



Environment and
Services Scrutiny
Committee

14 March 2016

2.00 pm

Item

3

Public

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON 1 FEBRUARY 2016
2.00 - 4.15 PM**

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Councillor Vince Hunt (Chairman)

Councillors Keith Roberts (Vice Chairman), Peter Adams, Ted Clarke, Nigel Hartin, Roger Hughes, Christian Lea, Pamela Moseley, Vivienne Parry and Arthur Walpole

42 Apologies for absence and substitutions

42.1 There were no apologies for absence as all Members were present.

43 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

43.1 There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

44 Minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2015

44.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2015 had been circulated.

44.2 RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Services Scrutiny Committee held on 30 November 2015 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

45 Public Question Time

45.1 There were no questions from members of the public.

46 Member Question Time

46.1 There were no questions from Members

47 Petition re Removal of Speed Bumps on Wem Road Shawbury

- 47.1 The Chairman informed Members that a petition had been received requesting the removal of speed cushions on the B5063 Wem Road, Shawbury and that it had been referred to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration. Members had before them a briefing note regarding the scheme. He welcomed Mrs Gregory, the petitioner to the meeting and asked her to present her petition.
- 47.2 Mrs Gregory thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the meeting. She informed Members that there had been considerable concern expressed over the installation of the speed bumps as part of the 30mph speed limit on Wem Road as they were considered excessive and there had been no public consultation on their installation. She went on to say that residents did not object to the 30 mph limit but that if further controls were necessary they should be in the form of vehicle activated signs rather than the speed bumps.
- 47.3 The Area Commissioner South reminded Members that under the Speed Limits Policy Parish Councils and other organisations could raise issues of community concern with regard to traffic speeds. He added that the Policy clearly laid out the consultation process.
- 47.4 The Project Manager (Capital Schemes) advised Members that the scheme on Wem Road had been introduced as part of a larger package of “Safer Routes to Schools” measures introduced in several areas around Shawbury following concerns expressed by the Parish Council, RAF Shawbury and the Local Member regarding increased pedestrian use following the closure of St Mary’s School and the transfer of pupils to Shawbury Primary School. He informed Members that both informal and formal consultation was carried out and during this consultation West Mercia Constabulary had stated that they would only support a 30mph limit where appropriate traffic calming measures were introduced. Following this input from the police, a revised scheme was developed and further consultation had been carried out prior to the schemes’ installation.
- 47.5 The Project Manager advised Members that surveys carried out to assess the effectiveness of the scheme had shown that mean speeds had reduced to below 30mph which meant that the scheme was delivering what was required.
- 47.6 The Local Member confirmed that concerns had been expressed regarding road safety following the closure of St Mary’s School and the increase in children walking down Wem road to Shawbury Primary School. He confirmed that full consultation had been carried out and that the scheme had been considered by the Parish Council on two occasions.
- 47.7 Several Members commented that whilst they understood the concerns expressed by local people the scheme seemed to be reducing traffic speeds to the required level and for this reason they could not support the removal of the speed cushions.
- 47.8 In response to a query, the Committee Officer confirmed that under the Shropshire Council petitions scheme, signatories should reside in Shropshire and that whilst there were 1207 signatures on the petition, on checking it was found that a number

of the signatories lived in the Telford & Wrekin Council area and could not be considered under the terms of the scheme.

47.9 The Chairman thanked Mrs Gregory for attending the meeting and presenting her petition.

47.10 **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Scrutiny Committee support the retention of the existing scheme including the speed cushion traffic calming measures; and

2. That under part 8 of the Shropshire Council Constitution the Area Commissioner South ratifies this recommendation.

48 **Shropshire Council's Response to Flooding**

48.1 Members received the report of the Operations Manager, Environmental Maintenance and the Flood and Water Manager which outlined Shropshire Council's response to flooding. This illustrated how the Council worked with partner agencies when flooding may impact on people and property and also the work done by the Council in its role as a Lead Flood Authority.

48.2 The Flood and Water Manager advised that the Council worked with the Environment Agency (EA) and Severn Trent Water (STW) to deal with incidents of flooding and explained the role of each of the agencies. He added that together with partner agencies, the Council had developed a seven stage Joint Flood Action Plan and that the different phases of the plan were activated according to the level the river had reached.

48.3 The Flood and Water Manager advised that as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) the Council had a number of statutory duties to address local flood risk, one of which was to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. Through collaborative working a Joint Strategy had been produced with Staffordshire County Council which set out the combined approach to managing flood risk.

48.4 The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing, Regulatory Services and Environment stated that funding for local flood risk management came from the DEFRA Revenue Support grant for the EA levy of £120,000.00 which covered 70% of the cost, the remaining 30% coming from the Council Budget. He informed Members that the budget was set by a binding vote of the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee and was the only budget in the recently published Council budget that would be increasing. He commented that more funding was received back from the EA than was paid in by the Council.

48.5 The Portfolio Holder drew Members' attention to the "Slow the Flow" project which aimed to reduce the flow of water by holding it back upstream in an effort to reduce the risk of flooding further downstream. He commented that the Council was working with the NFU and other organisations in order to progress this scheme.

48.6 A member commented that the Molverley area was regularly flooded as part of the flood plain, and added that there were a number of places where some work was

required to the highway which would mean that villages were not cut off for long periods as happened currently. The Area Commissioner agreed to look into this.

48.7 A Member commented that there appeared to have been a change in the way water levels were managed in the reservoirs in that previously there had been a certain capacity retained to allow for heavy rainfall; this was no longer the case and therefore more water was released into the river system. The Portfolio Holder commented that this had been raised at the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee and that he would raise it again.

48.8 A Member asked whether there was an issue with landowners not maintaining the ditches and water courses on their land. The Flood and Water Manager commented that landowners were reminded of their riparian responsibilities and that as part of the “Slow the Flow” project the Council was working with Landowners. A Member commented that there may be a cross-compliance issue where farmers did not keep their ditches and watercourses in good order.

48.9 The Chairman thanked the Flood and Water Manager for his report

48.10 RESOLVED:

- a) That the current approach in response to flooding and flood management is noted
- b) That the support that is given to the continuing allocation of DEFRA's Revenue Support Grant that is allocated for local flood risk management activities is noted.
- c) That a further update be brought to a future meeting of the Committee

49 **Update on Provisions of Community Transport for Shropshire**

49.1 Members received the report of the Transport Commissioning Manager which gave an update on the current provision of Community Transport.

49.2 The Transport Commissioning Manager informed Members that there were a number of small bus Community Transport Schemes which operated in Shropshire and that whilst all the schemes were independent of the Council, it retained a seat on the board of each group in an observer/mentor role. He added that the groups had formed a Community Transport Consortium which provided additional options for development and integration of groups in the future.

49.3 The Transport Commissioning Manager stated that groups obtained their funding from a number of different sources but income came broadly equally from four sources –

- grant from Shropshire Council;
- other contracts;
- fund raising, Bus Services Operators Grant, donations, bequests and sponsorship; and
- fares and concessionary fares compensation

He added that during the financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13 Shropshire Council received grants from the Department for Transport (DfT) which had been used for projects such as vehicle replacement eco driver training, purchase of an online booking system and driver training.

49.4 A Member asked about the future of Community Transport Schemes should Shropshire Council funding be withdrawn. The Transport Commissioning Manager commented that the development of the Community Transport Consortium with its ability to bid for other contracts should enable Community Transport Schemes to become more independent.

49.5 The Chairman commented that it may be useful for the Committee to receive a presentation from the Director of the Community Transport Consortium and representatives from Community Transport Groups at a future meeting.

49.6 RESOLVED: -

1. That the contents of the report be noted

2. That the Committee receive a presentation from the Director of the Community Transport Consortium and representatives from Community Transport Groups at a future meeting.

50 Update on Drugs and Alcohol Action Team and New Way of Working

50.1 Members received the report of the Public Health Strategic Lead which provided an overview of the work of the Drug and Alcohol Team.

50.2 The Strategic Lead reminded Members that the responsibility for the commissioning of drug and alcohol had passed to the Local Authority as part of its public health function and that in February 2015 Cabinet had agreed proposals to retender drug and alcohol treatment services.

50.3 The Strategic Lead advised Members that following a two stage procurement process and the successful bidder was Shropshire Recovery Partnership made up of Arch Futures and Addaction. This Partnership would deliver services using the current "hub and spoke" model, and that a new approach to drug and alcohol treatment would include the use of "Recovery Mentors" who would support those at the early stages in their treatment.

50.4 The Strategic Lead informed Members that alongside the recommissioning of the treatment services other work had been carried out including the updating of several strategies and protocols, the recommissioning of medically assisted in-patient beds and revision of Service Level Agreements with GPs and pharmacies.

50.5 A Member welcomed the use of Peer Mentors and asked whether there were sufficient mentors to meet need. The Strategic Lead advised that this was a new project and that there were a good number of mentors and that it was hoped that more would be recruited as the project progressed.

50.6 The Chairman commented that it would be beneficial to the Committee to receive a further report once the new contract had been running for a while.

50.7 **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Committee note the contents of the report; and
2. That a further report be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

51 **Date/Time of next meeting**

51.1 Members were advised that the next meeting of the Environment and Services Scrutiny Committee would be held on Monday 14 March 2016 at 2.00pm.