

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
7 DECEMBER 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Wednesday, 7 December 2016

PRESENT: Councillor Ray Hughes (Chairman)

Councillors: Haydn Bateman, Chris Dolphin, Ian Dunbar, David Evans, Veronica Gay, Brian Lloyd, Richard Lloyd, Sara Parker and Paul Shotton

SUBSTITUTES: Councillors: Andy Dunbobbin (for Cindy Hinds) and Dennis Hutchinson (for Colin Legg)

APOLOGIES: Councillors: Alison Halford and Ann Minshull, and Councillor Derek Butler, Cabinet Member for Economic Development

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Bernie Attridge, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment; Chief Officer (Planning & Environment); and Ancillary and Performance Manager

Chief Executive and Mr. Steffan Owen, Project Manager of the North Wales Residual Waste Project (for minute number 44)

IN ATTENDANCE: Environment Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

There were no declarations of interest.

43. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 2 November 2016 were submitted.

Minute number 38: Renewable Energy Action Plan Update - in response to Councillor Hilary McGuill's question, the Chief Officer explained that consideration had been given to installing solar panels on the high-rise flats in Flat whilst undertaking other work. However, this had not been feasible due to the height of the buildings. He agreed to circulate the Energy Conservation Engineer's detailed response to the Committee and to Councillor McGuill.

Councillor Dennis Hutchinson gave positive feedback on the site visit to the Standard landfill site and asked about the level of savings expected to be generated from the site. The Ancillary and Performance Manager agreed to provide a response during the day.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

44. NORTH WALES RESIDUAL WASTE PROJECT UPDATE

The Chief Executive provided a verbal update on the final stages of contract completion for the North Wales Residual Waste Project (NWRWP), following a recent meeting of the regional Joint Committee for the project.

Members were reminded of the aim to procure a modern, sustainable waste management solution for five of the North Wales local authorities which would help to meet challenging national recycling targets. Commercial negotiations had concluded with contracts expected to be signed the following week. Construction was due to start on the site in January 2017 and the facility to be fully operational by 2020.

The Chief Executive welcomed the positive support from the Welsh Government (WG) in subsidising 25% of the project which covered operations, gate fees paid by the Local Authorities, haulage contracts and the running of the waste transfer stations across the region. Whilst negotiations had been finalised on the complex matter of gate fee charges, the uncertainty of foreign exchange rates remained a financial risk. However, the current sterling position was showing a slight improvement and could reflect positively on the gate fee, depending on the timing of financial close of the project. The Preferred Bidder, Wheelabrator Technologies Inc (WTI), had increased its number of waste management facilities across the UK and would contribute to a local community benefits fund.

The Chief Executive suggested that the Committee may wish to invite WTI representatives to a meeting in the first quarter of the New Year to provide more information on the project. A detailed report on progress and timescales for the project would also be submitted.

Councillor Paul Shotton welcomed the update and opportunities for local businesses. He referred to the potential for a breeze-block factory on the site to use the bottom ash produced by the facility. Mr. Steffan Owen, Project Manager, explained that bottom ash would contribute towards 7% of recycling performance and would be taken away by an external company for a number of uses. Whilst the suggestion of a conversion factory may be an option for the area, it could not be accommodated on the site itself. In response to comments on the bidder's day event, the Project Manager advised that around 200 companies had expressed an interest in the project.

When asked about use of rail transport at the site, the Chief Executive said that this option had been explored but was considered unviable due to the revenue costs. Road haulage was the immediate solution, however, rail remained an option for future consideration.

Councillors Ian Dunbar and Dennis Hutchinson raised concerns about the impact of road haulage along the Deeside corridor. The Project Manager said that the impact of the estimated 30-40 vehicles per day would be minimal and that there was provision in the contract to define specific routes for haulage contractors, with penalty clauses. The Chief Executive provided explanation on the gate fee which had been negotiated on the basis of a minimum of 175K tonnes of waste, including a minimum 90K tonnes from the partnership with the

remainder from other sources. The total amount of waste was relatively minor in comparison to other facilities in the UK. Comments on improving the road and rail network linked to the longer-term growth strategy.

In response to comments by Councillor Andy Dunbobbin on the A494 consultation, the Chief Executive spoke about the need to meet criteria and the expectation for WG investment which would benefit the Northern Gateway. In respect of the NWRWP, he gave a brief summary of the site selection process where an alternative site had been 'ruled out' due to it not being made available.

When asked by Councillor Haydn Bateman about the use of heat from the facility, it was explained that the use of hot water and steam for use elsewhere was being explored. The generation of electricity for sale to the National Grid would provide the partnership with a share of income.

The Chairman thanked the officers for the update and agreed with the suggestion for WTI representatives to attend a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted and WTI representatives be invited to attend a future meeting.

45. QUARTER 2 IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2016/17 MONITORING REPORT

The Chief Officer (Planning & Environment) introduced the regular update report to consider progress towards the delivery of the impacts set out in the 2016/17 Improvement Plan, focussing on the areas of under-performance relevant to the Committee during Quarter 2.

A number of areas indicated good progress, including the co-ordination of the Single Environment Grant (SEG) by an established working group; an approach which had been endorsed by Welsh Government. The Chief Officer advised that the only major risk area was that funding would not be secured for priority flood defences. Whilst smaller scale schemes were informed by local knowledge, the outcomes of the review of the Mold flood alleviation scheme would be discussed with local Members and the Committee, once it had concluded. The Ancillary and Performance Manager summarised the actions being taken to address the two 'red' performance indicators relating to road safety initiatives.

Councillor Paul Shotton acknowledged the involvement of Kingdom, the environmental protection service, on the success of the pilot scheme and asked how many of the 2,000+ penalty tickets issued had related to dog fouling offences. He went on to thank Streetscene officers and SP Energy for their prompt actions in clearing a significant amount of dog faeces and litter which had been reported as part of an environmental visual assessment.

Councillor Bernie Attridge gave assurance that dog fouling offences would be pursued and prosecutions taken where identified and evidenced. The Ancillary and Performance Manager referred to the challenges on this and outlined the proactive approach being taken to raise awareness along with the

work of the Dog DNA Task Group. A total of 54 fixed penalty tickets had been issued for dog fouling since the start of the pilot, which sent a positive message to deter irresponsible dog owners.

Following comments from Councillor Veronica Gay, the Manager advised that hotspot areas were targeted and agreed to provide details of the locations where the 54 tickets had been issued. The compulsory microchipping of dogs did not form part of the pilot scheme. The Manager noted the suggestion to promote road safety initiatives with licensed driving instructors and would refer comments on a scheme for cyclists to the Road Safety Team. Councillor Attridge said that partners such as the Police could help to raise awareness of road safety initiatives and encourage young drivers to take the 'Pass Plus' driving course.

Councillor Gay also referred to a draft development brief on Wrexham Road in Chester and raised concerns about the impact on surrounding areas. The Chief Officer confirmed that as part of the consultation process, the Council had expressed concerns to Chester West & Cheshire Council about the effect on the highways, surface water and foul water infrastructure.

Following a matter raised by Councillor Dennis Hutchinson on noise nuisance at a private housing estate, the Manager explained that this was a Police matter, but that the Council could issue fixed penalty notices on open spaces. The Chief Officer suggested that noise nuisance matters be referred to Pollution Control so that incidents could be logged and evidence gathered.

In response to concerns expressed by Councillor Brian Lloyd on the potential for more flooding in Mold, the Chief Officer said that the results of the review of the Mold scheme were due at the end of the month. Councillor Attridge urged Members to make representations to the Assembly Member to lobby Welsh Government for funding for the scheme.

Councillor Richard Lloyd raised issues on Public Protection Spaces Orders (PPSOs), litter/leaves left in streets by the Recycling team, cyclists using footpaths to access cyclepaths and the need to promptly remove temporary traffic signals after work completion. In responding, the Manager asked that matters of rubbish removal be referred to Streetscene supervisors where there were health and safety concerns, adding that the new vehicles would help to reduce spillage of waste. He would pass on the comments about cyclists to the Road Safety team if specific details were given.

Councillor Chris Dolphin expressed his appreciation to the team for the improved road safety schemes and praised the work carried out at the Greenfield Recycling Centre for improving the appearance of the facility.

In response to comments from Councillor Ian Dunbar, the Chief Officer provided clarification on the elements covered by the SEG and noted the request to keep Town/Community Councils updated on the Local Development Plan (LDP) vision.

Councillor Gay pointed out the lack of public buildings in Saltney in which to display information on the LDP consultation. The Chief Officer suggested that she liaise with the Planning Strategy Manager to identify an appropriate location.

He agreed to discuss a separate issue on tree maintenance following the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

46. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

- A reminder was given of the workshop on Public Spaces Protection Orders - Dog Control, Dog Fouling & Dog DNA on 5 January 2017 to which all Members had been invited.
- Members were advised that the Committee's provisional budget meeting on 13 January 2017 was no longer required and that formal notification would be issued.
- A presentation on the Flintshire Bridge Converter Station would be scheduled for a future meeting, as requested by Councillor Paul Shotton.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be amended as necessary; and
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.

47. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10am and ended at 11.40am)

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Chairman