



Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee. held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 13 June 2024.

PRESENT

|                      |                                   |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
|                      | Mr. D. Harrison CC (in the Chair) |
| Mr. G. A. Boulter CC | Mr J. Poland CC                   |
| Ms. Betty Newton CC  | Mrs B. Seaton CC                  |
| Mrs. R. Page CC      |                                   |

Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr. N. Chapman CC and Mr. M. Frisby CC.

1. Appointment of Chairman.

It was moved by Mr. G. A. Boulter CC and seconded by Mr. J. Poland CC that Mr. M. Frisby CC be appointed as Chairman of the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2025.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. M. Frisby CC be appointed Chairman for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2025.

2. Appointment of Deputy Chairman.

It was moved by Mr. G. A. Boulter CC and seconded by Mrs. R. Page CC that Mr. D. Harrison CC be appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2025.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. D. Harrison CC be appointed Deputy Chairman for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2025.

Mr. D. Harrison – in the Chair for this meeting.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2024 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

4. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 34.

5. Questions asked by members.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

6. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

7. Declarations of interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

8. Declarations of the Party Whip.

There were no declarations of the party whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

9. Presentation of Petitions.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 35.

10. Persistent Organic Pollutants in Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which provided an update on the first year of operation of separately collected and treated Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating (WUDS) containing Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. The performance data showing the tonnage of WUDS collected per month for the County Council had not currently been benchmarked against other local authorities. The Director agreed to conduct a comparison and let members know how well the County Council was performing.
- ii. No direct reports of fly tipping of sofas had been received by the Director, as this was a district council responsibility. However, the County Council worked closely with district councils to reduce instances of fly tipping in the county.
- iii. The Regulations on WUDS/POPs detailed which items were specifically within scope of the legislation, and this did not include mattresses possibly as the level of POPs was much lower in these items. However, it was possible that future updates to the Regulations may include mattresses.
- iv. The RHWS which disposed of WUDS in Leicestershire were not promoted out of county to neighbouring residents in other counties. However, it was acknowledged that cross-boundary usage of RHWS did occur, but all authorities involved acknowledged that the movement was probably in equal measure, and they did not limit such movement.

In response to members' requests, the Director agreed to produce a short summary of the report, explaining WUDS and POPs, for members to use in their local areas as a press release.

RESOLVED:

That the update provided on the first year of operation of separately collected and treated Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating containing Persistent Organic Pollutants be noted.

11. Collection and Packaging Reforms.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport concerning the Government's recent policy announcements on the Collection and Packaging Reforms (CPR). A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 11', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. In response to concerns from a member about district councils' plans to collect food and garden waste mixed together and the possible impact of this on the County Council as the waste disposal authority, the Director explained that the Government had confirmed capital finding for district councils to purchase the infrastructure needed to start food waste collections. It was also predicted that revenue finding would be available in the future, although no details were available at this stage. The County Council currently had contracts in place to dispose of separately collected food and garden waste, but not mixed waste. However, the Director explained that it was for the district councils to decide how such waste was collected and the County Council would seek to put in place suitable contracts for the disposal of mixed waste should the need arise.
- ii. Members noted that food and garden waste could not currently be mixed for recycling collections, although the Government was considering plans to introduce this in the future.
- iii. In response to a question from a member, the Director clarified that reference in Paragraph 17 of the report to 'All UK nations' referred to Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England. Different deposit return schemes would be put in place in the UK nations with slight differences in the materials collected, for example, glass. The Government was considering how these different schemes would operate across borders.
- iv. Members noted that the new Regulations were expected to bring about a change in packaging habits especially with that used around white goods, for example, polystyrene around washing machines. Currently, some providers took away the packaging and the old machine for recycling. The Extended Producer Responsibility under the new Regulations, would encourage those producing the packaging to use a more recyclable material or to manage the recycling of the packaging themselves.
- v. In response to a question from a member about why glass was not included in waste collection in England but was in Wales, the Director informed members that it was possibly due to complexities and weight/health and safety considerations with the collection of glass. This was particularly the case with reverse vending machines which could lead to breakages presenting health and safety issues which needed further consideration in England. Wales were very keen to include glass in their recycling schemes

as their recycling rates were higher than in England and they were keen to recycle everything that could be included. The Director assured members that the Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging detailed in the report would include glass.

- vi. Members noted that more details about the Deposit Return Scheme were needed to clarify what materials and items would be covered by the Regulations.

In response to members' requests, the Director agreed to produce a short summary of the report, explaining the Government's plans for Collection and Packaging Reforms, to place in Leicestershire Matters and for Members to use in their local areas as a press release. However, the Director added that the release of information needed to be managed in a timely manner, as some plans were still being considered by the Government and were not currently in place.

RESOLVED:

That the summary provided of the Government's recent policy announcements on the Collection and Packaging Reforms be noted.

12. Dates of future meetings.

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 9 September 2024 at 2.00pm and that meetings of the Committee in 2025 would be held at 2:00pm on the following dates:

- 22 January 2025
- 12 March 2025
- 11 June 2025
- 10 September 2025
- 12 November 2025

2.00 - 2.45 pm  
13 June 2024

CHAIRMAN