

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

4.00pm 11 JULY 2012

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor West (Chair)

Also in attendance: Councillor Sykes (Deputy Chair), Janio (Opposition Spokesperson), Mitchell (Opposition Spokesperson), Cobb, Deane, Pissaridou, Summers, G Theobald and Wakefield

Other Members present: Councillor Hawtree

PART ONE

1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

1.1 There were none.

1(b) Exclusion of press and public

1.2 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the Act"), the Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the business to be transacted or the nature of proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I(1) of the Act).

1.3 **RESOLVED-** That the press and public not be excluded from the meeting.

2. CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

2.1 The Committee considered a report of the Monitoring Officer that provided information on the Committee's Terms of Reference and related matters including the appointment of its urgency sub-committee.

2.2 Councillor Janio asked how the Members for an urgency sub-committee would be selected.

2.3 The Acting Assistant Head of Law clarified that an urgency sub-committee would comprise of the Chair and one Member each from the two other political groups who would be nominated by the respective Group Leaders. Any decisions taken by the urgency sub-committee would be reported to the next regular Environment & Sustainability Committee.

2.4 **RESOLVED-**

1. That the Committee's Terms of Reference, as set out in Appendix A to the report be noted.
2. That the establishment of an urgency Sub-Committee consisting of the Chair of the Committee and two other Members (nominated in accordance with the scheme for the allocation of seats for the committees), to exercise its powers in relation to matters of urgency, on which it is necessary to make a decision before the next ordinary meeting of the Committee be approved.

3. **MINUTES- FOR INFORMATION**

3.1 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes of the previous Environment, Transport and Sustainability Cabinet Member Meetings held on 27 March and 4 May be noted.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS CITY SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIP MEETING- FOR INFORMATION**

4.1 The Chair noted that he had requested that the minutes from the City Sustainability Partnership (CSP) meetings be included on the agenda for the Committee on an on-going basis.
Councillor Sykes, Mitchell, Janio and himself were all members of the CSP, and he was keen to ensure this Committee is aware of and values the work of the CSP.
He would ask that the Chair of the CSP was copied the agendas and minutes for the Environment & Sustainability Committee too.

4.2 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes of the previous meeting of the City Sustainability Partnership held on 14 May 2012 be noted.

5. **CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

5.1 The Chair conveyed the following Communication:

"I would like to welcome Members, Officers and the Public to this, the first meeting of our new Environment & Sustainability Committee.
The Committee brief covers many highly visible and important Council Services and areas of public interest.

We have a key role to play in delivering one of the Council's top Corporate Priorities, of "Creating a more sustainable City" and we will be taking a presentation from Geoff Raw later that expands on that.

I hope that Members will find their experience of this Committee interesting and worthwhile and I will certainly seek to ensure all are enabled to make a positive contribution.

We face a challenging financial situation which is placing strain on services and staff. We have the challenge to see that we evolve and maintain good quality services that support the needs of the City, and that we continue to progress to making the City a sustainable, healthy and resilient city, living within our fair share of what the planet can afford.

I hope we will be able to enjoy working together and to share in ensuring the City, its residents, businesses and visitors and our shared natural and built environment are well served.

As part of my role of Committee Chair, I get to meet and learn of all manner of interesting people striving to make change in the City and I would like to use this Communication to regularly share with you some of the recent highlights.

I'm very glad to say, that recently the partners in the Harvest project succeeded in receiving an additional Big Lottery award for £235k. This is a great reflection on the success of the partnership of community food organisations locally and provides a strong platform for future work.

Harvest, have also been short-listed for a National Lottery Award for best Environment Project. This has progressed to a public voting stage, so I'll share the link, and ask that you encourage support.

I think there is good deal to understand about the food partnerships work and the Harvest project, so I think it would be good to invite them to give a presentation at one of our future meetings.

Recently I was delighted to attend the 6th Annual Moulsecomb Environment & Heritage Festival at Moulsecomb Primary School. The school is an outstanding resource and pride of the local community and I thoroughly recommend members pay a visit to the festival next year, to see the wonderful gardens and heritage buildings that have been created.

A number of colleagues and I recently attended the first Eco Technology Show at the new Amex Stadium. The show was a joint venture our officers helped to develop. I was particularly impressed by the presentation given by Brighton University about the work they are doing to reduce their carbon footprint by 50% over 5 years. This should stand as an inspiration to us all.

Finally, I'd like to mention, that this Friday sees the launch of the Big Sussex Butterfly count which begins with a mad day long rapid pursuit across the county for intriguingly named Yellow Clouds, Commas and Purple Hairstreaks, to name but a few".

6. CALL OVER

6.1 **RESOLVED-** That all items be reserved for discussion.

7. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

(a) Petitions**Increase Allotment Volume**

- 7.1 The petitioner did not attend the meeting therefore a response was provided in writing and is set out below.
- 7.2 The Chair provided the following response:

“We have 2,943 allotments and waiting list of 2,144 so there is a great interest in food growing which is good news.

In 2008-2009, a review of the Allotments Service was undertaken to try to address the number on long waiting lists and under-utilised plots. There were issues of under cultivation or neglect of allotment plots. Since that time, changes have been introduced which included managing non cultivation fairly and firmly and introducing half size plots which are more manageable for those new to growing as well as increasing the number of allotments overtime.

We are also looking to at old sites and new sites, including Race Hill, and Whitehawk Hill. In fact we are due to consult on the management of the whole area which includes working with the Permaculture Trust on planting an Orchard. We have also identified a new potential site. However, there is always a funding issue.

I have called for an Allotment Strategy to be developed with the Federation to work up long term plans for the service and this should include considering how new sites can be financed in terms of the capital needed to set them up and the on going revenue costs such as water charges

Initial discussions have commenced and I am positive we can find a way forward even though we have to work within the current financial restrictions”.

- 7.3 **RESOLVED-** That the petition be noted.

8. MEMBER INVOLVEMENT**(d) Notices of Motion****Nominating Queen Elizabeth Fields in Brighton & Hove- Conservative Group**

- 8.1 A Notice of Motion as detailed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Cobb on behalf of the Conservative Group and seconded by Councillor Theobald.
- 8.2 The Chair moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group which was seconded by Councillor Sykes.
- 8.3 The Chair then put the following Notice of Motion to the vote:

Environment and Sustainability Committee strongly supports the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge – a campaign run by the Fields in Trust Charity and headed by Prince William - to protect in perpetuity outdoor recreational spaces in communities all across

the country as a permanent living legacy of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the 2012 Olympics.

Committee notes that in addition to providing a lasting legacy and giving additional protection to nominated sites, Queen Elizabeth II Fields are also eligible to apply to a range of improvement funds managed by Fields in Trust. Local residents can also get involved in choosing a QE2 Field in their neighbourhood if their local council nominates more than one site.

Therefore, this Committee resolves to:

- 1) Note that officers are examining the options for nominating one or more of the city's parks, gardens and sports fields or downland sites as a Queen Elizabeth II Field and requests officers to bring an update in October and a report to the November Committee meeting for decision.
- 2) Request that the Chief Executive write to the city's 3 MPs seeking their support for the campaign.

8.4 **The motion was carried.**

9. **INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE (PRESENTATION)**

- 9.1 The Committee considered a verbal presentation from the Strategic Director, Place that included suggested key issues & Work Programme Priorities.
- 9.2 The Chair proposed that Committee Members attend site visits that related to the Committee's functions. The Chair asked for suggestions from other Members and proposed that the first of these visits be to view the trial communal recycling scheme in Brunswick and Adelaide ward.
- 9.3 Councillor Sykes asked if the Committee could be provided with more information on the work of the CSP, the Food Partnership and sea defences and water management.
- 9.4 Councillor Deane asked if the Committee could be provided with a presentation on Elm trees as Brighton & Hove was one of the few places in the United Kingdom where they were still prevalent.
- 9.5 Councillor Wakefield requested the Committee learn more about biodiversity projects on Council housing land.
- 9.6 Councillor Theobald recommended a physical inspection of surface water flooding risks in the Patcham area.

- 9.7 Councillor Mitchell stated that she hoped the Committee would predominately consider decision-making.
- 9.8 The Chair replied that site visits would be related to issues where the Committee has a decision making role to enable the Committee members to be fully informed before making decisions.
- 9.9 Councillor Pissaridou felt that the focus of such site visits should be wide-ranging adding as an example that issues concerning flooding should also include concerns regarding the necessary insurance cover.
- 9.10 **RESOLVED-** That the Committee notes the verbal presentation.

10. AIR QUALITY PROGRESS REPORT

- 10.1 The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Place that set out the Air Quality Action Plan, Air Quality Progress report and Air Quality Action Plan. Publication of Air Quality Progress Reports was one of the council's statutory duties under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and the Clean Air Act 1993.
- 10.2 The Chair stated that a recent update on air quality in the city showed NO₂ levels in parts of the city centre after decades of monitoring remained significantly over EU limits. This had a serious health impact and there was a growing risk of fines which may be passed on to the city.
The administration were improving sustainable transport and seeking to address city centre air pollution, with investments in the Lewes Road, Old Shoreham Road cycles lanes, more electric charging points and using parking tariffs to encourage parking to spread away hotspots.
The Chair added that he had called for this report so that members were aware of the concern over air quality and so they could consider what further may need to be done to achieve compliance.
- 10.3 The Head of Regulatory Services and the Senior Technical Officer provided further information on the technical aspects of the report.
- 10.4 Councillor Janio asked how likely it was that the Local Authority would have to pay fines to the European Union (EU).
- 10.5 The Head of Regulatory Services clarified that whilst there were some safeguards and financial sanctions wouldn't be imminent, the Localism Act authorised financial sanctions to be passed on to Local Authorities.
- 10.6 Councillor Theobald noted that air quality had improved in suburban areas but worsened in the city centre.
- 10.7 The Head of Regulatory Services replied that there were varying factors behind this including the most common type of fleet in these areas, the street size and the design of buildings in the proximity. For example, North Street had very tall buildings which affected the dispersal of emissions.

- 10.8 Councillor Deane asked if there was evidence of a topographical effect on emissions in the city and enquired if it was possible to negotiate timescales of action.
- 10.9 The Head of Regulatory Services replied that topography did have an effect in relation to the terrain of the South Downs preventing the dispersal of emissions. He clarified that officers were seeking to speak to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs about a possible extension.
- 10.10 Councillor Mitchell asked if central government would be requesting tighter targets in Local Transport Plans.
- 10.11 The Chair replied that the recommendations in the report sought to establish this with central government.
- 10.12 Councillor Janio asked what could be done to identify the main problems.
- 10.13 The Head of Regulatory Services replied linking with partners such as the NHS was providing a better understanding of the problems presented. The Senior Technical Officer added that significant improvements had already been made including a dispersion model tool for assessing the worst affected streets.
- 10.14 The Chair noted that it was proposed that officers would present a further report to the Committee with a visual presentation.
- 10.15 Councillor Sykes stated that it was important that Members support the recommendations in the report and that action be undertaken as soon as possible.
- 10.16 Councillor Cobb stated that she was a supporter of hybrid and electric cars but the authority needed to be more sensitive to the placement of charging points and make efforts to bring down the cost of owning such vehicles.
- 10.17 Councillor Janio stated that the problems could not be considered on monetary values alone and what was needed was a steady plan with sensible spending figures.
- 10.18 Councillor Sykes noted that one of the recommendations requested officers to look at the best course of action to address air quality problems. He agreed with Councillor Janio that the solution was not to spend huge sums of money on the problem but to devise a strategy that was realistic and fit for purpose.
- 10.19 **RESOLVED-** That the Committee:
1. Notes the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) set out at Appendix One.
 2. Notes the Air Quality progress report set out at Appendix Two and instructs the Strategic Director, Place to consider further options that may be brought forward concerning local Air Quality Management measures necessary to achieve compliance with Defra objectives, targets and requirements.

3. Agrees that the Air Quality Action Plan be included as supporting evidence for the Council's City Plan and the appropriate Development Plan documents, the Local Transport Plan and Council strategies.
4. Directs the Strategic Director, Place to meet appropriate Defra officials to seek clarity on the Council's current liability and timescales required for compliance.

11. SUSTAINABLE CITIES WORK - MAJOR FUNDING BIDS

- 11.1 The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Place that that sought agreement to submit funding bids which would support the city in becoming a more sustainable place in accordance with the Corporate Plan and was consistent with a One Planet Living approach.
- 11.2 The Chair noted that the report detailed two very exciting funding opportunities that would greatly help the drive to become a One Planet City. The impressive list of partners rapidly assembled for City Living Sustainably bid showed the strengths the city enjoyed. He was particularly impressed at how well the project related to socially deprived and climatically vulnerable communities. The Chair congratulated the One Planet team for being shortlisted
He added that he was proud that the city had been invited to bid to be a Future City Demonstrator with the enticing potential of up to £25m funding. The Chair paid tribute to officers for their work on the project.
- 11.3 The Strategic Director, Place, the Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy and the Senior Sustainability Consultant provided further information on the funding opportunities.
- 11.4 Councillor Mitchell passed her congratulations for the wide-ranging partner bodies included for the Communities Living Sustainability Big Lottery bid. She also praised the Future City Demonstrator bid that would bring educational benefits in the funding for a feasibility study as well as the potential for enormous funding for the potential winner.
- 11.5 Councillor West moved an amendment to the recommendation 2.2 to read (shown in bold):
 - 2.2 Notes that the Strategic Director, Place ~~register~~ **has registered** an expression of interest for the Government's Technology Strategy Board 'Future Cities Demonstrator' bidding initiative **and requests Officers to bring a progress report to the next meeting of the Committee**
- 11.6 Councillor Sykes formally seconded the amendment.
- 11.7 **RESOLVED-** That the Committee:
 1. Notes the Big Lottery bid submitted by city partners under the Communities Living Sustainably programme.

2. Notes that the Strategic Director, Place has registered an expression of interest for the Government's Technology Strategy Board 'Future Cities Demonstrator' bidding initiative and requests Officers to bring a progress report to the next meeting of the Committee

12. RAMPION WINDFARM: RESPONSE TO DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

- 12.1 The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Place that provided an update to Members on the progress of the proposed Rampion off-shore windfarm and requested permission for the Strategic Director, Place to be authorised to respond to the draft Environmental Statement on behalf of the council. The report was supplemented by a presentation by representatives from E.O.N.
- 12.2 The Chair stated that he hoped Members would welcome the benefits of the proposals including CO2 reduction, a boost to the economy and jobs, education and tourism. There were concerns about the seascape, marine biology and the cable route. However, the consultation was ongoing and the project had the potential to be good for the city and it was important for the Authority to be a critical friend.
- 12.3 Councillor Sykes asked if the environmental statement had been reviewed by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and the expected impact of the 195 concrete turbine bases on the marine environment.
- 12.4 The representatives from E.O.N replied that the environmental statement had not been reviewed by IEMA but the proposals had been accessed by the Planning Inspectorate who had their own environmental guidelines and the experts within their own organisation. The representatives added that there was some evidence from previous projects that the concrete bases for the turbines saw an increase in marine activity.
- 12.5 Councillor Janio asked why Shoreham Power Station could not be used as a substation.
- 12.6 The representatives from E.O.N clarified that whilst they hoped to be able to use this facility, they had found that the energy capacity generated from the turbines would be too high for Shoreham Power Station.
- 12.7 Councillor Theobald asked if there were similar schemes in operation and if there was an intention to use local companies and employment for construction and operation.
- 12.8 The representatives from E.O.N replied that a similar scale project was in operation in Great Yarmouth and had good support. He further explained that E.O.N were currently working with Marine South East a business-led consortium developer in identifying local options and they were currently assessing interest.
- 12.9 **RESOLVED-** That the Committee authorise the Strategic Director, Place to produce a response for the City Council on the draft Environmental Statement in liaison with Adur District Council and the Shoreham Port Authority, in consultation with the Chair and Opposition Spokespersons.

13. ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

13.1 No items were referred to Full Council for information.

The meeting concluded at 6.13pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of