

Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Panel, 29 January 2013

**ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
29 January 2013**

PRESENT: Councillor Mark Anderson - Chairman; Councillor Chris Wakefield - Vice-Chairman; Councillors Sue Anderson, Eddie Coope, David d'Orton Gibson, Dennis Gritt, Sue Levell, and John Wilson.

APOLOGIES: - Councillor Ron Whittaker

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor Michael Filer - Cabinet Member for Transport, Cleaning and Waste;
Councillor Jane Kelly - Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources;
Councillor David Smith - Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment;
Councillor Lawrence Williams - Cabinet Member for Corporate Policy Implementation
Councillor Michael Weinhonig
Councillor Roger West

ALSO ATTENDING:

Paul Ambrose - Drainage & Flooding Manager
Bill Cotton - Executive Director, Environment & Economic Services
Lee Green - Environmental Strategy & Sustainability Manager
Ian Kalra - Transportation Services Manager
Kevin Smith - Senior Energy Engineer

The meeting commenced at 6.04 p.m.

Note: To see a copy of the public reports that were considered by the Panel at this meeting please visit:

<http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/CouncilDemocracy/Councillors/BoardsPanels/EnvironmentTransportOverviewScrutinyPanel.aspx>

SECTION I - BUSINESS RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL

No Items

SECTION II - BUSINESS DECIDED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

1. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Levell replaced Councillor Whittaker for this meeting of the Panel.

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2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

4. MINUTES

DECISION MADE:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2012 be confirmed.

4. PUBLIC ISSUES

There were no public issues.

5. UPDATES FROM CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

A. Portfolio Holder for Planning and Environment

Councillor Smith advised the Panel that most of his core work was already included on the agenda for the meeting but welcomed any questions from the Members of the Panel.

Councillor Smith asked what action was being taken concerning street furniture in Old Christchurch Road following Councillor Smith's recent meeting in London. Cllr Smith advised that he attended in connection with cycling. However a walkthrough with officers had been conducting and they were in the process of removing clutter on the section of road between WH Smith's and Beales, once this has been finished the area would then also be cleared of chewing gum. An issue was also raised concerning paving stones in Boscombe and Cllr Kelly informed the Panel that this was being addressed.

DECISION MADE: That Councillor Smith would update the Panel when further work had been carried out.

B. Portfolio Holder for Transport, Cleaning and Waste

Councillor Filer provided an update to the Panel which included the following issues:-

- Pot Holes - Members should email Reg Hutton with any pot holes identified and these will be attended to.
- Camera Car - The Camera Car had been looking at safety outside schools and talking to parents about correct behaviour. Camera Car issues should be addressed to Margaret Lesley.
- Traffic Wardens and On-Street Parking Meters - Following stories in the press concerning parking restrictions not being enforced in the wake of an appeal against a parking ticket, this issue had now been fully resolved

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following a re-submission of documentation for the parking meters and wardens were now back and issuing tickets.

- DCLG Weekly Collection Support Scheme Bids - The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in a letter to Cllr Filer had congratulated Bournemouth on being an example for other authorities to follow in waste and recycling and in particular Reg Hutton and Larry Austin for their work.

In response to a question, Ian Kalra agreed to contact Dorset regarding pot holes on the A338 by Black Water Junction.

DECISION MADE: That the issues raised in the update from the Portfolio Holder be noted.

6. FLOODING IN BOURNEMOUTH

The Panel received an update from Paul Ambrose, Principal Engineer - Projects, which included information on the development of a new modelling system for identifying surface water flooding. It was noted that it confirmed that the number of properties involved in the August 2011 Flooding had been underestimated and showed that a number of properties were flooded but that no reports of this were received.

To illustrate some of the challenges faced in flood prevention Mr Ambrose explained that, although there was an alarm facility on the rain gauges, there was only a narrow window of opportunity between the alarm sounding and flooding occurring, as referred to in paragraph 1.06 of the report. Some discussions have been had with various parties on how this could be improved but it would involve very recently developed computer techniques. The challenge would then be how this information could be given to interested parties.

In 2012 only 11 properties reported flooding internally in Bournemouth (a number of which flooded twice) mainly due to river flooding. In comparison in 2011 157 properties reported internal flooding but this was largely from surface water flooding. This compared with at least 250 properties which flooded internally in Dorset during 2012. However it was expected that problems may arise from June 2013 onwards as the National Agreement for flood insurance will lapse. A new agreement had not been reached which may mean that many households will find it very difficult to obtain (flood) insurance. It was reported that a small number enquiries had already been received from people who flooded in 2011.

In the subsequent discussion the Panel raised a number of issues including:

- Where the weather radar covering Bournemouth was based as in Scotland there had been a number of issues concerning it being affected by wind

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turbines. Mr Ambrose advised that he did not know but that it may be possible to discern this through studying the data on the map.

- Whether the model could be made available to the public on the Council's website. It was clarified that the data in the model would not be 100% accurate as it is based on 5m2 grid sections and would not, for example take into account very small variations such water being diverted by a garden wall. Therefore the model may be misinterpreted if it was uploaded on the website. However it was open to the public to view at the Council Offices where further explanation of the model could be provided. It was noted that the environment agency had a map of river flooding on their website and surface water mapping would be available later his year.
- The wider picture of how the Council strategically responds to flooding across Service Units. The Executive Director for Environment and Economic Service advised that he would consider how this could be incorporated within the Service Plan. In response to a follow up question concerning the flooding group Cllr Smith advised that he had cancelled the last meeting of the group as he was in the process of ensuring that a proper structure was in place and had spoken to the Monitoring Officer regarding the constitutional position of this.
- Claims being made against the Council if insurance became more of a problem. Mr Ambrose advised that although this wasn't within his particular area of expertise, the legislation concerning flooding was permissive rather than actually directive and he therefore felt it unlikely that anyone would be able to show that the Council had been at fault.

DECISION MADE: That the report from the Principal Engineer projects be noted.

5. UPDATE ON CORE SERVICE TRANSFORMATION

The Panel received an update from the Executive Director for Environment and Economic Services concerning the Environment and Economy Core Service Transformation. Members were advised that the Directorate would be reducing from five service units down to four. There were approximately 12 different work streams involving several Cabinet portfolio holders. A Task and Finish Group had been established with Members from the three Scrutiny Panels concerned with the CST. The final Business case was due to be considered by Cabinet on 1st May 2013.

DECISION MADE: That the current progress on the Environment and Economy CST be noted.

6. SOUTH EAST DORSET SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT PACKAGE - THE 3 TOWNS CORRIDOR (LSTF)

The Panel considered a report concerning the progress of the implementation of the South East Dorset Sustainable Transport Package. The Transportation Services Manager outlined to the Panel the background to achieving the Local

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Sustainable Transport Funding, the proposed improvement schemes and some of the opportunities and challenges brought about by the scheme. The project was due to be officially launched on 11th February and all Councillors were welcome to attend. The project would be officially branded 'Three Towns Travel' and would emphasise the support it would bring to the local economy as well as tackling climate change. The Panel was advised that the aim of the project was to make the use of alternative modes of transport more attractive for people and recognised that it was not possible to build your way out of congestion. The 'Smarter Choices' section of the bid would now play a smaller role as personalised travel planning was not accepted as part of the approved bid.

In the subsequent discussion the Panel raised a number of issues including:

- Qualifying Agreement between Bus Operators - this was seen as being one of the most challenging parts of the bid as it was important to ensure that the bus operators worked together to provide the most efficient service.
- How the success of the scheme will be measured - The Transportation Services Manager explained that bus patronage would be used as one of the measures but that this would need to be isolated to the three towns' corridor as at the moment the data was only available for the whole of Bournemouth. Targets and baselines were due to be agreed upon over the ensuing months.
- Increasing journey time for motorists - In response to a question regarding the priority which would be given to buses on traffic lights and additional pedestrian crossing measures Mr Kalra informed the Panel that he was confident that measures were unlikely to increase journey times as the overall aim of the project was to reduce traffic congestion.
- Improvements to toilet facilities - Whilst improvements to toilets did not fall within the remit of the package it was acknowledged that this was an important issue for people using public transport and the possibility of joining funding streams would be looked into.
- In response to a question about improving transport in other areas of the town the Panel was advised that the Council had needed to submit a bid with the most chance of being successful and this bid supported recommendations of the SE Dorset Transport Study and corresponds with the Local Transport Plan strategy.

DECISION MADE: That the report on the 3 Towns Corridor be noted.

9. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

Councillor Greene advised the Panel that following the issues raised at the last meeting of the Panel a number of changes have now been made to the reporting of the corporate priorities and hopefully Members would now be happy with the detail now in place for the reporting of these.

The Chairman questioned whether there was a need to report the quarterly figures for ET3.5ag - to ET3.5be. However Cllr Greene advised that this had

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been looked at and it was thought that the quarterly figures were useful as they compared each quarter with the comparative quarter for the previous year.

The Following issues were raised regarding individual indicators -

- PI4A - Comment should read March 2014 not 2015
- ET3.5 ag - Currently shown as Amber when it should be green
- ET3.5 bg - Currently shown as Amber when it should be red

Members requested that in future once the data had been extrapolated that 2 indicators be reported for bus trips; one based on the Three Towns Corridor and the other for the whole of Bournemouth.

In relation to the energy saving targets it was noted that the Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment along with officer would be checking Council building to ensure computers and lights were switched off. The Cabinet Member informed the Panel that 4th to 10th March was Climate Week in Poole and Bournemouth. The event was launched on the previous Friday and was backed by a number of major employers across the boroughs. There would be further public information available on carbon reduction.

DECISION MADE:

- a. That the Corporate Performance be noted
- b. That the issues raised regarding correct RAG statuses be noted and amended where necessary.
- c. That following government agreement of the targets and once the data is available the Panel should receive a breakdown for PI4A the number of passenger trips based on the Three Towns Corridor area.

10. UPDATE FROM THE PLANNING ENFORCEMENT TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Councillor Smith explained to the Panel that some of the recommendations made by the Planning Enforcement Task and Finish Group last year involved a number of different sections within the Council. Due to the Core Service Transformation (CST) looking at regulatory services across the Council and the lack of resources currently within the Enforcement Section it had been agreed with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment that the actions from the Task and Finish Group be postponed until completion of the CST.

DECISION MADE: That the decision to defer completion of the Task and Finish Group recommendations until the completion of the Core Service Transformation be noted. .

11. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY STRUCTURE - PARKS SERVICE

The Chairman advised the Panel that due to the current remit of the Panel and the areas of expertise of the Members of the Panel he felt that it was more appropriate that Environment and Transport scrutinised those aspects of Parks

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and Open Spaces that were concerned with environmental matters. The Panel agreed that this should be recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Panel.

DECISION MADE:

That it be recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Panel:

That all areas of parks and open spaces concerning environmental issues such as river bank erosion, flooding, land contamination, etc. report directly to the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Those areas of parks concerning tourism, in particular the Lower Gardens would continue to report to the Economy and Tourism Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS - HENGISTBURY HEAD OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE

Councillor Eddie Coope gave a verbal update to the Panel following a recent meeting of the Hengistbury Head Outdoor Education Centre Management Panel, of which Councillor Coope and Anderson were Members. It was reported that things were progressing well under the management of Brockenhurst College and the Centre was due to be linked with the Visitor Centre when it opens next summer. An open day was due to take place at the Centre on 28 June and all Members were welcome to visit at any time.

The meeting closed at 7.58 pm

Contact: Claire Gray, Democratic Services Officer
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Please note that the next quarterly meeting of the Environment & Transport Overview and Scrutiny Panel will take place at the Town Hall at 6:00 pm on 14 May 2013.