

Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee

16 March 2018 – At a meeting of the Select Committee held at 10.30 a.m. at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mr Barrett-Miles (Chairman)

Mr Baldwin
Lt Cl Barton***
Mrs Bridges**
Mrs Brunsdon*

Mr Jones****
Mr McDonald
Mr S Oakley
Mr Oppler

Mr Purchase*
Mrs Purnell

In attendance by invitation: Ms Goldsmith (Leader), Mr Lanzer (Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure) and Mrs Kennard (Cabinet Member for Safer Stronger Communities).

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Patel

* Left the meeting at 1pm ** Left the meeting at 2.10pm *** Left the meeting at 2.45pm ****Left the meeting at 3pm

Declarations of Interests

225. In accordance with the Code of Conduct, the following personal interests were declared:

- Mrs Purnell as her partner being a retired Fire Fighter in relation to Fire & Rescue Service: Publication of draft 2018 - 2022 Integrated Risk Management Plan for Consultation
- Mr Oakley as a member of Chichester District Council in relation to Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023 - Update
- Mr Jones as Chairman of the Safer Crawley Partnership in relation to Performance of the Substance Misuse Contract

Minutes of the 31 January Meeting

226. The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting on 31 January and agreed the following:

- That Lt Cl Barton had provided apologies, and was not absent as incorrectly stated.

227. Resolved – that subject to the amendment above, the minutes of the Environmental and Community Services Select Committee held on 31 January 2018 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

Minutes of the 7 February Call-in Meeting

228. The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting on 7 February.

229. The Committee noted its disappointment that the decision had been published following the Committee's recommendation to pause the process.

230. Resolved – that the minutes of the Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee Call-in Meeting held on 7 February 2018 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's Recommendations

a) Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023

231. The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's Recommendations on the Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023 and agreed to raise any comments under the Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023 update item later on the agenda.

b) Options for Improved Control and Management at Household Waste and Recycling Sites & Strategic Challenges in Waste

232. The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's Recommendations on the Options for Improved Control and Management at Household Waste and Recycling Sites & Strategic Challenges in Waste

c) Rights of Way Management Plan 2018 – 2028

233. The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's Recommendations on Rights of Way Management Plan 2018 - 2028

d) Call-In: New Approach to Community Grant Funding decision – SSC11 (17/18)

234. The Committee commented on the Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's recommendations on the New Approach to Community Grant Funding as follows:

- Highlighted their disappointment that the decision had been implemented following the Committee's recommendation to pause the project to allow for further work to be carried out.
- Raised concern over the additional 5% fee for Spacehive for the individual proposals, and requested that officers look at how these costs could be mitigated for Community Initiative Fund (CIF) funded projects. The Committee supported a presentation by Spacehive for all members in their localities to understand how the process will work.
- Suggested that work be done to explore best practice from other local authorities that were already using Spacehive, especially around process and administration. The Committee also welcomed exploration of the overall management and administration savings costs for the future arrangements and the costs for the new contract to identify the overall saving.

- Welcomed future scrutiny of the proposals, taking into account the comments made above and agreed that the Committee's Business Planning Group should determine the scope of what should be scrutinised by the Committee moving forward.

Fire & Rescue Service

a) Publication of a Draft 2018-2022 Integrated Risk Management Plan for Public Consultation and b) Annual Statement of Assurance

235. The Committee considered a report by Executive Director for Communities and Public Protection and Director of Operations and Chief Fire Officer (copy appended to signed minutes).

236. Gavin Watts, Director of Operations and Chief Fire Officer and Neil Stocker, Director of Public Protection introduced the report which outlined the five key strategic priorities being proposed for the new Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and the consultation plans. The IRMP was being refreshed to take into account of the new National Framework, the new inspection regime for Fire and Rescue Services, and also to align with the County Council's new West Sussex Plan. The results of the public consultation and final draft IRMP would be presented to the Committee in June, after which the final IRMP would be launched and the underlying action plans developed.

237. The Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities thanked officers for their hard work and highlighted the need to refresh the IRMP to make it fit for purpose. The work and identification of priorities demonstrated the challenges and amount of work being undertaken by the Service.

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

- Welcomed the hard work and dedication of the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) and recognised the clear benefits of having the FRS integrated into the County Council. The Committee recognised the need to update the IRMP to make it more fit for purpose, taking into account the changing national and local picture. *Mr Watts added that a key reason for the refresh of the IRMP was to ensure that the resources were matched to risk to provide the best service to residents. This would also be a key part of the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services inspection regime.*
- Highlighted that the IRMP was a large and detailed document and requested the development of an executive summary to allow the public to get a high level overview of the content and priorities within the document and highlight the areas of interest to the community. The executive summary should clearly set out that detailed action plans would be developed to underpin the approved IRMP, with any proposals being subject to future public consultation and scrutiny when required. The executive summary needed to clearly set out the purpose of the document and the 'ask' from the public through the consultation.

- Requested that there was a more proactive consultation process, including a strong communications plan and engagement with district and boroughs and town and parish councils, to ensure that the consultation engaged with residents and was as open and transparent as possible and that the public were clear on what they were being asked. The Committee recognised that any proposed change to blue light services could raise concerns and therefore it was important to give assurances on how any changes would affect residents.
- Requested that there was emphasis on the robust approach the FRS took to hazardous substances (e.g. asbestos) within the IRMP.
- Highlighted the aspirational nature of the IRMP and asked what benchmarks and indicators would be used to monitor performance against the approved IRMP. Mr Watts confirmed that the action plans would specify measures for each proposal. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) was due to conduct an inspection of the FRS later this year, and the process would enable Fire & Rescue Authorities to be more easily compared (process to complete by summer 2019). The FRS currently compares itself against a number of similar authorities on a number of areas including response times. This would be more clearly articulated within the IRMP. The Statement of Assurance would be scrutinised by the Committee on a yearly basis and would provide five years of data to identify trends and measure performance. These performance standards would be clearly set out within the IRMP to provide a robust set of indicators on which to measure performance.
- The Committee agreed to share any suggested drafting edits with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Senior Advisor for passing onto officers. If any of these were deemed significant, these would be discussed with the Committee and officers to take a view on whether the timetable needed to be adjusted to allow for the changes to be made.
- The Committee recognised the need to review how to best utilise and incentivise retained fire fighters to improve recruitment and retention and suggested the exploration of tax breaks/value breaks and that there could be an opportunity to work with district and boroughs to offer benefits. The Committee supported the exploration of a reduced crewing minimum and that this could help increase the usage of retained fire fighters. *Gavin Watts confirmed that Assistant Chief Fire Officer Kieran Amos would be attending a national conference on his behalf to look at the national issues of the Retained Fire System. A brochure had also been produced for employers, to set out the expectations and benefits of employing retained fire fighters.*
- Recognised the value and importance of scrutiny of the FRS by the Committee, and that it would work to identify the best way of doing this moving forward. The Committee requested that the degree of scrutiny on proposals be clearly set out in the executive summary of the IRMP to clarify that any future proposed changes to services would be subject to the appropriate governance, consultation and scrutiny.

239. Mr Purchase made the following amendment which was seconded by Mr Oppler, which the Committee considered: - That the Committee requests the addition of an Executive Summary and the summary of implications of the proposals within the IRMP and that these amendments be reviewed by the Committee prior to the launch of the consultation.

240. A vote was held and the amendment was lost.

241. Resolved – That the Committee:

- 1) Supports the strategic objectives for West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service
- 2) Subject to the comments made above, and any minor changes (which are to be reviewed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman), the text for the draft 2018 – 2022 IRMP is endorsed for the purposes of public consultation.

Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023 - Update

242. The Committee received a verbal update on the progress of the Economic Growth Plan by the Economic Growth Manager.

243. The Leader highlighted that she welcomed the comments and input from the Committee on the Plan and was keen to keep the Committee up to date as the Plan progressed. Work was being done to assure the alignment of the Economic Growth Plan with the emerging new Strategic Economic Plan being developed by the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership.

244. Carolyn Carr, Economic Growth Manager confirmed that the draft plan would be shared with partners for comment over the next 3-4 weeks with outcomes being fed into the final Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023 due to be adopted in May. An action plan was being developed to outline how those priorities would be achieved. This included projects that were already underway, for example the growth deals, and new areas of work under new priorities. The action plan would be brought back to a future Committee meeting for review, recognising that it would be a living document that would adapt and develop as work progressed.

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

- Welcomed the progress being made on the Economic Growth Plan and the action plan, however queried the use of social media to measure the economic impact of Experience West Sussex. Ms Carr confirmed that this was a common methodology used in the industry to evaluate impact, however recognised the challenge in being able to directly measure economic impact.

246. Resolved – That the Committee:

- 1) Supports the progress with the development of the Economic Growth Plan 2018 -2023.

County Council's proposed response to the Department for Transport's (DfT) Consultation on the creation of a Major Road Network (MRN)

247. The Committee considered a report by Executive Director Economy Infrastructure and Environment and Head of Planning Services (copy appended to signed minutes).

248. Michael Elkington, Head of Planning Services introduced the report, confirming that the proposed MRN would elevate the status of strategically important roads and supplement the current national Strategic Road Network (SRN). It would be important to establish how the County Council, the Department for Transport (DfT) and Highways England could work together to improve and maintain the MRN. Mr Elkington highlighted the suggested changes to the MRN network for the consultation response.

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

- Supported any improvement to the road network but highlighted the need to ensure the proposed MRN did not create an additional financial burden on the County Council.
- Recognised the issues of air quality in Cowfold and supported a review of the DfT's proposed inclusion in the MRN of the A272 in this area.
- Recognised that the resilience of the Strategic Road Network was a key criterion for the MRN, but highlighted the lack of resilience for the A27 from the Bognor Roundabout to the Hampshire border in the current proposals. The consultation response therefore provided an opportunity to highlight the lack of an alternative route to the A27 round Chichester.
- Supported the proposed amendments to the MRN route as outlined in the map in Appendix B of the report, in particular, recognising the importance of including an alternative east-west coastal route to the south of the A27. Mr Elkington confirmed that the County Council was carrying out improvements to the route, recognising its importance for coastal traffic.
- Suggested that representation should be made to the DfT to include, as a new criterion for the MRN, short stretches of road whose vehicle movements impact on the Strategic Road Network.

250. Resolved – That the Committee:

- 1) Supports the network of roads that are proposed for inclusion in the MRN and the draft consultation response, taking into account the comments made above.

Performance of the Substance Misuse Contract

251. The Committee considered a report by Executive Director for Children Adults Families Health & Education (copy appended to signed minutes).

252. Holly Yandall, Public Health Lead for Substance Misuse introduced the report which provided an overview of the performance of the contract following its launch in 2016. The aim of the contract was to deliver a needs-led service and respond to changing trends and be responsive to national indicators. In the long-term the aim is to increase focus on prevention and early intervention. Philippa Gibson, Senior Commissioning Manager (Substance Misuse) provided an overview of the successes and challenges for the service. Substance Misuse was now a priority area within the Community Safety Agreement, highlighting the value of the work over the last 18 months since the contract went live.

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

- Raised concern over the flexibility of the contractor to be able to adapt to meet changing needs, for example compulsory drug testing. The Cabinet Member for Safer Stronger Communities confirmed that a written response had been provided to this query on 6th March and would be shared with Committee Members. Ms Gibson confirmed that an information sharing agreement had been drafted between the service provider Change, Grow, Live (CGL) and the police to understand the level of demand from the criminal justice system and to develop a business case. Funding was available from Community Safety to support this work.
- Recognised the broad scope and work being undertaken under the contract and the importance of ensuring that effort was not diluted as a result. Mrs Yandall confirmed that there would be a national review of GP prescribing over the next year, recognising that this was a long-term issue and liaison work was also taking place with primary care providers. The County Council was also linked in with district and borough councils over the Social Prescribing Initiative, recognising the need for a holistic view of individuals. The Committee recognised the challenge of prevention due to the large number of issues and factors that lead to drug use and the challenge in being able to identify these.
- Recognised the cross cutting nature of the work and suggested that the performance report should be shared with the Health and Adults Select Committee.
- Welcomed the performance update and requested a further update in mid-2019, to time in with contract renewal.

254. Resolved – That the Committee:

- 1) Welcomes the high level service outcomes to date of the Substance Misuse Contract
- 2) Requests a further update on performance in 2019 to tie in with the contract renewal
- 3) Suggests that the performance is also reviewed by the Health and Adults Select Committee

Forward Plan of Key Decisions

255. The Committee considered the Forward Plan April 2018 to July 2018 (copy appended to signed minutes).

256. Resolved – That the Forward Plan be noted.

Date of the Next Meeting

257. The Committee noted that its next scheduled meeting (Project Day) will take place on 24 May 2018 at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 3.15pm

Chairman.