

Environmental & Community Services Select Committee

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

Present:

Mr Barrett-Miles	Mr G Jones	Mr J Rogers (Vice Chairman)
Mrs Brunsdon	Mr M Jones	Mr Tyler (Chairman)
Mr Circus	Mr R Oakley	Mr Whittington
Dr Dennis	Mr S Oakley	

In attendance by invitation:

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

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Mrs Phillips

Part I

Declarations of Interest

141. No interests were declared: -

Part I Minutes

142. Resolved – That the

- Committee requests that the response to the recommendations from its last meeting be sent to members of the Committee as soon as they are ready
- Part I minutes of the Environmental & Community Services Select Committee meeting held on 26 February 2014 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

Delegation of Decisions on Classification of County Roads

143. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Communities Commissioning and Strategic Planning Manager (copy appended to the signed minutes) which was introduced by Darryl Hemmings, Planning & Transport Policy Manager, who told the Committee that: -

- The classification system was intended to ensure the highway network was coherent and joined-up between important destinations for traffic
- The Primary Road Network between primary destinations was sign-posted to encourage people to use the most suitable routes
- The Council now had the responsibility to manage the classification process and decide primary routes
- Consultation would take place with neighbouring transport authorities before changes could be made
- Consistent consultation would take place before decisions and consistent records kept afterwards

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

- Roads were classified as A, B, C, D, E or U with A and B most prominent
- The funding the Council received for road maintenance was partly based on the length of network per classification, with less deterioration allowed for higher classified roads before maintenance had to be undertaken
- The road network took account of the fact that people needed to travel to places other than those classified as primary destinations
- A separate legal process is followed when stopping-up a road
- Roads could be downgraded if, for example, they were replaced by better routes such as relief roads – consultation would take place at key stages of the changes – three such cases were in progress
- Consultation would also take place if it was proposed to upgrade a road
- All local authorities had to follow the same guidance on classification of roads, but if agreement couldn't be reached, the final decision would lie with the Secretary of State for Transport
- Trunk roads and motorways could not be re-classified under this system
- Examples of roads that were thought to be wrongly classified could be brought to the attention of officers within Highways and Transport
- Roads through the South Downs National Park were included in the classification system

145. The following additional recommendation was proposed by Mr Roger Oakley and seconded by Mr Simon Oakley: -

The Committee requests that any proposed classification decisions be referred to the relevant County Local Committee so that recommendations can be made to the delegated officer.

The proposal was agreed.

146. Resolved – That the Committee: -

- i. Supports the proposal to delegate decisions on county roads classification and the Primary Route Network to the Director of Service Operations (with approvals being made by the Traffic Manager on behalf of the Director of Service Operations)
- ii. Supports the draft operational procedure for 'Road Classification and the Primary Route Network' produced for use by the County Council officers
- iii. Requests that any proposed classification decisions be referred to the relevant County Local Committee so that recommendations can be made to the delegated officer

The Management of the Additional Expenditure made Available to Improve Highways Resilience

147. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Service Operations and Head of Highways and Transport (copy appended to the signed minutes) which was introduced by Geoff Lowry, Head of Highways and Transport, who told the committee: -

- Following deterioration of many unclassified roads due to several bad winters, an Executive Task & Finish Group was set-up to see what could be done to bring them back up to standard – its report underpinned the Better Roads Programme (BRP) with £30m of investment over two years to increase the resilience of these roads in the future
- There were two elements to the BRP: carrying out the work and improving communications with members and the public – a website was being built that would show what and when work was being carried out – the most damaged roads would be dealt with first

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

- Investing £30m over the next two years would improve the resilience of roads meaning that £1.2m less could be spent against the current base budget in years three to twenty
- The £3.4m grant from the Government would not come off the budget, but would be spent on roads
- On-going inspections determined which roads should be prioritised for repair – Members fed in to the process through sight of the Integrated Works Programme
- The most damaged roads would get remedial treatment first, then preventative work would be carried out on others as soon as possible
- Reporting defects and works carried out by other organisations would not be on the BRP website

149. Resolved – That the Committee welcomes the management arrangements for the Better Roads Programme 2014-2016

Forward Plan of Key Decisions

150. The Committee considered extracts from the Forward Plan for April to July and made the following comments:

- A communication problem between Coast to Capital and town/parish councils was highlighted by Mr Whittington – **ACTION: Sue Hawker, Director of Communities Commissioning, to investigate and report back to Mr Whittington and the Chairman, Mr Tyler**
- The decision on the Integrated Parking Strategy and On-Street Parking Charges Review had slipped to April
- Mrs Brunsdon queried whether the decision on the Approval of the West Sussex Minerals and Waste Development Scheme 2014-2017 was an extension to the Minerals Local Plan – **ACTION: Sue Hawker, Director of Communities Commissioning, to investigate and report back to Mrs Brunsdon**
- The issue of Public Rights of Way Inspections would be discussed by the Business Planning group

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

Date of Next Meeting

152. There will be a joint meeting of the Committee with the Performance & Finance Select Committee on 1 May

153. The next meeting of the Committee will be on 14 May 2014 at 10.30 a.m. at County Hall, Chichester.

Part II

Exclusion of Press and Public

154. 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.

Minutes (Part II) of the meeting held on 26 February 2014

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

155. The Minutes (Part II) of the meeting held on 26 February 2014 were agreed.

The meeting ended at 11.53

Chairman.