

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 21 March 2013

PRESENT: Councillors Helen Mirfin-Boukouris (Chair), Ian Auckland (Deputy Chair), Roger Davison, Bob Johnson, Steve Jones, Alf Meade, Joe Otten, Sioned-Mair Richards, Steve Wilson, Clive Skelton (Substitute Member) and Jillian Creasy

.....

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Terry Fox with Councillor Clive Skelton attending as his substitute.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where a resolution may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee held on 17th January 2013, were approved as a correct record and, arising from their consideration, it was noted that the Chair, Councillor Helen Mirfin-Bourkouris, and Councillors Bob Johnson and Steve Jones had joined the Task and Finish Group which would consider the issues involved in parking on dropped kerbs and pavements, and that the Group was to meet on 25th April 2013.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 There were no petitions submitted and responses to public questions were provided as follows:-

(a) the Chair, Councillor Helen Mirfin-Bourkouris, indicated that the question from Mr Peter Hartley relating to the Council's intentions regarding the site of the Castle Market and the area of demolished houses at Skinnerthorpe Road, would be passed to Councillor Leigh Bramall, Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development for his attention.

(b) In response to a question from Mr Alan Kewley, relating to

obtaining further information on items on the Cabinet agenda, the Chair agreed to meet with Mr Kewley and Emily Standbrook-Shaw, Policy Officer (Scrutiny), to discuss this issue.

- (c) The Chair hoped that the issues raised in the detailed statement presented to the Committee by Dr Aaron Thierry, Sheffield Campaign Against Climate Change, relating to Climate Change Adaptation, would be covered in the presentation and discussion in the following agenda item (Sheffield Climate Change Adaptation Strategy).

6. SHEFFIELD CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION STRATEGY

6.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Sustainable Development, on the Sheffield Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, with particular emphasis on managing risks and increasing resilience in the City. This was supplemented by the showing of a short video presentation on climate change, its effects and adaptation measures, and a joint presentation given by Councillor Jack Scott, Cabinet Member for Environment, Recycling and Streetscene, Bernd Hoermann, Sustainable Development Officer, and James Fletcher, Flood Risk Management Team. Also in attendance for this item was Andy Nolan, Director of Sustainable Development.

6.2 In summary, Councillor Scott explained that the object of the presentation was to outline the issues relating to climate change, mitigation and adaptation, and consider the challenge to Sheffield and the City's exposure.

6.3 Members made various comments and asked a number of questions in relation to the report and presentations, to which responses were provided as follows:-

- The Flood Wardens' role was about communication, with an important part of this being the keeping of records of those who were vulnerable. They may also hold resources such as sandbags.
- There were a large spectrum of views in the environmental lobby and it was hoped to encompass these in the Council's planning policies.
- It was important to remember that climate change was caused by individual acts and that the cumulative actions of individuals could contribute to mitigating this.
- The sewerage and drainage system in the City had been developed over 100 years and there had been significant investment by Yorkshire Water in the 1980's and 90's. The

drainage system in the Don Valley had a large capacity and storm water overflowed into this. This and the reservoirs above Sheffield were used to prevent the City flooding. A water and 5 year asset management programme for the City had been approved by OFWAT (Water Services Regulation Authority).

- It was felt that the utilities had now developed an increasing awareness of their vulnerability in relation to flooding.
- The issues relating to the heating of the Town Hall were recognised.
- The role for public agencies was to promote good environmental behaviour and the collective value of lots of small mitigating actions should be acknowledged. The Council had opportunities available to it like no other organisation in that it could consider long term issues and the bigger picture, including complex land management issues. Larger private sector organisations needed to develop their own strategies, but there was an accountability issue here.
- The free insulation scheme was a good example of an action which the Council could take to mitigate climate change.
- The Council was continuing to plant trees and was now maintaining them in a better manner.
- In relation to district energy, the Council were working with Veolia and E-on and looking at the social housing stock to see what could be done.
- It was acknowledged that better use needed to be made of the Peak Park in combating climate change.
- It was necessary to adopt a more regional approach in relation to waste management and consideration was being given to the sharing opportunities provided by the energy recovery facility.
- It was accepted that the submitted report did not include much on the social justice aspects regarding climate change.
- Food planning needed to be more ambitious both in international terms and in relation to food banks.
- The Sustainable Development Team would now operate as a revamped function.
- Work was being undertaken with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on the impacts of climate change on the vulnerable

and it was hoped that a report on this would be produced within the next 2 months, which would then provide a platform for development work. There was also a project being undertaken through the Core Cities group which used the Council's data sets to focus on the vulnerable. A report on this was expected in a months' time, following which actions relating to Sheffield could be explored.

- The possibility of climate change causing a serious high impact event provided a challenge to people's way of life and to the City, so a unique and unified direction was required. It should be borne in mind that actions today would have repercussions in the future but, nevertheless, people should be exhilarated and excited by the challenge presented. It was estimated that the 2007 flood had cost £135m and evidence was still being gathered to properly assess this. The Council was working with the Government in this regard and it was a challenge to argue the case for a fair share of the resources available. The effect of a serious high impact event on those in poor health needed to be considered, as did the water system's ability to deal with both flood and drought.
- It was important to enable choices to make people more adaptable, for instance in terms of walking and using public transport. Issues could arise if people were not presented with such alternatives.
- Windmills were 30% more efficient than any other way of harnessing wind power.

6.4 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Councillor Jack Scott, Cabinet Member for Environment, Recycling and Streetscene, Andy Nolan, Bernd Hoermann and James Fletcher for their contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the report, presentations and responses to questions; and
- (c) requests that (i) the Director of Sustainable Development investigates what actions were being taken by the Local Enterprise Partnership and Local Authorities in the City Region to combat the effects of climate change and that the outcome of these investigations be considered for inclusion in the Sheffield Climate Change Adaptation Strategy; and (ii) a further report on the Sheffield Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, to include the more human elements of the effects of climate change and the outcome of the work being undertaken by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on the impact of climate change on vulnerable individuals, be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

7. BUSINESS FRIENDLY COUNCIL - ACCESS TO FINANCE

- 7.1 Kevin Bennett, Creative Sheffield, gave a presentation on Access to Finance for Business, in preparation for a discussion with business representatives which was to take place at a forthcoming meeting of the Committee. The presentation covered the national perspective and response, together with the local response and initiatives and lessons and challenges. Also in attendance for this item was David Campbell-Molloy, Creative Sheffield.
- 7.2 A brief discussion then took place as to how the forthcoming meeting was to be managed with Members suggesting that they should adopt a listening role, consider how the average person could be assisted and see what could be done to improve the flow of capital and encourage business. The importance of getting business representatives with different experiences in obtaining finance, to attend the meeting, was also emphasised.
- 7.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee notes the information reported in preparation for the forthcoming meeting with business representatives on 18th April 2013.

8. WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

- 8.1 The Policy Officer (Scrutiny) submitted the Committee's Work Programme for 2013/14 and the Forward Plan for the period 1st March 2013 to 30th June 2013, for consideration.
- 8.2 **RESOLVED:** That:-
- (a) the contents of the Committee's Work Programme 2013/14 be approved subject to:-
 - (i) the Sheffield City Region Investment Fund being considered as part of the City Deals item scheduled for late 2013; and
 - (ii) food banks being considered as part of the Sheffield Food Plan item at a future Committee meeting; and
 - (b) the Forward Plan for the period 1st March 2013 to 30th June 2013, be received and noted.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 9.1 The next meeting of the Committee would be the Special Meeting with Business Representatives, to be held on Thursday, 18th April 2013, at 2.00 pm, in the Town Hall.