



Environment and  
Services Scrutiny  
Committee

14 March 2016

2.00 pm

Item

**5**

Public

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2016  
2.00 - 3.30 PM**

**Responsible Officer:** Tim Ward

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**Present**

Councillor Vince Hunt (Leader)

Councillors Keith Roberts (Vice Chairman), Dean Carroll, Ted Clarke, Roger Hughes, Christian Lea, Pamela Moseley, Vivienne Parry and Arthur Walpole

**52 Apologies for absence and substitutions**

52.1 Apologies for absence were received from Nigel Hartin

**53 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

53 There were no declarations of pecuniary interest made.

**54 Minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2016**

54.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2016 had been circulated.

**54.2 Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2016 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**55 Public Question Time**

55.1 There were no public questions

**56 Member Question Time**

56.1 There were no questions from Members

## 57 Portfolio Holder Update

57.1 The meeting received an update from the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport. He reminded Members that responsibility for highways and transport predominantly came under the Commissioning Directorate and that the portfolio covered: -

- Highways Planning, Transport & Maintenance
- Car parking
- Major projects such as LEP / SITP / Oxon Link Road
- Highways community safety projects
- Local transport plans
- Highways Development Control
- Drainage

57.2 The Portfolio Holder advised Members that the Council was a “Level 2” Highway Authority and that this grading meant that an additional £916,000 of capital funding would be received, although there would still be a reduction in overall funding due to a cut in the total DfT capital grant over the next 4 year.

57.3 The Portfolio Holder informed Members that as well as ongoing management of key contracts such as the Ringway and Kier contracts work was ongoing in preparation for the new arrangements for the Highway Maintenance Contract which was due to commence in April 2018.

57.4 In response to a query the Portfolio Holder advised that the “Level 2” was awarded through a process of self-assessment which was verified by the Councils Audit team and that the Council had achieved “Level 3” in a number of areas. He added that Officers would be sharing the good practice carried out at a national conference in Highway Management and Leadership.

57.5 A Member asked whether progress had been made with the implementation of “smart” methods of payment for car parks. The Portfolio Holder advised that further work was being carried out and that it was important that all methods of payment were available. The Chairman commented that this may be a topic for the Committee to look at further.

57.8 The Chairman thanked the Portfolio Holder for his update.

## 58 Permits Scheme Update

58.1 Members received the report of the Economic Growth and Permit Scheme Manager which provided an overview of the performance of the Street Works Team since the introduction of the West and Shires Permit Scheme (WASP) in April 2014.

58.2 The Permit Scheme Manager reminded Members that the Permit Scheme had been developed following a recommendation from the Scrutiny Committee in 2011. She went on to say that the Council had been asked by the Department for Transport (DfT) to develop a common scheme for rural authorities in the West Midlands to join, and that currently Cheshire East, Warwickshire and Coventry

Councils were operating the scheme, with Telford and Wrekin and Worcestershire Councils joining the scheme this year.

- 58.3 The Permit Scheme Manager advised that the Streetworks Team were self-funding with income coming from a number of sources. She informed Members that any surplus that was made would be reinvested according to local needs, individual schemes or to provide additional finance for large programmes of work.
- 58.4 The Permit Scheme Manager informed the meeting that following concerns raised at a previous meeting of the Committee it was recognised that there was need for a more rigorous coring programme and as a result the number of phases and cores taken had been increased and this had led to a significant improvement in the failure rate.
- 58.5 A Member asked why when a road was under a 7 day closure work was often only carried out on week days. The Permit Scheme manager commented that it was not possible to enforce working at weekends and that often the weekends were used to overcome any delays encountered.
- 58.9 The Chairman thanked the Permit Scheme Manager for her report and commented that the Scheme was a good example of a suggestion made by the Scrutiny Committee being taken forward.
- 58.10 RESOLVED:
- a) That the contents of the report be noted
  - b) That a further update report is presented to a future meeting of the Committee
  - c) That the Environment & Services Scrutiny Committee support the investment of Highway enforcement charges into the Highways and Transport infrastructure in Shropshire on a continual basis, and that the allocation of this will be agreed following consultation with the Highways, Transport and Environment Commissioning Manager and the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport.

## 59 Development of Sustainable Energy

- 59.1 The Committee received the report of the Senior Energy and Sustainability Officer which set out the work being carried out by the Council in the field of sustainable energy and future opportunities that may be available.
- 59.2 The Senior Energy and Sustainability Officer advised Members that there were currently 26 solar photo voltaic systems installed on council buildings which were receiving or were due to receive feed in tariff (FiT). He added that work was being done to look at the potential development of 4 solar farm sites in the county. He then outlined other work that was being done.
- 59.3 The Project Development Manager advised Members that work had been undertaken to explore opportunities to generate income through the establishment of an energy company to supply energy and to take the opportunities that wider commercial energy related activities could deliver. She informed the meeting that

an “Invitation to Partner with Shropshire Council” had been issued inviting licenced energy suppliers to submit proposals, and that following the selection process a full report would be taken to Cabinet to obtain a decision on progressing the preferred option.

59.4 A Member asked whether there were any plans to develop hydroelectric schemes. The Senior Energy and Sustainability Officer advised that there were no plans currently.

59.5 The Chairman thanked Officers for their report.

59.6 RESOLVED

a. That the contents of the report be noted

b. That a further update is brought to a future meeting of the Committee

**60 Date/Time of next meeting**

60.1 Members were advised that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee would be held on 13 June 2016 at 2.00pm

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: