

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 July 2015
5.30 - 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Gawthrope (Chair), Perry (Vice-Chair), Baigent, Gehring, Gillespie, Pitt, Ratcliffe, Robertson, C. Smart and M. Smart

Executive Councillor for Environment and Waste: Peter Roberts

Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport: Kevin Blencowe

Officers:

Director of Environment: Simon Payne

Head of Finance: Caroline Ryba

Head of Streets and Open Spaces: Joel Carre

Committee Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

15/22/Env Apologies

No apologies were received.

15/23/Env Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were declared.

15/24/Env Minutes

The minutes of 17 March 2015 meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

15/25/Env Public Questions

There were no public questions.

15/26/Env Record of Urgent Decision by the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy & Transport

15/26a/Env Allocation of Minor Highway Improvement Budget for 2015/16
The decision was noted.

15/27/Env Oral Report from the Executive Councillor for Environment & Waste and Proposals for Lead Councillor.

The Executive Councillor for Environment and Waste gave an oral report on his portfolio priorities for the municipal year 2015/16 which were as follows:

- i. Shared waste services
- ii. Black bin review
- iii. Free compost campaign
- iv. Improving the promotion of the benefits of recycling
- v. Advance the number of women in waste services
- vi. Public toilets review (including Silver Street)
- vii. Continue with the Environment Data Reports at Area Committees
- viii. Introduction of a campaign to reduce cigarette littering in the City.
- ix. Summer bins programme
- x. Replacement bin programme

Councillor Roberts advised that the Council's Environmental Health sector was the most compliant in the County and placed 63rd in the country. He then went on to explain that Councillor Perry had been appointed as the Lead Councillor for recycling and would assist with initiatives to improve recycling promotion and performance in the City.

In response to Members' questions Councillor Roberts stated the following:

- i. Where the public had abused the use of accessible toilets, radar keys had been allocated to ensure that the toilets were only used by those who they were designed for.
- ii. Advised that information to show the location of public toilets was on the Council's website but agreed the information could be improved.
- iii. A campaign to promote kitchen caddies would be trailed in targeted wards where it was hoped it would assist in the reduction of food waste.
- iv. Technology was currently being investigated that would alert the Street Team when bins were full which could help reduce staff time and costs.
- v. Confirmed that the Principal Scientific Officer was currently working on an air quality project as referenced in the portfolio plan. A report would be brought to Committee at a later date.
- vi. Stated it was not possible to use electric vehicles for refuse lorries as the technology was not yet available to power these types of vehicles. However the new purchase of an electrical vehicle used by the Pest Control team showed commitment to green energy and it was expected there would be further changes in the future.

- vii. The cost and efficiency of the new electric vehicle would be monitored over a twelve month period.
- viii. Residents were encouraged to contact their Local Councillor to suggest new locations for bins or through an Area Committee.

The Chair thanked Councillor Roberts for his report and the Committee noted the report.

15/28/Env 2014/15 Revenue and Capital Outturn, Carry Forwards and Significant Variances - Environment and Waste Health Portfolio

Matter for Decision

The Officer's report presented a summary of the 2014/15 outturn position (actual income and expenditure) for services within the Environment and Waste portfolio, compared to the final budget for the year. The position for revenue and capital was reported and variances from budgets were highlighted, together with explanations. Requests to carry forward funding arising from certain budget underspends into 2015/16 were identified.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Environment and Waste

- i. Agreed the carry forward requests totalling £96,400 as detailed in Appendix C of the Officer's report, to be recommended to Council for approval.
- ii. Agreed to seek approval from Council to carry forward capital resources to fund rephrased net capital spending of £537,000 from 2014/15 into 2015/16, as detailed in Appendix D of the Officer's report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Head of Finance which noted that the outturn reports presented to the Committee cycle reflected the reporting structures in place prior to the recent changes in Executive portfolios.

In light of these changes (together with the requirement to report outturn on the basis of portfolios in place during 2014/15) members of this committee were asked to consider the proposals to carry forward budgets and make their views

known to the Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources, for consideration at Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee prior to the recommendations to Council.

In response to the Committee's comments Officers and the Director of Environment and the Executive Councillor for Environment and Waste made the following statements:

- i. Following a change in the process the previous year the recharges were now allocated slightly differently.
- ii. Although it appeared there were differences line by line between original budgets and final budgets, the total budget had not changed, only the way in which the overhead costs had been allocated across budget lines. The restructuring of overhead costs was deemed to be a technical adjustment.
- iii. The carry forward request of £50,000 for the new post of Contracts Manager was for a fixed twelve month contract pending further review. The recruitment process had been followed but the Director of Environment would confirm to the Committee the basis on which the decision had been made.
- iv. Confirmed that few adjustments had gone through the Mid-year Financial Review
- v. Although the overall capital for streets and open spaces had not changed significantly compared to previous years, there had been an increase in monies spent which had focused on public priorities, such as the recruitment of a dog warden, additional money on posters, bins and enforcement.
- vi. Officers were working to improve the accounting reporting process for scrutiny.
- vii. The bulk of the underspend related to the purchase of new vehicles which had been ordered in the second half of the previous year but the monies had been spent in the first quarter of this financial year.

The Committee **resolved** (6 votes to 0) to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

15/29/Env Oral Report from the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy & Transport and Proposals for Lead Councillors

The Executive Councillor for Planning Policy & Transport gave an oral report on his portfolio priorities for the municipal year 2015/16 which were as follows:

- i. Further work on the Local Plan was required as instructed by the Planning Inspector. This meant that meetings of the Development Plan Scrutiny Sub Committee would increase.
- ii. A review of Park Street Car Park would be brought forward to committee in October.
- iii. A joint approach with Cambridgeshire County Council was required on parking issues in the City while looking at the reduction of the number of vehicles that come into the City Centre.
- iv. Work was ongoing regarding shared services with Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Councillor Blencowe advised that Councillor M Smart had been appointed as the Lead Councillor for cycling who would assist in the review of the planned projects for cycling including the City Deal, and work on joint initiatives with the County Council Cycling Champion.

Councillor C Smart acknowledged it was important for the Council to work with the County Council on the issue of parking and vehicle movement in the City. She also expressed disappointment that the scrutiny of all the proposed shared services would be going to Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and rather than by the Environment Committee.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Blencowe for his report and the Committee noted the report.

15/30/Env 2014/15 Revenue and Capital Outturn, Carry Forwards and Significant Variances - Planning Policy and Transport Portfolio

Matter for Decision

The Officer's report presented a summary of the 2014/15 outturn position (actual income and expenditure) for services within the Planning Policy and Transport portfolio, compared to the final budget for the year. The position for revenue and capital was reported and variances from budgets highlighted, together with explanations. Requests to carry forward funding arising from certain budget underspends into 2015/16 and future years where relevant were identified.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Environment and Waste

- i. Agreed the carry forward requests totalling £81,500 as detailed in Appendix C, to be recommended to Council for approval.

- ii. Agreed to seek approval from Council to carry forward capital resources to fund rephased net capital spending of £6,414,000 from 2014/15 into 2015/16, as detailed in Appendix D.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Head of Finance which noted that the outturn reports presented to the Committee cycle reflected the reporting structures in place prior to the recent changes in Executive portfolios.

In light of these changes (together with the requirement to report outturn on the basis of portfolios in place during 2014/15) members of this committee were asked to consider the proposals to carry forward budgets and make their views known to The Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources, for consideration at Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee prior to the recommendations to Council.

In response to the Committee's comments Officers and the Director of Environment and the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport made the following statements:

- i. Agreed that all abbreviations in future documents would be written in full in the first instance.
- ii. Confirmed there had been an increase in the number of cars in the city which had brought a rise in the income collected from parking. However this meant an increase in traffic pollution which needed to be addressed.
- iii. Work to the 20mph City Zones should be completed by July 2016. With all of the statutory obligations needing to be met and the desire to consult properly the overall process had been slower than expected.
- iv. Advised that a report would be made to the Cambridge City Joint Area Committee to consider the increase of traffic into the City, the impact in the rise of the park and ride charges, flow of traffic movement and parking.
- v. The end date for the Green Deal had been extended to March 2016.

The Committee **resolved** (6 votes to 0) to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

The meeting ended at 7.00 pm

CHAIR

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