as correct records.

**08/ENV/32 APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Newbold.

**08/ENV/33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

**08/ENV/34 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

None

**08/ENV/35 NON KEY DECISION 2007/08 Revenue and Capital Outturn, Carry Forwards and Significant Variances – Environmental and Waste Services (see also record of decision 08/ENV/21)**

City Services were congratulated for their success in increasing in the customer base for trade waste recycling and the resulting improvement in the financial position.

Cllr Baker asked if the planned use of fixed penalty notices for verge parking is intended to be self-financing. It was thought that this is unlikely and this will certainly not be achieved in the short term. The desired outcome is to solve the problem rather than raise revenue.

The introduction of the Verge Parking Byelaw pilot is dependant on a Ministerial decision that is expected soon. A clearer forecast will then be possible.

The current financial position was agreed to be satisfactory.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 5 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

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The Executive Councillor for Environmental & Waste Services agreed the recommendations.

08/ENV/36            **KEY DECISION Revised Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Waste Management Strategy**            *(see also record of decision 08/ENV/22)*

This document was introduced as a revision of the original strategy. Defra guidelines state that strategies should be reviewed every five years. Success in the key target of waste prevention was also noted. The emphasis on recycling trade waste was discussed and felt to be a good thing. The service had been able to pursue a vigorous trade waste policy without any impact on the domestic waste service.

Cllr Herbert suggested that the document lacked an element of accountability. He suggested that an annual report on progress would be helpful to members as this is a fast changing area and a number of projects and actions are taking place. Keeping track of these, without regular reports, is not possible. Cllr Rosenstiel and the Chair agreed that this would be a good idea. Members were also invited to visit the new waste treatment sites to see how well things are progressing.

The Chair informed members that the County Council, which has also achieved considerable success in this area, is currently reviewing services and partnership arrangements. The Executive Councillor for Environmental and Waste Services was determined that current, successful partnerships should not be undermined by the review.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 5 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor for Environmental & Waste Services agreed the recommendations.

08/ENV/37            **NON KEY DECISION - Capital Project Appraisal & Procurement Report: 2nd Chamberlain Round Running Costs**

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

08/ENV/38            **NON KEY DECISION 2007/08 Revenue and Capital Outturn, Carry Forwards and Significant Variances – Climate Change and Growth** *(see also record of decision 08/ENV/23)*

The Accountant presented the report that is a summary of the 2007/08 outturn position. Cllr Herbert asked if the variance was expected to get worse in the next year. Cllr Reid answered that although the figure appeared large, it was in fact a less than 5% variance. This represents good forecasting in a year when that presented many challenges to budget forecasts, such as the opening of the Grand Arcade. External circumstances have impacted on the previous years budget and it is hoped that projects would stay in budget in the following year.

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Cllr Wright asked if there were any plans to reduced parking in the City in view of the increased update of the Park and Ride opportunities. The Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth responded that the policy was to maximize the parking charges to limit the number of cars coming into the City while protecting the interests of City Centre traders. The long-term goal is reduce car use in the City. Some successes in this area were noted. For example, John Lewis went ahead with a store expansion without requiring the provision of any additional parking.

The future of the Transport Innovation Fund is uncertain and while the situation is unclear, some schemes may have to be deferred. Cllr Kightley asked if the Madingley Road cycle track could be put back on the agenda. It was suggested that the Members' Cycling Steering Group could take this up. Cllrs Herbert and Wright felt that there were problems with existing cycle tracks within the City and that these should be given some priority.

The Director of Environment and Planning suggested that the Cycling City initiative presented opportunities and considerable funding over the next three years. Results would be achieved by through joint working with the County Council and at a sub regional level. All member involvement would be important.

The Director of Environment and Planning stated that a number of schemes were in the pipeline and that relationships with the County Council remain crucial. The emerging cycling strategy is seen as a key element of future growth within the City. The Chair suggested it was unclear how much influence the City Council had in shaping the County Council's cycling priorities.

Cllr Baker asked why there were under spends on projects that Area Committees agreed were priorities. The Director of Environment and Planning responded that under spends had been a problem. Small projects had proved time intensive and had consumed a disproportionate amount of officer time. Changes in performance management are underway and additional staff resources have been agreed. A new Head of Service will be in post by next week. Dialog with Area Chairs is important and officers do try to spread resources fairly across the City.

Cllr Upstone asked if the process for actioning small, resource heavy, projects could be simplified. A menu of options and costing would speed up and simplify the procedures. The Director of Environment and Planning stated that prices and procurement guidelines for some small, standard works are available. Further consultation is needed. There is scope for Area Committees to join together and create cross-area initiatives. This had been successful in dealing with issues such as pinch points. It was agreed that the criteria for projects should be reviewed and refined.

North and West Central Area Committees have both reviewed their local priorities recently. The Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth suggested that progress on local Environmental Improvement Projects should be reported back to the scrutiny committees. This information could also be use to inform County Council objectives.

Cllr Herbert suggested that Area Committees should hold discussions and agree City-wide priorities. This could achieve better project management and would result in a more consistent use of officer time. Cllr Baker reminded members that there had been

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a recent workshop to set priorities and this should produce better outcomes in the coming months. Cllr Baker did not feel that a more centralised approach would be appropriate. Small issues can be very important at a local level and Area Committees need to be able to set local priorities. Cllr Herbert responded that he was not suggesting centralised decisions and supports local input. However, he expressed concern that currently little progress is being made and nothing is being delivered. He suggested that there were learning opportunities in the S106 spending priorities.

Cllr Shah asked if a regular progress report could be supplied to Area Committees. The Director of Environment and Planning stated that monthly status reports were available and could be shared with the Area Chairs if that would be helpful.

The Committee questioned the carry forward of £5,600 for the Car Club project as it was thought the project was complete. Clarification of this will be circulated. Cllr Wright asked why the spend on the Taxicard Scheme was reducing. This is due to changes instigated two years ago to reflect improved bus provision and to target resources at those most in need. At that time existing cardholders, who were over eighty, were exempt from the changes. This cohort is now reducing in numbers resulting in reduced uptake of the cards.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 6 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth agreed the recommendations.

08/ENV/39                      **KEY DECISION Climate Change Fund Operational Guidelines**  
*(see also record of decision 08/ENV/24)*

Climate Change Officer introduced the guidelines. The guidelines were agreed in principle at the April Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee. The guidelines presented in the report bring management of the Climate Change Fund into line with the financial procedures for approval of capital schemes contained within the Council Constitution.

Cllr Upstone suggested that the criteria and payback within the report could be more forward thinking and could look at the carbon cost rather than financial savings. He suggested the policy might result in schemes that look good in the short term being funded rather than those with a longer-term environmental impact. The Officer responded that the criteria would be linked to the Council's efficiency agenda.

Cllr Herbert asked how the Committee would be informed about applications. The Officer responded that applications will need to be approved within the normal Committee cycle. Details of approved projects would be circulated. The Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth suggested that other Scrutiny Committees should also be putting projects forward for funding.

Cllr Wright asked for clarification on the nature of the funding and if it was available to external agencies. The Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth explained that a number of external initiatives have already been funded. This funding is intended to encourage staff to initiate changes internally. A workshop has been arranged for

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officers in July to give them the tools needed to take things forward. In addition, there will be a library of examples, available in the intranet, of type of projects eligible for funding.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 6 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth agreed the recommendations.

08/ENV/40                    **NON KEY DECISION Members' Cycling Steering Group**  
(see also record of decision 08/ENV/25)

Members felt that this group would make a valuable contribution to the implementation of cycling schemes and the promotion of cycling within Cambridge City.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 7 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth agreed the recommendations.

08/ENV/41                    **NON KEY DECISION Terms of Reference – Cycling Champion**  
(see also record of decision 08/ENV/26)

The Director of Environment and Planning introduced the paper. The Committee asked for a rewrite of the Terms of Reference for the Cycling champion. There was a general view that they need to be shorter and more succinct. It needs to reflect the fact that the Champion role brings no additional allowances and needs to reflect time constraints. The areas of participation were thought to be unrealistic as were the expectations. Cllrs Wright and Herbert expressed regret that the changes would emasculate the role. The Chair suggested that the Terms of Reference should demonstrate a realistic approach to what could be achieved. It was agreed that raising the profile of cycling was a legitimate aim.

Having the Leader in the role of Cycling Champion as soon as possible, together with the new Members' Cycling Steering Group was seen as the best outcome. Therefore, it was agreed that the item would not be deferred.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed in principle to the recommendations, subject to changes outlined above. The redrafted Terms of Reference will be circulated to all committee members for comments.

The Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth will agree the amended terms of reference.

08/ENV/42                    **NON KEY DECISION Housing Growth Fund – Biodiversity  
Habitat Creation and Protection in the Southern Fringe**  
(see also record of decision 08/ENV/27)

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The Principal Landscape Architect introduced the paper. The funding is unexpected and needs to be spent quickly. Members were concerned that unexpected projects such as this distract officers from planned and agreed projects. Concerns were also expressed about future changes to proposed costings. The Principal Landscape Architect responded that there is some flexibility in the funding and it may be possible to role over some funding to the next financial year. However, completion of the projects promptly may mean project appraisals will need to be approved outside the normal committee cycle.

Cllr Baker questioned the proposed spend for a sustainable drainage systems (SUDs) design guide when there are already a number available. The Principal Landscape Architect reported that this is the second part of the project and that Cambridgeshire Horizons, the fund provider, are happy with the proposed spending. This will be the first time that a Local Authority has produced a guide of this kind which should give clear direction to developers on what the Council expects to see in good SUDs practice for drainage design, biodiversity value and landscape appearance. The Director of Environment and Planning will take this forward and will ensure that there is a good case for this work to be undertaken.

The Committee asked for clarity on the funding and what impact it would have on already allocated S106 funding. This funding will be over and above existing funding although it will also be spent on Byron's Pool Local Nature Reserve. The S106 funding will be spent on addressing problems of pressure on the Local Nature Reserve that additional visitors from the new development will cause. The Housing Growth Fund monies will be spent on nature conservation and biodiversity enhancements works.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 7 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth agreed the recommendations.

08/ENV/43                      **NON KEY DECISION    Decision to Let a Temporary Contract for Cash Collection Services for Car Parking and Other Council Services and to Tender for a Longer Term Contract**  
*(see also record of decision 08/ENV/28)*

The committee approved this decision.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 7 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth agreed the recommendations.

08/ENV/44                      **NON KEY DECISION    Capital Project Appraisal and Procurement Report: Barnwell East LNR Conservation Grazing Project**  
*(see also record of decision 08/ENV/29)*

Members felt this was a worthy project that had been well expressed in the report.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 7 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth agreed the recommendations.

08/ENV/45

### **DECISIONS BY EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS**

The Committee noted decisions made by the Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth since the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in April:

- Variation of the agency agreement with the County Council for the local authority parking enforcement (Lape) account  
(see also record of decision 08/ENV/U4)
- Establishment of Joint Urban Design Team  
(see also record of decision 08/ENV/U5)

The relevant part of the Constitution states:

#### ***“Urgency Action***

*33. Each Chief Officer is authorised to act on behalf of the Executive or the Council (after consultation, if practicable with the relevant Executive Councillor or, in respect of non-executive functions, the relevant Chair or, in either case, the Chief Executive) in relation to matters within his/her area(s) of responsibility in cases of urgency or emergency. Any such action to be reported as soon as possible to the relevant Executive Councillor and Scrutiny Committee or, for non-executive functions, the relevant committee or sub-committee.”*

The Committee noted the decisions.

The meeting ended at 11.25 am.

Chair

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