

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting of the Environment Committee held in the Council Chambers, Fourth Floor, Council Building, 2 High Street, Perth on Wednesday 5 June 2013 at 11.30 am.

Present: Councillors A Grant, M Williamson, M Barnacle, R Brock, B Ellis, C Gillies, H Anderson (substituting for T Gray), G Laing, M Lyle, D Melloy, W Robertson, M Roberts and A Younger.

In Attendance: Councillors A Cowan (up to and including Art. 342), B Renton, Depute Director (Environment); L A Cassidy, A Clegg, J Dixon, P McLennan, K McNamara, S Newton and B Reekie (all the Environment Service); C Flynn and P Frazer (both Chief Executive's Service).

Apology for Absence: Councillor T Gray.

Councillor A Grant, Convener, Presiding.

340. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, Councillor B Ellis declared a non-financial interest in Item 6 on the agenda (Art. 346) in relation to the Perth and Countryside Trust – Service Level Agreement Review.

341. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minute of Meeting of the Environment Committee of 20 March 2013 (Arts 169-173) was submitted, approved as a correct record and authorised for signature.

342. REQUEST FOR DEPUTATION

In terms of Standing Order 59, the Committee agreed to hear a deputation from Mr Simon Poots, Chair, and Mr David Wood, Secretary of the Perth and Kinross Red Squirrel Group in relation to Article 343. Mr Poots and Mr Wood addressed the Committee, and following their representation and subsequent questioning by members of the Committee, withdrew to the public benches.

343. NOTICE OF MOTION

Motion by Councillors W Robertson and M Lyle

The Committee recognises the Scottish Government's and Perth and Kinross Council's strong commitment to biodiversity. Perth and Kinross is renowned for its outstanding scenery, flora and fauna. We are the home of Big Tree Country.

One of our most iconic native animals is the red squirrel. Through the works of Perth and Kinross Red Squirrel Group and landowners red squirrels have been returning to areas of Perth and Kinross where they haven't been seen for many years.

We ask that a report be prepared with recommendations on how we as a Council can support the control of grey squirrels on land under our control and in so doing encourage the re-introduction of our native red squirrel to our parks and open spaces thus promoting biodiversity and supporting the local economy through wildlife tourism.

Resolved:

In accordance with the Motion.

344. THE ENVIRONMENT SERVICE BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2013/14 AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2012/13

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Environment) (13/262) presenting The Environment Service's Business Management and Improvement Plan 2013/14 and the Annual Performance Report 2012/13.

Resolved:

- (i) The Business Management and Improvement Plan 2013/14 and Annual Performance Report 2012/13 for the Environment Service pertaining to the Environment Committee's area of responsibility, as appended to Report 13/262, be approved.
- (ii) It be noted that Report 13/262 would also be considered by the Community Safety and Enterprise and Infrastructure Committees on 5 June 2013, and would be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee on 12 June 2013 for scrutiny and comment as appropriate.

345. WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2010-2015

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (13/267) (1) providing an update on progress with the Action Plan of the Perth and Kinross Council Waste Management Plan; and (2) recommending approval of new Actions 52-60, outlined in Part 2 of Appendix 1, to bring the plan in line with the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012

Resolved:

- (i) The update on progress on the Waste Management Action Plan as outlined in Part 1 of Appendix 1 to report 13/267 be approved.
- (ii) The new actions 56-60 to the Waste Management Action Plan as set out in Part 2 of Appendix 1 to report 13/267 be approved.
- (iii) The Depute Director (Environment) be instructed to submit a further report on progress to the Environment Committee in 12 months time.

346. PERTH AND KINROSS COUNTRYSIDE TRUST – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT REVIEW 2012/13 AND PROPOSAL 2013/14

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (13/268) (1) outlining the achievements of the Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust over the last year; and (2) recommending the approval of a new Service Level agreement with the Trust for 2013/14.

Resolved:

- (i) It be noted that Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust had achieved the required outcomes under the existing Service Level Agreement 2012/13 as outlined in Appendix 1 to report 13/268.
- (ii) A revised Service Level Agreement with Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust for 2013/14 as outlined in Appendix 2 to report 13/268, to include updated activity targets and a financial contribution to the Trust to the value of £55,000, be agreed.

347. PROPOSED AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA - CRIEFF

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (13/269) detailing: (1) the outcomes of a Detailed Assessment of air quality monitoring in Crieff; (2) the requirement for Perth and Kinross Council to begin the process to declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) covering West High Street / High Street / East High Street and Comrie Street; and (3) the proposed consultation process with relevant stakeholders in accordance with Scottish Government Guidance.

Resolved:

- (i) The contents and recommended outcome from the Detailed Assessment as outlined in report 13/269 be noted.
- (ii) The proposed draft Air Quality Management Area be approved.
- (iii) The consultation process as outlined in report 12/269 be approved.
- (iv) Agree that on completion of the consultation, and analysis of responses, a further report be submitted to the Environment Committee seeking approval for the Declaration by Order of an Air Quality Management Area in Crieff.

348. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE – SITE ASSESSMENTS AND ASSET MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (13/270) seeking approval on specific issues arising from the consultation process to rationalise Grounds Maintenance services to meet approved revenue budget savings.

Resolved:

- (i) Engagement be concluded with owners of sites which the Council maintains but does not own, to cease maintenance as quickly as reasonably possible, unless there is an obligation on the Council to provide such maintenance.

- (ii) An objective criteria be developed to determine the frequency of verge maintenance beyond the 30mph limits and to limit to one cut per annum the service to settlements which do not meet the relevant criteria.
- (iii) Shrubs in lower priority local areas be replaced.
- (iv) Maintenance operations be reduced and frequencies on sites with a 'local' classification, except in cases where consultation comments have been received, as at Appendix 4 to Report 13/270, and are accepted by the Committee.
- (v) Officers' recommended action, in response to representations made during the consultation process, as at Appendices 1-4 of Report 13/270, be agreed.
- (vi) The Depute Director (Environment) be requested to submit a further report to the Environment Committee in 6 months time.

Councillor C Gillies moved an Amendment to defer a decision on the reprioritisation of ground maintenance operations to address outstanding issues in relation to properties in North Muirton, Perth, as set out in paragraph 1.7 of Report 13/270. On failing to find a seconder, the amendment accordingly fell.

349. THE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT CHALLENGE FUND (CECF) REVIEW

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (13/271) seeking agreement on key changes to the Community Environment Challenge Fund, which was approved by the Environment Committee on 7 September 2011.

The fund has now been running for over 18 months. The changes proposed in this Report are based on experience gained during this time as well as feedback from organisations/individuals that have experience of applying to the Fund, and Council officers.

Resolved:

- (i) The outcomes of the Community Environment Challenge Fund review, be agreed.
- (ii) The revised fund criteria as listed in Appendix 2 of Report 13/271, be agreed.
- (iii) The revised assessment process and level of delegation for Officers to approve applications, be agreed.
- (iv) The outcomes of the CECF be reported to the Environment Committee on a 6 monthly basis.