

**ORGANISATION IMPROVEMENT & ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW  
AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION  
HELD ON 6 NOVEMBER 2006  
(FROM 5.30 PM TO 7.02 PM)**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs Atkinson in the Chair. Councillors Robin Adderley, Galloway, Hawke, Newby, Parnaby, Peter Phillips, Trotter and Willoughby.

**In attendance:** Councillor Cooper (Cabinet Member for Environment) for Minute 34/06.  
Councillor Hawkins for Minute 34/06.  
Councillor Theakston for Minute 34/06.

**Late Arrivals:** None.

**Early Departures:** None.

**28/06 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF**

**SUBSTITUTES:** Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors R Marsh and Grange.

(5.30 pm)

**29/06 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were no declarations of interest.

(5.30 pm)

**30/06 - MINUTES:** In relation to Minute 23/06, regarding the proposed new Primary Care Centre at Westmoreland Street, Harrogate, it was advised that in the final paragraph the word 'previous' should be replaced with the word 'pension' to read 'the present surgeries were owned by the GPs and would form part of their pension plan'. The Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Commission held on 11 September 2006, as amended, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

(Eight Members voted for the motion and there was one abstention).

(5.32 pm)

**31/06 – EXEMPT INFORMATION:** There were no exempt information items.

(5.32 pm)

**32/06 – PUBLIC ARRANGEMENTS – QUESTIONS:** There were no questions to consider pursuant to Standing Order No 27.

(5.33 pm)

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### **SCRUTINY CONSULTATION**

#### **33/06 - WASTE MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN - WASTE COLLECTION**

**OPTIONS:** The Head of Environment submitted a written report on those household waste collection options identified by Cabinet for further investigation and the options (1 - 4) were attached to the report as Appendices. Cabinet, at its meeting held on 18 October 2006, adopted Option 4 as the preferred waste collection option which was for the collection of recyclates from the kerbside once a fortnight using a wheeled bin for co-mingled dry recyclates and a box for glass, with residual waste and green garden waste being collected on alternate weeks using wheeled bins. This was the preferred option on the basis that its implementation, supported by NYCC through a service level agreement, would be the most effective way of helping to deliver the North Yorkshire Joint Waste Strategy LAA targets.

The Chair welcomed the Cabinet Member (Environment) and the Head of Environment to present the report. The Cabinet Member advised that there was nothing to add to the report and he would be happy to answer any questions. One Member raised concerns over a two weekly cycle of household waste and queried whether any research had been carried out with other Council's on the collections they carried out and the public response to them. The Cabinet Member reported that 113 Councils used a fortnightly collection system which had been well received by the public and that public health issues were addressed as the capacity of the bins would meet the waste needs of residents. There would also be less problems caused by vermin as residents' bagged rubbish would be securely contained in a wheeled bin.

Referring to section 13.2 of the report, one Member queried the £150/tonne penalty and where in fact this money would go. The Head of Environment stated that the £150 penalty was levied on for waste disposable authorities by the government, in this case NYCC, for landfill allowance exceedence. In response to another query regarding "pay as you throw" charging and the introduction of microchips in the wheeled bins to monitor and record levels of waste etc, the Cabinet Member confirmed that the Council would not be introducing the charging system or the microchips. One Member queried whether the introduction of a fortnightly system would increase fly tipping. The Cabinet Member commented that Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council had conducted research into this matter which had concluded that there was no increase in fly tipping and added that the wheeled bins were designed so that there was enough capacity for both recyclable waste and waste for landfill. He emphasised the importance of careful implementation and planning of the system to reflect the difficulties associated with wheeled bin storage and that input from local residents would be sought. Discussions would also take place with a number of the 113 Councils who had already implemented the fortnightly scheme. Responding to a query regarding the mini recycling centres, particularly common in the rural villages, and whether these would remain, the Head of Environment stated that, once the new scheme was implemented, there would be a review of the mini recycling centres to ascertain their usage in light of the new scheme. In relation to any possible staffing redundancies, it was noted that the Council were seeking to expand recycling, not reduce staff. The processes for introducing new ways of working would have to be carefully managed.

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It was noted that there could be different requirements for individual residents, some large families would require large bins and some residents would require smaller ones. There would also be different requirements due to the presence/absence of gardens at properties. The Chair asked if a survey of residents would be undertaken to ascertain individual requirements and this was confirmed by the Head of Environment. The Cabinet Member emphasised that most households would have three wheeled bins and that there would be careful planning and implementation including good communication with residents. The Commission considered that the correspondence and consultation with residents needed to be in plain English.

It was confirmed that advice would be given to residents concerning leaving properties vacant due to holidays etc based on experience from other Councils who had introduced fortnightly collections. The Cabinet Member stated that there would also be a register scheme run by the Council whereby residents incapable of moving the wheeled bins could be registered and the bins would be moved by HBC staff and emptied. It was also confirmed that collections for residual and green waste and collections for dry recyclates and glass would be on the same day to make it easier for residents to use.

The Cabinet Member concluded by stating he had received a great deal of correspondence regarding the scheme from members of the public, much of it positive, and he stated that he would be happy to come back to the Commission at a future date with a progress report.

(5.33 pm - 6.16 pm)

### SCRUTINY MATTERS AND REVIEWS UNDERTAKEN BY THE COMMISSION

34/06 - **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION REVIEW:** The Scrutiny Officer submitted a written report regarding the recruitment and retention review and the proposed Executive Action Plan was attached to the report for comments. The Chair welcomed Councillors Hawkins and Theakston to the meeting who had been Members of the Recruitment and Retention Panel and had been responsible for the final report submitted to Cabinet from which the action plan had been developed for the implementation of the recommendations. Councillor Theakston commented that the Panel carried out an extremely thorough review of recruitment and retention and added that recruitment and retention had improved since the Panel first started its work back in 2003. In relation to the section 11 of the proposed Action Plan, Councillor Hawkins commented that there should also be a section in the Members' Handbook of the Council officers who Members dealt with, together with a description of their roles and responsibilities which would encourage a greater understanding by Members of who officers were and the role they played at the Council and this was **agreed**.

Members noted the Action Plan and it was **agreed** that a progress report in 12 months time be received on the recruitment and retention issues.

(6.16 pm - 6.25 pm)

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### **35/06 – REQUESTS FOR INCLUSION OF ITEMS IN FUTURE WORK**

**PROGRAMME:** Additional information and a copy of the Commission's draft Work Programme for 2006/07 was submitted, along with a list of major issues which had been identified by Departments which fell within the Commission's remit. Members discussed future potential items of work and it was **agreed** that the Commission should receive further information regarding the position of the Council regarding on the spot fines for litter dropping etc and the Scrutiny Officer to liaise with the Head of Environment regarding this. It was also **agreed** that the Commission should receive further information regarding the state of the economy in the Districts market towns and the Scrutiny Officer to liaise with the Head of Economy regarding this.

(6.36 pm – 6.55 pm)

### **MATTERS HOLDING THE EXECUTIVE TO ACCOUNT**

**36/06 - PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER TWO REPORT, 2006/2007:** The Performance Manager submitted a written report and gave a presentation on the Council's performance in relation to the Best Value Performance Indicators, the Strategic Plan and the Corporate Improvement Plan in quarter two of 2006/2007. In relation to Strategic Plan Action Code SA11.1.C, Members queried why no progress had been made on the Member newsletter and the Performance Manager **agreed** to follow this up and respond to the Commission. Members also queried PI BV17a, in relation to ethnic minority representation in the workforce and whether any of the research work undertaken by the CVS had been considered. The Performance Manager **agreed** to follow this up and respond to the Commission.

Concern was also expressed regarding progress on the Council Resource Plan, SA 2.2, and it was **agreed** that the Performance Manager would follow this up and respond to the Commission

The report was noted.

(6.25 pm - 6.36 pm)

**37/06 - FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS:** The Chair invited the Commission to consider those issues in the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions that affected the Commission.

(6.55 pm – 7.02 pm)