

GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday, 17 February 2010 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 1.42 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Patrick Greene – in the Chair
Councillor David Nimmo-Smith (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale
Councillor Michael Gibbard
Councillor Charles Mathew
Councillor Anne Purse
Councillor Keith Strangwood
Councillor John Tanner
Councillor David Turner
Councillor Roger Belson (In place of Councillor Nicholas Turner)

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Ian Hudspeth (for Agenda Items 1-8)
Councillor Keith R. Mitchell CBE (for Agenda Item 5)
Councillor Rodney Rose (for Agenda Items 1-8)

By Invitation: Mr. Barry Russell, Flood Risk Manager, Environment Agency (for Agenda Item 6)

Officers:

Whole of meeting: Huw Jones (Director of Environment & Economy) and Geoff Malcolm (Principal Committee Officer)

Part of meeting

Agenda Item	Officer Attending
7(a)-(c)	A. Bailey (Corporate Core)
6	C. Brown (Environment & Economy)
6 & 7(c)	S. Howell (Environment & Economy)
7(a)&(b)	S. McHale (Corporate Core)
7(a)&(b)	C. Smith (Corporate Core)

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.

1/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS (Agenda No. 1)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Nicholas P. Turner for whom Councillor Roger Belson substituted.

2/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE ON THE BACK PAGE

(Agenda No. 2)

Item 7(a)&(b):

Councillor Belson declared a personal and prejudicial interest as the former Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development. He withdrew from the meeting for item 7(a)&(b).

Councillor Gibbard declared a personal interest as a member of Cherwell District Council and its Planning Committee.

Councillor Strangwood declared a personal interest as a member of Cherwell District Council.

3/10 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2009 were approved and signed subject to amendment of the list of members present to show that Councillor Gibbard had given his apologies for absence and Councillor Lilly had attended as his substitute.

Matter arising

Minute 30/09-Information Share-item 1.

The Committee requested that the document/s referred to be circulated to Committee members if this had not been done already.

4/10 SPEAKING TO OR PETITIONING THE COMMITTEE

(Agenda No. 4)

The Chairman had agreed the following requests to address the meeting:

Item	Speakers
7 Work Programme	Members of the public:
(a)	Mr A. R. Day
(b)	Mr R. Draper

5/10 CAPITAL PROGRAMME - 2009/10: POSITION UPDATE - PERIOD 3

(Agenda No. 5)

The Committee considered a report (GI5) on the progress made in delivering the capital programmes which had been approved by the Council. It also informed the Committee of the current position of capital expenditure and available resources.

Ms. Ulusoy-Shipstone, Capital Programme Manager gave a comprehensive presentation including the background on the Cabinet and Council consideration and

approvals, the programme's progress, the capital expenditure to date & revised projections for 2009/10 and an update on the capital budget setting process. The report also presented planned capital expenditure across 2009/10-2014/15 which it noted may change depending on the outcome of the Government's next Comprehensive Spending Review.

She then responded to questions and comments including monitoring of the Capital Programme, reasons for slippage and the effective use of resources.

Councillor Mitchell commented on the scale/complexity of the exercise and the implications of the current economic recession.

The Chairman supported members' sentiments in congratulating all concerned on achieving the current position with the Capital programme.

The Committee **AGREED** to receive the second quarterly report and thanked Ms Ulusoy-Shipstone for her presentation and work.

6/10 FLOODING REVIEW - PROGRESS UPDATE

(Agenda No. 6)

The Committee considered a report (**GI6**) which presented the second update following the Flooding Review. (In June 2009 the Committee had noted progress and asked the Head of Transport to continue to seek a response in respect of river dredging.)

Mr. Howell, Head of Transport and Mr. Brown, Oxfordshire Long Term Flooding Issues Group Co-ordinator introduced the report. Mr. Russell, Flood Risk Manager, Environment Agency gave an update the Agency's activity in respect of flooding since 2007 including the development of targeted action and local schemes, a dredging trial, and specific projects in Oxford and Banbury. Councillor Hudspeth highlighted the role of partnership working, emergency planning work, action & planning and the use of limited resources.

Key matters raised during debate included:

- welcome for the measures which were being undertaken or completed so far;
- the crucial role of effective partnership working between the various agencies;
- the importance of local co-ordination;
- the importance of clarity about the roles of the various agencies;
- issues around the (re)allocation of resources for the County Council and district councils to meet their duties and responsibilities;
- some continuing concerns, for example in areas where effluent and flood water affected residential property.

There were no specific comments to the Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure.

The Committee thanked officers for their report and work and Mr Russell for his attendance and report.

The Committee **AGREED** to note the report.

7/10 WORK PROGRAMME

(Agenda No. 7)

The Committee considered Scrutiny Proposal Form **GI7(A)** in relation to a suggestion by Mr. A. R. Day for a review of planning, waste management, sustainable development and energy policies. (Information from Mr. Day had been made available to members in the Members' Resource Centre).

Mr. Day addressed the meeting in support of his suggestion. He circulated a copy of his presentation to members.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Day who then responded to questions about his suggestion.

Ms. Bailey then introduced the Proposal Form and drew members' attention in particular to Note 1 which set out the reasons for the recommendation.

The Director for Environment & Economy confirmed that the applicants had appealed the decision by the Council's Planning & Regulation Committee to refuse permission for an incinerator at Ardley. It was expected that the appeal would be heard in July 2010.

The Assistant Head of Finance (Procurement) outlined the procurement process and current position.

Following debate it was **AGREED** (on a motion by Councillor Greene, duly seconded and carried by 6 votes to 3) not to take any further action on this proposal for the reasons outlined in Note 1 attached to the Form.

The Committee then considered Scrutiny Proposal Form **GI7(B)** in relation to a suggestion by Mr. R. Draper for a review of planning, waste management, sustainable development and energy policies. (Information from Mr. Draper had been made available to members in the Members' Resource Centre).

Mr. Draper addressed the meeting in support of his suggestion. He commented on the consultation process, the legal framework, the proposed financial underpinnings of the proposed incinerator and the Scrutiny Committee's role.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Draper.

Ms. Bailey then introduced the Proposal Form and drew members' attention in particular to Note 1 which set out the reasons for the recommendation.

The Director for Environment & Economy confirmed that there was a preferred bidder for residual waste treatment but no contract at present. Mr. Smith outlined the current legal position.

Following debate Councillor Purse moved and Councillor Tanner seconded a select committee style review of alternative technologies to incineration, including those raised at this meeting but focusing mainly on approved technologies. The motion was lost by 6 votes to 3.

It was **AGREED** (on a motion by Councillor Nimmo-Smith, seconded by Councillor Mathew and carried by 6 votes to 3) not to take any further action on this proposal for the reasons outlined in the Form and in Note 1 attached to the report.

The Committee then considered Scrutiny Proposal Form **GI7(C)** in relation to a request by the Head of Transport for scrutiny involvement in the evaluation of the Council's arrangements for winter maintenance of roads and footways.

Mr. Howell gave the background to the request. Councillor Rose, Cabinet Member for Transport Implementation expressed his support for the suggestion.

It was **AGREED** (on a motion by Councillor Greene, seconded by Councillor Nimmo-Smith and carried by 7 votes to 0, Councillor Mathew having abstained) to set up a working group (comprising Councillors Gibbard, Lindsay-Gale and Purse) to work with officers on this issue.

8/10 FORWARD PLAN (Agenda No. 8)

The Committee considered whether there were items in the current Forward Plan on which it wished to have an opportunity to offer advice to the Cabinet before a decision was taken.

The Committee **AGREED** that it would be useful to have an opportunity to offer advice to the Cabinet on the following topic:

'Homes & Communities Agency Single Conversation: Local Investment Plan (Ref: 2010/005) (Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure).'

Councillor Lindsay-Gale wished to raise as a potential topic for future scrutiny 'wind power in Oxfordshire'. She was requested to forward details of her suggestion either to the committee officer or the scrutiny team to feed into the scrutiny process as to how it might be dealt with.

Information Share

Local Transport Plan 3: Councillor Nimmo-Smith reminded members that this topic would be considered by the Committee on 10 March 2010. The working group was meeting in the afternoon following this meeting to look at the strategy.

Update on Finmere Quarry: Councillor Gibbard updated members on the planning issues, site acceptance of waste, inspections and liaison. (A copy of the full update is attached to the signed Minutes).

GI3

..... in the Chair

Date of signing