

**ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL****14 March 2011****Attendance:**

Councillors:

Higgins (Chairman) (P)

Banister (P)  
Jackson (P)  
Jeffs (P)  
Maynard(P)Mather (P)  
Pearson (P)  
Phillips (P)  
Witt (P)**Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:**

Councillor Bell (Portfolio Holder for High Quality Environment)

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**1. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Councillor Bell declared personal and prejudicial interest, due to her involvement as a Cabinet Member in the actions taken or proposed in the Reports outlined below.

Councillor Pearson declared a personal and prejudicial interest as the former Portfolio Holder who had responsibility for the actions set out in Report EN110 below.

However, the Panel requested that both Councillors remain in the meeting, in their capacity as the Portfolio Holder and the former Portfolio Holder, under the provisions of Section 21(13) (a) of the Local Government Act 2000, in order that they could provide additional information to the Panel and/or answer questions.

In addition, Councillor Pearson declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest as the former Chairman of Project Integra Board in relation to Report CAB2136 below. He spoke and voted thereon.

**2. MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That, the minutes of the previous meeting held 8 February 2011 be approved and adopted.

### 3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No statements were made or questions asked.

### 4. **PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

With the permission of the Chairman, Councillor Bell informed the Panel that the Environmental Services Team had received confirmation of their Customer Services Excellence Award (following a 12 month review); that the new South Winchester Park and Ride car park had won an environmental award from the British Car Parking Association and that the Council had received seven applications for the Green Innovation Category of the Winchester Business Awards.

During general discussion, a Councillor highlighted the problem of street cleaners working on the A34 throwing their cigarettes into the verges. Although this was noted to be County Council function, the concern was acknowledged by the Portfolio Holder.

### 5. **DRAFT DETAILED CHANGE PLAN 2011/12 (HIGH QUALITY ENVIRONMENT)** [\(Report EN108 refers\)](#)

The Assistant Director (High Quality Environment) explained that the Report formed part of the consultation process on the Council's Change Plans for 2011/12. The Change Plans replaced the Council's Business Plans, which had been considered by the Panel in previous years. The Change Plans were part of the overall framework to deliver the outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy, as well as the Council's own "Efficient and Effective" outcome.

Each Scrutiny Panel was being asked to consider those parts of the Change Plan that were relevant to their area of work.

The Panel therefore considered Appendix 1 of the Report in detail and, during debate, the following issues were raised and clarified:

- That although there were a number of plans and strategies with related outcomes, this did not mean that there was a duplication of work.
- That the improved home insulation scheme was being run in partnership with the County Council in order to achieve greater economies of scale.
- That there was a small delay with the delivery of the photo-voltaic project for the Council's housing stock and the Legal Services Team was currently considering the procurement process for the scheme.
- That the Council was continuing to move towards a "thin client" IT system, which used less energy and that the older tower unit PCs would be recycled appropriately in compliance with EU law.
- That, whilst the Open Space Strategy was updated every year, the standards on which the Strategy was based could only be changed

following the anticipated adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy in 2012/13.

- That, in respect to HQE/003.4 “Work on Major Development Areas”, it was clarified that the Council was not seeking to create a new MDA at Winchester. Instead, the action referred to the Development Control Team’s responsibility to ensure that any applications for this potential MDA were dealt with as efficiently as possible, as a high quality and sustainable urban extension.
- The Assistant Director (High Quality Environment) agreed to circulate to the Panel outside of the meeting the latest information regarding the Air Quality management Plan.

RESOLVED:

That the Report be noted.

6. **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RURAL MASTERPLANNING, LDF AND LOCALISM**  
(Oral Report)

This item had been requested by Members at the previous meeting of the Panel during their consideration of Report EN107.

The Head of Strategic Planning explained that rural masterplanning referred to the work commissioned with East Hampshire District Council from CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) to investigate settlement hierarchies in rural areas for the Local Development Framework (LDF). This work had been funded by the Government to help local authorities implement the recommendations of the Taylor Review, “Living, Working Countryside.” CABE’s work would form part of the evidence base for the LDF and was due to be considered at the Cabinet (Local Development Framework) Committee at its meeting to be held on 1 April 2011.

The Head of Strategic Planning also stated that the relationship between the LDF and Localism would be addressed at two Member Briefing Sessions that had been arranged for 15 and 29 March 2011.

RESOLVED:

That the Report be noted.

7. **PROJECT INTEGRA 2011 – 2016 ACTION PLAN AND REVIEW**  
[\(CAB2136 refers\)](#)

The Assistant Director (High Quality Environment) explained that the Report set out the Project Integra Draft Annual Action Plan, the joint Partner Implementation Plan; the Project Integra Review Summary Report and the draft responses to the key questions from the Review. The Report would also be considered by a meeting of Cabinet to be held on 13 April 2011.

The Assistant Director (High Quality Environment) explained that the Plan was a timely opportunity to review and refocus the aims of Project Integra and to ensure that the Council received good value for money from its contribution to the scheme.

During debate, the Panel commented on the need to minimise waste creation and Members noted that the Plan proposed joint campaigns with East Hampshire District Council, to encourage behavioural changes. Whilst Members noted that there was a limited officer resource to support those campaigns, it agreed that Project Integra should strive to work at a national level in minimising waste creation through, for example, tackling unnecessary packaging.

In response to a question, the Assistant Director agreed to clarify outside of the meeting whether the Plan's budget included kerbside glass collection and he confirmed that kerbside glass collection was likely to improve recycling rates by 2-3%.

At the conclusion of debate, the Panel welcomed the Report but recommended an additional sentence to the answer to Question 1 in Appendix 4: "That the Review should aim to increase the number of waste streams for recycling, including food, waste plastics and glass."

**RESOLVED:**

1. That Draft Action Plan, Partner Implementation Plan and the Outcomes of the Project Integra Review be noted.

**2. That Cabinet be requested to consider amending the draft responses set out at Appendix 4 to include:**

**i) (within the answer to Question 1) "That the Review should aim to increase the number of waste streams for recycling, including food, waste plastics and glass."**

**ii) That Project Integra should be encouraged to work at a national level to reduce waste creation.**

**8. PROGRESS WITH THE PUBLIC CONVENIENCES INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP'S ACTIONS**  
[\(Report EN110 refers\)](#)

The Report updated the Panel on progress with the Informal Scrutiny Group's recommendations.

In response to questions, the Assistant Director (High Quality Environment) explained that, subject to funding, the next major refurbishment was likely to be of the Market Lane conveniences and that the Discovery Centre conveniences still required better signage.

RESOLVED:

That the Report be noted.

9. **PUBLIC CONVENIENCES CLEANING CONTRACT**  
[\(Report CAB2131\)](#)

The Assistant Director (High Quality Environment) explained that the Report set out details of public convenience cleaning in the new contract and that the Report would also be considered by a meeting of Cabinet to be held on 13 April 2011.

He explained that the new contract would be commissioned jointly with East Hampshire District Council and that it placed a high emphasis on quality.

The Panel noted the process of the contract and that it should be finalised by October 2011.

RESOLVED:

That the Report be noted.

10. **TREE PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP – FINAL REPORT**  
[\(Report EN109 refers\)](#)

The above Report was not notified for inclusion on the agenda within the statutory deadline. The Chairman accepted the item onto the agenda, as a matter of urgency, to ensure that the Group's recommendations could be considered at the earliest opportunity.

As Chairman of the Informal Scrutiny Group (ISG), Councillor Banister introduced the Report and thanked those involved in its production. She particularly highlighted the recommendations regarding the tree survey and policy and the need to better advertise planned tree works.

At the conclusion of debate, the Panel thanked the Group and the officers for their work in producing the Report and recommended the following to Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

**1. That Cabinet be requested to agree the following recommendations from the Group:**

**a. That the full utilisation of the facilities provided within the TPO module in CAPS/UNIFORM be investigated using either commissioning budgets or the 1Team process.**

**b. That the option of providing out-of-hours cover for tree protection in the District through joint working with another Local Authority is investigated.**

- c. That the post of Tree Survey Officer be established as a permanent full-time appointment to ensure that the Council is effectively managing Risk arising from trees on Council land.**
- d. That a Portfolio Holder Decision report is brought forwards to obtain approval for the proposed framework agreement for a Schedule of Rates for tree works.**
- e. That a feasibility study is undertaken to review Winchester TPOs in order to identify and revoke those which are no longer required or replace those which are not enforceable. Resources for the study should be sought through the City Council's 1Team process.**
- f. That the proposed review of planning fees include the costs of the consultation service provided by Landscape and Trees staff with the aim to achieve full cost recovery.**
- g. That the Tree Officers assess applications from third parties for permission to undertake works to Council-owned trees on a case by case and grant consent where:**
- There is no arboricultural objection to the works;**
  - The third party pays for the entirety of the works; and**
  - The third party uses a contractor approved by the Council.**
- h. That the Tree Survey Officer provides advance notification about Council tree works to the relevant Ward Councillors and Parish/Town Council clerks.**
- i. That options to provide an additional dedicated budget of £5,000 per year for proactive tree management, are investigated either through commissioning budgets or increased fee income from planning consultations.**
- j. That the Council provides information via its web-site about the trees and woodlands within its ownership.**
- k. That the Council provides information to the community to explain its approach to the management of trees.**
- l. That Council Tree Officers maintain a positive working relationship with HCC Highways.**
- m. That a revised Tree Policy be prepared for consideration by Cabinet before the end of 2011.**
- n. That the Council encourages planting of new trees in part-mitigation of the impacts of climate change.**

o. That the Council identifies opportunities for planting trees on its own land.

p. That the Tree Officers arrange a meeting of all the Tree Wardens in the District to provide an opportunity for training and networking.

3. That the Portfolio Holder for High Quality Environment be requested to report on Cabinet's consideration of these recommendations to the next meeting of the Panel (to be held 19 July 2011).

4. That the Panel review Cabinet's implementation of the above recommendations in twelve months time, at its meeting to be held March 2012.

11. **THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (REPORT PS440 REFERS) AND MATTERS ARISING.**

As this was the last meeting of the Panel, Members discussed the future of scrutiny.

During debate, the Panel considered and acknowledged the potential benefits of future Informal Scrutiny Groups to examine local and national performance indicators and their value to the Council and a Group to examine the performance of the Planning Team, which had been an on-going concern for the Panel.

RESOLVED:

That the Scrutiny Work Programme, as set out on the reverse of the agenda, and as extracted from Report PS435, be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30am and concluded at 9.30pm

Chairman