


**Report of: Environment Scrutiny Committee**

**To: Executive Board**


**Date: 4<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

**Item No:**


**Title of Report : Recommendation on Decision Tracking**



**Summary and Recommendations**




**Purpose of report:** To present to Executive Board a recommendation from Environment Scrutiny Committee on tracking decisions made by the Board.



**Key decision:** No


**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor John Goddard, Leader of the Council

**Scrutiny Responsibility:** Environment Scrutiny Committee




**Area(s) affected:** All


**Report Approved by:** Andy Collett, Finance and Asset Management and  
Chris Pownall, Legal and Democratic Services



**Policy Framework:** This report contributes to the Council's priority to be an effective and responsive organisation, providing value for money services.




**Recommendation(s):** The Executive Board is asked to respond to the  
Scrutiny Committee's recommendation:



That a recommendation tracking system is developed to assist members when following up the implementation of decisions made.



## **Background**

- 1.1  At the Environment Scrutiny Committee on the 14<sup>th</sup> January, members followed up the recommendations they had made to Executive Board in 2007/08. In some cases they were disappointed with the progress that had been made in implementing the recommendations after Executive Board had approved them. The minute of the discussion is included at appendix 1.

- 1.2 As a result, the Committee recommended that a decision tracker be set up as soon as possible to enable Executive Board councillors and Scrutiny Committees to follow up decisions that have been made. This is to ensure that decisions have been implemented and to enable officers to update members on progress using an agreed system, rather than an ad hoc approach through each of the scrutiny committees.
- 1.3 The Scrutiny Officers have set up a system using Corvu to track scrutiny committee recommendations. The same system could easily be adapted to track Executive decisions. The Environment Scrutiny Committee hopes that Executive Board can support the request to set up a decision tracking system.

**2. Comments from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services – Jeremy Thomas**

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Team have developed a system using CORVU to track recommendations made by scrutiny committee's.
- 2.2 Included in the Legal and Democratic Services Business Plan for 2007/08 is a commitment to build on this work and develop a system to track decisions made by decision-making committees. It is still our intention to do this.
- 2.3 I am happy to support the recommendation from the Environment Scrutiny Committee.

**3. Comments from the Portfolio Holder – Councillor John Goddard**

- 3.1 I agree with the officer's comments.

**4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Committee would like the Executive Board to answer the following questions when considering this recommendation:
  1. If it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations outlined.
  2. If it agrees when will the recommendations be implemented and who will take the lead?
  3. If it disagrees why?
  4. If more information is required from other officers when that will be considered?

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**Background papers: None**



## **Appendix 1**

### **1. Minutes of Environment Scrutiny Committee – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2008**

#### **61. SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOW UP**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report (previously circulated now appended), presenting details on recommendations made by the Committee and Executive Board responses as well as a follow up on the review of Air Quality Management.

Andrew Davies said that recommendation follow up on the environmental enforcement scrutiny review had been deferred until the Committee's meeting in February 2008.

Councillor Pressel said that she was frustrated by the use of phrasing such as that referred to in the Waste Collection scheme response which said that officers from Planning and City Works were drawing up an information sheet for use by planning officers to ensure that there is adequate bin storage at new developments and said that there was a need for definite timescales to avoid the danger of recommendations being lost, especially as this recommendation had been made on 11 June 2007. She also highlighted the need for a progress report on cleaning the ring road verges. The Chair said that he supported the need for recommendations to be properly timetabled. Colin Bailey and Councillor Fooks explained how the work continued to develop the waste collection scheme and that a further outline report would be submitted in February. In response to a question on recommendation tracking, Andrew Davies said that this should be a recommendation to the Executive Board.

The Committee noted that a report on the Thames towpath had already been reported to the Executive Board. A further assessment on the Thames Towpath was scheduled in the work plan for June. The Committee also noted that recommendations concerning flooding had gone directly to the Executive Board in December. Tim Sadler was continuing the work begun by Michael Lawrence in coordinating the inter department flooding meetings. The Committee noted that Councillor Pressel was being interviewed as part of the County Council flooding review.

Councillor Van Zyl, speaking as portfolio holder in response to questions on the implementation of the Council's policy on mass balloon releases said that she had been contacting officers to discuss implementation and would report back on progress when there was further information. Councillor Timbs asked about the number of helium filled balloons during the St Giles Fair and the potential hazard they could cause to animals if released. The Committee said that the proper Council officer should take this up when the fair organising meetings were being held.

Trevor Dixon answered a series of questions from Members about the Air Quality Management Scrutiny Review. Members were particularly frustrated about the time being taken to implement recommendations, especially from the air quality action plan, and the delay in introducing cross operator ticketing and other measures. Trevor confirmed that the action plan had identified emissions as a major problem and that the low emission zone and other measures continued to be worked on in partnership with the County Council. Members said that it was important that the bus companies become a partner to the proposals as soon as possible. Andrew Davies said that he would follow up on recommendations to the County Council in relation to fleet vehicle emissions and any delays which might have been caused by staff vacancies.

The committee expressed its regret that the County Council had failed to appoint a full time cycle and pedestrian officer. At the request of Members, Andrew Davies said that he would circulate a copy the air quality assessment of the Westgate proposals prepared by Roger Pitman. A follow up on the recommendations in the Air Quality Action Plan and implementation of the LEZ would be made at the April meeting.

Resolved to:

1. Recommend to the Executive Board that a recommendation tracking system is developed to assist members when following up the implementation of decisions made.
2. Ask the Chief Executive and the Facilities Manager to ensure traders are aware of the Councils balloon policy when arranging the St Giles Fair;
3. Ask the interim Executive Director for City Services (Tim Sadler) to provide the Committee with an update on the ongoing flood prevention and response work.
4. Ask the Scrutiny Officer to:
  - a. contact the County Council regarding:
    1. the impact of staff vacancies on the implementation of air quality recommendations regarding fleet vehicle emissions;
    2. to express the Committees regret over the failure to appoint a full time cycling and pedestrian officer;
  - b. circulate to the committee members copies of the Environmental Scientific Officers report on air quality implications of the West Gate Development and copies of the Air Quality Action Plan.
  - c. update the committee on Air Quality Action Plan issues at the April meeting.