

# GREENER SELECT COMMITTEE

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009

**Councillors:** (Emma Webster (*Chairman*) (P), Peter Argyle (P), Howard Bairstow (A), Lee Dillon (P), Tim Metcalfe (P), Tony Vickers (*Vice-Chairman*) (P), Graham Pask (*Portfolio Holder for Partnerships, "Cleaner Greener" and Safer Stronger Communities*) (P)

**Substitutes:** Paul Bryant, Manohar Gopal, Owen Jeffery, Terry Port

**Also present:** John Ashworth (Corporate Director Environment) and David Cook (Principal Policy Officer).

### PART I

#### 4. APOLOGIES.

There were no apologies for absence received.

#### 5. MINUTES.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2009 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Members noted that Councillor Royce Longton had been replaced as a Committee Member by Councillor Lee Dillon. It was resolved that Councillor Tony Vickers be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Greener Select Committee for the 2009/10 Municipal Year.

#### 6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Councillor Tony Vickers declared an interest in the work of the Greener Select Committee as he was the Council's representative on the Local Access Forum, but reported that, as his interest was not personal and prejudicial, he was permitted to take part in the work of the Committee.

#### 7. WEST BERKSHIRE PARTNERSHIP'S GREENER PARTNERSHIP.

The Committee considered a presentation (Agenda Item 4) concerning the work of the West Berkshire Partnership's Greener Partnership.

Councillor Graham Pask and John Ashworth made the following points as part of their presentation:

- The Greener Partnership was formed in January 2008 and its membership was made up of representatives from the private sector, voluntary sector and the Council. The partnership's activities were aligned with the Council's Cleaner Greener priorities and National Indicators. It was noted that Vodafone had left the Partnership and a replacement was being sought. Councillor Tim Metcalfe said that as West Berkshire was 74% of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and that the majority of this was farm land then there should be a representative from the farming community on the Partnership. Councillor Tony Vickers mentioned that the Partnership should consider a representative from the Elm Farm Research Centre. Councillor Graham Pask noted the suggestions and said that even if representatives from these organisations were not on the Board, representatives could be invited to take part in the Partnership's work such as the use of local resources.

## GREENER SELECT COMMITTEE – 8 SEPTEMBER 2009 – MINUTES

- The priority outcomes of the Partnership were to:
  - Reduce the carbon footprint of West Berkshire;
  - Increase the use of local resources;
  - Improve the sustainability of waste management;
  - Maintain the quality of the local environment.

Members asked when calculating the district's carbon footprint, if embedded carbon was included, (for example the carbon produced in factories abroad producing goods used in West Berkshire); and why school staff were not included in figures produced when looking at the Council's staff travel carbon footprint? Councillor Graham Pask replied that the district's carbon footprint was calculated according to Government guidelines and that there were travel plans in place for schools and the Council was working with schools to reduce reliance on cars to travel to work.

The Partnership was working towards the following SMART targets:

- NI 186: reduce carbon emissions in West Berkshire by 9.4% over 3 years:

This was being undertaken through the Community Carbon Reduction Programme. Through this programme funding had been obtained to undertake work to reduce carbon emissions in three communities.

Councillor Lee Dillon asked if Thatcham Town Council had been contacted regarding work undertaken in Thatcham. Members were informed that the Partnership, via West Berkshire Council, had contacted Thatcham Town Council and details would be emailed to Committee Members.

Members were also informed that the Government would be measuring the district's carbon reduction based primarily upon national initiatives. The Partnership however had been eager to introduce local measures.

The Partnership had also introduced a commercial carbon reduction programme that was also working with SMEs (Small to Medium sized Enterprises) to help them reduce their carbon footprint and had held an information exchange event, established a Green Business Network and proposed to host a series of network events.

The Local Strategic Partnership's Climate Change Strategy would be considered by the Executive in the autumn.

There was also work being undertaken regarding sustainable transport by reducing single occupancy car journeys and reducing car journeys to schools. The Partnership was also working towards introducing a "Sustainability" award.

- Increase the use of local resources:

Members were informed that lottery funding had been secured and that work was underway to increase the percentage of local food consumed in West Berkshire and to encourage the use of community allotments. Councillor Tim Metcalf also mentioned that more could be done on the use of local energy.

- Waste related targets:

Members were informed that the waste targets had been incorporated into the Waste Public Finance Initiative and were expected to be achieved.

- Improve management of commercial waste in West Berkshire:

## GREENER SELECT COMMITTEE – 8 SEPTEMBER 2009 – MINUTES

This topic had been considered by an Overview and Scrutiny Commission Task Group and the recommendations were to be reviewed by the Partnership.

- NI 175: access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling.

Members were informed that there were a range of actions being introduced relating to the Local Transport Plan.

- Overview so far:

Members were informed that governance by a small core group supported by sub-groups had worked well with clear direction and resource contributions from partners.

It was noted that the economic downturn would have an impact on future resources but there was evidence that the downturn had also reduced emissions.

It was suggested that the Partnership should be encouraged to work with representatives from the rural community.

**RESOLVED** that the presentation be noted.

### 8. GREENER SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME.

The Committee considered a report (agenda Item 5) concerning its future work programme.

Councillor Emma Webster suggested that the Council should sign up to the 10:10 campaign that was aimed at reducing carbon reduction by 10% by 2010. The campaign covered a number of initiatives people could undertake to reduce their carbon footprint, for example Councillor Webster travelled to the meeting by train to reduce carbon emissions, save money and provide additional time to do work whilst travelling. Councillor Tony Vickers recommended that a cross party motion be put to Council to join the 10:10 campaign.

**Ref 20 and 23** – It was recommended that the waste contract and bulky waste work programme subjects be considered as work programme items by the Waste Management Task Group. John Ashworth informed Members that the Waste Management Task Group had been established to oversee the introduction of the Waste PFI contract. Members resolved that the Waste Management Task Group be invited to attend the next meeting of the Greener Select Committee to participate in these discussions.

**Ref 21** – Rights of Way: Councillor Vickers reported that the Local Access Forum was discussing the Right of Way Improvement Plan at its June 2010 meeting. Members agreed that the outcome of this meeting should be considered by the Committee in the summer of 2010.

**Ref 25** – Sustainable Energy: Councillor Vickers reported that sustainable energy was currently being considered by the Local Development Framework working party and thus this item should be reviewed in a year's time. It was agreed to review sustainable energy in 2010/11.

**Ref 26** – Use of Local Resources: it was resolved that the Committee would start its review of the use of local resources at its December 2009 meeting and would be initially be concentrating on the use of local food.

## GREENER SELECT COMMITTEE – 8 SEPTEMBER 2009 – MINUTES

**Ref 27** – Equality and Amenity to the local Environment: Members resolved that as this was linked to the review of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (Ref 21) the review should take place in the summer of 2010. Members requested that officers provide them with an update on what work was being undertaken to access the urban environment.

**Ref 22** – Flooding: Councillor Lee Dillon reported that the Committee should look at what could be done by residents to protect their homes from flooding as well as investigate the actions arising from the Water Management Plan. Councillor Peter Argyle also reported that the Committee should consider actions arising from the previous review into flooding carried out by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Ref 24** – Improved use of Public Transport: Councillor Vickers suggested that the Committee should consider mixed mode travel, for example combining cycling and public transport. Members resolved to invite officers producing the Local Transport Plan 3 to a special meeting of the Greener Select Committee.

**RESOLVED that** a cross party motion on the 10:10 initiative be submitted to Council and that the Greener Select Committee's work programme be amended for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission.

*(The meeting commenced at 6:30pm and closed at 8:45pm)*

**CHAIRMAN** .....

**Date of Signature:** .....