

Environment, Communities and Fire Scrutiny Committee

13 January 2020 – At a meeting of the Environment, Communities and Fire Scrutiny Committee held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mr Barrett-Miles (Chairman)

Mr S J Oakley	Mr Jones, left at 4pm	Mr Oppler, left at 1.45pm
Mr Barnard	Mr McDonald	Mr Waight
Lt Col Barton, left at 1.45pm	Mr R J Oakley	Dr Walsh, left at 1.45pm

Apologies were received from

Absent:

Also in attendance: Mr Crow and Mr Elkins

Part I

138. Declarations of Interest

138.1 In accordance with the code of conduct Dr Walsh declared a personal interest in item 7 as the Leader of Arun District Council.

139. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee

139.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the Committee held on 7 November 2019 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

140. Responses to Recommendations

140.1 The Committee is asked to note the responses to recommendations made at the 7 November 2019 meeting from the Cabinet Member for Environment, the Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities and the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure.

141. West Sussex Fire and Rescue Services HMICFRS Improvement Plan Progress Report

141.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Fire Officer (copy appended to the signed minutes which detailed the progress made.

141.2 The Chairman stated that this item would now be discussed in one part rather than split as previously agreed. The presentation would be completed and then the union representatives would have the opportunity to speak.

141.3 The Committee made a number of comments including those that follow. It:

- Welcomed the acknowledgement from the staff representative bodies that they valued continuing input as there is still a lot of work to do.
- Agreed that it is important not to expect too much quickly as it is important to that staff are given sufficient time to ensure that the necessary changes are embedded.
- Welcomed the reassurance from the Cabinet Member that the service is highly valued and most certainly not seen as a burden on resources.
- Raised concerns regarding the new Control Centre but were reassured that the service to West Sussex had not been affected.

Resolved – That the Committee

1. Noted the good progress ahead of the HMICFRS visit but recognised that progress needed to become embedded and sustained.
 2. Noted the governance structure around the Improvement Plan and IRMP, and suggested the updated Plans (included timelines) be scrutinised by Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee (FRSSC).
 3. Would like the HMICFRS report to be made available to the new Committee members, and via a hyperlink to all other members.
 4. Did not identify issues picked up by the HMICFRS, and noted that the key performance indicators (KPIs) for protection and prevention were activity-based, and requested that all KPIs presented to Members be outcome-based. A Task and Finish Group could act as a critical friend to this work.
 5. Noted that the Control Centre had been implemented, but that there had been some teething issues. It was recommended that a more detailed report be considered at the first meeting of FRSSC, which should include some consideration of the staffing levels and the robustness of the IT systems.
 6. Noted that the FRS investigated the safety critical notice on the Contact Centre and that there had been no impact on the service delivered to residents, and welcomed that this would be kept under review and that a detailed report will be considered at the first meeting of FRSSC.
1. With regards to the “People Project” recognised that this is the start of a long journey and that it will take time to impact, but was pleased to hear the positive feedback from the union representatives on the work undertaken so far. Noted the concerns

around the lack of trust that came through the listening groups and requested that regular reports are sent to FRSSC.

8. Considered that the involvement of the staff representative bodies is a good model for the County Council and requested that the Cabinet Member passes this back to his cabinet colleagues.
9. Noted that FRS is not going to pursue crewing with 3 firefighters at this time.
10. Welcomed the appointment of the additional Retained Liaison Officers and their role in taking forward the issues of retention and recruitment of on-call firefighters. Also asked that they encourage recruitment from within WSCC and other employers.
11. Fully supported the new Scrutiny Committee and the training that will be available to those scrutiny committee members.
12. Noted the FBU request that a union representative (non-voting) be included on the FRSSC, but suggested that the new Committee instead continues with the established practice of allowing union representatives to speak at formal meetings, and contribute to responses to members' questions.

142. Road Safety Framework Progress

- 142.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transport and Planning (copy appended to the signed minutes).
- 142.2 The Chairman welcomed Neil Honor, Operations Director of the Sussex Safer Road Partnership to the meeting.
- 142.3 Jon Forster, County Road Safety Group Manager and Andy Ekinsmyth, Head of Transport and Countryside introduced the report with a presentation (copy appended to the signed minutes), which gave an overview of the current progress.
- 142.4 Neil Honor gave an overview of the history and funding arrangements for the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership and how it links with initiatives such as Operation Crackdown.
- 142.5 The Committee made a number of comments including those that follow. It:
 - Raised concerns that the killed and seriously injured figures have not fallen.
 - Raised concerns regarding the lack of Government funding for road safety initiatives nationally.
 - Requested that officers speak to other local authorities who have been more successful in reducing casualties as nationally the reasons for this are not clear.

- Welcomed the positive feedback from young people who have attended the "Safe Drive, Stay Alive" programme and questioned why Highways did not have input when Fire and Rescue Service were told not to continue funding it. The Sussex Safer Roads Partnership confirmed that they see it as an important piece of prevention work.

Resolved – That the Committee:-

1. Requested that officers write to the Government about additional funding for road safety.
2. Requested, given the endorsement of the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, that WSCC makes a commitment to fund the "Safe Drive, Stay Alive" programme.

143. Consultation by Transport for the South East on a Draft Transport Strategy

143.1 The Committee considered a report by Acting Executive Director Place Services and Director of Highways, Transport and Planning (copy appended to the signed minutes).

143.2 Nicola Hitchcock, Senior Planner, introduced the report with a presentation (copy appended to the signed minutes), which explained the background to the strategy and that this was the first time that West Sussex County Council has been able to comment on the detail. Some of the issues were highlighted and that these would be covered in the next stage of work that will be undertaken with Transport for the South East.

143.3 The Committee made a number of comments including those that follow. It:

- Welcomed the Strategy and the opportunity to provide feedback.
- Requested that the need for public transport improvements be strengthened in conversations with Transport for the South East during the next phase of work.
- Requested that the draft response be amended from road and/or rail to road and rail on page 95 paragraph 19.

Resolved – That the Committee:-

- Endorsed the response with the modifications as discussed.

144. Business Planning Group Report

144.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chairman of the Business Planning Group (copy appended to the signed minutes).

Resolved – That the report be noted.

145. Appointment to the Business Planning Group

145.1 The Committee noted the vacancy for a member of the Conservative group on the Business Planning Group.

145.2 The Committee agreed to the appointment of Mr McDonald.

146. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

146.1 The Committee considered the Forward Plan dated 10 January 2020 (a copy appended to the signed minutes).

146.2 Resolved – That the Forward Plan be noted.

147. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 5 March 2020 at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester. Probable agenda items include:

- Household Waste Recycling Sites
- Road Space Audit Progress Report
- Licensing of Tables and Chairs on the Highway
- Implementation of Highways and Infrastructure 2020/21 Delivery Programmes
- Highways Restructure

Any member wishing to place an item on the agenda for the meeting must notify the Director of Law and Assurance by 24 February 2020.

The meeting ended at 4.48 pm

Chairman