

**To: All Members of the County Council
All Chief Officers**

From: County Secretary's
Department

**Cc: Environment Officers)
Officers named for action) e-mail
Committee Section)**

Ask For: Nicola Hayden
Ext: 25560
My ref:
Your ref:

**ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
29 JUNE 2004**

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

S A Batson, M V Bayes (Vice-Chairman), R S Clements, R N Copping, A D Dodd (substituting for H M Saunders), D J Drake, S E Jones, W A Storey (substituting for R Roberts), C J White (Chairman), B A York

Also present:

Executive Members: D Beatty

Other Members: N E Agar

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Membership Changes

Tony Dodd replaced Martin Saunders and Bill Storey replaced Richard Roberts for this meeting only.

Anne Fisher

The Chairman announced that Anne Fisher would be leaving the authority in September to join Haringey Council as their Director of Environmental Services. The Committee thanked Anne for her contribution to the work programme and wished her all the success in the future.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 March 2004 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PUBLIC PETITIONS

None

QUESTIONS

None

PART 1 (OPEN BUSINESS)**1 AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

[Officer Contact: Jon Tiley, Head of Forward Planning
Tel 01992 556292]

Councillor R N Copping declared a prejudicial interest in relation to this item and chose to withdraw from the Chamber during consideration of this report.

- 1.1 In January 2003, the Resources, Prosperity, Partnership and Consultation Scrutiny Committee referred the following target from the Traffic Light Monitor to the Environment Scrutiny Committee for possible consideration – *Local L075, Number of Affordable Homes Built – not on target for 2002-2003.*
- 1.2 The Committee received a report that set out the number of affordable homes that have been built in the County over recent years, and examined the respective responsibility for the delivery of affordable housing.
- 1.3 Additional information was circulated that showed the annual total and affordable housing completions by County and District 1991 to 2003, and gave affordable housing definitions in each of the district and borough councils across Hertfordshire.
- 1.4 **Conclusions**
- (a) The Committee noted that whilst the definition varies between each district, they supported the need for affordable housing.
- (b) The Committee referred the report to the Structure Plan and Regional Planning Issues Panel and recommended that the Panel:
- Advise the Executive Member on ways of lobbying central government to find solutions for lack of funds for affordable housing.
 - Work with the Director of Environment to seek ways of encouraging district councils to adopt a more unified definition of affordable housing in order to make it easier to lobby for stronger policies within regional planning guidance.

Joyce
Brooks

2 HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS TOPIC GROUP

[Officer Contact: Rob Smith, Assistant Director, Transport Management
Tel: 01992 556121]

2.1 The Committee received the final report and recommendations of the Hertfordshire Highways Topic Group, presented by Mary Bayes on behalf of Richard Roberts (Chairman of the Topic Group)

2.2 Conclusions

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| (a) The Committee thanked the Topic Group for its work. | |
| (b) The Committee requested an annual report on performance indicators in June of each year, with an initial report in October of this year. | Rob Smith
Nicola
Hayden |
| (c) The Committee asked the Director of Environment to encourage Joint Member Panels to meet in public. | John Wood |
| (d) The Committee endorsed the following recommendations to the Director of Environment: | John Wood |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That a Code of Good Practice be prepared and presented to a joint workshop of chairs and vice-chairs of all JMP's which would incorporate the output from the Rectory Lane scrutiny process. • That the learning from the recruitment and retention process be shared within the Authority and that JMP's are given regular updates on staffing levels within their area. • That where Members have raised specific comments about how they are kept informed about the activities of Hertfordshire Highways these are addressed. • That where the feedback to the public via the website (and hence the Customer Service Centre) continues to be monitored to ensure that completeness and accuracy continue to improve. | |
| (d) The Committee also requested that the Corporate Director (People and Property) share lessons learnt from the recruitment and retention process across all services and asked the Director of Environment to take steps to ensure that this work continues within the department. | Alan Warner
John Wood |
| (e) The Committee agreed that at the next Agenda Strategy meeting the Group Spokesmen would consider the protocols regarding consultation to ascertain if further scrutiny of this issue would be required. | Group
Spokes
David Moses
Nicola
Hayden |

- (f) The Committee noted that communication with Members is good.

3 TOPIC GROUP REVIEW OF CONGESTION

[Officer Contact: Anne Fisher, Assistant Director of Environment
Tel: 01992 555203]

- 3.1 The Committee received the final report and recommendations of the Congestion Management Topic Group presented by Roy Clements (Chairman of the Topic Group).

3.2 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee thanked the Topic Group for its work and in doing so thanked Officers who supported the Group and various stakeholders who gave evidence for their contribution to the work of the Topic Group.
- (b) The Committee endorsed the Topic Group's overarching recommendations which were to:
- Make a clear policy statement that it recognises that there is no single solution to the problem of congestion that suits all transport users and any approach will be multi-faceted.
 - Develop appropriate strategies to address the problems posed in particular hot spots around the county, which could include consideration for Park and Ride schemes, road user/area charging and other such programmes.
 - Focus further policy and campaign work on local solutions, or amelioration, and on changing attitudes and behaviour.

Demand Management

- Ensure that more attention across the county council is paid to land use strategies that are compatible with congestion management and minimisation.
- Review the Section 106 agreement procedures to ensure maximum and consistent benefits are negotiated for road improvements.
- Review current parking policy guidance at both county and district levels.

Traffic Management

- Continue to prioritise safety of pedestrians and transport

users in the county's transport policies.

- Develop a telematics strategy for the county that co-ordinates current and future IT solutions to improve strategic utilisation of the transport network and develop a business case for an integrated management approach to the network.
- Develop a county wide speed strategy, which identifies how best to balance traffic speeds against traffic flows.

Mode Share

- Review and revitalise HCC travel campaigns by considering alternative marketing approaches such as niche and direct individualised marketing techniques focusing on specific issues e.g. promoting healthy alternatives to the car for short journeys.
- Further develop the school travel plan programme to include:
 - Strategies that address the overall transport needs of schools in close geographic proximity and to encourage schools to work together in developing transport solutions.
 - Redesigning access routes and developing recommended urban journey routes.
 - Sharing facilities and producing co-ordinated travel plans.
 - Staggering schools start and finish times.
 - Re-launch/promote cycle proficiency test.
 - Escorting younger pupils from bus drop off points into the school grounds.
 - Incorporation of non-car transport into School-Home agreements.
 - Reviewing the cost of travel permits for sixth formers.
- Extend the Business TravelWise programme to further engage and influence the wider business sectors. This could include:
 - Promotion of flexible working practices across HCC.
 - Annual business awards for good practice in travel planning production.
 - More robust, outcome focussed indicators for business travel plan development.
- Continue to develop and broaden the county cycling strategy
- Create a countywide motor cycle forum to address not only the increasing numbers of fatalities but also the role safe motorcycling could play in helping to reduce traffic congestion.

Passenger Transport

- Provide more targeted information for bus and rail users.
- Incorporate bus priority measures into area plans.
- Maximise the use of bus quality partnerships particularly in relation to integrated ticketing services.
- Secure better bus infrastructure through S106 agreements.
- Improving accessibility and increase patronage to public services through more user-friendly public transport facilities.
- Incorporate into reviews of school transport schemes means to implement bus priority measures.

(c) The Committee commended the recommendations in respect of School Travel Plans to the Director of Children, Schools and Families.

John Harris

(c) The Committee referred the report to the Transport Panel for consideration in revising the Local Transport Plan and in particular wished to draw the Panel's attention to the need to revitalise the TravelWise programme.

Adrian Service

4 PROGRESS REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT'S ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (EMS)

[Officer Contact: Siân Treasure, EMS Officer
Tel: 01992 556291]

4.1 The Committee considered a report that provided details of the progress made with the development and implementation of an Environmental Management System (EMS)

4.2 Conclusions

(a) The Committee welcomed the report and congratulated officers within the Environment Department on their enthusiastic adoption of the system and in achieving external accreditation.

(b) The Committee requested that an annual report be brought before the Committee on the department's performance against the system.

John Wood
Nicola
Hayden

- (c) The Committee commended the system to all County Council departments and asked the Director of Environment to share the benefits with other Chief Officers and report back to the Committee in October 2004. | John Wood

5 RESTORATION OF MINERALS AND WASTE SITES IN HERTFORDSHIRE

[Officer Contact: Andy McIntosh, Restoration Manager
Tel: 01992 556275
Katharine Ingram, Planning Officer
Tel: 01992 556254]

- 5.1 The Committee considered a report that examined the scope and role of restoration carried out by the minerals and waste industry and controlled through the planning system, as administered in Hertfordshire by the County Council. The report highlighted the impact that restoration schemes can have on the environment and the local community and the benefits that good restoration can bring about.

5.2 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee noted the report and welcomed the fact that the County Council has a Restoration Officer and endorsed the approach taken which seeks long-term improvements rather than simple restoration.
- (b) The Committee asked the Director of Environment to circulate a briefing note to Members outlining the situation at sites currently causing concern. | John Wood

6 OBSTRUCTIONS ON PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

[Officer Contact: Richard Cuthbert, Head of Rights of Way
Tel: 01992 555292]

- 6.1 Following an initial request from Councillor Brian York, the Committee considered a report that detailed the current level of illegal obstructions on the Public Rights of Way (ProW) Network, examined how successful the County Council's policy approach has been in dealing with illegal obstructions and noted whether there are any emerging issues for the Authority resulting from new legislation such as the Countryside and Rights of Way (CroW) Act 2000.

6.2 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee noted the report and welcomed the projected reduction in outstanding obstructions.
- (b) The Committee endorsed the current priority scheme that takes into account public safety, level of use and impact on the wider

network.

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| (c) | The Committee referred the report to the Local Access Forum for information. | Trevor Mose |
| (d) | On being put to the vote (6:3) it was agreed that an annual report would not be necessary but information would be made available to Committee Members as necessary. | Richard Brown |

7 CYCLING FACILITIES

[Officer Contact: Morag Saunders, Strategy Development Manager
Tel: 01707 356567]

7.1 Following an initial request by Councillor Brian York the Committee received a report that detailed the County Council's current approach towards cycling facilities.

7.2 Conclusion

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| (a) | The Committee referred the report to the Transport Panel for consideration when a new cycling strategy is being developed within the next Local Transport Plan. | Adrian Service |
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8 CONTRACT BUS SERVICES

[Officer Contact: Keith White, Principal Transport Officer
Tel: 01992 588637]

8.1 Following an initial request by Councillor Chris White the Committee considered a report that updated them on the process used to decide which bus services to provide and how changes to services are made.

8.2 Conclusion

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| (a) | The Committee formally noted the report. | |
| (b) | On being put to the vote (7:3) the Committee agreed that it was not necessary to set up a topic group. | |

9 BUDGET MONITOR TO 29 FEBRUARY 2004

[Officer Contact: Mike Collier, Assistant Director (Resources)
Tel: 01992 556010]

9.1 The Committee considered a report on the budget monitor to 29 February 2004 to enable Members to identify any issues that they wished to scrutinise.

9.2 Conclusion

- (a) The Committee noted the report but did not identify any further items for scrutiny.

10 TRAFFIC LIGHT MONITOR

[Officer Contact: Geoff Brown, Head of Performance Improvement
Tel: 01992 555370]

- 10.1 The Committee considered a report giving the latest data for the promises monitor 2003/04 to enable Members to identify any issues that they wished to scrutinise.

10.2 Conclusion

- (a) The Committee noted the report but did not identify any further items for scrutiny.

11 SCRUTINY UPDATE AND WORK PROGRAMME 2003/04

[Officer Contact: Nicola Hayden, Committee Administrator
Tel: 01992 555560]

- 11.1 The Committee received a report that updated them on recommendations made to the Chief Officer at the last meeting, informed them of progress made on previous scrutiny items and confirmed the work programme for forthcoming meetings.

11.2 Conclusions

- (a) The Committee formally noted the report and agreed that the item referred from the Hertfordshire Highways Topic Group on performance indicators would be added to the list of items set for the October 2004 meeting.

Nicola
Hayden

REPORTS TO COUNCIL

Item 2 – Hertfordshire Highways Topic Group

Item 3 – Topic Group Review of Congestion

Item 8 – Contract Bus Services

**Andrew Laycock
County Secretary**