

Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee

20 June 2019 – At a meeting of the Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mr Barrett-Miles (Chairman)

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| Mr S J Oakley | Lt Col Barton, left at | Mr Oppler, arrived at |
| Mr Barling | 2.17pm | 11.23am, left at 2.21pm |
| Mr Barnard, left at 3.55pm | Mr Jones, arrived at 10.33am | Dr Walsh, arrived at 2.02pm |
| | Mr McDonald, arrived at 12.32pm | |

Apologies were received from Mrs Bridges, Mr Jupp and Mr R J Oakley

Absent:

Also in attendance: Mr Bradford, Mr Elkins and Ms Kennard

Part I

92. Declarations of Interest

92.1 None Declared

93. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee

93.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee held on 9 May 2019 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

94. Urgent Matters

94.1 It was noted that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services' Inspection Report was published at midnight. The Chairman confirmed that there will be an additional meeting of this Committee on 10 July to discuss this and all County Councillors have been invited to attend.

A copy of the report was circulated.

95. Responses to Recommendations

a) Recommendation on the West Sussex Crowd.

95.1 The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's recommendation on the West Sussex Crowd.

- 95.2 The Committee was disappointed that £1000 maximum recommendation has not been taken up but welcomed that the 30% limit can be exceeded at the discretion of CLC Chairman.

b) Economic Growth Plan

- 95.3 The Committee noted the Leader's Response to the Committee's recommendation on the Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023.
- 95.4 The Committee requests that officers work closely with district and borough councils and asked officers to supply a copy of the Strategy for this particularly in regards to the night-time economy.

c) Highways Maintenance Service Procurement

- 95.5 The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's Recommendation on the Highways Maintenance Service Procurement.
- 95.6 The Committee noted the Chief Executive's response to the Committee's request for reassurance of governance on the Highways Maintenance Service Procurement.

d) Halewick Lane Battery Storage Project

- 95.7 The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's response to the Committee's recommendation on the Halewick Lane Battery Storage Project.

96. Framework for Considering Requests for Events on West Sussex Highways

- 96.1 The Committee considered a report by Executive Director for Place Services and Director of Highways, Transport and Planning (copy appended to signed minutes).
- 96.2 Jeff Elliott, Highway Network & Traffic Manager, introduced the report with a presentation (copy of slides appended to the signed minutes) which highlighted the work that has been carried out to produce the framework. It was emphasised that this is very much a draft document which has been produced with support from the district and borough council licensing teams.
- 96.3 With permission of the Chairman, Mr Bradford, Member for Rother Valley addressed the Committee and highlighted some of the issues that "Velo" had caused to his division. Similar concerns were received in writing from Mrs Dunton, Member for Petworth, Dr O'Kelly, Member for Midhurst and Mr Jupp, Member for Southwater and Nuthurst.

- 96.4 The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:
- Welcomed the report and was broadly supportive and understood the need to have a framework. It noted that the framework balances both the positive and negative impacts of events and reassured that this framework would address many of the issues highlighted by the communities with regards to "Velo" and would allow the Cabinet Member to refuse permission for events to be held if the mitigation offered is not suitable or the risk to the community too high.
 - Welcomed the long lead-in time required for events to be organised (at least one year) as this would give sufficient time for the local member, County Council services and communities to be properly consulted at the earliest opportunity.
 - Requested that the report be clearer on when West Sussex County Council can claim back costs, who would take the final decision on whether events would be permitted, and whether the decision could be taken as a key decision.
 - Suggested that screening points should be added to the timeline, to make it clear when political escalation is required.
 - Requested clarity on the process for implementing Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 96.5 Resolved – That the Committee welcomes the production of a draft protocol, and asks that the revised version be brought back to the Committee when ready.

97. Highways, Transport and Planning Service Area Review & Highway Maintenance Infrastructure Plan

- 97.1 The Committee considered a report by Executive Director of Place Services and Director of Highways, Transport and Planning (copy appended to signed minutes).
- 97.2 Matt Davey, Director of Highways, Transport and Planning, Michele Hulme, Head of Local Highway Operations, Chris Stark, Area Manager Highways – Horsham and Richard Speller, Area Highways Manager – Mid Sussex introduced the report with a presentation (copy appended to signed minutes) which highlighted the risk-based approach that has been adopted and that this report has brought together all the Service Level Agreements that exist into the one document. This document has taken into account what can reasonably be carried out within the allocated budget and Safety Plus inspections will not change.
- 97.3 The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:

- Raised concerns around the service standards going down and how this sits with the expectations in the West Sussex Plan.
 - Raised concern over the past budget overspend and asked if this is just a way of moving the burden of cost to others including parish and town councils.
 - Raised concerns particularly regarding the reduction of grass cutting and that there did not appear to be any mention in the report to having any reactive budget should weather conditions cause significant growth. Similar concerns were raised with regards to the significant reduction in the winter salting network.
 - Asked whether a full period of community engagement will be undertaken before any changes are made particularly with town and parish councils.
- 97.4 Mr Jones proposed a recommendation that the Committee does not support the reduction in grass-cutting, winter salting routes and line painting. This was seconded by Mr Oppler. The resolution was lost.
- 97.5 Resolved – That
1. This Committee notes with concern the consequences of past budget decisions and asks that they inform future budget discussions going forward.
 2. The communication with members, parishes and communities going forward must be robust particularly around the changing levels of service. Also the Highways team should continue to encourage town and parish councils to take on additional works.

98. A259 Littlehampton Corridor Improvements

- 98.1 The Committee considered a report by Executive Director of Place Services and Director of Highways, Transport and Planning (copy appended to the signed minutes).
- 98.2 Matt Davey, Director of Highways, Transport and Planning, Alex Sharkey, Manager Highways Projects and David Lambert, Project Manager - Major Projects introduced the report with a presentation (copy appended to signed minutes) which highlighted that this project is one which is being delivered in partnership with the Local Enterprise Partnership, Coast to Capital and that this is therefore time critical. It is also part of a larger programme of road improvements in the area.
- 98.3 The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:

- Welcomed the report was broadly supportive, appreciated the importance of delivering this project and noted the support that this project has with the local community.
 - Questioned the impact on other programmes of maintaining funding for this programme. Questioned whether such cost escalations inhibited our corporate desire to commit to future major infrastructure projects.
 - Raised concerns that this is another major scheme where the budget has risen significantly and wanted reassurance that processes are being put in place to reduce this risk in future.
- 98.4 Resolved – That the Committee has reviewed the decision and recommends that this is passed to the Cabinet Member for approval and look forward to the process review being undertaken as soon as possible.

99. Street Lighting LED Conversion Programme and Central Monitoring (CMS) Programme

- 99.1 The Committee considered a report by Executive Director of Place Services and Director of Highways, Transport and Planning (copy appended to the signed minutes).
- 99.2 Barry Edmunds, Traffic Signals and Street Lighting Manager introduced the report with a presentation (copy appended to the signed minutes), which highlighted the need to replace the majority of the street lighting over the next six years and for the introduction of a Central Monitoring System.
- 99.3 The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:
- Welcomed the report and was supportive. It was encouraged to hear that this project would lead to £82M savings over 25 years but also a 17% reduction in carbon emissions.
 - Concerns were raised regarding health issues associated with LED lighting that have been raised over a number of years and were reassured to hear that Public Health England had been consulted and that they have identified no health risks to the public in having LED lighting and that this is now proven technology.
 - Welcomed that the introduction of a Central Monitoring System will now ensure that the will no longer be a lag in dimming times when the clocks change in March and October.
- 99.4 Resolved – That the Committee supports and recommends that the Council moves forward with this project

100. 2018/19 Fire and Rescue Service Performance Review and Annual Report

100.1 Before the report was presented Ms Kennard, Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities read a statement to the Committee where she accepted the findings of the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services' Inspection Report and highlighted some of the steps that are already being taken to address the issues.

100.2 The Committee made comments regarding the Inspection Report including those that follow. It:

- Raised concerns in particular areas such as staff morale and the perceived culture of bullying within the Fire and Rescue Service.
- Asked whether the Chief Fire Officer had challenged some of the findings as some of the issues had already been highlighted on the Risk Management Plan. It was confirmed that such a challenge was made.
- Raised concerns that the report did not reflect where issues had been highlighted earlier in the process and the progress that had subsequently been made. This good work has not been reflected.
- Acknowledged that the Inspection Report will be discussed more fully at the additional meeting on 10 July 2019 where representatives of the unions will also be present.

100.3 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Fire Officer (copy appended to signed minutes), which outlined the performance of the Fire and Rescue Service and highlighted some of the issues that the Service is facing.

100.4 The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:

- Raised concerns about the process for recruiting retained firefighters which appears to be complicated and can put people off. People's expectations of the role also differ from what is expected.
- Raised concerns that there appeared to be a mismatch between the Inspection Report and some of issues highlighted in the Annual Review and that this needs to be addressed before the final report is published. This was acknowledged and will be rectified.

100.5 Resolved – That the Committee continues to support the Fire and Rescue Service but it recommends that some changes are made to the Annual Report in light of the Inspection Report before it is published.

101. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

101.1 The Committee considered the Forward Plan dated 17 June 2019 (copy appended to the signed minutes).

101.2 Resolved – That the Forward Plan be noted

102. Possible Items for Future Scrutiny

- 102.1 The Committee requested further details on Parking on New Developments. The Cabinet Member's response is included on the agenda for 10 July meeting and it will be decided after this meeting whether the issue still needs to be brought back to the Committee.
- 102.2 Chairman reminded the Committee that the next Business Planning Group meets on 1 July and to let him know if anyone wished to have any issue raised with them.

103. Date of Next Meeting

An additional meeting of the Committee will be held on 10 July 2019 at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester. This meeting will scrutinise the Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services' inspection report and Review of the Integrated Risk Management Plan Action Plans.

The meeting ended at 4.03 pm

Chairman