

ITEM 4

Time commenced 6.00 pm
Time finished 7.45 pm

ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION 22 JANUARY 2007

Present: Councillor Jackson (in the Chair)
Councillors Afzal, Care, Carr, Ingall, Poulter, Rawson, Travis
and West

Also present: Councillor Graves, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Direct
Services
Councillor Wynn, Cabinet Member for Planning and
Transportation

65/06 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hird and Tittley.

66/06 Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

67/06 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

68/06 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2006 was confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

69/06 Call-In

There were no items for call-in.

Items for Discussion

70/06 Performance Eye

The Commission considered which performance eye indicators they wished to look at in more detail at the next meeting.

Resolved to consider performance indicator BV215a – average number of days taken to repair a street lighting fault - at the next meeting.

71/06 Retrospective Scrutiny

No items were identified.

72/06 Local Transport Plan – Highways and Transport Programme Consultation

The Commission considered a report on the Local Transport Plan – Highways and Transport Programme Consultation. The report was a draft working document as additional funding had been received from the Government. It was reported that the programme would be looked at in closer detail at a special meeting of the Commission.

Resolved to note the report

73/06 Work Plan 2006/07

The Commission received an update on the progress so far on the review of Public Art and the next stages of the review and were informed of the next review meeting date on 14 February 2007.

Resolved to note the report.

74/06 'Lets Talk Budget' – Revenue Budget

The Commission received a report on the Revenue Budget 2007/08 and 2009/10 – consultation on proposals. Members recognised the constraints under which the budget proposals had been developed and the need to achieve savings whilst still addressing the budget pressures that had been identified. Members were concerned that certain savings proposed would have a detrimental effect on the provision of Council services, on the ability of the Council to respond adequately to pressures and on the overall environment of the City.

Members raised concerns over the reduction in funding for the Events programme, the Arts grants freeze and the staff reductions proposed within the Environment Strategy Development Team. Members were also concerned that funding had not been identified to continue the Reading Rocket service.

Resolved:

- 1. to recommend to Council Cabinet that they do not seek to make savings in the following areas:**
 - **the reduction in funding for the Events programme - £4,000 for Shopper performances**
 - **the Arts grant freeze (£21,000)**

- **The Environmental Strategy Development Strategy Development Staffing reductions (£11,000)**

2. to recommend to Council Cabinet that funding is identified to maintain the Reading Rocket service

75/06 'Lets Talk Budget' – Capital Programme

The Commission received a report on the Environment Capital Programme 2007/08 to 2009/10 which set out the proposed capital programme for Environment Services over the following three years.

A member queried the budget for Quad commenting the amount seemed a lot higher. Councillor Graves responded that the budget for Quad was the tightest he had seen and it was a testament to the staff that it has been kept in check.

A member asked whether the proposed new fleet of vehicles and plant would be environmentally friendly. John Winters responded that the refuse collection vehicles were on low sulphur fuel and vehicles were being chosen for reliability. He also reported that the Carbon Trust were doing a study on how the Council's fleet of vehicles could be improved.

Resolved to note the report and commend the work done in upgrading the fleet of vehicles.

76/06 Council Cabinet Forward Plan

There were no items.

77/06 Responses of the Council Cabinet/ Council Cabinet Members to any reports of the Commission

There were no items.

78/06 Matters referred to the Commission by Council Cabinet/Council Cabinet Members

There were no items.

Signed by the Chair of the next ensuing meeting
at which these minutes were signed