

## **Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee**

13 March 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)

Mr S J Oakley, arrived at 10.40am	Mr Jones Mr McDonald	Mrs Purnell, arrived at 1.25pm
Mr Baldwin	Mr Oppler, left at 1.25pm	Dr Walsh, left at 1.17pm
Mrs Bridges, left at 2.58pm		

Apologies were received from Lt Col Barton, Mrs Brunsdon, Mr Patel and Mr Purchese

Also in attendance: Mr Elkins and Mrs Kennard

### **Part I**

#### **68. Declarations of Interest**

- Mr Barrett-Miles as a Member of the County Council's Planning Committee in relation to Call-in: A29 Realignment Scheme – HI20 18/19
- Mr Elkins as a Member of Arun District Council in relation to Call-in: A29 Realignment Scheme – HI20 18/19
- Mr Oakley as a Member of Chichester District Council Planning Committee in relation to Call-in: A29 Realignment Scheme – HI20 18/19 and as a Member of Chichester District Council in relation to Draft Guidance on Parking in New Developments
- Mr Oppler as a Member of Arun District Council in relation to Call-in: A29 Realignment Scheme – HI20 18/19
- Dr Walsh as a Member of Arun District Council in relation to Call-in: A29 Realignment Scheme – HI20 18/19

#### **69. Minutes of 14 January 2019 Meeting**

69.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee held on 14 January 2019 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### **70. Minutes of 30 January 2019 Meeting**

70.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee held on 30 January 2019 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### **71. Responses to Recommendations**

##### **a) Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's**

## **Recommendations on the Operations and Public Protection Savings Proposals.**

71.1 The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's Recommendations on the Operations and Public Protection Savings Proposals.

### **b) Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's Recommendations on the Savings Proposals – Community Initiative Fund**

71.2 The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's Recommendations on the Savings Proposals – Community Initiative Fund

71.3 Members made the following comments:

- Highlighted that there should be no reduction in the Community Initiative Fund as it was considered to be extremely valuable and engaged members with the voluntary sector.

## **72. Call in: A29 Realignment Scheme - HI20 18/19**

72.1 Mr Jones introduced the request, to call-in the decision by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure concerning the A29 Realignment – HI20 18/19; (call-in request appended to the signed minutes) and highlighted the following points:-

72.2 In his view, previous costs on Local Enterprise partnership (LEP) projects had spiralled out of control and there was potential that any works could result in huge disruption as this scheme involved a major road, believing that there were already questions that needed further examination.

72.3 He also queried what the County Council commitments would be, given that it would be required to underwrite any costs and demonstrate its commitment to delivering Phase 2 of the scheme. He also believed that the strategy could be risky in the event external events affected the project and it could take a long time to recover the costs.

72.4 He also noted that there was no action in the Business Case (BC) for adequate transport links if there was to be an increase in demand for public transport and whether there would be an improvement on journey times. He was also concerned over the welfare of local residents affected by the scheme and the potential impact on those with mobility issues accessing local health services.

72.5 In his view, it wasn't clear whether the indicative route in the Arun Local Plan (ALP) was the same as was being put forward now and was concerned that if not consulted upon properly then it could increase the chance of legal challenge. He further believed the scheme appeared to facilitate only the ALP rather than look at the bigger picture in the county.

*72.6 Roger Elkins, Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure addressed the Committee, highlighting the following points:*

72.7 In his view, this was a major scheme approved through the Local Plan making process, of which the County Council were delivering the preferred route and which he believed would improve jobs and businesses in the area.

72.8 Moving forward, there were unlikely to be any substantial changes to the proposed route, although the Southern Spur/Lidsey bends area may be subject to some change, pending consultation with residents in the area. He further believed that the scheme would improve transport routes and traffic congestion, as well as provide a much needed link to the Bognor Regis area.

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

- Welcomed the greatly needed improvements to the A29 road in particular to encourage economic growth for Bognor Regis and the coastal strip, but raised concerns over the current infrastructure deficit in the county, the growing congestion that needed to be addressed and queried what was being done to ensure the impacts of development hadn't been under reported. Mr Matt Davey, Director of Highways and Transport advised that in terms of traffic modelling a standard approach had been used in respect of estimated traffic and development growth. During the detailed design phase there would be safety audits carried out and the County Council would be obliged to address any issues. This would include mitigation against noise, drainage and other issues arising. The consultation was seen as an opportunity for comment on the proposals and to address any major elements that were flagged.
- Raised concerns that the engagement and consultation process had not been proper and meaningful, with short notice given for the public meetings along with the lateness and quality of documents available. Also that there had been a lack of public exhibitions in the Bognor Regis area. Mr Davey advised that the consultation period of 8 weeks was adequate enough to look at the information and to comment and respond. There had been a good response from a number of the public exhibitions and events in conjunction with developers had also been well attended. The County Council website had all the detailed colour maps available to view.
- Raised concerns over Capital costs and the cost estimate process, requesting that the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure investigate and report back to the Committee on the cost estimate ability. Noting that there was a possible large risk element to the project and the potential for rising costs, also requesting an outline of the full financial impact if the project were to run over schedule. Mr Davey advised that if project delivery over-ran then it might not necessarily have a significant impact on costs.

- Raised concerns over the large number of additional roundabouts in the proposals and whether the best possible route had been chosen. Mr Davey advised that roundabouts were taken into account through the traffic modelling in the BC and that further detailed elements would also be looked at in the planning process. As part of the Local Plan process the County Council had been a key consultee and the route had already been subject to studies and technical work to get the scheme to this point. *The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport added that the preferred route had been selected through the planning process.*
- Raised concerns over the effect on the Southern end of Shripney, suggesting an alternative route to by-pass the village; and that the northern end of the route could be possibly be subject to increased traffic pollution levels. Also raised concerns that the road wouldn't be linked to the Rolls Royce roundabout. Mr Davey advised that these points would have been looked at through the Local Plan process and that although not part of this scheme, there may be future opportunities to address these concerns.
- Queried what the actual housing numbers were likely to be in the new development and how affordable these would be; and requested reassurances that S106 contributions would be sufficient to provide funds for other needs such as school places and impact on drainage. Mr Davey advised that housing numbers were the responsibility of the district and borough councils. The County Council was confident there was enough S106 funding to fill requirements and that developers were comfortable with contributions towards other infrastructure elements within this. Further details such as drainage and blight would be addressed during the planning application.

*72.10 The Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure summed up by saying that he believed there was absolute support for the scheme and that the A29 road improvement was much needed, especially to enhance economic growth in the area and provide infrastructure for business growth in the county.*

*72.11 A lot of discussion on the alignment and the preferred route was established a few years ago and the County Council was delivering on the scheme put forward by Arun District Council and their Local Plan process. It was a detailed programme going forward, leading to a planning application and another opportunity to comment. It was important to hear the views of residents and take them into account and he noted the comments over presentation of the scheme to the public and would take them on board.*

*72.12 Mr Jones summed up by saying that during the Local Plan process there had only been a consultation on the indicative route and clearly the public felt they hadn't been consulted properly. He was not convinced over the effectiveness of the scheme and didn't support it. He proposed that the decision be paused and reconsidered given its impact and value and should be subjected to an extended and meaningful consultation.*

72.13 Mr Jones made the following proposal, seconded by Mr Baldwin which the Committee considered: -

72.14 That the Committee:

Supports, in principle, the need for the A29 realignment Scheme and calls on the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure to withdraw this decision and reconsider it in light of the concerns expressed by members today, and that any further decision which commits the County Council to any course of action relating to this is not published until after the current public consultation takes place, in which all contributions are given close consideration.

72.15 A vote was held and the proposal was carried.

72.16 Resolved – That the Committee:-

- 1) Supports, in principle, the need for the A29 Realignment Scheme.
- 2) Calls on the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure to withdraw this decision and reconsider it in light of the concerns expressed by members today, and that any further decision which commits the County Council to any course of action relating to this is not published until after the current public consultation takes place, in which all contributions are given close consideration.
- 3) Agrees for the BPG to look into the current process surrounding the initial costing of major projects.

### **73. Highway and Transport Improvement Schemes**

73.1 The Committee considered a report by Executive Director Economy, Infrastructure and Environment and Director of Highways and Transport (copy appended to signed minutes).

73.2 Mike Elkington, Head of Planning Services, Michele Hulme, Assistant Head of Highways Operations, Matt Davey, Director of Highways and Transport and Ian Patrick, Local Transport Improvements Manager introduced the report, which addressed the identification, assessment, prioritisation and funding of highway and transport improvement schemes, including the role of members and the use of developer contributions.

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

- Welcomed the report, but highlighted the importance of transparency and oversight as the current approach was seen as overly bureaucratic and suggested a future report be brought back to the Committee on an annual basis.
- Queried the costs of schemes and requested that along with member education on the viability of developments and local plans there should be more community focus and involvement; suggesting that existing County Local Committees (CLC) be used more in the process, be briefed on work streams and delivery plans at the appropriate time and have the ability to produce an annual

wish list of schemes they would like to see financed. Ms Hulme advised that back in 2016, an Executive Task and Finish Group (TFG) recommended that the previous 'community issues list' approach under the CLCs be replaced with the current Community Highways Schemes (CHS) process, primarily because the former approach raised unrealistic expectations. Mr Elkington added that there were issues around delivery of schemes so it was important that they were costed correctly; also suggesting that a representative from the district and borough councils could be invited to carry out a workshop for members on scheme viability.

- Suggested better communication surrounding schemes, especially regarding feedback to the community and requested that there should be a general consensus on what level of information Area Highways Managers were communicating to members. Ms Hulme advised that part of the scoring looked at community support, so it already formed part of the process.
- Questioned the rationale of the split between the programmes of work using the Integrated Transport Block funding and that there were two different approaches being taken. Mr Davey advised that there was a scoring mechanism used for LTIP and CHS but that there was currently no clear process for allocating funding, as it partly depended on the number of applications for CHSs. Mr Elkington added that there were different processes in place with the district and borough councils for the allocation of s106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), and that there was a need to comply with the governance that had been in place by those authorities, including the need for audit trails.

73.4 Resolved – That the Committee:- Agrees the way forward suggested in the report, with a request that an Annual Programme of Highways Works for each area be brought to the relevant County Local Committee (CLC).

#### **74. Draft Guidance on Parking at New Developments**

74.1 The Committee considered a report by Executive Director of Economy, Infrastructure & Environment and Director of Highways and Transport (copy appended to signed minutes).

74.2 Paul Eagle, Principal Planner, Mike Elkington, Head of Planning Services and Matt Davey, Director of Highways and Transport introduced the report which gave an overview of the review undertaken taken of the current approaches to parking resulting in the prepared new draft 'Guidance on Parking at New Developments'. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure would be asked to approve the new guidance in March 2019.

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

- Welcomed the review, noting that it was long overdue in view of the current insufficiency of parking on new developments, in particular multi-occupancy dwellings and highlighted that parking provision

should be seen as a necessity and not an amenity. Also questioned the validity of the guidance if district and borough councils had their own parking standards, and requested an amendment to the text to include 'In the absence of parking standards at district and borough council level, this County Council guidance should be referred to'.

- Suggested an amendment to the text to deal with developments under 10 dwellings, and to consider the use of whole numbers in parking space calculations as opposed to fractions, also highlighting the need for cycle space provision. Mr Davy advised that it was common practise to use fractions in calculations, with developers being used to this method. He advised that he would seek further clarity on cycle parking requirements.
- Requested a link to the colour maps of Parking Behaviour zones and a comparison of previous verses new guidance and also requested further clarity on Table 2, D2 of the guidance in relation to vehicle standards.
- Queried the current parking space standards and when these were originally set and highlighted the need for guidance on preferred sizes and garages. Mr Eagle advised that he would seek further clarification on the standards and specifications.
- Raised concerns over whether the reduction for parking demands offered to developers in the event of a range of travel choices being available through travel plans and other sustainable travel initiatives would be effective. Also suggested the need for special parking zones around railway stations.

#### 74.4 Resolved – That the Committee:

- 1) Requests an amendment to the text to deal with developments under 10 dwellings, and to consider the use of whole numbers in parking space calculations and the need for cycle space provision.
- 2) Requests an amendment to the text to include: ' In the absence of parking standards at district and borough council level, this County Council guidance should be referred to'
- 3) Requests sight of the revised document once all of the above points have been addressed.

### **75. Community Hubs and Plans for Worthing Library**

75.1 The Committee considered a report by Director of Communities (copy appended to signed minutes).

75.2 Rachel North, Director of Communities, Nicola Bulbeck, Executive Director Communities and Public Protection, Lesley Sim, Head of Libraries Heritage and Registration and Russell Allen, Lead Manager, Library Service introduced the report which gave an overview of the Community Hubs Programme, its strategic principles and financial implications, and outlined the engagement and consultation undertaken for the first Community Hub

in Worthing.

*75.3 The Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities added that this was an exciting project for libraries and would comprise a myriad of community services in each hub. Although there were current financial restraints, it was important to recognise that this was an opportunity to strengthen the service rather than initiate closures.*

75.4 Ms North added that the library service had already undergone a degree of transformation and integration by incorporating within their buildings various activities, including Children & Family Centres. The programme would be of benefit to both the community and County Council and would overall reduce running costs, offer opportunities to combine workforce and give a more flexible space whilst promoting social health and wellbeing and help towards reducing social isolation.

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

- Supported the programme as being an exciting project that would encourage community use, was both innovative and resource-efficient and was pleased to see the closure of libraries prevented within the programme. Also queried what commitment there was to ensure the hubs would be environmentally friendly and suggested that thought be given to the layout of quiet/children's areas and appropriate receiving space and that any lessons from the Worthing project be learned for future roll-outs. Ms North advised that the County Council would seek to look at sustainability measures.
- Raised concerns over the lack of cost figures in the report and that various points previously raised during the Call-in request had not been sufficiently addressed. Ms North advised that there were high level costs specified that included indicative figures and that work was currently being carried out to assess criteria and methodology to see if these were viable. *The Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities added she was happy to bring a report back to the Committee once area information and definite figures were available in order to consult with members.*
- Raised concerns over the potential closure of Worthing Library during any works and the effect on those with limited mobility, such as the elderly or disabled in the event of a temporary change of building location, and the level of public communication that would be available. Mrs Sim advised that there had been a long process of engagement and consultation and potential closures may include partial building closures or using temporary. Mr Allen added that further detail would be known once reconfiguration of services had been addressed, but for both access and opening times the public would be informed well in advance. The new proposed Worthing temporary site was very close to the existing building, with current characteristics being protected and the County Council was looking at no exclusion from the alternative provision. *The Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities, added that where possible buildings would be kept open, with minimal disruption, and that the public would be kept well informed.*

- Queried why the Project Board wasn't cross-party and whether member input would be sought for the 'Top 10' list being compiled within the programme. Ms North advised that the 'Top 10' list was still being worked on for feasibility and viability and that community impact and sensitivities would be considered. The Project Board would be making their recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities on the 'Top 10', but that member input would definitely be sought for local insight. *The Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities, added that the list could be changed or altered if necessary and that engagement would be sought with members and the district and borough councils prior to the consultation. Although the project board wasn't cross-party, local members would be consulted for their area.*

**75.6 Resolved – That the Committee:**

- 1) Supports the objectives and would welcome a list of the next top 10 programmes, their costs and implementation schedules.
- 2) Requests a progress report in 6 months' time with a clear outline of the decision-making points throughout the process, and a copy of the project timeline to be distributed to Committee Members when available.

**76. Business Planning Group Report**

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

76.2 Resolved – That the Committee endorses the contents of the report and particularly the Committee's Work Programme for 2019/20, revised to reflect the Business Planning Group's (BPG's) discussions.

**77. Requests for Call-in**

77.1 The Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee Business Planning Group (BPG) received a request to call-in the proposed decision by the Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities concerning the Community Hubs and Plans for Worthing Library SSC7 18/19 – decision published on the Executive Decision Database on 21 January 2019 and in the Member's Information Service on 21 January 2019. The BPG declined the request.

77.2 The BPG also received a request for call-in of the proposed decision by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure concerning the A29 Realignment Scheme - decision published on the Executive Decision Database on 18 February 2019 and in the Members' Information Service on 18 February 2019 HI20 18.19. The request was accepted by the BPG and was heard in Item no.5.

**78. Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

78.1 The Committee considered the Forward Plan dated 1 March 2019 (copy appended to signed minutes).

78.2 Resolved – That the Forward Plan be noted.

**79. Date of Next Meeting**

The Committee noted that its next scheduled meeting will take place on 9 May 2019 at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 3.40 pm

Chairman