

**Environmental & Community Services Select Committee**

18 November 2015 – At a meeting of the Select Committee held at 10.30 a.m. at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mr Tyler (Chairman)

Mr Barrett-Miles  
Dr Dennis  
Mr G Jones

Mr M Jones  
Mr S Oakley  
Mrs Phillips

Mr Rae  
Mr J Rogers  
Mr Whittington

In attendance by invitation: Mr O'Brien (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport) and Mr Lanzer (Cabinet Member for Corporate Relations)

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Brunsdon and Mr Circus

**Declarations of Interests**

88. In accordance with the code of conduct, the following personal interests were declared:

Mr Oakley as a member of Chichester District Council in relation to Approval to Procure Real Time Passenger Information Contract

**Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee**

89. Resolved – that the minutes of the Environmental and Community Services Select Committee held on 17 September 2015 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

**Cabinet Member's response to the Committee's recommendations on the Public Engagement and Consultation on the Future of the 3in1 Card Young Persons Travel Scheme**

90. The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's response to the Committee's recommendations on the Future of the 3in1 Card Young Persons Travel Scheme (copy appended to signed minutes).

**Cabinet Member's response to the Committee's recommendations on the Response to Proposals for Two New Railway Stations, between Littlehaven and Ifield Stations on the Arun Valley Line**

91. The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's response to the Committee's recommendations on the Response to Proposals for Two New Railway Stations, between Littlehaven and Ifield Stations on the Arun Valley Line (copy appended to signed minutes).

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

- Requested clarity over the response process. The Cabinet Member advised

that as a Highways Authority the County Council may receive a request for comments from Network Rail. As there are competing interests, all information needs to be obtained before any action is taken. Enquiries are currently being made with Network Rail.

- Requested that the Committee be updated on the response and information from Network Rail before the Cabinet Member makes a decision. The Cabinet Member advised that this was still considered a Key decision and that the Committee will be kept informed once the necessary information is received.
- Requested that consideration be given to the non-degradation of other rail services between Horsham and the coast.

### Traffic Regulation Orders

93. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Highways and Transport and Head of Highway Operations (copy appended to signed minutes).

94. Jonathan Ullmer, Head of Highway Operations introduced the report which provided an overview of the new process for Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs). The proposed process concerns non-complex TRO proposals. As defined by the criteria in the report, more complex TROs will be considered for progression as a Highways Improvement scheme. Key points included:

- The Cabinet Member recognised the importance of TROs and that the current process needed to be revisited. An executive Task and Finish Group (TFG) set up to debate and look at the options included seven members and met a total of three times. The new process will be fully implemented by April 2017.
- New TRO requests will be encouraged to go through the online form. All applications will require Member support and canvassing of the community to provide evidence of why the TRO is required. Hard copy applications will be available for non-web users.
- Once the request is received in the electronic system then it will be passed to a traffic engineer to carry out an initial assessment and check viability. The lead time for this is 20 days.
- If the initial assessment is passed then a further assessment of the area is carried out. Each TRO application will then be scored, and passed to the CLC's. If the request is denied then the requestor and Member are advised of the reasons.
- At the end of July of each financial year the information will be collated and then passed to the CLC's who can then determine which TROs they want to go forward. If CLC's are unsuccessful at progressing them all, then the suggestion is that they are held over for 1 year only then

reassessed against other priority TROs.

95. The Cabinet Member thanked the TFG for all the work put into the process and concluded that the County Council is trying to deliver clarity, transparency, value and certainty to communities as to what will be delivered and has confidence that these can be achieved each year.

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

- Welcomed the new process as fairer and more transparent but raised concerns that Members may choose certain TROs to their advantage. It was suggested that a record be kept of how many schemes each Member supported or rejected. An officer advised that Members will be trusted to select the right ones for their communities and not just highest scoring ones. The process will be kept under review with control mechanisms in place.
- Raised concerns that the member support required on the application form before any professional officer assessment or criteria has been applied, has the possibility of holding up of the process in order for the member to endorse, study and investigate the application. There is also potential for conflict if the applicant feels they are not supported by their member. An officer advised that the application asks the question if the local member has been consulted. If the answer is yes then evidence will be needed and if the answer is no then it will go back to the member to request support. The member can seek information from Highways officers where necessary, giving them the opportunity to have a meaningful discussion at an early stage.
- Raised concerns on lead times, the ability to track applications and updates for the public. An officer advised that the intention is to have everything self-serve, available online. Each application will have a reference number, and applicants will be updated periodically and advised if further information is needed.
- Queried how many points a TRO scheme needs to score in order to achieve a pass. An officer advised that a positive score is required, but that it would become clearer once sufficient applications had been assessed under the new process. Accident spots will attract a higher score but the aim is to carry out test sites. If a request is rejected the member will still be advised of the scoring rationale.
- Raised concerns that when CLC's run out of their allocated share of funding that the expense of additional schemes will be pushed onto town and parish councils. It was also queried whether staff time was included in the funding. An officer advised that there is currently sufficient capacity to deliver the number of schemes selected. A lot of communities will have Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money so that if a scheme doesn't reach TRO priority then these monies can be used to fund it. The only staff time to be funded will be through advertising costs such as design and implementation.

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- Raised concerns over the existing TRO list as some are experiencing delays and how the proposals address these issues. An officer advised that this process deals with new TRO requests only. In the past there had sometimes been poor communication, but that previous TROs that have been prioritised by the CLC's have been delivered
- Wanted reassurances that, when site visits are carried out, the local member is consulted to get the best time and day, and questioned whether the expansion of schools with schemes such as additional crossings will go into the Integrated Works Programme (IWP), or be classed as a TRO. An officer advised that as part of the Highways reorganisation the intent is to better liaise with members and that school crossings would be included in the IWP.

97. Resolved – That the Committee:

- 1) Requests member involvement to be at the start of process.
- 2) Requests that any TRO request from a member of the public automatically triggers an email to the local member.
- 3) Requests that the possibility of residents being able to track their TRO requests online is explored.
- 4) Requests that CLC's be asked to justify their selections 'up front'.
- 5) Requests that members are provided with training on the new process.
- 6) Requests that the process is publicised among third parties seeking to fund TROs.

### **Draft Sustainability Strategy 2015-2019**

98. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Strategic Planning and Place and Strategic Planning Manager (copy appended to signed minutes).

99. Ruth O'Brien, Advisor, Sustainability Team and Catherine Cannon, Sustainability Team Leader introduced the report which provided an overview of the revised Sustainability Strategy in light of the new Corporate Plan. It is a four year strategy which includes the following new priority areas identified for action: Embedding Sustainability, Place, Resource Efficiency and Working with and Influencing Others.

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

- Welcomed the wider strategy but queried how far it goes to ensure financial sustainability is taken into account. An officer advised that sustainability has been embedded into the decision-making process. As it is built into business cases it will look at all impacts and elements including financial sustainability.

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- Queried if the Forum for the Future rating system, the Sustainability Standard, was still being used (from the previous Sustainability Strategy) and if so what the County Council's current position is. An officer advised that the Sustainability Standard was set up for local authorities but was never revisited, and is no longer supported or promoted by Forum for Future. It was decided it wasn't fit for purpose.
- Queried the halving of carbon emissions and if the aerial survey had been carried out (as stated in the previous sustainability strategy). An officer advised that an aerial survey wasn't completed but a desktop study using Googlemaps was done, that generated the same information. This work has been picked up by the Your Energy Sussex (YES) Programme to see how opportunities can be maximised within the corporate estate.
- Queried how flooding and Operation Watershed funding can be extended and what assistance can be given for unsuccessful applications. The Chairman advised that the Joint Scrutiny Flooding Task and Finish Group (TFG) has recommended that Operation Watershed funding be continued.
- Queried if there was an expectation that the Fire and Rescue Service would continue to offer flood protection advice to homeowners should responsibility for the Service be passed from the County Council to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The Cabinet Member for Corporate Relations stated that the County Council had objected to the proposal to pass Fire and Rescue to the PCC.
- Queried staff training on the impacts of extreme weather and whether information on flood warnings is accessible to everyone. An officer advised that in a changing climate the likelihood and severity of weather events will continue to increase. The County Council is working to increase longer term resilience through risk assessments and business planning, to avoid unnecessary disruption to services. The flood warnings are distributed widely and members of the public can sign up for Flood Warnings from the Environment Agency.
- Questioned if there was any improvement that could be made through the use of new technology. The Cabinet Member for Corporate Relations advised that there is new technology available and the County Council is currently running the Customer Experience Programme which encourages on-line channels of communication such as video conferencing designed to reduce travel, costs and aid sustainability.
- Raised concerns that the Cycle to Work scheme has been withdrawn

101. Resolved – That the report be noted.

### **Approval to Procure Real Time Passenger Information Contract**

102. The Committee considered a report by Executive Director of Residents & Environmental Services and Director of Highways and Transport (copy appended to signed minutes).

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103. Peter Atkins, Highways Network and Traffic Manager and Liz Robbins, Team Leader, ITS and Traffic Monitoring introduced the report which outlined the scope of the existing Real Time Information (RTPI) System and why it should continue to be maintained and expanded under a new contract. Key points included:

- The contract for the maintenance of the RTPI System and its expansion has expired and a new contract is required. Funding is in place for RTPI projects in 2016/17 and beyond, which can only be delivered if a new contract is in place.
- The new contract will enable maintenance of any future equipment and provides a framework around future procurement of equipment.

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

- Welcomed and supported RTPI and agreed the displays were a crucial part of raising the quality of bus travel and were particularly helpful if there were disturbances to services such as cancelled or running late buses, especially on low frequency routes.
- Welcomed the decision to renew, replace and maintain what already exists but raised concerns over possible future expansion and the long term financial sustainability regarding repairs and maintenance. An officer advised that this contract involves maintenance of existing equipment and doesn't commit to more funding. As the existing contract one has already expired, a new one needs to be re-tendered.
- Raised concerns that RTPI is a non-essential item and whether running costs and funding for new equipment will come out of the Highways budget. An officer advised that until the framework is in place to put out to tender then potential maintenance costs could not be known. On-going revenue costs will have to be balanced against the entire Highways asset. That decision is not being made as part of this decision.
- Suggested that members be consulted on where any proposed new monitors are best placed, and that RTPI could be incorporated into new developments to reduce car traffic. An officer advised that the decision on location is mostly informed by feedback from bus operators, but local requests are taken into consideration.
- Queried if operators could set up companies themselves to enable control of the service. An officer advised that different companies may want different delivery methods so it's easier to pull all the information together via the County Council to keep control.
- Suggested it would be of benefit if there was more publicity available to the public on how to access the online facility. An officer advised that recently it has been left to operators to promote but other ways such as improving information at bus shelters could be looked at.

105. Mr Tyler made the following proposal, seconded by Dr Dennis which the Committee considered: -

The addition of the following recommendation in the report: -

The Committee requests that any decision to expand the existing RTPI system be subject to Committee scrutiny.

A vote was held and the proposal was carried.

106. Resolved - That the Committee:

- 1) Notes the information within the report.
- 2) Endorses the decision to commence procurement of a new Real Time Passenger Information Contract to maintain the existing RTPI system and allow for future expansion.
- 3) Requests that any decision to expand the existing RTPI system be subject to Committee scrutiny.

**Highways and Transport Traffic Signals Maintenance Contract –Approval to Procure a Term Contract**

107. The Committee considered a Report by Director Highways and Transport Residents Services and Head of Highways Engineering (copy appended to signed minutes).

108. Barry Edmunds, Traffic Signals and Street Lighting Team Leader introduced the report which provided an outline of the proposals to progress with a Traffic Signals Maintenance Contract (single provider) for all Highways and Transport design, development, supply, install and maintenance services. Key points included:

- There is a requirement to replace the current contract, which expires on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016. It is proposed that the contract term for the Maintenance Contract will be 5 years with an option for an additional 5 year extension, based on the supplier meeting the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's).
- The proposal includes the addition of assets into the contract such as CCTV.

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

- Queried if the £1.2 million average annual spend of the contract included any additions or whether it was just the current expenditure. An officer advised that it varies each year and that revenue costs were around about £400,000 a year.
- Queried the possibility of combining the contract with the larger Highways Maintenance contract. An officer advised that while many local authorities

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have done that, all a large contractor would do is sub-contract the work to a smaller company. It is deemed more cost-effective for the authority to place a contract directly with the smaller company.

- Raised concerns that there seem to be an unduly high number of equipment failures and whether there was any opportunity to replace the old equipment with more modern improvements such as count down timers. An officer advised that this was possible but that most crossings installed now are Puffin crossings which have detectors, which were considered to be more appropriate for West Sussex's roads
- Queried if the contract will absorb the concerns of communities to be able to get things changed if appropriate and if it were possible to combine with other neighbouring authorities. An officer advised that it will depend on what funding is available. If the funding is there it can be done through the contract and it is preferable that independence from other authorities is kept.

110. Resolved – That the Committee:

- 1) Supports that the new Traffic Signals Maintenance Contract is developed by utilising the existing contract as a basis with consideration to altering the specification to obtain best value for money.
- 2) Supports that consideration is given to including additional assets within the specification, as discussed in Section 3.
- 3) Notes that the Traffic Signals Maintenance Contract commences on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016 and runs for a period of five years, with provision for an additional five years dependent on performance.
- 4) Recognises the value of having separate contracts for specialised services such as these.

### **Business Planning Group Report**

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

112. Resolved – That the Committee endorses the contents of the report and particularly the Committee's Work Programme for 2015/16, revised to reflect the Business Planning Group's (BPG's) discussions. With a request that the Economic Update scheduled to come to the Committee in January 2016 will include an update on the Five Bold Ideas.

### **Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

113. The Committee considered the Forward Plan December 2015 to March 2016 (copy appended to signed minutes).

114. Resolved – That the Forward Plan be noted.

**Date of the Next Meeting**

115. The Committee noted that its next scheduled meeting will take place on 14 December 2015 at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 1.30pm

Chairman