

Environment Select Committee

A meeting of Environment Select Committee was held on Monday, 28th June, 2010.

Present: Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg (Chairman), Cllr Dick Cains, Cllr Roy Rix, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Mick Womphrey, Cllr Bill Woodhead.

Officers: Ms J.Ballinger (CESC); R.McGuckin, Ms J.King, W.Trewick (DNS); G.Birtle, N.Hart (LD).

Also in attendance:

Apologies: were submitted on behalf of Councillors Gardner and Stoker.

1 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Mrs Rigg declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of the item entitled 'EIT Review of Built and Natural Environment' insofar as the item related to the Council's Blue Badge service as a result of a relative of hers being a blue badge holder, and the fact she did on occasion use the badge when transporting her relative.

CONCLUDED that the Declaration of Interest be noted.

2 Draft Minutes-17th May 2010

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the Meeting held on 17th May 2010 be approved as a correct record and be forwarded to Council.

3 EIT Review of Built and Natural Environment

Consideration was given to the draft scope and project plan for the Committee's EIT Review of Built and Natural Environment; together with baseline information for the following service areas comprising the review:-

- Blue Badge Scheme
- Penalty Charge Notices for Parking and Bus Lanes
- The operation of off-street and on-street car parking
- Permit Parking Schemes
- Road Safety Partnership
- Eco Driver Training
- Motorcycle Training
- School Crossing Patrol Service
- Urban Design and Countryside Greenspace.

It was noted that the intended inclusion of green spaces within the review had now been referred to the Arts, Leisure & Culture Select Committee for consideration as part of their review.

Members made reference to the expenditure/income ratio of the Blue Badge service and the possibility of the review including consideration of action being taken to address problems of non-blue badge holders parking in disabled bays at supermarkets.

With regard to Off Street and On-Street Parking, members made reference to

opportunities to maximise income in certain areas around Stockton Town Centre, which had no parking restrictions and therefore allowed people to use these areas to park, often all day whilst they worked nearby. Options to address this, including the possible use of parking meters, would be considered as part of the review. It was noted that Cabinet had in 2007, considered a full breakdown of usage of town centre car parks and it was suggested that this information be circulated to members of the Committee.

Statistical information to review the effectiveness of initiatives such as the Safety Camera Partnership and the Driver Offender Rehabilitation Scheme were also requested, along with a cost analysis of the School Parking Enforcement service measured against the ability of a school to contribute towards the cost of the service. Reference was also made as to when the issue of cycling on pavements would be addressed by the scrutiny process and it was agreed that the Scrutiny Officer would clarify the likely timescale for such a review to commence and advise the relevant member accordingly.

All of the required information arising from the above would be presented to members in the forthcoming months.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. The draft scope and project plan for the review be approved.
2. The further information requested be presented to the Committee at its forthcoming meetings.

4 Progress Updates of Previously Agreed Recommendations

Members considered the progress on the previously agreed recommendations of the following scrutiny reviews provided in the progress update:

Cemeteries

Members noted that the objectives for the development of a woodland cemetery and the identification of further woodland sites had slipped due to the absence of any available funding.

Animal Welfare and Dog Fouling

Members were advised that, following consultation with dog owners at Preston Park, the proposal to consider the introduction of Dog Control Orders had now been withdrawn.

Reference was also made to recent media coverage of kite flying being used as an effective deterrent against pigeons, and it agreed that the Scrutiny Officer would investigate further.

CONCLUDED that the updates be noted.

5 Work Programme

Information required to be presented as evidence for the Committee's review of

Built and Natural Environment would be scheduled into future meetings as appropriate.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.

6 Chair's Update

The Chair advised that there was no further items upon which she wished to advise at this stage.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.