

TRAFFIC, ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL

MINUTES OF A MEETING of the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel held on 5 November 2010 at 3.00pm in the Executive Meeting Room, Third Floor, Portsmouth Guildhall.

(NB These minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting, which can be found at www.portsmouth.gov.uk).

Present

Councillors Caroline Scott (Chair)
Margaret Foster
Frank Jonas

Officers & witnesses

Pam Turton
Assistant Head of Transport & Street Management
Jane Tume
PFI Commercial Manager, Transport & Street Management
Louis Ledoux, Business Unit Manager, Colas
Peter Nail, Team Leader, Legal Services
Dominic Kirby, Corporate Risk Manager
Stewart Agland, Local Democracy Manager
Anthony Quinn, Senior Local Democracy Officer

29 Apologies for absence (AI 1)

Apologies had been received from Councillors David Fuller and Lynne Stagg

30 Declarations of interest (AI 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

31 Minutes of previous meeting (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the TECS meeting of 26 March 2010 are approved on the basis that this was a preliminary response with limited unsubstantiated information available at the time, which should be read in conjunction with the report from Transport & Street Management that goes before the panel today.

32 Review into the hazards posed by icy pavements in the city (AI 4)

The panel recognised that this notice of motion was received very soon after the prolonged period of cold weather and that there was insufficient opportunity at that time for the panel to establish the facts and understand the lessons learnt by the council and their contractors.

The panel welcomed the opportunity to review what has happened over the

previous months and the level of preparedness for the forth-coming winter.

The Assistant Head of Transport & Street Management presented the panel with an update on what action the council took during the prolonged period of cold weather and how the operational response for the forthcoming winter has subsequently been developed.

[TAKE IN REPORT FROM TRANSPORT & STREET MANAGEMENT]

In response to questions, the panel heard;

- Snow clearance is carried out in accordance with a pre-determined priority road network, maps of which are incorporated in the Winter Operational Maintenance Plan
- Work is ongoing with Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth City Council to formalise a section 8 agreement to provide a better use of gritters and issues around boundaries
- There is an ongoing process to provide a joined up approach to working across the city including, housing, leisure services and Community Wardens to include re-allocation of resources to assist with snow clearance
- Government guidance for salt storage is enough for 6 days, gritting 6 times per day, which equates to 650 tonnes for Portsmouth
- During the previous winter, 700 tonnes of salt were used, whereas this year, the snow barn that has been specially built at the Colas Depot already has 850 tonnes of salt stored in preparation for the winter
- Colas have a framework in place to replenish stocks when they drop below Colas target threshold and use both mainland UK salt suppliers
- In previous years, the council have used only 15-20% of their salt compared to last year's consumption
- Central Government guidance on clearing snow and ice is available on the Directgov website and will be available on Portsmouth City Council website from November (the panel believes this effectively covers the issue raised in the Notice of Motion regarding the Chief Executive writing to central government on this matter)
- Whilst the guidance from central government does not exempt householders and businesses from prosecution for clearing snow and ice, this is likely to be limited to cases of negligence
- The current liability in respect of clearing snow and ice and claims arising from this lies with Colas as provider of this service under the PFI contract

The panel thanked the witnesses for their time and agreed that the report would form the basis of their response to the Notice of Motion back to Full Council.

RESOLVED that the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel responses to the Notice of Motion brought by Cllr Luke Stubbs seconded by Cllr Steve Wemyss on 9 February 2010 be as attached to Appendix A of these minutes.

33 Work programme (AI 5)

Following the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Panel on 4 November, the TECS panel have been asked if they can provide assistance to the Health, Overview & Scrutiny Panel to deal with priority health scrutiny matters. The key areas for health scrutiny will be determined at the HOSP meeting on 9 November and disseminated to the TECS panel thereafter. TECS scrutiny panel indicated their support to this approach.

34 Dates of next meeting (AI 6)

The panel members to be contacted to agree a convenient date for meeting once the next scrutiny topic has been identified by HOSP.

The meeting closed at 3.40 pm

Chair.....