

**ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND
COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
PANEL**

23 SEPTEMBER 2014

7.30 - 8.51 PM



Present:

Councillors Finnie (Chairman), McLean (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Barnard, Brossard, Ms Brown, Gbadebo and Porter

Executive Members:

Councillors Mrs Hayes, McCracken and Turrell

Also Present:

Councillor Ian Leake

Richard Beaumont, Head of Overview & Scrutiny

Andrea Carr, Policy Officer (Overview and Scrutiny)

Sue Cuthbert, Principle Engineer (Transport)

Mark Devon, Chief Officer: Leisure & Culture

Steve Loudoun, Chief Officer: Environment & Public Protection

Neil Mathews, Transport Development Manager

Vincent Paliczka, Director of Environment, Culture & Communities

Richard Walton, Head of Parks and Countryside

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Ms Miller

18. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel would be held on 13 January 2015 at 7.30pm.

19. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest or any indications that Members would be participating under the party whip.

20. Minutes and Matters Arising

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 24 June 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendments:

- The closing time of the meeting be amended to 8.50pm
- Councillor Turrell be added to the list of Executive Members in attendance.

Matters Arising

Further to Minute 8 of the last meeting, the Panel was informed that the upward trend of municipal waste land filled was continuing. Officers were analysing the reasons for

the increase with a view to implementing targeted actions. It was a national issue and appeared to be partly due to the upturn in the economy with households replacing and disposing of products and partly an attitudinal issue.

Further to Minute 10 of the last meeting, the Panel was informed that representatives of the Crown Estate and Forestry Commission would be invited to a Panel meeting in the new year.

21. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

22. Public Participation

No submissions had been made by members of the public under the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.

23. Quarterly Service Report (QSR)

The Panel considered the latest trends, priorities and pressures in terms of departmental performance as reported in the Quarterly Service Report for the first quarter in 2014/15 (April to June 2014) relating to Environment, Culture and Communities (ECC).

The Director highlighted the following significant budget variances:

- Concessionary Fares £119,000 - due to changes in Government guidance on fare calculation
- Planning Policy Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) £105,000 - assumed income not received due to the deferral of the implementation of CIL until April 2015.
- Waste Disposal £61,000 - the cost of increased land fill (see also Minute 18 above).

The Director also reported on the marked increase in planning applications (51% up on the same period last year and 25% up on the previous quarter) which, together with a rise in enquiries, appeals and enforcement complaints had put the service under pressure and was likely to adversely impact on performance in the next quarter.

Arising from the Panel's questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Officers were seeking to identify additional areas for rose beds at the Cemetery and Crematorium.
- It was agreed to investigate reported problems with the blue bin incentive scheme e-cards at Sandhurst Library and South Hill Park.
- Performance Indicator NI 192 measured recycling by tonnage rather than volume so, as recycling materials got thinner and lighter it was possible that increased amounts were being recycled. Councillor Mrs Hayes, Executive Member for the Environment, stated that she had raised this issue and other matters of concern, with the Secretary of State.

- The recent EU Waste Framework Directive concerned the sorting of co-mingled paper and glass. As the Council did not collect these together it did not apply. However directives on waste and recycling were increasingly onerous.
- The trial recycling collection of flexible packaging would last for three months. Residents would opt in to this service and would be provided with separate bags.
- Officers agreed to check whether the figure of 33% of appeals dismissed (Annually) under performance indicator L181 was, in fact, the percentage of appeals allowed.

The Panel thanked the officers for the comprehensive report.

24. **Supported Bus Service Contracts 2015**

The Panel considered a report detailing the planned changes to the supported local bus network and the forthcoming procurement of the revised bus contracts. Proposals to award contracts were scheduled to be considered by the Executive in January 2015.

Arising from the Panel's questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Whilst the 598 Sandhurst Shopper Service was infrequent there had not been any requests to increase the frequency. The Transport Development Manager would provide information concerning the route of the 598 to a Councillor outside the meeting.
- The proposed Route D would provide a service to the Binfield Road.
- Whilst the 108 route did not include Jennett's Park Community Centre it might do so in the future. However, other services did serve the Community Centre.
- With regard to the implementation of the Bus Strategy Working Group's proposal for shared tickets amongst operators, the Strategy would be adopted in January 2015 and Officers had begun related work but this would be the subject of negotiation with bus operators.
- Similarly, whilst Officers could take forward Members' views regarding the unfairness of a bus operator not issuing child tickets in the evening they could not guarantee that the operator would agree to change its policy.
- A real time bus information service was being constructed at the moment and was being twinned with a web page accessible by smart phones. There would also be information accessible by the blind and partially sighted. The system would be rolled out from November
- The proposals focused on the Council's supported routes to and from Bracknell town centre. A number of the new routes stopped at a Tesco store as it was acknowledged that Tesco was a popular destination.
- Whilst the proposed route B (replacing service 199) no longer served Birch Hill Sainsbury's, it did go to the town centre where there was a Sainsbury's store.

The Panel noted the report.

25. **Enforcement Policy (Regulated Services)**

The Panel noted the draft Enforcement Policy (Regulatory Services) which had been approved by the Executive and would be subject to consultation prior to formal adoption.

In response to a Member's question, it was agreed to circulate details of the number of fixed penalty notices issued in the past year.

26. **Parks and Open Spaces Quality Improvements - Jocks Lane Recreation Ground and Sandhurst Memorial Park**

The Panel noted the report detailing the quality improvement works to raise standards at Jocks Lane Recreation Ground and Sandhurst Memorial Park and congratulated the officers on the quality of the works.

27. **Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan Update**

The Panel considered a report on the progress of documents forming part of the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan since the previous report in June.

The Panel was informed that, the delay in the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) until April 2015 had provided an opportunity to review and revise the Council's CIL Draft Charging Schedule which had been submitted for examination.

Arising from the Panel's questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Whilst the revisions to the CIL Charging Schedule had been agreed by the Executive, a briefing on the changes had been submitted to members of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.
- Any further proposed changes to the Charging Schedule would have to be submitted for examination.

The Panel noted the report.

28. **Draft Cultural Services O&S Report**

The Panel considered the Review of Cultural Services undertaken by a Panel Working Group

The Chairman thanked the members of the Working Group and the supporting officers for their efforts.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report and recommendations of the Working Group which reviewed Cultural Services be adopted.
2. That the working Group be stood down.

29. **Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions**

The Panel received and noted the scheduled Key and Non-Key Decisions relating to Environment, Culture and Communities.

CHAIRMAN