

## **TRAFFIC, ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL**

MINUTES OF A MEETING of the Traffic, Environment & Community  
Safety Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday 10 July 2012 at 4pm in  
Conference Room A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, The Civic Offices, Portsmouth.

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

### **Present**

Councillor Caroline Scott (Chair)  
Les Stevens  
Sandra Stockdale (Vice Chair)  
Neill Young

### Officers

Alan Cufley, Head of Community Housing and  
Regeneration  
Rachael Dalby, Head of HIDs and Community Safety.  
Paul Fielding, Assistant Head of Service-Environment  
Barni Fry, Contracts Project and Procurement  
Manager  
Richard Lee, Pollution Control Manager  
Simon Moon, Head of Transport and Street  
Management

**13 Apologies for Absence (AI 1)**

Councillor Phil Smith sent his apologies.

**14 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)**

Councillor Young declared the non-prejudicial interest that he is a member of  
the Hampshire Probation Trust Community Safety Partnership.

**15 Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2012 (AI 3)**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Traffic, Environment & Community  
Safety Scrutiny Panel held on 19 June 2012 be confirmed and signed by  
the chair as a correct record.**

**16 Highways Management PFI Contract (AI 4).**

Mr Fry, Contracts Project and Procurement Manager summarised the  
contract and explained the following points:

In 2004, the Council signed the 25-year contract with Ensign (the Special  
Purpose Vehicle), which sub-contracted the work to Colas. At the time, the  
city's roads were among the worst in the country but now they are now  
ranked as one of the best.

This scrutiny panel carried out a review of the contract in 2009. One of its  
recommendations was that the conclusions from the best value review be  
brought to the panel.

The review covered many aspects of the contract including performance, maintenance, finance and branding. The council can deduct a maximum of 250 points from Colas for poor performance; to date approximately 60 have been deducted. For new projects, Colas refunds the Council some of the costs if they overrun and sets aside funds for maintenance. The finance is reviewed quarterly. Colas vehicles have recently been re-branded with the council logo to increase public awareness that the work is being carried out by the council.

In order to improve the contract management, the council has increased the number of staff involved: from 2.5 FTEs to 7-8.

In response to questions from the panel, the officers clarified the following points:

A board was set up to review the contract and has produced 44 recommendations including one to improve dialogue with Ensign.

The council currently pays £23m per year. This figure is currently being reviewed to ensure that it represents value for money.

When this Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract was set up it was a pathfinder. A second one was set up in Birmingham in 2011 and others are expected to be signed next year elsewhere in the country.

Closed book accounting is carried out for this Private Finance Initiative. The council is talking to Colas to try to gain more access to their accounts.

The Department for Transport expects each Local Authority to provide a minimum of 10 staff to manage a PFI contract.

Portsmouth City Council ensures that maintenance is carried out by monitoring higher level performance indicators. The contractor has a statutory regulation to conduct regular surveys of roads and footpaths. However, it is important that residents report any problems that they notice to Colas or the council. The risk liability has been transferred to Colas.

When the contract comes to an end in 2029, Colas must leave the carriageway in a good condition and likely to last for a further 10-15 years.

The Council is currently reviewing which other departments work with Colas with a view to improving working relations.

Colas' Communications Officer has recently left and the council will encourage Colas to replace them.

The Chair asked the panel to note the community work that Colas carries out, which is listed in appendix 2 of the scrutiny report.

**RESOLVED that the best value review of the Council's Highways Management PFI contract be noted.**

**17. Discussion of Future Topics (AI 5).**

Richard Lee Environmental Health Manager suggested that the panel consider conducting a review of air pollution in the city which might cover the following questions:

- a. What is the purpose of local air quality management and why is it necessary to deliver improvements in air quality?
- b. What are the PCC strategies designed to achieve the national air quality objectives and what are the implications of failing to meet them?
- c. Why do we need local air quality management, what obstacles do we face in improving cleaner air and how does poor air quality impact upon our population?

A background note was tabled and is attached to these minutes as *appendix A*.

In response to questions from the panel, officers clarified the following points:

The Air Quality Action Plan and the air quality review and assessment reports completed since 2004, which contain the baseline information on air pollution, can be found on the Council's website.

The review of assessment reports consider the impact of all pollution sources including industry, shipping, background and vehicular emissions.

There are international and national standards that regulate shipping emissions. The movement of ships is monitored and have been assessed as part of the review and assessment of air quality.

The local authority is responsible for regulating local industrial environmental permits which impose conditions to control emissions to the atmosphere. The Environment Agency control emissions and publish the monitoring of pollutants results from larger permitted facilities such as the Waste Energy Recovery Facility.

The Environment Act 1995 lists pollutants of concern - heavy metal pollution is not monitored.

In 2007 the council identified 13 Area Quality Management Areas. Pollution levels improved by 2010 but the subsequent data has suggested that there is deterioration in the level of nitrogen dioxide.

Noise pollution.

Mr Lee also suggested that the panel consider conducting a review into domestic noise nuisance covering the following points:

- a. What is domestic noise nuisance, what is PCC doing to combat this problem and how can services work more efficiently to deliver effective solutions?
- b. Why are complaints of domestic noise nuisance on the increase and how

- can PCC do more, through transformation, to combat its cause?
- c. What is required to deliver faster, more effective resolutions to neighbourhood noise complaints?

It might also cover the following areas:

- Disentanglement of service responsibilities.
- Leaner more streamlined approach to tackling noise nuisance.
- Governmental involvement, strategy and legislative changes.
- Portsmouth City Council's policy.
- The role of other stakeholders such as the Police, University, the Portsmouth Assessment and Mediation Services.

A report entitled '2012 statistical analysis pollution control team' was circulated to the panel and is attached to these minutes as appendix B.

Although the panel would look at individual cases, all information would be anonymised.

One of the licensing objectives is the prevention of public nuisance, which covers excessive noise levels from places providing regulated entertainment.

When residents make a complaint to the council about domestic noise nuisance the Environmental Health Team investigate these in line with the Council's 2011 Neighbourhood Noise Enforcement Policy.

**RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Management Panel consider the following topics for possible inclusion in the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel's work programme:**

- Air quality in Portsmouth.
- Domestic noise nuisance.

**18 Dates of the Next Meeting (AI 6).**

11 September 2012 at 4pm.

The meeting concluded at 5:10pm.