

CABINET**3 December 2014****Minute Extract****347. DRAFT PORTFOLIO PLANS 2015/16**
(Report CAB2633 refers)

Councillor Warwick drew Members' attention to "The Great Waste Project" proposed to take place during 2015 (page 52 of the Report's Appendix). This would include a Great Waste Exhibition and work by the Art School focussing on a recycling theme.

During the public participation, Karen Barratt addressed Cabinet as summarised below. She requested that the special Planning Committee scheduled for 11 December 2014 to consider the revised Silver Hill application be postponed until the results of the related Judicial Review (JR) were known. She believed that the JR application had a strong case and that the planning application had altered dramatically since first considered by the Planning Committee. She also referenced the recent protest march which took place in Winchester against the proposed development.

The Chairman emphasised that the functions of the Planning Committee were completely separate to those of the executive and neither Council nor Cabinet could influence their decision. The Council had sought external legal advice and been informed that it was appropriate for the Planning Committee to consider the amended application in advance of the JR decision. The JR related to procurement issues which was an entirely separate matter to the planning application. The Silver Hill applicant had the same entitlement as any other planning applicant to have their application considered in a timely manner and public protests could not be allowed to affect that right.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillors Thompson and Learney addressed Cabinet and their comments are summarised below.

Councillor Thompson generally welcomed the Plans but believed that as a number of projects fell within a number of Portfolio Holders' Plans there was a danger that no one Councillor took overall responsibility. In addition, she considered that there were a number of omissions, namely:

- The Plans did not have adequate regard to the requirement to improve consultation with the public on important issues. For example, there was not enough detail on how consultation was to be undertaken regarding the proposals for the Station Approach area;
- The Plans should focus more on the Council's Low Carbon Route map. For example, fitting solar panels on Council houses, including new builds, wherever possible. Councillor Thompson queried the results of a pilot project to fit solar panels on a Council property in Cromwell Road, Stanmore a number of years ago? More also needed to be done on the Council's non-housing properties.

- She believed that the Council had fallen behind on recycling targets, in particular in relation to food waste and textile recycling.
- She queried the importance of the project to ensure dogs were well provided for (page 49 of the Appendix).

The Chairman highlighted that a number of the comments raised by Councillor Thompson would be dealt with by the detailed Plans that complemented the Portfolio Plans. With regard to consultation, he stated that it was proposed that a Cabinet (Major Projects) Committee be established whose remit would include consideration of consultation on major projects, such as Station Approach.

Councillor Warwick explained that the project regarding dogs had resulted from a national requirement. She disputed that the Council were not performing in terms of recycling and stated it was rated fourth in Hampshire. As a member of the Low Carbon Board she confirmed that the introduction of solar panel was an ongoing matter for discussion.

With regard to Council housing, Councillor Tait confirmed that Officers continued to carefully consider the possible use of solar panels and were working with WinACC.

Councillor Learney stated that she would raise a number of detailed points when the Report was considered at The Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, she had a fundamental concern that the Plans were too activity rather than outcome focussed and the success criteria were too vague and consequentially difficult to monitor. She emphasised that effective scrutiny required good information and believed that backbench Councillors were not given sufficient information to hold Portfolio Holders to account.

The Chairman noted these comments and highlighted that the outcomes were contained within the Community Strategy. He asked Officers to consider whether they should also be incorporated into the Portfolio Plans.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RECOMMENDED:

THAT FOLLOWING THE CONSULTATION, A REPORT BE MADE DIRECT TO COUNCIL IN JANUARY 2015 TO ENABLE THE PORTFOLIO PLANS FOR 2015/16 TO BE CONSIDERED FOR ADOPTION.

RESOLVED:

1. That the draft Portfolio Plans for 2015/16 be approved as a basis for consultation with key stakeholders.

2. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Policy in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make any amendments prior to the Portfolio Plans being submitted to Council in January for adoption.