

Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee

24 June 2020 – At a virtual meeting of the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee held at 10.30 am.

Present: Cllr Barrett-Miles (Chairman)

Cllr S Oakley	Cllr Goldsmith, arrived at	Cllr Waight
Cllr Baldwin, arrived at	10.40am	Cllr Walsh, left at 2.01pm
10.45am	Cllr McDonald	Cllr M Jones
Cllr Barnard	Cllr R Oakley	
Cllr Barton, arrived at	Cllr Oppler, arrived at	
10.45am, left at 2.01pm	10.35am, left 2.01pm	

Apologies were received from Cllr Quinn

Absent:

Also in attendance: Cllr Boram, Cllr Elkins and Cllr Urquhart

Part I

1. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the Code of Conduct the following interests were declared:

Cllr Walsh declared a personal interest in Items 4 and 5 as Leader of Arun District Council and a Member of Littlehampton Town Council.

Cllr Jones declared a personal interest in Items 4 and 5 as a Member of Crawley Borough Council and in Item 6 as a Member of the West Sussex Climate Change Advisory Board.

Cllr S Oakley declared a personal interest in Items 4 and 5 as a Member of Chichester District Council.

Cllr Waight declared a personal interest in Items 4 and 5 as a Member of Worthing Borough Council.

Cllr Baldwin declared a personal interest in Items 4 and 5 as a Member of Horsham District Council.

Cllr Goldsmith declared a personal interest in Items 5 and 6 as Chairman of Save Our South Coast Alliance.

2. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee

2.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the Committee held on 5 March 2020 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

3. Responses to Recommendations

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to note the response to the recommendations made at the 5 March meeting regarding the On-street Parking to Support Traffic Management from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure.

4. Integrated Parking Strategy

- 4.1 The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director Place Services and the Director of Highways, Transport and Planning (copy appended to the signed minutes).
- 4.2 The Cabinet Member introduced the report and confirmed that this is a strategic document.
- 4.3 Miles Davy, Parking Manager set out the background and outlined some of the developments that have occurred since the last update in 2014.
- 4.4 The Committee made a number of comments including those that follow. It:
- Raised concerns that the Strategy had been developed before the impact of COVID-19 is known particularly regarding future public transport use and any effect this would have on congestion.
 - Sought clarification on whether the need to encourage people back into town centres and coastal areas has been fully considered.
 - Asked that more consideration be given to cycle parking to maintain the upsurge in cycle journeys.
 - Raised concerns regarding the lack of enforcement particularly regarding pavement and verge parking but welcomed the Government's review of this issue.
 - Sought clarification on whether pavement and verge parking was an offence and who was responsible for enforcement.

The Committee resolved that:

1. The strategic impact of Covid needs to be looked at in some detail in terms of both impact and funding, including the changes in public transport use over the longer-term.
2. There are conflicts between short-term and long-term particularly in regard to the economic dimension which need to be corrected.
3. There needs to be more treatment of parking for cyclists, as it is not mentioned in the Strategy.

4. The Council's Climate Change and Clean Air decisions need to be referred to and addressed.
5. The capital and revenue costs associated with delivery of the strategy need to be better set out.
6. A report is needed on the timing and delivery of future road space audits (RSAs).
7. There needs to be adequate resources for effective enforcement. The Committee welcomes the fact that systems to enable reporting from district and borough councils on Civil Parking Enforcement are in place. It would be helpful if views of the public can also be gathered, to improve enforcement.
8. Consultation responses from district and borough councils need to be included in the Strategy.
9. Controlled Parking Zones being now being dependent on RSA process (hence the need for a paper on RSA timing and delivery).
10. It was reassured to hear that the issue of verge/footway parking is being addressed as a high priority.
11. Moving traffic violations are a particular priority around school safety zones, and need to be looked at in more detail.
12. Parking in new developments needs to be looked at again as the planning system does not appear to be robust enough. It was reassured that Matt Davey will look at our current guidance.
13. The importance of the EV Strategy and Climate Change Strategy - the need for charging infrastructure is paramount.
14. It recognised the need to give guidance to communities about what they are able to do about verge parking, such as planters, and better communicate it to communities.
15. There is a need to better communicate to communities about the responsibilities of car ownership, including responsible parking.

5. Reallocating Road Space in Response to COVID-19

- 5.1 The Committee considered a briefing paper by the Head of Transport and Countryside.
- 5.2 The Cabinet Member introduced the paper and thanked the officers for all their work in bringing these schemes forward to the very tight Government timetable and the limited criteria. Also confirmed that it is not yet known whether the funding bid has been successful.

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

- Appreciated the very short time frame involved for Tranche 1 and hoped that it would be greater when Tranche 2 schemes are considered.
- Raised concerns that the timeframe for Tranche 1 had not allowed for proper consultation and was reassured to know that consultation for Tranche 2 would be better.
- Raised concerns about Tranche 1 schemes only being temporary as shown in the Government guidance but was reassured that there is the possibility for successful schemes to become permanent.
- Supported the idea of an Executive Task and Finish Group as part of the Tranche 2 work and asked that the Walking and Cycling Strategies could be updated to reflect the changes in travel patterns.

The Cabinet Member responded and highlighted the amount of work that officers had put into this and that they worked very quickly. He personally recorded his thanks to all involved.

Resolved – That the Committee

Tranche 1

1. Expressed disappointment at some of the routes chosen but recognised the very tight timescales and the criteria that officers were working to.
2. Supported the work and acknowledged the efforts of officers.
3. Would like more details to be shared with members together with details of those that may become permanent.

Tranche 2

4. Supported the formation of a working group together with a review of the Walking and Cycling Strategies.
5. Requested that there is better communication with district and borough councils, and early on in the process.
6. Requested that the Cycle Forums are included as consultees in the process.

6. Climate Change Strategy 2020/30

- 6.1 The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director Place Services and the Director of Environment and Public Protection (copy appended to the signed minutes).
- 6.2 The Cabinet Member for Environment explained that this is a Strategy and that an Action Plan will follow once the Strategy is adopted.
- 6.3 Steve Read, Director of Environment and Public Protection, introduced the report with a presentation (copy appended to the signed minutes), which gave further details and the links to COVID-19 recovery.
- 6.4 The Chairman invited Tony Whitbread, President of the Sussex Wildlife Trust as a member of the Climate Change Advisory Group, and also representing SECA (South East Climate Alliance) to address the Committee. He gave some background and stressed the urgency that is now required. He had acted as a critical friend to West Sussex County Council and stated that leadership and enabling is important. He also acknowledged the valuable input from the West Sussex Youth Cabinet.
- 6.5 The Committee made a number of comments including those that follow. It:
- Raised concerns that the document was inward facing and that it needs to be clearer on how we are going to support communities to change behaviour.
 - Raised concerns that the current planning system is lacking and that officers should lobby Government with regards to the National Planning Framework along with the district and borough councils.
 - Welcomed the enthusiasm which the Strategy has received with communities but requested that community engagement be a priority in the Action Plan.
 - Welcomed the reassurance given by the Cabinet Member that the Strategy needs to be embedded in the COVID-19 recovery plan.

The Committee resolved that:-

1. It welcomed the Strategy.
2. More community engagement should be undertaken, and that the strategy should set out how we are going to support and guide communities to do what is necessary.
3. A stronger statement on the Planning system was needed, either in the Strategy or the Action Plan under development.
4. It welcomed that the Climate Change Board has already met.

5. It would like to see the Carbon Management Plan as soon as possible.
6. It would like to see the Strategy build on the successful COVID -19 recovery work, by increasing our commitments to communities and ensuring strong communication messages.

7. Requests for Call-in

- 7.1 The Director of Law and Assurance has agreed to call-in the proposed decision by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure concerning the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme – Discretionary Rail Cards HI02 (20/21) decision published on the Executive Decision Database on 10 June 2020 and in the Member's Bulletin on 10 June 2020.
- 7.2 A virtual meeting of the Committee will now be held at 10.30am on 2 July 2020.

8. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

- 8.1 The Committee considered the Forward Plan dated 22 June 2020 (a copy appended to the signed minutes).

9. Possible Items for Future Scrutiny

- 9.1 The Committee requested that the Chairman writes a formal letter to Governance Committee explaining how well the Committee felt that the virtual meeting went as this is particularly pertinent to the Climate Change Strategy work going forward.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 14 September 2020 at 10.30 am. Probable agenda items include:

- Highways and Transport Delivery Programme 2020/21
- Serious Violence
- Report from the Waste Strategy Task and Finish Group

Any member wishing to place an item on the agenda for the meeting must notify the Director of Law and Assurance by 2 September 2020.

The meeting ended at 3.18 pm

Chairman