

REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet met on 5 July 2011. Attendances:-

Councillor Jones (Chairman)
Councillors Belsey, Bennett, Bentley, Elkin, Freebody, Glazier and
Maynard

1. Environment Strategy

1.1 East Sussex County Council is one of a number of partners who have developed the Environment Strategy for East Sussex. A copy of the Strategy has previously been circulated to all members.

1.2 The environment is important both as an asset to protect and a resource to utilise and develop. How we manage the environment has implications for waste, energy, health and the economy as well as landscape and ecological sites. The environment is therefore inextricably linked to the future economic prosperity of the county and the health and wellbeing of our residents. The Environment Strategy for East Sussex has been developed in difficult economic times, and for that reason the partners involved have been careful not to create an environmental wish list, but to concentrate on identifying the county's strategic environmental assets, the most serious challenges that they face over the next 15 years, and the priorities required for them to be addressed.

1.3 The development of an environment strategy has been a long-standing commitment of the County Council. It was one of the key performance measures in the Council Plan 2010/11 (Policy Steer 6.9) and assists in the delivery of the policy steers in the 2011/12 Council Plan to 'achieve a fair balance between economic growth and the protection of our urban, rural and coastal environment' and 'reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change'. The objectives of the Plan have been aligned with other County Council plans and strategies such as the Local Transport Plan 3 and the emerging economic development strategy. It will also play a key role in delivering the strategic priority and key tasks for the environment and climate change in *Pride of Place*.

1.4 A public consultation was held on the strategy during the winter of 2010/11. Many organisations took part in the production of the draft strategy, and did not therefore comment on it. However, over 100 detailed comments were received and a large majority of respondents felt the strategy had correctly identified the environmental priorities for East Sussex and that the desired outcomes and actions to help deliver them were the right ones. At the same time a survey of the views of children and young people on the draft strategy was conducted by the East Sussex Youth Cabinet from which around 2,000 responses were received. The most important environmental issues for children and young people were improving habitats to prevent biodiversity loss, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and becoming more adaptive to

climate change, and reducing air pollution and noise. Some concern was raised that the strategy raises expectations in a difficult financial climate. These concerns have now largely been addressed through a process of further listening, explanation and amendment to the strategy document. The Economy, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Committee has considered the strategy and made some helpful suggestions as to highlight the significance and usefulness of the Strategy and is supportive of it.

1.5 The final strategy document is to be presented to the East Sussex Strategic Partnership on 8 July with a recommendation that is adopted.

1.6 The Cabinet has agreed that (i) the partnership Environment Strategy for East Sussex should be adopted as the County Council's environmental strategy in so far as it relates to its activities; and (ii) that the Council's future strategies, plans and policies should have regard to the strategy.

2 Council Plan 2010/11 Monitoring

2.1 The Cabinet has considered the Council Plan 2010-11 monitoring report and was pleased to note the following achievements:

Portfolio for Strategic Management and Economic Development

The Council's website received SOCITM's (Society of IT Managers) four star "excellent" rating for the 4th year running. A voluntary redundancy scheme was introduced to support the changes we are making as a result of the reductions in funding. The Council was named the best local authority employer (7th place out of 100 private and public sector employers) for lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the national Workplace Equality Index published by Stonewall. Personnel and Training have been shortlisted with its absence management partner, FirstCare for the Employee Benefits Award in the category of "Most Effective Sickness Absence Strategy".

Portfolio for Corporate Resources

We made 86% of payments to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises within 10 days (target 84%). Our property disposal target was exceeded, sales during the year amounted to £3.1m against a target of £1.5m.

Portfolio for Community Services

Visitors to the replacement Wadhurst Library (library opened July 2010) increased by over 50% in 2010/11 and issues increased by 30%. We received 360 new deposits, gifts and purchases into the East Sussex Records Office.

Portfolio for Adult Social Care

42.31% of clients receiving a community based service and carers who have received a carers service, have received Self Directed Support. 7,415 people (5,741 service users and 1,674 carers) are in receipt of some form of Self Directed Support. All new service users and carers with eligible ongoing support needs are allocated a personal budget. All service users who are eligible for a personal budget (i.e. those with ongoing support needs) are allocated a personal budget at the point of review. On 31 March 2011, of those clients reviewed and were not already on the Self Directed Support

pathway, 37% were eligible and have been transferred onto the Self Directed Support pathway and are now in receipt of a personal budget.

Portfolio for Children's Services

Provisional data for the 2009/10 academic year indicates that 77.5% of young people in East Sussex achieved a level 2 qualification by the age of 19 (target 76.8%, 2008/09 outturn 76.7%). The 2010/11 annual NEET figure was 6.58%, a reduction from 7.29% in 2009/10 and the lowest annual NEET figure since our records began (2007/08). The annual reduction of 0.7% compares well to 0.4% for England and the South East. In the 2009/10 academic year, 55.4% of pupils achieved five or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths. This good performance represented a significant improvement on the previous year (50.7%) and was enabled by the identification of under-performing schools which were then supported by Raising Attainment Plans.

Portfolio for Transport and Environment

We completed over 100 major surfacing schemes on the main roads across the county as part of the first year of a 2 year £23m resurfacing programme. We fixed over 20,000 potholes following the coldest December in over 100 years and invested an additional £1m between January and March to deal with potholes. We started work with utility companies to improve the, currently poor, quality of road reconstruction following emergency works by carrying out a programme of sample checks. We have successfully taken responsibility for the Concessionary Fares Scheme from the District and Borough Councils and customers are now able to apply for their passes at all libraries. We worked with businesses to identify potential cash savings for them of £175,000 per year, principally from saving energy which would deliver 1,000 tonnes per year of CO₂ reductions. The KSI indicators (6.2a and b) are rated red in appendix 1 because they are based on a 3 year rolling average. However, our investment in this area is paying off; this year there was the lowest annual rate of road casualty figures in over five years.

2.2 Where data is not expected for 2010/11, performance has been assessed based on the latest available data. For example last year, academic year measures were not given a RAG rating. This year measures relating to the academic year are assessed against the target for the latest available data, academic year 2009/10. In next year's Council Plan, the targets relate to the 2010/11 academic year, i.e. results that will be available for reporting to Cabinet in 2011. A summary of performance for all measures was given in Appendix 1 of the report to the Cabinet; measures that missed their targets (scored red) in quarter 4 were reported in detail in Appendix 2.

Performance Overview

2.3 Appendix 1 of the report to the Cabinet (previously circulated to all members) shows, where available, the year end position for all 178 Council Plan 2010/11 measures and the direction of travel from 2009/10 or latest previous comparable year, e.g. attainment measures are shown with their 2009/10 outturn and direction of travel from 2008/09.

2.4 Of these Council Plan targets, it is not possible to report on 1 due to a lack of national data, and 6 are recommended to be carried over to Quarter 1 of 2011/12 as set out in Appendix 3 of the report to the Cabinet. Of the 171 with year end results: 133 (77.8%) targets were achieved and 38 (22.2%) were not achieved.

2.5 Of the 171 due to report, 106 can be compared to the previous year. Of these 67 (63.2%) have improved, 19 (17.9%) showed no change and 20 (18.9%) deteriorated.

2.6 The generally good outturns are all the more positive as they were achieved in the face of in-year budget reductions and significant additional work undertaken for service reviews and managing the transfer of public health service staff to the Council. Efforts have been focused on minimising any negative impact on service users as evidenced by the targets achieved. Protecting front-line services and the most vulnerable has been our top priority as the Council plays its part in reducing the national debt.

2.7 In spite of the challenges in 2010/11 the Council has made good progress. National reports judged both our Adult Social Care and Children's Services as performing well; we achieved significant improvements in GCSE results, and expanded personal budgets for adult social care users. There were visible improvements to road surfaces and road casualties fell to a five year low. Our Build East Sussex initiative with Brighton & Hove City Council has attracted 450 firms with over 160 business opportunities logged. Over the last five years sickness absence levels have fallen 20%, reducing costs by £1.75 million and saving 13,000 working days. Construction of the Newhaven Energy from Waste Facility is well underway; two libraries moved to much improved premises and we made preparations to improve others. More detail on both our performance and areas for improvement will be given in the State of the County report to Cabinet at the end of July and in the Council's Annual Report published in the autumn.

3 Respite Provision

3.1 The Cabinet has considered a report of the Adult Social Care and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee on its review of respite provision in East Sussex. The report is included elsewhere on the agenda (see agenda item 7). The Scrutiny report has previously been circulated to all members.

3.2 The aim of the review was to assess the availability and accessibility of respite care provision in East Sussex to support adult carers in their role. To achieve this the Review Board:

- Gained an understanding of the different types of respite provision available and who was eligible for it;
- Assessed the current level and location of respite provision in East Sussex provided either in-house, by the independent sector or by the voluntary and community sector;
- Gathered evidence and views on respite provision in East Sussex from carers, the voluntary and community sector and independent providers;

- Considered the extent to which respite provision meets the needs and wishes of both the carer and the cared for person;
- Considered the barriers that may prevent a carer or a cared for person accessing respite provision and how these could be overcome; and
- Assessed the impact that Putting People First and direct payments has had on enabling carers to access respite services that best meet their needs.

3.3 The Scrutiny review has provided a welcome opportunity to explore further adult social care services.

3.4 In welcoming the findings of the Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet has considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care (as set out in Appendix 1 to this report, circulated separately to all members) on the specific recommendations and endorsed it as its response to the recommendations. The actions outlined in the action plan provide an opportunity to build upon and expand existing developments and is a key document in the improvement process.

3.5 The Cabinet, in welcoming the report, recommends the County Council to –

- ☆ approve the response of the Director of Adult Social Care on the implementation of the recommendations in the Scrutiny Committee's report

5 July 2011

PETER JONES
Chairman