

Environmental & Community Services Select Committee

11 June 2014 – At a meeting of the Select Committee held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester.

Present:

Mrs Brunsdon	Mrs Phillips	Mr Tyler (Chairman)
Dr Dennis	Mr R Oakley	Mr Whittington
Mr G Jones	Mr S Oakley	
Mr M Jones	Mr J Rogers (Vice Chairman)	

In attendance by invitation:

- Mr Brown (Cabinet Member for Finance)
- Mr O'Brien (Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport)

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Mr Barnard (Cabinet Member for Residents Services)
- Mr Barrett-Miles
- Mr Circus
- Mrs Field (Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing (and Deputy Leader))
- Ms Goldsmith (Leader)
- Mr Montyn (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport)

Part I

Declarations of Interest

38. The following interests were declared: -

- Mr Whittington declared personal interests in respect of item 5 (Street Lighting Private Finance Initiative Performance) as he had been the Cabinet Member who signed-off the contract, and a former Chairman of the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership
- Mr R Oakley declared a personal interest in respect of item 6 (Review of Kickstart Programme Progress) as a member of Worthing Borough Council who had been involved in the development of its schemes in the Kickstart Programme

Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14 May 2014

39. Mr Tyler reported that Duncan Barratt (Community & Economic Development Manager) had raised the issue of communication problems between the Coast to Capital Local Economic Partnership (LEP) and town/parish councils with Ron Crank, Chief Executive at the LEP, who recommended that the issue be progressed through Arun District Council as Planning Authority. Duncan Barratt would take this up with colleagues at Arun District Council. **ACTION:** Duncan Barratt to report the outcome to a future meeting of the Committee.

40. Resolved – That the minutes of the Environmental & Community Services Select Committee meeting held on 14 May 2014 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

Response by the Cabinet Member for Residents' Services to recommendations made by the Committee at the 14 May meeting of the Committee

41. Resolved – That the Committee notes the response.

Street Lighting Private Finance Initiative Performance

42. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Community Operations and Head of Highways and Transport (copy appended to the signed minutes) which was introduced by Peter Atkins, Specialist Services Team Manager, who gave a PowerPoint presentation (copy appended to the signed minutes) highlighting the following points: -

- The contract was monitored on a monthly basis
- Not all columns were being replaced, as larger areas could be lit with the new lights – some repositioning was necessary
- Some parish councils were part of the contract as they owned the street lighting in their areas
- Work was being done at 146% of the original rate to meet the 31 March 2015 deadline – failure to meet the deadline would mean funding issues for Scottish & Southern Energy (SSE)
- After 31 March 2015, customer service calls should decrease and be about maintenance issues only
- The percentage of 'lights in light' was slightly above the 99% target
- The complicated monthly payment method was adjusted to take account of performance
- Money was transferred to reserves when possible to pay for the contract in the future
- SSE followed the specification set by the Council, then provided the service as it saw fit

43. Summary of responses to Members' questions and comments: -

- The Committee felt that SSE and its contractors had been very helpful in facilitating requests from the public e.g. to move columns
- Many siting issues had been resolved before columns were erected and shielding had been used in some cases to avoid light shining into houses
- There was no correlation between lighting and road accidents
- Road type was one factor in determining column height – higher columns gave a better spread of light
- Tarmac had been used as a reinstatement material in paved areas generally where the existing paved areas were in a poor or uneven condition
- Delays in reinstating excavations may occur where there is reconnection/relaying of new cables, especially in the UK Power Networks area as it exerted more regulatory control over SSE
- Columns were guaranteed to last 25 – 30 years (five years beyond the end of the contract) but were expected to last 30 – 40 years – at the end of the contract, all columns would become the property of the Council and could be recycled at the end of their life
- There would not be another full-scale replacement programme under this contract and it was accepted that for the future such a programme was expensive and disruptive

- Southampton City Council was experimenting with a remote control system for street lighting
- Consultation would take place on any proposed new technology
- Reduced night lighting would be reflected in lower costs to the Council
- Through monitoring, several aspects of the contract demonstrated satisfactory assurance – substantial assurance was expected once action plans were carried out

44. Resolved – That the Committee was generally happy with the installation programme, but wanted more monitoring of the reinstatement of columns, and all assurance levels to rise to substantial.

Review of Kickstart Programme Progress

45. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Communities and Commissioning and Strategic Commissioner for the Economy (copy appended to the signed minutes) which was introduced by Duncan Barratt, Community & Economic Development Manager who reported that £55.6m had been spent on the Kickstart Programme and that all schemes were progressing well.

46. Michael Brown, Cabinet Member for Finance, told the Committee that Kickstart was intended to drive the local economy and get people in work. It was difficult to measure its effect, but indicators of success included increased proceeds from business rates and lower Council Tax benefit payments.

47. Summary of responses to Members' questions and comments: -

- 'Be the Business' had been very successful and would continue in a different form to encourage economic growth
- The Local Economic Partnership had adopted the 'Be the Business' model in its Strategic Economic Plan
- £1.5m had been spent on Chichester Festival Theatre providing work for local contractors – no further funding was expected to be given to the theatre
- Partnership working should include county councillors
- The 'light touch' approach was good for partner relations
- So far there had been a low take-up of the Green Deal offer

48. Resolved – That the Committee welcomes the progress made in the implementation of the Kickstart Programme and requests that: -

- i. Local members be kept informed of the progress of schemes in their areas
- ii. An update on the Green Deal to come to a future meeting of the Committee

Reviewing and Revising the West Sussex County Council Road Safety Strategy

49. The Committee considered a report by the County Fire Officer and Director for Stronger Communities (copy appended to the signed minutes). Jon Forster, Road Safety Team Leader, gave a presentation (copy appended to the signed minutes) highlighting the following points: -

- The number of people killed or seriously injured peaked in the summer, at weekends and during the evening rush hour, whilst numbers for those slightly

injured peaked in the autumn, on week days and during the morning and evening rush hours

- 25% of accidents happened when it was dark
- Most accidents happened on 'A' roads (the type with most traffic) then 'C' and 'D' roads (of which there were a lot in the county)
- Most accidents happened in 30 mph speed zones, but the ratio of accidents to traffic was greater in higher speed zones
- More pedestrians were injured in urban areas
- Most accidents happened on dry surfaces
- Car occupants were involved in 90% of accidents (cars were the main road users)
- Motor cycles were involved in a disproportionately large number of accidents
- Young people were the main victims in all types of accident

50. Gavin Watts, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, added that ways to reduce incidents included engineering (road surfaces), enforcement (speed cameras) and, most importantly, education.

51. Summary of responses to Members' questions and comments: -

- The number of young and old people involved in accidents had always been high and were target groups for education
- The number of cyclists on roads had increased, and it was now mainly middle-aged male cyclists involved in accidents, whereas before it had been boys
- 90% of accidents were caused by mistakes, so education was crucial – cycle training took place for 11 year olds and it would be beneficial to repeat it when children reached 14 or 15
- Reports of road traffic accidents included causes provided by the Police
- The Parking Strategy, Traffic Regulation Orders and yellow lines could help reduce accidents
- Although there were a lot of accidents at junctions, obstruction was rarely a reason
- Regional data for killed or seriously injured numbers showed the percentage change from the 2005/09 baseline – the figures for Kent might be low due to the way accidents were reported, and the low numbers for West Sussex in 2010 were a statistical anomaly.
- The recession and bad weather had an impact on figures, as people travelled less at these times
- The secondary peak in the number of people killed or seriously injured (those between 42 and 50) mainly involved motor cycle accidents
- Improvements in road and, especially, car design had help reduce the number of casualties
- It was hard to tell if 20mph zones helped reduce accidents, as they tended to be in areas with already low accident figures, but injuries would be less when involving vehicles travelling at slower speeds
- Serious design issues in the existing network had been addressed, and new streets/roads were designed to slow down traffic in residential areas, or to move traffic quickly in other areas, such as relief roads
- The Council could only comment on planning designs for housing estates where it might like to see more done to separate cyclists from other road users
- Lack of space and issues with land ownership meant it was difficult to add footways to rural roads
- Accidents involving road furniture were reported and information acted upon

52. Resolved – That the Committee requests that the Council: -
- i. Considers data as rates instead of absolute numbers
 - ii. Learns from better performing areas
 - iii. Uses engineering measures to slow traffic
 - iv. Designs roads to separate cyclists from other road users
 - v. Installs footways in rural areas where possible
 - vi. Formalises/improves other data sources
 - vii. Asks Members to engage with the Stronger Communities Programme through County Local Committees
 - viii. Educates communities in road safety
 - ix. Gives consideration to the strategic planning process for responding to consultations on proposed new developments, to ensure a focus on the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, above road capacity issues

And agrees

- x. With the focus on changing behaviours
- xi. With the importance of enforcement
- xii. That the subject should be brought back to the Business Planning Group at the appropriate time

Forward Plan of Key Decisions

53. The Committee considered extracts from the Forward Plan for July to October: -

54. Resolved – That the Committee notes the Forward Plan.

Date of Next Meeting

55. There will be a joint meeting of the Environmental & Community Services Select Committee and the Performance & Finance Select Committee on 4 July at 14.15 at County Hall, Chichester.

56. The next meeting of the Environmental & Community Services Select Committee will be on 11 July 2014 at 10.30 at County Hall, Chichester.

Part II

Exclusion of Press and Public

57. Resolved - That under Section 100(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I, of Schedule 12A, of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified under the item and that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption of that information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Response by the Cabinet Member for Residents' Services to recommendations made at the joint meeting of the Environmental &

Community Services Select Committee and the Performance & Finance Select Committee on 1 May

(Exempt, paragraph 3, Financial or business affairs of any person (including the authority))

58. Response by the Cabinet Member for Residents' Services to recommendations made at the joint meeting of the Environmental & Community Services Select Committee and the Performance & Finance Select Committee on 1 May

59. The Committee considered a response by the Cabinet Member for Residents' Services to recommendations made at the joint meeting of the Environmental & Community Services Select Committee and the Performance & Finance Select Committee on 1 May.

60. Resolved – That the Committee notes the response.

The meeting ended at 12.55

Chairman.