

Environment and Economy Overview Committee

Minutes of a meeting held at County Hall,
Colliton Park, Dorchester on 19 January 2016

Present:

Daryl Turner (Chairman)
Hilary Cox (Vice-Chairman)

Richard Biggs, Andy Canning, Paul Kimber, Mike Lovell, Margaret Phipps, Mark Tewkesbury
and John Wilson.

Peter Finney (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment) and Colin Jamieson (Cabinet member for Economy and Growth) attended under Standing Order 54 (1).

Bill Trite, County Councillor for Swanage, attended the meeting for minutes 4 to 6.
Deborah Croney, Chairman of the Task and Finish Group on Broadband Provision for Hard to Reach Communities, attended the meeting for minutes 36 to 38.

Officers attending:

Mike Harries (Director for Environment and the Economy), Steve Hedges (Group Finance Manager), Andrew Martin (Head of Highways), Peter Moore (Head of Environment), Matthew Piles (Head of Economy) and David Northover (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

For certain items, as appropriate:

Chris Hook (Manager, Economy), Mike Hansford (Manager, Dorset Highways), Anthony Littlechild (Corporate Sustainability Officer), Dugald Lockhart (Senior Project Manager), Mike O'Donovan (Senior Technician), Andy Smith (Group Finance Manager) and David Trotter (Policy and Performance Officer)

Public Speaker

Susan Chapman, Environmentalist and East Dorset Friends of the Earth, minutes 4 to 6.

(Note: These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the Environment Overview Committee to be held on **17 March 2016**).

Apologies for Absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Ronald Coatsworth, Mervyn Jeffery and Peter Richardson.

Code of Conduct

2. There were no declarations by members of disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

Minutes

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2015 were confirmed and signed.

Notice of Motion – Navitus Bay

4.1 The Committee considered a notice of motion submitted by Councillor Paul Kimber regarding Navitus Bay Wind Park and referred by the County Council at their meeting on 12 November 2015 for this Committee to consider.

4.2 The motion read " *The Dorset County Labour Group opposes and regrets the Government's decision not to proceed with the wind farm called Navitus Bay. Had this gone ahead Dorset would have been playing its part in supplying innovative sustainable energy that would have cut our reliance on fossil fuels in the County. We believe the creation of jobs, work and prestige would have had a great benefit for our Dorset community plus quality employment for the local workforce and economic community. We regret this great loss, which we believe will be felt for years. Therefore this Council calls on the Government to reconsider their decision regarding Navitus Bay.*"

4.3 In response to the motion, the Head of Economy provided the Committee with a briefing paper setting out the context of the motion; the County Council's view on the development and the evidence on which this was based; and how the Government's decision had been arrived at in refusing permission for the development. Officer's advice was that the stance taken by the County Council should be maintained on the grounds which it had previously stated.

4.4 The Committee provided the opportunity to hear from Susan Chapman who considered that there was a need to embrace all opportunities for renewable energy solutions as alternatives to fossil fuel use and urged the Committee to provide a steer on this so that the previous decision might be reviewed. She considered that there should be a better understanding of the implications of climate change as all the evidence indicated that an alternative to fossil fuels was required in the longer term. She was of the view that the County Council should take a lead on this and set an example.

4.5 Bill Trite then addressed the Committee as local member for Swanage. He implored the Committee not to waiver from the position already taken by the County Council on this, for the reasons previously given. Although he accepted the need for renewable energies, he considered that this was the wrong development in the wrong place and could not be supported. He considered that the Government's decision was correct.

4.6 Councillor Kimber was provided with the opportunity to present his motion and explained that his political group was committed to pursuing the use of renewable energies wherever possible as alternatives to fossil fuels and, as such, asked for the Government's decision on Navitus Bay to be reconsidered. Whilst he recognised that there were limitations to what could realistically be achieved, he nevertheless asked that the Committee might give consideration to a letter being sent to Government in this regard.

4.7 The Head of Economy then referred the Committee to paragraph 3.8 of the briefing paper which explained that whilst there had been a period for a judicial review of the Government's decision, this had long since expired and that there was now no mechanism to request a review in any event.

4.8 The Chairman of the Council, in being the Member Champion for Corporate Sustainability Programme had consequently kept an open mind about the merits of the development originally. However he had since been convinced that the environmental consequences of any development, on balance, meant that he could no longer support this initiative.

4.9 Other members shared this view, in that the decision which had been taken by the County Council should be maintained as there was no evidence to suggest otherwise and no mechanism to do so in any event. Other members were sympathetic with the principles of the motion but understood that the opportunity to affect any decision was limited, if not non-existent.

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4.11 On being put to the vote, the Committee decided to uphold the decision taken by the County Council previously in objecting to the development and in recognising that there was no process available to now effect the decision taken by Government.

Resolved

5. That the decision taken by the County Council on the Navitius Bay Wind Park development be upheld.

Reason for Decision

6. That there was no evidence to reverse the decision taken by the government and no mechanism or process available to effect the decision taken.

Public Participation

Public Speaking

7.1 There were no public questions received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21 (1).

7.2 There were no public statements received in accordance with Standing Order 21 (1).

Petitions

8. The Committee were informed that one petition had been submitted for consideration, minutes 9 to 11 refer.

Procedure for Petitions - Petition entitled: Request for the number 88 Bus (Town Circular) Service Wimborne, to be run on Saturdays

9.1 The Committee considered a report by the Head of Economy on the receipt of petition containing 70 signatures asking for the reinstatement of Saturday operation of the number 88 Wimborne town circular bus service. The report set out a series of options available to the Committee on how they might wish to respond to the petition.

9.2 The Committee took into consideration a submission received from the lead petitioner, Joan Rawlinson, on the benefits for residents in retaining the x88 bus service on Saturdays in providing a valuable service to the vulnerable in the community and stressing the isolation this would otherwise bring to those affected.

9.3 The attention of the Committee was drawn to submissions received from the two local County Councillors. Janet Dover, the Member for Colehill and Stapehill, supported the petitioner's request. Robin Cook, the Member for Minster, advocated a series of options which might be taken into consideration as a means to identifying a solution.

9.4 The Committee considered that the County Council Member for Minster's suggestion that negotiations might take place so that a Saturday service might be retained by a rationalisation of the routing arrangements had some merit and should be pursued. Accordingly they asked officers to liaise with the bus operator and petitioner to see what might be able to be achieved.

9.5 Officers took the view that to rationalise the routes might not necessarily be without issue, but agreed to discuss this with the bus operators to see if some compromise could be achieved. The Committee considered that there was also a key part that community transport providers could play in ensuring that a viable service was maintained.

9.6 The Committee considered that, whilst the petition might not necessarily be acceded to in its own right, there might be the possibility of some compromise being achieved and asked officers to pursue this providing that it was within budget limitations.

Officers agreed to discuss this prospect with both the bus operator and the petitioner to see if there was a viable solution.

Resolved

10. That the petition be noted and the petitioner informed that discussions between officers and the bus operator be undertaken in an attempt to identify a viable solution to go some way to meeting the petitioner's demands.

Reason for Decision

11. In order to comply with the County Council's published scheme for responding to petitions and so as to enable local people to connect with local elected decision makers.

Forward Together for Environment and the Economy

12.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director for Environment and the Economy which provided an update on the progress being made on workstreams for the Directorate's Transformation Programme, the three elements of which were; the Directorate's restructuring, the Holistic Transport Services Review and the Highways Service Delivery Model.

12.2 Details of the progress being made across the Programme were set out in the Director's report. Particular mention was made of the significance reduction in Special Educational Needs spend by the way in which this service was now being delivered. The Committee considered this to be commendable and were pleased to see the progress being made and the actions being taken to ensure that the effects of the transformation were now being realised.

Noted

Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026: Passenger Transport Strategy

13.1 The Committee considered a report by the Head of Economy regarding the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011 - 2026 for the establishment of Passenger Transport Strategy which had been developed as part of the County Council's Holistic Transport Review (HTR) and which provided a framework for the programmes of work arising from the review.

13.2 Officers explained that the objectives of the Strategy were to:

- demonstrate how the Council would deliver the outcomes of the HTR in relation to commissioned passenger transport services.
- establish how the Council would work to deliver the passenger transport and accessibility aspirations of LTP3 to support growth, secure funding and to stimulate and shape service development.

13.3 Members were being asked to note the key provisions of the Strategy and to consider what else could be identified in assisting the delivery of the County Council's transport objectives. The processes for dealing with the consultation exercise process and the approval of the Strategy were draw to the Committee's attention. The Committee agreed to how the consultation about this should take place.

13.4 The development of the Strategy was described, including what it was designed to achieve and how it would be applied. The importance of the role of rail was emphasised, as well as how buses could be utilised to maximise their efficiency and patronage taking into account the essential part that a ticketing strategy would play in this.

13.5 The County Council's continued commitment to an efficient Passenger Transport Strategy was emphasised, particularly in how this would play a valuable part in achieving an integrated transport solution and in meeting environmental considerations. The LTP would play its part in monitoring how successful this Strategy was and would help to encourage community engagement and partnership arrangements with operators in seeking solutions that were not so heavily reliant on public subsidy.

13.6 Members asked that parish councils be advised of developments at an early stage so that they could more readily advise their residents about these. Officers maintained their commitment to do this. The Cabinet Member for Environment suggested that the passenger transport solutions being applied in North Dorset to complement developmental growth should be taken into consideration where applicable.

Recommended

14. That the Passenger Transport Strategy be approved.

Reason for Recommendation

15. Implementation of the Passenger Transport Strategy would impact on the continuance of transportation service and quality as savings were sought through the Forward Together Programme.

Revenue Budget Monitoring 2015/16

16.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Financial Officer setting out budget monitoring information as at the end of November 2015, which showed a forecast overspend against service budgets for the County Council of £5,051,000.

16.2 The Environment and the Economy Directorate, was forecast to underspend by £396,000, or 1.2% of the budget for the year, with the details attributable to each cost centre being set out in the report. Officers confirmed the County Council's commitment to deliver a balanced budget outturn and responded to a series of questions on particular aspects of the report.

16.3 The Committee were pleased to see the actions being taken to maintain, or better, the forecast position until the end of the financial year.

Noted

Revenue Budget 2016/17

17.1 The Committee considered a joint report by the Chief Financial Officer and the Director for Environment and the Economy which set out a summary of the key issues within the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement and the impact of the settlement on the budget strategy for the County Council

17.2 The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement had been received on 17 December 2015 and saw a reduction in government grant funding for Dorset County Council of around 47% in 2016/17. This was considerably worse than anticipated in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), and which had reasonably be accounted for previously, and had left the County Council with a funding gap of around £7.7m in 2016/17, which would need to be financed by some means.

17.3 Councillors were informed of the implications of the budget strategy on the Environment and Economy Directorate. In arriving at the current budget position, the Directorate had front loaded its savings over the period to 2020 and identified £2.346m of savings and efficiencies for 2016/17, £1.906m for 2017/18 and a further £100k for 2018/19.

The Directorate would also deliver whole authority savings associated with The Way We Work Programme of £526k in 2016/17, £571k in 2017/18 and £905k in 2018/19.

17.4 A series of options outlined in Appendix 2 to the report identified the savings previously agreed by the Cabinet and provided some means of achieving this. Officers answered a series of questions raised by members on how those various options might be applied and what they entailed. However given the implications of the disappointing settlement received from Government, there would be a need to identify further saving and efficiency options in order to arrive at a balanced budget.

17.5 The Committee were provided with an opportunity to suggest alternative savings if they considered these to be appropriate and were asked to consider any additional measures that could be taken to generate savings to reduce the remaining budget gap. Whilst bearing this in mind, the Committee understood the implications for the Directorate of the way in which the settlement had been applied and were very disappointed that this was the case.

Recommended

18. That the savings proposals relating to services within the Environment and the Economy Directorate for 2016/17 and 2017/18 financial years be noted and accepted.

Reason for Decision

19. The County Council must set a budget within the resources available, and agree a precept for 2016/17 by the end of February 2016. To do this, Directors were required to draw up detailed budgets and develop and consult upon savings proposals within them.

Dorset Highways Performance Q1-Q2 2015/16

20.1 The Committee considered a report by the Head of Highways setting out the Dorset Highways Performance for Quarters 1 and 2 on 2015/16, which comprised a summary of Dorset's Highways Performance, as well as a table of performance indicators, for a range of key highway services.

20.2 In response to a question, the Head of Highways clarified how traffic regulation orders (TRO) were managed and prioritised and what costs were associated with these. The means by which these were required to be advertised were being assessed to determine if there was a more efficient, cost effective and accessible way of doing this. Whilst every effort was being made to process as many TRO's annually as possible, there were limitations to what was able to be achieved in terms of cost and resource implications and how effectively these could be enforced. This situation needed to be borne in mind when requests for new TRO's were received in order to manage expectations as to what could realistically be processed.

20.3 The Cabinet Member for Environment drew attention to Category 18 of the performance indicator summary relating to the Network Development Flood Risk Management online tool, entitled SWIM, designed to monitor how flooding was managed and how this was regarded to be a model of good practice nationally.

20.4 The Committee were pleased to see the progress being made with performance of Dorset's Highways and hoped that this could be sustained.

Resolved

21. That the Dorset Highways' Performance 2015/16 (Quarter 1 and Quarter 2) be noted and the progress being made duly acknowledged.

Reasons for Decisions

22.1 To ensure Councillors were aware of the performance of Dorset Highways and to draw attention to any specific performance issues or highlights.

22.2 To provide data to assist in making evidence based decisions.

Dorset Highways Capital Programme 2016/17

23.1 The Committee considered a report by the Head of Highways which advised on the proposed Local Transport Plan (LTP) Capital Programme for 2016/17 together with the provisional Highways Improvements Programme and Structural Maintenance Programme for 2016/17, as set out in the appendix to the report.

23.2 The report detailed all of the schemes planned for construction in the forthcoming financial year, explained how the highway improvement schemes were categorised, prioritised and the funding arrangements associated with them. It also set out how bridges and structures and structural maintenance schemes were prioritised. The detail of the schemes was set within the context of the Local Transport Integrated Block funding for 2016/17.

23.3 Councillors noted that the Capital Programme was divided into five categories so as to be readily meaningful and explanatory, these being safety schemes; construction only schemes; design and construction schemes; walk , talk, build schemes and; design only schemes. This provided the Committee with some context of the means by which schemes would be delivered. The Structural Maintenance Programme was similarly categorised to reflect its particular activities.

23.4 Mention was made of how the DfT's Highway's Authority self assessment process was managed, designed to determine which of three performance bandings schemes a highway authority was assigned dependant on their being able to demonstrate that they were delivering value for money through embedment of asset management strategies and implementation of efficiency initiatives. The County Council currently identified itself as a band 2, mid performing authority, anticipating that this would result in the receipt of 100% of the incentive fund available for 2016/17. Given that further investment was to be made in delivering these schemes, there were aspirations that ensuing years would see the County Council categorising itself in the top most band, 3.

23.5 Officers reported that technology would provide the ability to more readily depict and identify where works were taking place and when these were programmed and would help parish councils to provide their residents with more detailed information about this.

23.6 The Committee was pleased to see what was being achieved in delivering the highways improvements for 2016/17 and hoped that these would be progressed as envisaged.

Recommended

24. That Dorset Highways LTP Capital Programme for the 2016/7 financial year be approved.

Reason for Recommendation

25. To support the County Council's Corporate Aims and objectives linked to economic growth and health, safeguarding and wellbeing.

Dorset County Council Environmental Performance and Greenhouse Emissions 2015

26.1 The Committee considered a report by the Head of Environment which set out the County Council's Environmental Performance and Greenhouse Emissions for 2015. The report explained how data was collected and monitored, what progress had been made and how this had been measured against performance, showing what consumption and emissions had both reduced and increased.

26.2 Whilst some notable improvements continued to be made and carbon figures were encouraging, members recognised that there was more that needed to be done to reduce electricity and fleet fuel consumption in particular. Measures to address how parking needs and car use might be reduced for council employees were discussed and officers explained what initiatives were in place for this.

26.3 The Committee were satisfied with the progress being made to reduce the Council's carbon footprint, address greenhouse emissions and improve environmental performance and hoped that this success could be maintained.

Recommended

27. That officers be authorised to pursue the opportunities noted in Section 5 of the Head of Economy's report.

Reason for Recommendation

28. The recommendation supported the County Council's key objective of Enabling Economic Growth, set out in Corporate Plan 2014-15, by supporting an energy efficient, low carbon economy, tackling global environmental change and ensuring good management of our property, environmental and historic assets.

Partnership bid for European Structural Investment Funds for 'Dorset Low Carbon Economy Programme'

29.1 The Committee considered a joint report by the Head of Environment and the Head of Economy on the arrangements behind a Partnership Bid for European Structural Investments Funds (ESIF) for 'Dorset Low Carbon Economy Programme'.

29.2 Officers explained that the programme was designed to provide a range of technical and financial support to develop Dorset's clean technology, biomass and community energy sectors, provide grants to de-risk and accelerate deployment of low carbon projects. Officers reported that a previously submitted outline application had already been accepted, indicating that the approach being taken was seen to be acceptable.

29.3 As the budget was in the region of £8.8 million, Cabinet approval was being sought for the submission of the full bid to the ESIF Programme. The Committee's attention was drawn to the proposed financial commitment towards the programme of £400,000. Whilst some members asked for some assurance that this spend was prudent in the current financial climate where savings were being sought, officers confirmed that it was anticipated that there would be considerable benefits to be gained from this initial investment and, on balance, it was considered to be a worthwhile initiative. How the Programme would be targeted and which recipients would most likely benefit from this initiative was explained, with Housing Associations having a significant part to play in how those benefits were applied.

29.4 The Committee were encouraged by the acceptance of the outline bid and understood the need for this investment in order that the benefits might be achieved. It was considered that the opportunity should be taken for the Council to access what significant European monies were potentially available for such projects. Officers confirmed that they were engaging with local MEP's so that they could influence, as appropriate.

Recommended

- 30.1 That the submission of a full bid to the ESIF programme be approved.
- 30.2 That delegated authority to sign grant and partnership agreements for the purposes of the project to the Head of Environment, after consultation with the Portfolio Holder for the Environment be approved.
- 30.3 That Dorset County Council taking on the role of lead partner and accountable body for this project be agreed.

Reason for Recommendations

31. To deliver the County Council's Corporate Aims on enabling economic growth and to deliver the aim of an 'energy efficient, low carbon economy' in particular. Proactive pursuit of European funding also presented an opportunity to develop the capability and skills needed to better access and manage this potentially significant source of funding in future.

Heritage Lottery Fund/Big Lottery Fund 'Parks for People' Bid

32.1 The Committee considered a report by the Head of Environment which explained how the Heritage Lottery Fund/ Big Lottery Fund "Parks for People" bid was to be applied, what it might achieve and what benefits it would bring to Durlston Country Park in terms of infrastructure and heritage improvements. The rationale for the project was explained, in assisting the delivery of the County Council's commitment to Dorset's natural, cultural and heritage environments being well managed, healthy, productive and vibrant. Accessibility and interpretation of what the park had to offer, in making it an attractive proposition to visit, was also seen to be of considerable importance. Members noted that, if successful, this bid would provide the means for investment in the project which the County Council could not necessarily be able to do in its own right, given the severe constraints on public funding.

32.2 Officers reported that members of the County Parks Informal Liaison Panel had welcomed the proposal, with the local County Councillor for Swanage, Bill Trite, supporting the initiative wholeheartedly.

32.3 Accessibility requirements were discussed and it was hoped that this bid would see improvements in that regard. The relationship between County Council run country parks and other country parks was explained and that they were also entitled to make similar bids in their own right if they so wished.

32.4 The Committee were pleased to see that the opportunity was being taken to submit a bid and hoped that it was successful in delivering the anticipated improvements envisaged.

Recommended

- 33.1 That a Stage 1 bid be agreed and, in the event that this was successful, a Stage 2 bid be agreed to go forward to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the 'Durlston Pleasure Grounds' project.
- 33.2 That in the event of a successful bid, approval be given to delegate authority to the Head of Environment to agree the Terms of Grant, after consultation with the Portfolio Holder for the Environment.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 34.1 To support the Corporate Plan objectives on public health and wellbeing.
- 34.2 To support the Asset Management Plan objectives on improving the condition of, and reducing maintenance costs in, the retained estate.

Corporate Performance Monitoring Report: Second Quarter 2015/16 (1 July – 30 September 2015)

35.1 The Committee considered a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Director for Environment and the Economy which contained analysis of the Council's progress against both of its corporate aims and presented the results of the monitoring of the County Council's Corporate Balanced Scorecard for the second quarter of 2015/16. Whilst the Scorecard summarised performance monitoring analysis across the whole Authority, there was a specific focus on those elements of the plan which were managed by the Environment and the Economy Directorate.

35.2 Officers reported on the performance measures for the Directorate and to what these were attributable. Detailed performance information for all of these measures was provided in the Appendix to the report. In particular there was an improvement in the direction of travel for both the Growing Places Fund and maintenance of non-principal roads, whilst there was still a need to address the disappointing figures for KSI in the road safety category.

35.3 Councillors noted that, at the end September 2015, half of the performance indicator measures contained in both the Corporate Plan and the Balanced Scorecard had a 'green' on target rating. Councillors' attention was drawn to a series of performance monitoring measures of note, what was being done to address and manage these and how these would continue to be assessed in the future.

35.4 The Committee's attention was drawn to the way in which the Outcome Based Accountability approach to corporate and service planning and performance management was now being presented through a Concept Report Scorecard, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report. This enabled more timely performance data to be provided which would prove to be more relevant and meaningful to members understanding of the issues at hand. The Committee welcomed this new approach, considering it to be far more accessible to them.

Noted**Superfast Broadband Provision for Hard to Reach Communities**

36.1 The Committee considered a report by the Head of Economy which presented the findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group on Superfast Broadband Provision for Hard to Reach Communities. This Group had been established to look in detail at what might be able to be achieved to improve accessibility to Superfast Broadband for those areas. The Group had considered technical and commercial considerations of delivering Superfast Broadband, what solutions might be achievable, how a case for further investment might be made and the merits of Dorset's Digital Infrastructure Strategy.

36.2 The Committee heard from the Chairman of the Group, Councillor Deborah Croney, who explained what issues were considered, the nature of the problem, how this might be addressed, what obstacles were in the way of achieving this and what recommendations could be realistically made to see how the situation might be improved.

36.3 The Committee thanked Councillor Croney for her informative presentation and the valuable contribution made by the Group in making their recommendations. These were well received by the Committee, which they considered would go some considerable way to meeting the needs of hard to reach communities and improve their connectivity so as to benefit economic growth in those areas.

Recommended

37.1 That the Committee endorse the approach recommended by the Panel, and the Cabinet be asked to agree recommendations 37.2 to 37.7 below.

37.2 That a comprehensive analysis of Superfast Broadband “not-spots” across the County be carried out, detailing communities, clusters of properties and isolated properties.

37.3 That the Superfast Dorset team continue to work with the supplier to ensure solutions deliver value for money in order to maximise the potential underspend for reinvestment – it is understood that additional investment would be available for further delivery at the end of the current deployment period, i.e. into 2018.

37.4 That support be given to actively pursuing the benefits of a marketing action plan, with all of the strategic stakeholders for the development of a business case for revenue funding of activities that would drive greater take-up, from 19% to 50%.

37.5 That additional funding opportunities be pursued, including the part that the South West Ultrafast Fund would play in this.

37.6 That should additional funding be available, market engagement and open procurement should be a requirement to maximise competition, drive value for money and innovative solutions. Any alternative solution must be demonstrably no more expensive in on-going user costs than mainstream commercial offerings and must have no greater restrictions on volume of use and on hospitality to future extension.

37.7 That Dorset's Digital Infrastructure Strategy be used to gain traction with the Dorset LEP and other stakeholders to provide a strategic base for actions in the medium term to develop a digital Dorset and maximise economic growth and prosperity.

Reason for Recommendations

38. To enable members to have an oversight of this important programme which contributed to Dorset County Council's Corporate Plan focus on Economic Growth.

Schedule of Councillors' Seminars and Events

39. The Committee's attention was drawn to the Schedule of Councillors' Seminars and Events for the future.

Noted**Environment and Economy Overview Committee Work Programme**

40. The Committee considered and agreed its Work Programme for spring 2016 and noted the opportunity members had to add items to the Programme.

Noted**Questions from County Councillors**

41. No questions were asked by members under Standing Order 20(2).

Acknowledgement

42. As this would be the final occasion which Steve Hedges would service this Committee, the Chairman took the opportunity to thank him for his contribution to the work of the Committee over the years and wished him every success in the future. Mr Hedges duly responded.

