

# Notice of Meeting

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## **Greener Select Committee**

**Tuesday, 7th September 2010 at 6.30pm**  
in Committee Room 1 Council Offices  
Market Street Newbury

Date of despatch of Agenda: Friday, 27 August 2010

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact David Cook on (01635) 519475  
e-mail: [dcook@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:dcook@westberks.gov.uk)

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## Agenda - Greener Select Committee to be held on Tuesday, 7 September 2010 (continued)

**To:** Councillors Peter Argyle, Howard Bairstow, Roger Hunneman, Tim Metcalfe, Tony Vickers (Vice-Chairman) and Emma Webster (Chairman)

**Substitutes:** Councillors Paul Bryant, Manohar Gopal, Owen Jeffery and Alan Macro

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# Agenda

Part I	Page No.
1. <b>Apologies</b> To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any).	
2. <b>Minutes</b> To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2010.	1 - 4
3. <b>Declarations of Interest</b> To receive any Declarations of Interest from Members.	
4. <b>Use of Local Resources - Local Food</b> <i>Purpose: To consider a presentation by Newbury Town Council on the potential for allotments and other land owned by local councils to contribute to local food production.</i> <i>To consider the draft recommendations within the report from the Greener Select Committee's review into local food and propose any amendments.</i>	5 - 10
5. <b>Waste Collection and Fly Tipping</b>  <i>Purpose: To receive information on assisted waste collection, wheeled recycling boxes and fly tipping.</i>	Verbal Report
6. <b>Work Programme</b> <i>Purpose: To agree the Greener Select Committees work programme.</i>	11 - 12

Andy Day - Head of Policy and Communication

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**GREENER SELECT COMMITTEE****MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON  
TUESDAY, 8 JUNE 2010**

**Councillors Present:** Peter Argyle, Howard Bairstow, Tim Metcalfe and Emma Webster (Chairman) and Keith Woodhams.

**Also Present:** Councillor Paul Bryant, Leigh Hogan, Mike Sullivan, Andrew Deacon and David Cook.

**Apologies:** Councillor Lee Dillon and Councillor Tony Vickers

**PART I****4. Apologies**

Apologies for the inability to attend the meeting were received on behalf of Councillor Lee Dillon and Councillor Tony Vickers. Councillor Keith Woodhams attended as a substitute for Councillor Tony Vickers.

**5. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2010 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

**Page 4 – Review of Local Food.** A presentation by Newbury Town Council on the potential for allotments and other land owned by local councils to contribute to local food production was suggested for a future meeting.

**6. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**7. Procurement of Local Food**

As part of the ongoing review into the use of local food, Leigh Hogan, Team Leader, Legal and Electoral Services and Mike Sullivan, Contracts and Procurement Officer, attended the meeting to give evidence on the Council's procurement process.

Members were informed that under the Council's Contract Rules of Procedure and The Public Contracts Regulations 2006, the authority was not allowed to discriminate when awarding contracts. This meant that they could not offer a contract to a supplier on the grounds of their locality.

The Council did not procure food directly; however there were contracts to supply meals to schools and Council owned care homes. When setting these contracts the authority was able to insert a clause that the contractor would explore the use of local businesses. This was not always possible as consideration to the producers' ability to produce the right quality and quantity was more important than locality.

Members were also informed that the concept of locality varied between organisations, for example the food industry classed local food as being from the United Kingdom. There was also a growing number of food assurance schemes established over the

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## **Greener SELECT COMMITTEE - 8 June 2010 - MINUTES**

years, one such scheme being the Red Tractor Scheme that was established by the Prime Minister in 2000 as an assurance kitemark for quality and locality.

Whilst discussing the evidence given Members raised the following points:

- The agricultural industry had questioned the 'Red Tractor' scheme as emphasis was given to where a product was manufactured rather than where the ingredients were produced, for example a pie may have been manufactured in a village but the meat could be from outside the United Kingdom.
- Members considered the importance of reducing 'food miles' by promoting local and seasonal produce.
- Members discussed the negative impact the European Economic Community (Common Market) had on the milk industry and how local production in the United Kingdom had been limited to allow over-production in other countries.
- Members questioned if the Council's policy on awarding tender contracts could have a clause added requesting that consideration be given to the use of local producers whenever possible.
- As the authority was considering the introduction of a Sustainable Procurement Impact Assessment integrated within the procurement process, Members considered if locality could be part of the assessment.
- It was felt that the procurement conference should be an annual event.

The Committee thanked Leigh Hogan and Mike Sullivan for attending the meeting.

### **8. Flooding Update Report**

Carolyn Murison, Civil Contingencies Manager, attended the meeting to provide an update on progress made following the flooding incident of July 2007 and the outcome of the review by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission.

Members were informed that although work had been done since the review, there were still actions planned to help prevent the impact of a future flood event.

Since the scrutiny review, communities had returned to normality with all households now back in their own homes. The Council's help to communities had moved on from counselling and distributing aid to supporting community projects and providing information. There were now a number of community flood groups in operation who worked with the Council and other agencies.

A number of action plans were put in place and were progressing well:

- OSMC Action plan – only 3 items from the original 41 were not completed in full. A substantial amount of progress has been made in these 3 outstanding actions; however due to complexities they have taken longer than anticipated.

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- Highways and Transport Flood Alleviation schemes for 2008/09 – 100% completed. The other works which were not completed for 2009/10 had all commenced; however due to landowner agreements, external funding and the severe weather, not all had been completed as intended. This will however continue and it was anticipated that the majority of the actions in the 3 year programme would be completed by March 2011.
- The actions in the Highways and Transport Service Recommendations Plan were currently 75% complete with 3 actions outstanding. It was noted that one of the actions forms part of a 3 year programme and would not be completed until March 2011.

As well as the actions arising from the scrutiny review the Council had also made a number of other achievements, such as the Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan, successful bidding for external funding to aid communities, improved working relationships with other agencies and improved working relationships with our town and parish councils.

Members were informed that there were still challenges ahead including providing advice regarding insurance issues, additional highway improvements, progress with the Pitt Review and emergency planning for our reservoir. There would also be a national flood exercise in March 2011 that would test the plans that were in place.

Whilst discussing the evidence given Members raised the following points:

- It was recommended that the Flood Action Group had greater Member participation.
- Members asked for the timescale of the retention basins project in and around Thatcham.
- Members requested the list of Town and Parish Councils who had received financial support or equipment purchased for them as part of the support provided by the Council.
- It was noted that the Sustainable Urban Drainage System, when implemented, would help support a change in planning policy.
- Although a lot of work had been undertaken this would not prevent flooding if the same volume of rain fell as seen in the 2007 floods. The district would, however be in a better position to deal with the situation.

Members expressed their appreciation for the work undertaken by Carolyn Murison and Stuart Clark, Principal Engineer, since the 2007 floods.

### 9. Waste Management

Emma Webster informed the Greener Select Committee that since the Waste Contract had been introduced it had been decided to disband the Waste Management Task Group, who had overseen its implementation. Andy Deacon, Waste Manager, had been invited to the meeting to discuss with Members what role the Greener Select Committee would have in monitoring the contract.

Andy Deacon circulated a list of key performance indicators relating to the performance of the Waste Management Contract and a set of associated environmental performance indicators. Members were informed that recycling figures were up from 20% to about

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40% since the contract was introduced and West Berkshire Council was the 4<sup>th</sup> most improved authority. If the targets in the contract were met we would be in the top 1% of authorities with regards to waste management. Veolia Environmental Services were currently meeting 97% of their contractual obligations.

Andy Deacon said he was happy to attend future meetings of the Greener Select Committee to provide an update on the contract's performance.

Whilst discussing the evidence given Members raised the following points:

- Members requested a site visit to Padworth Sidings. Andrew Deacon agreed to arrange this.
- Members asked how accurate the recycling figures were. Andrew Deacon replied that every vehicle was checked and that the Department for Environmental, Food and Rural Affairs and the Environment Agency verified the data.
- Members asked what happened to plastics that could not be recycled. Andrew Deacon replied that the majority of plastics that could not be recycled would be used for energy recovery or would go to landfill. It was the Council's aim to have all plastics recycled; however this would have to wait until the demand made it economically viable.
- Members asked if the figures related to domestic waste and commercial waste. Andrew Deacon replied that all waste collected by the authority was domestic and if every household recycled it was estimated that 60% of our waste collection could be recycled.
- Andrew Deacon was asked if existing landfill sites could be excavated to recycle past waste. Members were informed that land fill re-engineering did exist, however it was not established in this country due to the cost.
- Concern was raised about the Waste Management Task Group being disbanded as the meeting dealt with a variety of issues and not just the introduction of the Waste Management Contract. Members were informed that operational issues discussed at the task group should be sent to StreetCare. Councillor Emma Webster replied that issues that might have previously been addressed by the task group could come to the Greener Select Committee if it was felt to be appropriate.
- Andrew Deacon was asked what the level of complaints were regarding the waste service. Members were informed that initially the level of complaints increased as the new service bedded in and as a consequence of the bad weather. The levels of complaints had now come down and were below that seen under the previous contract.

Members thanked Andrew Deacon for attending the meeting.

### 10. Work Programme

The Greener Select Committee considered a report (agenda item 7) concerning its future work programme.

**Resolved that** a future discussion be held on fly tipping.

*(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.30 pm)*

**CHAIRMAN** .....

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

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Use of Local Resources – Local Food</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Greener Select Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	7 September 2010
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	N/A

**Purpose of Report:**                      **For the Greener Select Committee to consider the draft recommendations of their review into promoting local food.**

**Recommended Action:**                **That the Greener Select Committee consider the draft recommendations and propose any amendments prior to the report being considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.**

<b>Greener Select Committee Chairman Details</b>	
<b>Name &amp; Telephone No.:</b>	Councillor Emma Webster
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	ewebster@westberks.gov.uk
<b>Date Portfolio Member agreed report:</b>	N/A

<b>Contact Officer Details</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	David Cook
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## Executive Report

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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Greener Select Committee on 8 December 2009 it was resolved that the Committee would start its review of the use of local resources and that they would initially be concentrating on the use of local food.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission agreed the terms of reference for this review at its meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009. It was proposed that the Committee would examine the work being proposed by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in promoting the use of local food.
- 1.3 The Greener Select Committee agreed to conduct the review initially looking at:
- Identifying the work being undertaken by the LSP;
  - Identifying the LSP performance measures and assess meeting these targets;
  - Understanding the barriers to meeting the LSP targets;
  - To look at ways of overcoming barriers to performance; and
  - Report to the Portfolio Holder and the West Berkshire Partnership with recommendations how West Berkshire Council can encourage the use of local resources.
- 1.4 The review would be undertaken during 2010 with evidence being presented to the Greener Select Committee with draft findings being presented at the Select Committee on 14 December 2010 prior to being considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission.

### 2. West Berkshire Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) Greener Sub-Partnership

- 2.1 The Committee considered a presentation concerning the work of the West Berkshire Partnership's Greener Partnership in relation to their work promoting local food.
- 2.2 Kelvin Hughes, Chief Executive Newbury Community Resource Centre, informed Members that the West Berkshire Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) Greener Sub-Partnership had been tasked within The Sustainable Community Strategy ([A Breath of Fresh Air](#)) with a priority outcome to have five percent of all the food consumed within West Berkshire grown within the district.
- 2.3 In order to reach the five percent target by 2026 the current levels of production and consumption needed to be established. The methodology for establishing this baseline figure needed to be replicated in future years without costly specialist input.
- 2.4 In order to meet the LSP target four actions had been established; secure funding from the National Lottery, establish the baseline figure, enlist the support of three organisations as local 'champions' and deliver a publicity campaign to promote the



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purchase of local produce. Funding had been secured for the last two objectives; however this could not be used for establishing the baseline figure.

2.5 Reading University were able to undertake this piece of work at a cost of £10,000. £2,500 towards the cost had been secured; however the remaining £7,500 had not been found.

2.6 Recommend that the Council secure £7,500 to enable the LSP's Greener sub-partnership establish current level of local food consumption as long as an affordable methodology is in place to undertake future surveys.

### 3. The Organic Research Centre

3.1 The Committee considered evidence from Nic Lampkin, Executive Director Organic Research Centre (Elm Farm) and Lawrence Woodward, Co-Director Organic Research Centre (Elm Farm).

3.2 The Organic Research Centre's, aim was to develop and support sustainable land-use, agriculture and food systems, primarily within local economies, which build on organic principles to ensure the health and well-being of soil, plants, animals, people and the environment.

3.3 The Organic Research Centre was established as a "Centre of Excellence" to address the major issues raised by a global economy based on an intensive agricultural system.

3.4 It was the UK's leading research, development and advisory institution for organic agriculture, having played a pivotal role in the development of organic research, policy and standards since 1980.

3.5 The Committee were informed that the Organic Research Centre supported the views raised by Kelvin Hughes regarding the work being undertaken by the Local Strategic Partnership's Greener Sub-Partnership.

3.6 Members were informed that local production was important to assist local economic development by targeting spend on local communities, to help reduce energy used and greenhouse gas emitted by reducing food miles and improving food quality through improved freshness.

3.7 It was felt that people needed to question what quality standards were guaranteed, how energy or carbon efficient the production and transport of the food was, did buying from a local business ensure local production and was local trade necessarily fair and ethical?

3.8 To make sure local production did make a real contribution to sustainability local food should meet environmental standards, meet food quality standards, meet animal welfare standards and be aware of social standards such as Fair Trade.

3.9 The sustainable benefit of organic food was recognised across Europe and by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The benefits included reduced energy consumption, increased biodiversity, reduced pollution, high animal welfare standards, increased evidence of food quality benefits and positive social impacts such as increased employment.

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- 3.10 Recommended that Council voice its support to national initiatives for clear food labelling and standards.
- 3.11 With regards to organic food the committee were informed that organic farms aimed to improve the quality and sustainability of food production that operated to standards that addressed environmental and animal welfare issues. As the term 'organic food' was legally defined and regulated its standards should be more reliable than food labelled as local without any quality assurance.
- 3.12 The committee were also informed that organic food need not be significantly more expensive and the additional costs were usually associated with supermarkets artificially increasing the cost. It was important to challenge the myth that healthy eating has to cost more.
- 3.13 Recommended that the Council works with the Local Strategic Partnership in the promotion of the benefits of locally produced food and promote healthy eating on low incomes.
- 3.14 Members were informed that the Organic Research Centre could help by providing advice on local food issues, advice on standards and regulations, support school education activities and be an active partner with the Local Strategic Partnership. The research centre had also recently opened its conference centre and was keen to work on joint initiatives with the Nature Discovery Centre.
- 3.15 Recommended that the Council works with the Local Strategic Partnership's Greener Sub-Committee, the Nature Discovery Centre and the Organic Research Centre to ascertain what joint initiatives could be undertaken to promote, educate and encourage a greater use of local food and healthy eating.

## **4. Local Food Groups and Farmers Markets**

- 4.1 Tamara Schiopu attended the meeting to inform the work of the Local Food Group and to answer any questions pertinent to the committees review.
- 4.2 The committee were informed that the term 'local' could be very wide or narrow in its definition. As the Local Food Group covered three counties they classed local food as food produced in these counties, they did not wish to introduce barriers to collective working.
- 4.3 Members were informed that there used to be three separate food groups, in 2004 they were merged with the aid of funding from the South East England Development Agency.
- 4.4 This funding ceased on 31 March 2010 and the group were looking for additional support. Since the group were created they had become a support network for local producers and worked at introducing local suppliers to local businesses.
- 4.5 'Meet the buyer' events were held and they also published Local Flavours that promoted locally produced food and drink. If funding could be found they would like to introduce local food walks and a food and drink trade show in West Berkshire.
- 4.6 Recommended that the Council's Economic Development Officer liaise with the Berkshire Food Group to ascertain what funding streams may be available to

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support the food group and how the Council may be able to promote the organisations work.

- 4.7 Alexander Farrow, Thames Valley Market Co-Operative, informed the committee that the co-operative were a 'not-for-profit' organisation that promoted fresh, seasonal, local food.
- 4.8 Most produce for the Newbury Farmers Market were produced within 30 miles, however they had to be flexible, for example the fish came from Southsea. The idea was to be more local rather than totally local. Farmers markets could be useful as local food hubs and local restaurants have been asked to cook at local markets.
- 4.9 As markets were not always weekly it was difficult to get people to visit them as part of their shopping routine. The Council could help farmers markets by improving signage to make people aware when they were in town.
- 4.10 Recommended that the Council consult with Newbury's Chartered Market and the Farmers Market to discuss possible improvements to road signage advertising the markets and promoting local markets via 'Visit Newbury'.

## 5. Procurement of Local Food

- 5.1 Leigh Hogan, Team Leader, Legal and Electoral Services and Mike Sullivan, Contracts and Procurement Officer, gave evidence on the Council's procurement process.
- 5.2 Members were informed that under the Council's Contract Rules of Procedure and The Public Contracts Regulations 2006, the authority was not allowed to discriminate when awarding contracts. This meant that they could not offer a contract to a supplier on the grounds of their locality.
- 5.3 The Council did not procure food directly; however there were contracts to supply meals to schools and Council owned care homes. When setting these contracts the authority was able to insert a clause that the contractor would explore the use of local businesses. This was not always possible as consideration to the producers' ability to produce the right quality and quantity was more important than locality.
- 5.4 The Committee felt that although the Council did not procure food directly it was important to encourage contractors to look at using local produce as sustainable food helped:
- Promote good health.
  - Improve access to healthy food.
  - Helps support the local economy.
  - Promotes eating food in season.
  - Encourage sustainable farming, involving high environmental standards and reduced energy consumption (food miles).
- 5.5 Recommended that the Council support sustainable food production, provide nutritionally balanced meals in schools, workplace and community facilities by introducing a Sustainable Procurement Impact Assessment integrated within the procurement process, that considered locality as part of this process.

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## 6. Allotments

Recommendation to be agreed at the Committee meeting on 7 September.

## Appendices

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There are no Appendices to this report.

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# Greener Select Committee Forward Plan

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# GREENER SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Reference (a)	Subject/purpose (b)	Methodology (c)	Expected outcome (d)	Review Body (e)	Dates (f)	Lead Officer(s)/ Service Area (g)	Portfolio Holder(s) (h)	Comments (h)
OSMC/09/21	Rights of Way Improvement Plan To review the WB ROWIP and make recommendations on delivery.	In meeting review with information supplied by, and questioning of, lead officers.	Make recommendations to improve delivery.	GSC	14/12/2010	Paul Hendry - 2858 Countryside & Environment	Councillor Hilary Cole	A review will be undertaken after the Local Access Forum has made its recommendations.
OSMC/09/25	Renewable/sustainable energy For the Select Committee to discuss.	In meeting review with information supplied by, and questioning of, lead officers.	To be identified.	GSC	14/12/2010	Countryside & Environment	Councillor Hilary Cole	The Greener Select Committee will review the finding of the LDF when available.
OSMC/09/26	Use of local resources For the Select Committee to discuss.	In meeting review with information supplied by, and questioning of, lead officers.	To be identified.	GSC	14/12/2010	Countryside & Environment	Councillor Hilary Cole	The review will start by looking at use of local food.
OSMC/09/27	Equality and amenity of the local environment For the Select Committee to discuss.	In meeting review with information supplied by, and questioning of, lead officers.	To be identified.	GSC	14/12/2010	Countryside & Environment	Councillor Hilary Cole	Review will be undertaken as part of the review of the Right of Way Improvement Plan.
OSMC/10/80	Council motion on renewable energy To consider action required to stimulate renewable electricity generation within West Berkshire and related targets.			GSC	14/12/2010	Adrian Slaughter - 2424 Property		Agreed Council Motion - 4/3/10
OSMC/09/24	Accessibility of public transport Review accessibility of public transport in West Berkshire for all residents.	Information supplied by, and questioning of, lead officers, and external partners.	For review.	GSC/SC SC	Start: 19/01/2010 End:	Bryan Lyttle - 2638 and Mark Edwards - 2208 Planning & Trading Standards and Highways & Transport	Councillor Alan Law & Councillor David Betts	Joint work between GSC and SCSC to review accessibility of public transport and contribute to the work on Local Transport Plan 3. Item 68 merged with this item