



Stafford

BOROUGH COUNCIL

SPECIAL ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - MONDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2002 AT 6.30 PM IN THE CRADDOCK ROOM, CIVIC SUITE, CIVIC CENTRE, RIVERSIDE, STAFFORD

SPECIAL ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP - 25 NOVEMBER 2002

Chairman - Councillor J S Highfield

Councillors:

R M Baggaley

D M Byrne

Mrs E A Croxall

Mrs A P Edgeller

J S Highfield

J H Kennedy

W R Reid

J A Russell

Mrs J E Tabernor

Mrs D A Wakefield

Mrs A J Walker

Cabinet Member - Councillor Mrs E Kidney

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B Apologies

C Officers' Reports

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STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

SPECIAL ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 25 NOVEMBER 2002

Environmental Well-Being

(Head of Environmental and Health Services)

Ward Interest - Nil**Purpose of Report**

This Report relates to:

- (a) Clarification of environmental well-being and implications for and relationship to the Stafford Borough area by:-
 - (i) Considering the role of environmental well-being in achieving sustainable development
 - (ii) Establishing how environmental well-being is being measured in Stafford Borough
 - (iii) Assessing what progress is being made within Stafford Borough with respect to environmental well-being
- (b) Reference to the means by which other local authorities are accommodating this new duty

1 Detail1.1 The Role of Environmental Well-Being in Achieving Sustainable Development

- (i) The international perspective

We live on one planet, connected in a delicate, intricate web of ecological, social, economic and cultural relationships that shape our lives and that we in turn shape. Yet, over the last few decades it has become clear that we are living beyond the limits of our planet's natural systems.

The past half-century has seen unprecedented economic gains for many. Millions of us are living longer, in sophisticated communities offering wide-ranging opportunities and affluence. But entrenched poverty and developmental problems, compounded by the rapid expansion of some economies and societies are putting immense strain on the world's human and natural resources.

Growing concern in the latter half of the twentieth century regarding these critical issues culminated in the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. It was here that the international community adopted 'Agenda 21', an unprecedented global commitment to sustainable development and to the integration of environmental, economic and social concerns into a single policy framework, aiming to achieve 'a better quality of life for all, both today and in the future'.

The Earth Summit gave rise to a number of positive responses, including the emergence of thousands of Local Agenda 21 initiatives and a greater understanding that social, economic and environmental well-being interlinked, mutually supportive goals.

The proposals set out in the Agenda 21 Treaty, based on 2,500 wide-ranging recommendations for action to, *inter alia*, reduce wasteful consumption patterns, combat poverty, protect the atmosphere, oceans and biodiversity and promote sustainable agriculture, remain sound. They have since been expanded and strengthened at several major United Nations conferences on population, social development, women, cities and food security.

Most recently the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg resulted in the agreement of a 'Plan of Implementation' calling for more effective action to achieve sustainable development. A summary of the outcomes of the 2002 Johannesburg Summit will be produced and made available soon. In short, these include calls to strengthen commitments to sustainable development, enhance the role and capacity of local authorities in implementing Agenda 21 and reinforce support for Local Agenda 21 programmes and associated initiatives.

There are expectations that sustainable development, and its aspirations and intent to achieve social, economic and environmental well-being will be further advanced and prioritised as a result.

(ii) The national and regional perspective

Nationally, the Government has established a framework for implementing sustainable development objectives in 'Sustainable Development: The UK Strategy', which was published in January 1994. In furtherance of these objectives, in May 1999 'A Better Quality of Life: A strategy for sustainable development for the UK' was presented, along with a set of indicators to assess progress. This document aimed to provide 'a national focus from which local and regional action can also follow'. The target was set 'for all local authorities to prepare local sustainable development "Local Agenda 21" strategies and for each English region to have sustainable development frameworks by the end of the year 2000. 'Quality of Life: A sustainability strategy for the West Midlands' was subsequently produced in February 2000.

(iii) The local perspective

In Stafford Borough, our Local Agenda 21 Strategy, prepared with the input of a wide range of views, ideas and expertise from local people, was formally launched in July 2001, having been developed in accordance with DETR/LGA guidance¹. This corresponded to the Council having established sustainable development as an overarching policy theme in its Policy Framework in 1999. The Strategy reviews the main sustainability issues for the area, summarises current good practice and sets down specific objectives, action plans and monitoring systems to ensure progress towards a more sustainable Stafford Borough.

The Local Agenda 21 Strategy aims 'to provide a strategic direction and framework for action' to help guide us towards a more sustainable Stafford Borough. A place where:

- *the needs of everyone in the community are met and people feel safe, healthy and ultimately happy*

¹ 'Sustainable local communities for the 21st century: Why and how to prepare an effective Local Agenda 21 Strategy'

- *our environment is appreciated, protected and enhanced and damage to the environment is avoided*
- *our economy is vibrant, employment opportunities are improved and our working lives are more rewarding*

1.2 Measuring environmental well-being in Stafford Borough

(i) The development of ‘sustainability indicators’

If social, economic and environmental well-being are priorities, it is essential to be able to measure any progress towards or away from them. To do this at an international level means collection of data at local level.

A number of initiatives have begun, both internationally and within this country, some led by Government departments, others by voluntary organisations, to develop ways to monitor progress on quality of life and to develop sustainability or quality of life indicators². At the local level, measuring social, economic and environmental well-being has formally begun as part of the Local Agenda 21 process.

In conjunction with the Local Agenda 21 Strategy a number of ‘sustainability indicators’ were developed, to measure trends taking place in the Borough. These were based on a combination of indicators published by Government, Best Value Performance Indicators and in addition, a series of local sustainability indicators.

The intention, stated within the Strategy, is to produce an annual report/audit of progress along with a more fundamental review and update of the Strategy as a whole, on a three-year basis.

This arrangement is expected to change with the introduction of the Local Strategic Partnership and the Community Plan, produced in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000. The objective of the Community Plan is to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of each area and its inhabitants and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK³ and authorities are now exploring how their Local Agenda 21 Strategy and Community Plan will work together.

Meanwhile, the first year audit of the Stafford Borough Local Agenda 21 Strategy was completed this Summer and was published in the Members’ Digest in September.

A summary of the findings is attached as an **APPENDIX**.

1.3 Assessing what progress is being made in Stafford Borough with reference to environmental well-being

(i) Towards a sustainable Stafford Borough: An audit of progress 2001-2002

² ‘Quality of life counts: indicators for a strategy for sustainable development for the UK’ DETR December 1999

‘Regional quality of life counts: regional versions of the national ‘headline’ indicators of sustainable development’ DETR December 2000

‘Local quality of life counts: a handbook of local indicators of sustainable development’ DETR July 2000

‘Quality of life: Using quality of life indicators’ Audit Commission September 2002

³ ‘Local Strategic Partnerships: Government Guidance’ DETR, 2001

The table below illustrates broad progress over the last year based on the sustainability indicators set down in the Local Agenda 21 Strategy. Data has been collated by members of the Sustainable Development Officer Working Group. Those indicators which directly measure 'environmental well-being' are marked 'E'. However, by definition, almost all quality of life/sustainable development indicators will have an implication for environmental well-being.

Please refer to the following key:

✓	– positive progress/improvement
○	– no real progress/little change
✘	– moving away from sustainable development/situation worsening
?	– insufficient/inadequate data
BL	– baseline data established
*	– indicators taken from or equivalent to those in 'Quality of life counts' July 2000
E	– quality of life/sustainability indicators measuring environmental well-being

‘Measuring our Progress’ Summer 2002		
* *	✓ ✓	Waste Minimisation and Recycling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> household waste collected per person (kilograms per year) E percentage of total tonnage of household waste arisings recycled or composted E
	○ ✓ ○ ✓ BL	Food for Life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of new schools joining the Farm-School Link Project each year percentage take-up of Council allotment sites number of allotment sites supported by an Allotment Mentor number of applications in the 'Taste of Staffordshire' Awards number of catering establishments receiving a Heartbeat Award
* * *	✓ ○ ✓ BL BL BL ✓	Promoting Good Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of 'Doorstep Walks for Health' published number of additional public houses joining the 'Smoke-Free Pub' initiative each year number of people participating in the 'Exercise on Referral' scheme death rate from coronary heart disease and stroke and related diseases in people under 75 death rate from cancer amongst people aged under 65 expected years of healthy life monthly averages of oxides of nitrogen taken over a twelve month period, at sites most likely to be polluted E
* *	✓ ✓ ✓	Wildlife Conservation and Biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of trees planted as part of the Borough's Tree Strategy each year E number of Millennium Shades planted per year E number of otters in Stafford Borough river catchments E

* * * *	✓ BL BL BL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> length of new field margin established under Countryside Stewardship Scheme (in metres) E number of breeding lapwing in Stafford Borough E number of pipistrelle bats in Stafford Borough E number of brown hares in the Borough E Countryside and Open Space
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*	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> percentage of new homes built on previously developed land (including conversions) <i>E</i>
*	✗	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> net change in quantity of open space and countryside <i>E</i>
	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> percentage of new industrial development constructed on previously developed land <i>E</i>
	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of people using paid facilities in formal parks
	?	<p>Community and Where we Live</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> percentage of affordable homes on qualifying building sites number of vulnerable residents assisted through the Care and Repair Service per year number of crimes recorded by the Police per 1,000 population according to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * theft of or from vehicles * burglary in dwellings * violent crime number of applications for community grants percentage of community satisfied with their local area as a place to live number of homes judged unfit to live in proportion of Council tenants satisfied with the opportunities for participation in management and decision-making homelessness acceptances in the most recent period 1 April to 31 March no. of households signed up to the 'Action at Home' programme <i>E</i> buildings of Grade I or II* at risk of decay
	✓	<p>Local Economy and Rewarding Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of Industrial Estates Associations in the Borough <i>E</i> number of applicants in the Best Kept Business Parks Award <i>E</i> number of businesses and organisations entering the annual Stafford Borough Green Awards <i>E</i>
*	BL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> proportion of people of working age who are in work
*	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> new business start-ups net of closures
*	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> access to services in rural areas
	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of jobs created
	BL	<p>Cultural Life in Stafford Borough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of people attending productions at Stafford Gatehouse Theatre customer numbers at Riverside Recreation Centre and Westbridge Park numbers participating in the Summer Playscheme number of tourism business entries in the Stafford Borough Green Awards <i>E</i>
	BL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of people attending productions at Stafford Gatehouse Theatre
	BL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> customer numbers at Riverside Recreation Centre and Westbridge Park
	BL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> numbers participating in the Summer Playscheme
	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of tourism business entries in the Stafford Borough Green Awards <i>E</i>
	BL	<p>Sustainable Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> percentage of journeys to work made by bicycle, on foot or on public transport traffic by officers at Stafford Borough Council <i>E</i>
*	BL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of drive-alone car journeys to work made by officers at Stafford Borough Council <i>E</i>
*	BL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> annual business car mileage recorded at Stafford Borough Council <i>E</i>
*	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> traffic volumes on different classes of road by vehicle type <i>E</i>
*	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mode of travel to school by children aged 5 to 16 years <i>E</i>
	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> changes in traffic speeds before and after introducing traffic calming measures and /or a 20 mph zone
	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> changes in patronage before and after introducing a Quality Bus Partnership route
	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a measure of congestion (to be developed) <i>E</i> <p>Access to Education and Education for Sustainability</p>

	○	• number of new schools participating in the Eco-Schools programme <i>E</i>
* *	✓ BL ?	• number of schools awarded the Eco-Schools ‘Green Flag’ <i>E</i> • number of sixteen year olds with no qualifications • adult literacy and numeracy
* *	✓ ✗	Sustainable Development: Theory to practice at the Borough Council • housing stock energy rating <i>E</i> • percentage of electricity generated from renewable sources <i>E</i>
	✓ ✓	A Global Perspective • number of establishments listed in the Stafford Area Fairtrade Guide • tons of carbon dioxide sequestered through the Council’s tree planting programme <i>E</i>

In summary:-

- For several ‘quality of life’ indicators the data has been collected for the first time. This means that a baseline has now been established from which change can now be monitored in the future.
- There are significant areas where there has been improvement, including waste minimisation and recycling, participation in local food initiatives, increased availability of, and participation in, initiatives promoting healthy lifestyles, some improvements in the Borough’s biodiversity resource, greater use of previously developed land for development, reduction in the number of recorded crimes, improvements in tenant participation and a reduction in the number of homes judged unfit to live in.
- There are some areas in which little change has been noted, mainly local indicators awaiting resources to help move initiatives forward. For instance, the recent appointment of a Smoking Cessation Officer will enable the promotion of and participation in ‘Smoke Free’ initiatives.
- Some indicators have not as yet been measured due to lack of available data at the time of collection, notably transport, access to services in rural areas and percentage of new industrial development constructed on previously developed land.
- There has been a net reduction in the quantity of open space and no progress in the use of electricity derived from renewables, against an increase in electricity consumption.

(ii) Next steps in measuring environmental, social and economic well-being

Since the Local Agenda 21 Strategy was adopted, the Audit Commission has published a paper entitled ‘Quality of Life: Using quality of life indicators’ (September 2002). Based on previous examples of work to develop sustainability indicators, this paper proposes a set of local sustainable development indicators that are linked to the Government’s national and regional quality of life projects. They are also intended to cover some of the quality of life/sustainable development issues, such as crime and recycling rates, set down as BVPI’s and may therefore be ‘an important component of the assessment of local authorities under the new Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) framework’⁴. The Audit Commission suggest ‘Quality of Life indicators can be helpful for partners in an LSP to monitor their efforts to improve the quality of life of local people through their community strategy’.

⁴ ‘Quality of life: using quality of life indicators’ Audit Commission, Sept 2002

There is current discussion regarding the use of the Audit Commission quality of life indicators as measures of progress for the Community Plan. Several of them are already incorporated in the existing Local Agenda 21 Strategy. The next Community Plan, together with any Policy Plan for the incoming Political Administration in May 2003 may use these indicators.

It is also expected that many locally specific indicators will be kept in the 'menu' of indicators. Measuring the Borough Council's own sustainability performance and sustainability indicators with a global perspective will hopefully also be included in future measures of 'quality of life' and sustainable development in Stafford Borough.

(iii) Challenges for the future

The audit of the Local Agenda 21 Strategy indicates major challenges:

- balancing the calls for short term economic development and growth against the long term necessity for sustainable development, based on economic, social and environmental progress (and ensuring environmental well-being becomes central to all decisions and change)
- meeting tough statutory recycling targets
- achieving sustainability through the Local Plan Review process and embedding it in the new Local Development Framework
- ensuring sustainable development and the principles of Local Agenda 21, are at the heart of the Local Strategic Partnership and constitute the bedrock of the Community Plan, in accordance with Government guidance⁵
- ensuring a fair deal for young people, older people and any excluded groups or individuals, in the Borough
- making progress towards sustainable livelihoods in the Borough's rural areas and village communities
- generating a broad and robust economic base which minimizes environmental costs, provides rewarding employment and looks to the future through, for instance, the development of renewable energy technology
- reducing the negative impact of the car and providing opportunities for sustainable travel
- integrating sustainable development in all of the Council's services and strategies
- promoting the continuation of sustainable development as an overarching policy principle of the Council
- responding to the challenges of the 'World Summit on Sustainable Development' for local authorities to advance sustainable development
- contributing to global sustainability

⁵ 'Local Strategic Partnerships: Government Guidance' March 2001, DETR: London

1.4 Reference to the means by which other local authorities are accommodating this new duty

Some research has been carried out as part of the Best Value Review of Local Agenda 21/sustainable development, through which a number of family and neighbour authorities have been posed questions regarding sustainability and Local Agenda 21. Further information has been sought through the Staffordshire and West Midlands Local Agenda 21 Co-ordinator networks.

In summary, to date environmental well-being has been a major focus of strategies to promote and achieve sustainable development, most usually in the form of a Local Agenda 21 Strategy. With the new duty to prepare community strategies to improve economic, social and environmental well-being most local authorities are currently working out the best way to accommodate this new duty. In most cases the LA 21 Strategy and Community Plan will be/are being combined. This should enable a wider and much stronger partnership of organisations working to achieve social, environmental and economic well-being and to take sustainable development from the margins to the mainstream, both of local government and of the community.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That environmental well-being be promoted as an essential and equal component of sustainable development and that sustainable development/quality of life be measured through a robust set of sustainability/quality of life indicators.
- 2.2 That the 'challenges for the future' summarised above be noted and taken into account.
- 2.3 That the above recommendations be brought to the attention of the Cabinet at their first meeting following the May 2003 election.

Previous Consideration

- 1 Environment Scrutiny Committee – 15 January 2002 – Minute No ES23/02.
- 2 Environment Scrutiny Committee – 11 July 2002 – Minute No ES15/02.

Background Papers

File available in Environmental and Health Services.

Officer Contact

Karen Davies, Local Agenda 21 Co-ordinator, Tel 619408

SPECIAL ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 25 NOVEMBER 2002

Environmental Well-Being

Delivery of Sustainability Actions and Targets, July 2002, based on an audit of 'A Local Agenda 21 Strategy for Stafford Borough'.

There have been areas of real improvement and success over the last year. In a very small number of instances there has been relative stand still. A broad summary is given below.

Waste management and delivering on national recycling targets are one of the Council's and Community's greatest challenges. With the establishment of a new Recycling Officer post, the Green Box Scheme is increasingly effective and a Green Waste Trial is now underway. New initiatives such as recycling bicycles and promoting the use of real nappies are also being investigated. The 2002-2003 target to recycle or compost 10% of household waste is already being met a year ahead. Adherence to longer term targets will however be more challenging.

Sustainable food production and healthy eating initiatives continue to be spearheaded through the Stafford Farmers' Market, which was awarded 'Best Farmers' Market in the West Midlands' this year, and associated promotional campaigns and activities. Initiatives such as the 'Heartbeat Awards' and the 'Taste of Staffordshire Awards' have expanded this year and links between Local Agenda 21 and the Great British Kitchen, St. John's Market and the Allotment Trustees are being developed. There are many potential areas for progress however in this broad subject area. Not least is the production of a 'Local Food Directory' and the need to improve the long-term economic sustainability of the Farmers' Market. County-based partnerships are also essential to further progress, including improving and/or establishing linkages between producers and consumers.

Promoting good health is a key theme of sustainable development. Significant benefits are now accruing following the appointment of a 'Walking for Health Co-ordinator', as a result of a successful bid for external funding. Progress has been made in promoting walking for health, smoking cessation, mental health support initiatives and healthy lifestyles, especially since the appointment of the Health and Physical Activity Development Officer (a joint appointment between Environmental and Health Services and Leisure Services). The Contaminated Land Strategy has now been produced representing a major new area of public protection work and local air quality monitoring is carried out on a monthly basis and is kept under review by Borough Council specialists. Promoting good health and reducing health inequalities across the Borough will require robust partnership working, as well as an understanding of the basic relationships between environmental quality, health and quality of life.

Wildlife conservation and biodiversity initiatives have really progressed, with successful outcomes received from applications to DEFRA for entry into the Countryside Stewardship Scheme and the Environment Agency for funding support. A fully-booked Biodiversity Conference was organised in July 2001 and several practical initiatives and promotional events have been undertaken, including the development of a 'Water Vole Survival Kit'. The success of a bid to the 'Wildspace!' programme, for funding to appoint a Community Biodiversity Officer, has been successful and will enable work to promote protect and enhance the Borough's biodiversity resource to grow.

Countryside and open space issues are always topical. In the Borough, its good management and protection are given a prominent place in the draft Open Space Strategy and the Local Plan, which is currently under review. Sustainable development will be a strong feature of the next Plan, which, in accordance with national planning process change, will become the 'Local Development Framework'.

However, pressures to relax the 'green belt' are ever present and it will be important to be watchful in planning decisions, to avoid the kind of development that does not contribute to *sustainable development*. The uncertainty surrounding the future of the M6 may also impact heavily on the Stafford Borough community. Within Stafford Borough, sustainable development is currently being flagged up to developers through the new Planning Application Form and 'sustainable construction' is being investigated by officers.

The physical and social fabric of our communities and the places we live are really at the centre when it comes to achieving true sustainability. In our Local Agenda 21 Strategy the promotion of sustainability and sustainable communities has been a priority. A 'Community Action Pack' was launched in March 2002 to support action for sustainable development across the Borough and a 'Faith for the Future Pack' aimed at all faith groups, was published in June. Ongoing support for the 'Action at Home' programme continues. A recent successful bid to the 'Social, Economic and Environmental Development' (SEED) Fund means we will be able to appoint an officer to help in 'Delivering Sustainability at School and in the Home' towards the end of 2002. More broadly, community consultation through the Area Forums and the Citizen Panel is helping to gauge public opinion on a range of issues and the Community Safety Strategy was recently launched.

Achieving a robust local economy and rewarding employment is crucial to Stafford Borough, especially as recent shockwaves have been felt within the local economy resulting from closures and cuts in several key Stafford based businesses. These have produced special challenges to the Local Authority and the Borough's residents. Recognising this, an Economic Development and Regeneration Plan has been agreed to promote economic development and regeneration within the town and rural parts of the Borough. For instance, through the Village Shops Development Partnership three grants to help ensure village shop facilities remain viable have been awarded. Success in bidding for Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) funding means that a good deal of activity is now underway to encourage inward investment and regeneration of the local economy. The Borough also looks set to become a leader in bio-fuel technologies, through a Stafford-based 'waste to energy' partnership. Some targets have been harder to achieve and initiatives to support the rural economy and to help young unemployed people gain access to employment have been delayed. The proposed Youth Information and Advice Centre is now expected to open in 2003.

Cultural life in Stafford Borough will benefit from the preparation of a new Cultural Strategy, launched last September and an Open Spaces Strategy (still in draft). These identify priorities for the Borough and highlight areas where investment and facilities are needed. They also provide a launch pad for making bids to external funding bodies. New and exciting cultural activities are already emerging, including 'The Mayor's Parade and Carnival' and the 'Thousand Year Fair' at Stafford Castle.

Sustainable transport issues are high on the agenda, nationally, regionally and locally. Transport planning in the Borough is broadly determined by the Staffordshire-wide Local Transport Plan, but is fine-tuned locally through more detailed policy documents. Unfortunately, staff shortages have delayed the production of a number of important transport strategies and the Borough's 'Agency Agreement' with the County Council is currently under review. Yet more positively, planning for sustainable and integrated transport is now recognised as essential. Negotiations with the bus companies to provide a better public service are ongoing and, through the planning control system, major new developments are now required to produce a robust 'Green Travel Plan' as a planning condition. Investment in walking and cycling infrastructure, plus advice and support to help people undertake walking and cycling safely has become a key priority of the Council and this year's 'Green Travel Month' has seen more activities and more involvement than ever before.

Access to education and education for sustainability incorporates both formal education as well as informal opportunities. The Local Agenda 21 Section includes an educational element in most of its activities and initiatives. It also provides educational resources and support to schools through its

website (www.staffordbc.gov.uk/la21), via its regular newsletter, 'Sundial', as the Chair of the Borough's 'Eco-Schools Network' and through initiatives such as the 'Doorstep Walks for Health' and publications such as the 'Farm-School Link Pack'.

Across the Borough however, more fundamental issues of funding, falling numbers, possible closures and pressures of work are facing the teaching community. To help teachers under pressure to provide a sustainability element in their teaching and in their school management, the 'Sustainability Project Officer' mentioned above will provide support.

At the Borough Council steady progress is being made in putting theory into practice. A Green Travel Plan encourages staff to think carefully about their travel to work methods and promotes 'greener travel' whilst at work, such as sharing a car to offsite meetings. A Procurement Policy has recently been produced which will flag up the importance of sustainability and environmental performance of products and suppliers, and promotes a 'life-cycle analysis' approach. The introduction of Fairtrade beverages, the recycling of paper, mobile phone and ink cartridges, the promotion of sustainable tourism and a number of other initiatives already demonstrate good sustainability practice. Through 'Best Value' and the Service Planning procedure, the Council will take an even stronger and more confident lead in best practice for sustainable development.

Local Agenda 21 recognises that a global perspective is required to achieve true sustainability and a better quality of life for all. It is this fundamental principle that provides a focus for work on Fairtrade issues, has tasked us to investigate the potential of ethical investment funds and to start to adopt practical measures to combat climate change. Encouraging awareness and understanding of other people and their cultures is also promoted through the Council's Twinning links and work with French exchange students each year.

A reminder,

- Over six billion people inhabit the earth today, an increase of over 140 % over the last 50 years. By 2050, the earth's population is projected to rise to nine billion.
- One fifth of the world's people in the world today live in abject poverty – defined as living on less than a dollar a day
- 1.1 billion people lack access to safe drinking water – with an estimated 25,000 people dying each day from drinking polluted water
- It is estimated that 25 % of the world's mammal species are at significant risk of extinction - tropical rainforests continue to be burned or bulldozed at a rate of 63,000 square miles each year

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

SPECIAL ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 25 NOVEMBER 2002

Scrutiny of Health Services

(Head of Environmental and Health Services)

Ward Interest - Nil**Purpose of Report**

To update the Committee on the developing process in relation to scrutiny of Health Services by Local Government.

1 Detail

- 1.1 A consultation draft of The Local Authority (Overview and Scrutiny Committees Health Scrutiny Functions) Regulations 2003 has been received.
- 1.2 The consultation draft has been considered by the Health Scrutiny Officers Group, established by Staffordshire County Council, and a response returned to the Department of Health by the closing date of 18 November 2002. The anticipated commencement date for the Regulations is 3 January 2003.
- 1.3 Staffordshire County Council has now confirmed the appointment of Councillor M Poulter as their representative to sit on any Scrutiny Committee established by this Council to scrutinize health issues.
- 1.4 The first meeting of the County Health Scrutiny Committee took place on 27 September 2002. This meeting was attended by Councillor J S Highfield and dealt with largely procedural matters. A verbal report by the Chairman will be given at your meeting.
- 1.5 The County Council organised a "Developing Health Scrutiny Workshop" held at Shugborough on 17 October 2002 at which Councillors J S Highfield, Mrs J E Tabernor and Mrs A P Edgeller were in attendance, in addition to elected Members from other Districts.
- 1.6 A report is to be considered by Resources Scrutiny Committee on 27 November 2002 relative to proposed amendments to this Council's constitution to facilitate the Health Scrutiny function.
- 1.7 Any further issues relating to progress on the subject of Health Scrutiny will be reported verbally at the meeting.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that this report be noted.

Previous Consideration

- 1 Environment Scrutiny Committee - 15 January 2002 - Minute Nos ES20(b) and ES24/02
- 2 Environment Scrutiny Committee - 23 April 2002 - Minute No ES43/02
- 3 Special Environment Scrutiny Committee - 14 May 2002 - Minute No ES3/02
- 4 Environment Scrutiny Committee - 11 July 2002 - Minute No ES14/02

Background Papers

File available in Environmental and Health Services.

Officer Contact

Mr R F Ball, Head of Environmental and Health Services, Tel 619358.

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

SPECIAL ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 25 NOVEMBER 2002

Stafford Market
(Head of Operations)

Ward Interest - Nil

Purpose of Report

To inform the Scrutiny Committee of progress to date in relation to improvements at Stafford Market following the presentation of the consultants report.

1 **Detail**

1.1 The approved report to Cabinet on 10 September 2002 established the key principles for improvements at Stafford Market as follows:-

- (a) the principle of a regular outdoor market located in the Crabbery Street/Princes Street area be approved subject to the officers considering the more detailed implications, to include the feasibility of contracting out this work;
- (b) Stafford Market ultimately move to a six day trading operation (Monday to Saturday inclusive) with increased trading hours in order to intensify the asset use and that officers, in consultation with traders, identify the most appropriate basis for achieving this outcome;
- (c) the implementation of revised management arrangements be noted; the revised arrangements taking account of both indoor and outdoor market activities and the relationships to wider town centre issues;
- (d) a 'design brief' be drawn up as a framework for the refurbishment, signing and promotion of the indoor market and the proposed outdoor market.

1.2 **Outdoor Market**

A Town Centre Officer Working Group was recently established to consider, amongst other things, the Market and Town Centre issues generally. It considers that an outdoor market located in Chapel Street/ Crabbery Street is more appropriate than one located in Princes Street/Crabbery Street. This is due to their closer proximity to the Indoor Market and also causes less problems relating to emergency vehicle access and the position of trees and street furniture. It is considered further as part of the Design Brief (see attached **APPENDIX**) although there are still some legal/technical issues to finally resolve. This aspect was also subject to the discussion at Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 14 November 2002 in relation to Street Trading Consents.

1.3 Six Day Trading

The issue of moving to six day trading was part of a package of proposals and it was always acknowledged that this would be a major issue. It is therefore considered appropriate to raise this in the New Year, after the important Christmas period and following the appointment of the successor post to the Market Manager.

The initial meeting of the newly constituted Officer/Tenant Working Group was held on 12 November 2002. It has been established as a forum for discussing issues relevant to the market and will be considering the points raised in this report at a subsequent meeting of the Working Group.

1.4 Revised Management Arrangements

The revised management arrangements were set out in Members Digest No 39 and it is anticipated that the position of Stafford Markets Co-ordinator will be advertised in November 2002 in order to fill the post as early in 2003 as possible. The postholder will also work in close conjunction with the Town Centre Manager, Events Manager and LA21 Manager in order to introduce initiatives which will increase footfall in the Town Centre in general and the Indoor/Outdoor markets in particular.

1.5 Design Brief

A draft Design Brief 'Raising the Game' has been drawn up by the Urban Designer (prior to leaving his post with the Council) in conjunction with appropriate officers and is attached as an **APPENDIX**.

The web site for Stafford Market has been set up (stafford.towntalk.co.uk) which shows details of goods sold at each stall as well as the rent required for vacant stalls.

1.6 The report deals with progress to date and acknowledges that the run up to Christmas is an important time for the market and the Town Centre. It will be important that progress is made next year on the various issues raised here and on the back of the new management arrangements.

Recommendation

That the Scrutiny Committee notes the report.

Previous Consideration

Cabinet - 10 September 2002 - Minute No CAB 32/02

Background Papers

File available in Operations Service

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