

By: Paul Wickenden, Overview, Scrutiny and Localism
Manager

To: Environment, Highways and Waste Policy Overview and
Scrutiny Committee
14 September 2010

Subject: **SELECT COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report advises Members on the progress of the Select Committee on Renewable Energy and invites suggestions for future Select Committee Topic Reviews.

Select Committee: Renewable Energy

1. (1) The Select Committee on Renewable Energy, under the Chairmanship of Mr Ferrin, has now completed its evidence gathering. It has received written and oral evidence from a wide range of stakeholders including the Environment Agency, Energy Saving Trust, Forestry Commission, National Farmers' Union, energy and engineering companies, environmental protection organisations, community groups and individual residents. In addition, a questionnaire has been distributed to Kent schools.

(2) Members of the Committee have also visited the headquarters of a renewable energy company, a national conference (Ecobuild), a regional conference on Combined Heat and Power and Distributed Generation (held at Sessions House) a local conference (Protect Kent's 'Keeping the Lights on') and a Kent primary school which aims to be the first carbon-negative school in Europe.

(3) The draft report is in the process of being agreed by the Select Committee and will be shared with the Cabinet Member(s) and Directorates before it is finalised and submitted to County Council, via Cabinet. In accordance with the agreed timetable this report is due to be submitted to County Council on 14 October 2010. However, due to the large number of stakeholders that need to be consulted on the draft report, in order to get wide engagement with the recommendations, it is not possible to do this effectively and submit the report to the meeting of the County Council in October. The Scrutiny Board at its meeting on 8 September 2010 will be asked to extend the timescale for this review to enable this consultation to take place and the report to be submitted to the Cabinet on 29 November 2010 and the County Council on 16 December 2010.

Suggestions for Select Committee Topic Reviews

2 At the meeting of the Scrutiny Board on 24 February 2010 Members received an update on the current Select Committee topic review programme. Although resources to support reviews are all currently allocated, there would

be the potential to start new reviews in November 2010 and January 2011. It was agreed that Members would be asked to consider whether there are any topics that they would like to put forward for consideration for inclusion in the future topic review programme. If Members do have any suggestions could they contact the Democratic Services Officer for this POSC.

Recommendation

3. Members are asked to note the progress on the Select Committee for Renewable Energy and to advise the Democratic Services Officer of any items that they would like to suggest for inclusion in the Select Committee topic review programme.

Denise Fitch
Tel No: 01622 694269
e-mail: denise.fitch@kent.gov.uk

Background Information: *Nil*