

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION 1 NOVEMBER 2005

Present: Councillor Graves (in the Chair)
Councillors Ahern, Allen, Hickson, Higginbottom, Jackson, Jones,
Latham, MacDonald, Smalley, Travis and Turner.

45/05 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

46/05 Late items introduced by the Chair

There were none.

47/05 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

48/05 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2005 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

49/05 Call-In

There had been no call in of a decision.

Items for Discussion

50/05 Petition – Inner Ring Road and Ancillary Works

The Commission considered a petition from Derby Heart, submitted to the Leader of the Council, stating that 'We the undersigned, urge Derby City Council not to proceed with the plans for the new Inner City Ring Road and ancillary works and, after wide public debate, to explore alternatives to the scheme.'

The Chair outlined the standard procedure that would be followed for this item and invited the representative of Derby HEART, Penny Abreu to present the petitioners case.

Penny Abreu informed the Commission that the lead petitioner had requested that the petition be withdrawn from this meeting and asked why this had not been done. She claimed that:

- the Environmental Impact Assessments had failed as they did not meet legislative requirements.
- the cumulative effect of the plans had not been fully considered.
- alternative options to the scheme had not been fully explored.
- Connecting Derby and the Planning Committee had not taken into account the impact on the heritage of the city and that English Heritage's opinion had been ignored.
- the north of the City would have limited access which would be detrimental to this part of the City.
- There had not been comprehensive consultation on the proposals.

The Chair informed the Commission that he felt it was important to consider the petition at this meeting as he felt the petitioners' case would be weakened by any delay. The Commission agreed that the petition should be dealt with at this meeting.

Pat Ethelston, the Assistant Director for Highways, Transportation and Waste Management identified for the Commission the potential benefits of the scheme for Derby. He said that the need for the works had been identified in 1998 and told the meeting that the proposals were aimed at improving road safety, increasing bus access and improving air quality by reducing traffic in the city centre. He stated that the plans would drive forward regeneration across the city and would be accompanied by extensive landscaping. He circulated details of the consultation that had been carried out and informed the Commission that the plans had been given a high level of publicity. He said comments from the public had been taken on board. The scheme was the result of detailed traffic analysis and was not designed to increase the capacity for traffic on the roads.

Councillor Smalley stated that, in his opinion, there had been extensive consultation on the plans and this was the best scheme for the residents of Derby.

Councillor Allen agreed that the scheme was the best option for Derby and that extensive consultation had been carried out.

Councillor Ahern felt that Councillors had considered the scheme on many occasions. He stated that there was a need for Derby to move forward on this issue and that in his opinion this scheme was the best way to progress issues. He believed that there was little substance in the petition.

Councillor Jackson felt that consultation on the plans had been extensive. Councillor Hickson agreed and believed that the scheme had the support of Derby residents. He said the scheme had cross party support.

The Chair queried when the petition had been started. In response Penny Abreu said that the collection of signatures had begun in 2002.

Councillor Latham pointed out that many of the petitioner's addresses were not in Derby.

Resolved to not give the petition the Commissions' support.

51/05 Performance Eye

The Commission noted that the Performance Indicators had not altered significantly since they were examined at the last meeting. It was noted that officers were considering how to produce the information for quarterly reports in a more meaningful way.

Resolved to note the oral report.

52/05 Retrospective Scrutiny

The Commission Members felt that Retrospective Scrutiny would develop as the year progressed. They noted that the Planning and Environment Commission had recently conducted some retrospective scrutiny.

Resolved to ask Members to contact the Scrutiny and Complaints Manager with any items for Retrospective Scrutiny.

53/05 External Scrutiny

The Chair introduced a report on External Scrutiny.

Councillor Latham queried whether the Regional Assembly could be included in the remit of External Scrutiny. The Scrutiny and Complaints Manager informed the Commission that any suggestions for External Scrutiny would be investigated by his team.

Councillor Smalley expressed concerns that the Commissions may invest a lot of time and effort in conducting External Scrutiny but that this may be ignored.

Councillor Hickson felt that External Scrutiny of the shortage of Dentists in the NHS, the proposals to merge local Police Forces and the widespread public confusion regarding Utility Providers would all be useful topics for investigation. He reported that the consultation timescales for the Police Force Mergers were very tight.

Resolved to:

- 1. appoint Councillors Latham, Ahern and Allen to a Sub Group to look at the proposals for the merger of local Police Forces and to report back to the full Commission**
- 2. invite all Commission Members attend the meeting of the Sub Group.**

54/05 Scrutiny in Practice Conference

The Commission received a report from the Director of Corporate Services on the Scrutiny in Practice Conference held on 29 September 2005.

Resolved to note the report

55/05 Gershon Update

Resolved to defer the report to a future meeting.

56/05 Planning and Environment Commission Review of the Way in Which the Council will Comply with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs requirement to control Mercury Emissions from Markeaton

The Chair of the Planning and Environment Commission asked for the Scrutiny Management Commission's approval for a proposed review of the way in which the Council will comply with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs requirements in relation to the control of Mercury Emissions.

Resolved to approve the Planning and Environment Commission's proposed review.

57/05 Planning and Environment Commission Topic Review 2005/2006 – A Review of Energy Use By Derby City Council

The Chair of the Planning and Environment Commission asked for the Scrutiny Management Commission's approval for a proposed review into the Energy Use of the Council.

Resolved to approve the Planning and Environment Commission's proposed review.

57/05 Responses of the Council Cabinet to any reports of the Commission.

There were none.

58/05 Council Cabinet Forward Plan

No items were identified in the Council Cabinet Forward Plan for consideration at future meetings of the Commission. It was noted that the Commission would receive a report on the Accommodation Strategy.

59/05 Matters referred to the Commission by the Council Cabinet

There were none.

60/05 Scoping Report on Proposed Workplan Topic Review of Emergency Planning

The Commission considered a report from the Director of Corporate Services on the proposals for a Review of Emergency Planning in Derby.

Ian Shuttleworth, the Emergency Planning Officer for Derbyshire County Council, delivered a detailed presentation on the Emergency Planning Procedures for Derby.

Councillor Latham asked about the range of issues that the Emergency Planning Team would become involved in. Mr Shuttleworth responded that the Team would try to help whenever an incident was referred to them no matter how large or small the incident was.

Councillor Latham asked whether all schools had an individual Emergency Plan. It was noted that whilst all schools had a model Plan but it was unknown whether each school had developed their own individual emergency plans.

The Chair queried why the Army were not included on the list of those who would be called upon if the Derbyshire Joint Emergency Services Major Incident Procedures were put into practice. It was noted that the Army were not included as local units may not always be located in Derbyshire. However, there was a local Territorial Action Team which could be called upon if necessary.

The Commission felt that the presentation had provided them with useful information about the work currently being carried out by the Emergency Planning Team. However as Emergency Planning was currently in the middle of a period of change, members agreed it would be better to consider this issue as a topic review at a later date. The Commission felt that quarterly update reports would be beneficial.

The Commission then considered and voted on the list of issues that had been previously identified by members as potential topic reviews and requested a scoping report on a possible review of Council Tax Income/Expenditure by Ward.

Resolved to:

- 1. request Quarterly Update reports on Emergency Planning in Derby.**
- 2. ask the Scrutiny and Complaints Manager to produce a scoping report on a review of Council Tax Income/Expenditure by Ward.**

MINUTES END