

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
8 MARCH 2017

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire on Wednesday, 8 March 2017

PRESENT: Councillor Ray Hughes (Chairman)

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

APOLOGIES: Councillor Alison Halford. Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation)

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Bernie Attridge, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Kevin Jones, Cabinet Member for Waste Strategy, Public Protection and Leisure, Councillor Derek Butler, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Chief Officer (Planning and Environment), Public Protection Manager, and Senior Trading Standards Officer

IN ATTENDANCE: Environment Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

54. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2017 were submitted.

Matters arising

Councillor Chris Dolphin referred to the agreement at the previous meeting that a breakdown of the Planning enforcement cases at the present time would be provided to the Committee and said this had not been received. The Chief Officer (Planning and Environment) explained the reasons for the delay and said that updated and more 'user friendly' information would be provided shortly.

RESOLVED:

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

55. QUARTER 3 IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2016/17 MONITORING REPORT

The Chief Officer (Planning and Environment) introduced a report to present the monitoring of progress for the third quarter of the Improvement Plan

2016/17 priority 'Environment' relevant to the Committee. He provided background information and advised that it was a positive report with 95% of agreed actions being assessed as making good progress. The Chief Officer reported on the one major risk area, as detailed in paragraph 1.07 of the report, concerning funding for priority flood alleviation schemes. He also commented on progress against the risks identified in the Improvement Plan which were included in the appendix to the report.

Members asked that their thanks be passed to the Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation) and his Team, for the hard work and commitment given to ensure both services and standards were maintained during the recent storm-force weather conditions.

Councillor Paul Shotton commented on a new road surfacing material which was being used in other areas of the country and was achieving a cost saving and asked if information could be provided on this.

Councillor Veronica Gay raised the following questions and concerns. She referred to the DB2 bus services and said there was no bus service provided on Sandy Lane or Boundary Lane in Saltney. Referring to the Improvement Plan which was appended to the report she asked for information regarding where the next public drop-in events would be held to develop the community transport schemes. She asked for more information on the maintenance programme and referred to the Balderton Brook project. Commenting on the enforcement of littering and dog fouling offences Councillor Gay asked in which areas the tickets had been issued. Councillor Gay referred to performance indicator 7.1.1.3, and asked for information on the future location of events. Referring to page 20 of the report and the information on highways infrastructure she expressed concerns around further housing development and the impact on the condition of the highways. Councillor Gay commented on the risk that sufficient funding would not be found to continue to provide subsidised bus services and raised concerns on the impact on her Ward. She expressed further concerns around the impact on her Ward regarding the risk that funding will not be secured for priority flood alleviation schemes. Councillor Gay asked the location of Fixed Penalty Notices be identified by Town/Ward.

Councillor Bernie Attridge responded to the points raised by Councillor Gay concerning community transport and provided further information. He also commented on plans to introduce a demand-led community transport service. Councillor Derek Butler reported that the Minister had commissioned a national review of bus transport services across Wales.

The Chief Officer (Planning and Environment) responded to the queries and concerns raised by Councillor Gay regarding road safety matters, road infrastructure and repairs and maintenance programmes, the impact of housing development on highways, and the impact of flooding.

In response to the points raised by Councillor Gay concerning 'kerbside collections' of small electronic appliances, Councillor Kevin Jones advised that any opportunities that were deemed financially viable would be considered.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee supports the progress made under Quarter 3 of the Improvement Plan for the Environment.

56. TRADING STANDARDS COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

The Chief Officer (Planning and Environment) introduced a report to provide an update on Trading Standards Collaborative Projects. He invited Sian Jones, Public Protection Manager, to present the report.

The Public Protection Manager explained that the purpose of the report was to provide an overview of the on-going areas of work and to highlight those areas of work where regional partnership working had been found to be beneficial. She provided background information and reported on the main considerations, as detailed in the report, concerning the fostering of a collaborative approach to service delivery. The Public Protection Manager explained that in terms of future delivery it was recommended that Flintshire continued to work alongside its regional partners; this would improve service resilience and ability to deal with cross border issues.

The Public Protection Manager explained that the work undertaken by the North Wales Trading Standards Services was also consistent with the ethos of the recently published Local Government White Paper 'Resilient and Renewed' where reference was made to the possibility of a regional service. She commented that whilst project work lent itself to regionalisation other areas required a local delivery. The Public Protection Manager introduced the Senior Trading Standards Officer and invited him to report on the Buy With Confidence scheme which had been put together by a partnership of Local Authority Trading Standards Services in response to concerns about 'rogue traders'. The Senior Trading Standards Officer gave an overview of the Scheme and explained that it provided consumers with a list of businesses which had given their commitment to trading fairly. He reported that the regional launch of the initiative would be held on 15 March 2017 at Eiras Park.

Councillor Brian Lloyd raised the issue of false advertising and false contact details which were used by 'rogue traders' on vehicles and correspondence.

Councillor Chris Dolphin commented on the temporary/seasonal nature of some businesses provided by the traveller community and asked if Trading Standards kept in contact with the traveller community when they moved location.

During discussion Officers responded to the further concerns raised by Members around sale of counterfeit goods, doorstep crime, and scams.

Officers encouraged anyone who had evidence of or suspected unscrupulous activity to report it to the Council's Trading Standards or the Police. The Public Protection Manager gave an assurance that such information was useful in terms of 'intelligence' gathering and would also be forwarded to the Police and OWL for action.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

57. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 3.10 pm)

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Chairman