

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8 MARCH 2010

REFERRALS TO CABINET

45 REVIEW OF POLICY LEQ08 - LICENSING OF 'A' BOARDS, SHOP DISPLAYS AND PAVEMENT CAFES

The Director of Technical Services submitted a report reviewing the current policy on the control of 'A' boards, shop displays located within the public highway.

The report reviewed the scope of the existing policy and the charges in relation to items placed temporarily on the highway for the purpose of advertising, promoting or enhancing an adjacent business. It specifically excluded pavement cafes licences as this element of the policy was already well established and was not the subject of the concerns raised. Included in the review were the results of consultations received from a number of bodies and groups representing users of the footway and/or vulnerable user groups. These representations which were summarised in the report were in support of the policy of regulation of such items on the highway.

It was proposed that the existing Policy LEQ08 should be amended to include all items temporarily placed on the highway for the purpose of promoting, advertising or enhancing a business (Appendix B). Each application would be assessed by reference to the criteria for site and location standards, and a consultation process would also take place including the display of a site notice and notification to adjacent frontagers and ward councillors.

Members were asked to consider the fee options for or items displayed on the highway which were detailed in the report. When fully implemented the staffing and administration costs estimated at £17,000 would be offset by income of £10,000, the balance being contained within existing budgets.

It was not proposed to change the process for implementation of the policy or enforcement action.

Councillor W Smith, Bebington Ward Councillor, addressed the committee and made representations on behalf of shopkeepers in Teehey Lane regarding the existing charging policy. The pavement areas outside this particular block of shops could easily accommodate shop displays or goods and he therefore considered that the imposition of charges for items displayed on the highway was an unnecessary burden for this group of small shopkeepers.

Councillor J Williams addressed the committee in his capacity as Bebington Ward Councillor and supported his colleague's comments.

There was a general discussion regarding implementation and enforcement of the existing policy during which members identified their particular ward issues. Consideration was also given to the representations received from The Blind and Visually Impaired, living streets and the Council's Access Officer.

Resolved - That the Committee:

- (1) Note the outcome of the review of the “A” board and shop display policy,
- (2) Recommend to Cabinet that the revised policy as discussed in the report and detailed in Appendix B be approved.
- (3) Consider the options for charging and recommend to Cabinet that the charging element of the policy be abolished completely and that the scheme be administered utilising existing staffing resources.

46 REDUCING WIRRAL'S CARBON FOOTPRINT

The Director of Technical Services submitted a progress report on the various projects currently being undertaken by the Council, the Local Strategic Partnership and other partners, to 'Reduce Wirral's Carbon Footprint', which was a Corporate Priority in the Council's Corporate Plan 2010/11, and supported NI 186, one of Wirral's Local Area Agreement targets.

To improve its own emissions the Council initially set a target within the Climate Change Strategy to achieve a reduction in carbon emissions by 2010. Due to the successful implementation of phase 1 & 2 Energy Efficiency Investment initiatives, this target was achieved by late 2007, significantly ahead of schedule. The Council had now adopted the CRed target of a 60% reduction by 2025 and was now working with residents, communities and both the public and private sectors to achieve their own reductions.

Wirral's Carbon Reduction Programme coordinated all Council activities to reduce its CO2 emissions. This corporate programme was approved by Cabinet and progress update reports were presented to councillors bi-annually with next progress update scheduled for the June meeting of this committee.

Wirral's joint working with external partners to reduce CO2 emissions across the borough had now been re-named the Wirral Climate Change Group (WCCG) to more accurately reflect its co-ordinating role. At its last meeting on 26th January, the WCCG had approved its terms of reference (Appendix A), and also signed off version 1 of its Wirral-wide Carbon Reduction Programme.

The proposed monitoring and delivery arrangements for the Wirral-wide NI 186 Carbon Reduction Action Plan (Appendix B) were as follows:

- Regular updates by partners to WCCG meetings, held approx every 6 weeks
- Wirral-wide NI 186 Carbon Reduction Action Plan progress updates to the LSP Living and Working Environment Partnership at its 6 weekly meetings
- Bi-annual Update Wirral-wide NI 186 Carbon Reduction Action Plan Progress Reports to the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee in the usual manner;
- Regular informal Cabinet Member briefings.

The Council's NI 186 partnering organisations would have their own structures and mechanisms in place to monitor and report the delivery of their respective Carbon Reduction projects.

Resolved – That the Committee:

- (i) Note the Terms of Reference of the Wirral Climate Change Group
- (ii) Note the performance and progress of the various Wirral-wide 'Carbon Footprint

Reduction' projects undertaken by the Council and its LSP and other partners.

(iii) Endorse the various joint 'Carbon Footprint Reduction' projects being undertaken, and support future proposed projects,

(iv) Endorse the proposed arrangements for monitoring the delivery of these projects including regular informal briefings for the Cabinet Member for Environment and the LSP Board.

(v) Refer this report on to Cabinet for approval.