

AT A MEETING of the Economy, Transport and Environment Select Committee
of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on
Tuesday, 17th September, 2019

Chairman:

* Councillor Russell Oppenheimer

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| * Councillor Graham Burgess | * Councillor Stephen Philpott |
| Councillor John Bennison | * Councillor David Simpson |
| * Councillor Roland Dibbs | * Councillor Michael Thierry |
| * Councillor Gary Hughes | * Councillor Martin Tod |
| * Councillor Rupert Kyrle | * Councillor Michael White |
| * Councillor Derek Mellor | * Councillor Bill Withers Lt Col (Retd) |
| * Councillor Floss Mitchell | |

*Present

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman: Councillor Jonathan Glen, Chairman of the Policy & Resources Select Committee

96. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor John Bennison.

97. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

98. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.

99. DEPUTATIONS

It was confirmed that there was one deputation for the meeting, speaking on Item 7.

100. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman proposed that the agenda was reordered slightly to allow the Cycling Strategy to be taken first, due to there being a deputation. The Committee were happy with this arrangement.

101. TRANSFORMATION TO 2021 - REVENUE SAVINGS PROPOSALS

The Committee considered a report and presentation from the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment and Senior Finance Business Partner, which outlined the detailed savings proposals for Economy, Transport and Environment that had been developed as part of the Transformation to 2021 (Tt2021) Programme.

The Senior Finance Business Partner highlighted the general position of the County Council and £480 million of savings identified going forward over the next few years. Savings proposals had been put forward as part of a consultation over the summer, in which 5500 responses had been received.

There had been an assumption that the Council tax threshold would remain at 3%, but this had fallen back down to 2% after forecasts had already been estimated.

The capital budget for Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) was significant and now bigger than the revenue budget. The Director went through the current budget and amounts allocated for areas such as service areas and sources of spending, with some staff costs being covered by external funding. The majority of savings would be achieved from the waste budget, and in particular removing the current subsidies for District Council recycling. In relation to HCC waste operations, in addition to plans to reduce the overall cost of the service through the waste contract, a further example highlighted was the cost of disposing of wood brought to the HWRCs, on which £.2.25 million was currently spent each year, which was why it was proposed to start charging for larger wood items.

Whilst no reductions were proposed to the highways maintenance service, it was currently proposed in relation to the Parish Lengthsman scheme that alternative methods of funding would be looked at. It was acknowledged that relationships with District and Borough Councils may be strained in the short term by the County Council's proposals, but the County Council were keen to find long-term advantages to suit all.

During questions, Members learned that:

- 1/5 of recycled material was rejected due to contamination, doubling the haulage costs. These costs would in future be passed to the District Councils;
- There was no current proposals to further reduce bus subsidies;
- The County Council was open to all methods of alternative funding for the Parish Lengthsman scheme;

- 'DIY waste' was not something that was recognised in law but any waste classed as 'home improvement' was not considered to fall within the legal definition of household waste;
- There was evidence that reported fly-tipping incidents had increased while volumes of fly tipped material had decreased. This was probably due to changes in the methods of reporting, changes to how districts classified fly tipping and litter, and greater public awareness
- Whilst some suggestions and proposals had been taken to Project Integra (PI) in the past regarding new ways of working, these had been rejected. The County Council had no plans to leave PI, but instead proposes that the financial framework needs to be radically updated. If this cannot be achieved then HCC's eventual departure may become inevitable in the longer-term if it was not fit for purpose;
- Incinerators were already at maximum contract capacity, meaning that increasing recycling is even more important.

During debate, some Members felt that a lack of alternatives to achieve savings had been provided along with insufficient granularity regarding how the waste savings would be achieved.

Members noted that further consultation would happen before any decisions were made about charging for wood waste, which would explain the complexities and costs around processing wood.

RESOLVED:

The Select Committee supported the recommendations being proposed to the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment in section 2 of the report.

Voting

Favour: 7

Against: 4

Abstentions: 2

102. **CYCLING STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment (item 7 in the minute book) updating Members on the Cycling Strategy.

The Committee received a deputation from Tim Pickering on behalf of Cycle Waterloooville. Mr Pickering expressed thanks at the work and progress made over the past year and reminded members of the economic importance of cyclists, along with the huge benefits of walking and cycling to peoples health. Mr Pickering felt that the number of bike users remained underestimated and there continued to be an imbalance between investment in roads and car infrastructure and expanding and improving the cycle network.

The presenting officer confirmed that work was ongoing with the Cycle Strategy, but it was difficult to impose a cultural shift. The five key challenges raised by

cycling groups were highlighted within the report and it was noted by Members that there were six plans in development in light of funding opportunities likely to arise in the near future. More time and money was being invested in cycling than ever before and a lot had already been achieved through Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) and Town Centre Fund (TCP) grants.

The Chairman thanked the deputation and observers for attending and confirmed that a Cycling Workshop was taking place in Basingstoke on 10 October at 14:00, which was open to all Members.

Members agreed that the County Council needed to focus on how improvements could be made to the existing infrastructure and fully assess what worked and what didn't for cyclists. Cycle ways were expensive to implement, so it was important that criteria for them was fully assessed in order to judge how successful they were likely to be. Key stakeholders and groups were consulted as part of the process and there were currently six potential routes being investigated.

It was widely accepted that there were great health and social benefits to cycling, but reported that only 1.7% of the population used a bicycle on a regular basis.

Councillor Humby highlighted the investments made in walking and cycling and the importance of Hampshire County Council working with the unitaries in a joined-up approach in relation to the Transforming Cities (transport) programme.

Officers were thanked for their work on the project. It was agreed that progress be revisited following the conference in the spring of 2020.

103. **CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment regarding the Climate Change Action Plan.

Members were updated on progress and the links with the Hampshire 2050 work. Tackling emissions remained high on the agenda with regards to vehicles and buildings, with a particular focus on energy use and emissions from domestic property. Drainage systems and flood defences were also under review in respect of climate resilience.

During questions of the Director, Members learned that:

- Collaborative working was being done with other organisations through the Hampshire Partnership and partnership and engagement was an important factor going forward;
- Planting and managing tree stock was an important element, particularly with the Ash trees dying, but it was crucial to plant the right trees in the right areas for maximum benefit from additional tree planting;
- There were currently no specific targets for a modal shift in transport as cycling and rail users were still in very low numbers, but targets could arise following discussions with groups over the next few months;

- Findings regarding energy generation and relevant local and national energy strategies would likely be available for April 2020 and possibly become part of a rolling action plan for the County Council.

The Committee thanked officers for their work on the Action Plan.

104. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The current work programme was discussed by Committee (item 9 in the minute book) and the following items were proposed to be added:

- Climate change
- Tree Stock and tree strategy (with CCBS) Requested by Cllr Kyrle
- An item on Cycle tax was requested by Cllr Thiery
- Energy generation and capacity (possibly more suited to the Policy & Resources Select Committee)
- The impact of Brexit – already on the programme but look at adding to a 2020 meeting
- Walking strategy
- Street Light Safety – already on the programme but look at in a wider context

The items would be considered by the Director for Economy, Transport and Environment along with the Chairman of the Select Committee to find the most suitable timings and meeting allocations.

At the end of the meeting, Councillor Mitchell was thanked for her work on the Select Committee and Members wished her well for the future.

Chairman,