

Environmental & Community Services Select Committee

21 November 2012 – At a meeting of the Select Committee held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mr Crow (Chairman)

Mrs Arculus	Mr Deedman	Mrs Hall
Mr Blake	Dr Dennis	Mr Quirk
Mrs Brunsdon	Mr Duncton	Mr Rogers
Mr Coomber	Mr M Hall	Mr Stevens

In attendance by invitation:

- Mr Barnard (Deputy Leader and portfolio for Communities, Environment and Enterprise)
- Mr Montyn (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport)

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Mrs Field (Cabinet Member for Public Protection)
- Mrs Mockridge

Declarations of Interest

81. In accordance with the Code of Conduct, the following personal interests were declared: -

- Mr Coomber in respect of item 6 (Building For Growth: Investment in infrastructure to support growth (Kickstart)) as a Friend of Chichester Festival Theatre
- Dr Dennis in respect of item 6 (Building For Growth: Investment in infrastructure to support growth (Kickstart)) as a Friend of Chichester Festival Theatre
- Mr Duncton in respect of item 6 (Building For Growth: Investment in infrastructure to support growth (Kickstart)) as the husband of a Board Member of Chichester Festival Theatre
- Mr Rogers in respect of item 6 (Building For Growth: Investment in infrastructure to support growth (Kickstart)) as the husband of a Governor of Worthing College
- Mr Blake in respect of item 7 (The Green Deal) as a member of Crawley Borough Council
- Mrs Brunsdon in respect of item 7 (The Green Deal) as a member of Mid Sussex District Council
- Mr Coomber in respect of item 7 (The Green Deal) as a member of Adur District Council
- Mr Crow in respect of item 7 (The Green Deal) as a member of Crawley Borough Council
- Mr Quirk in respect of item 7 (The Green Deal) as a member of Crawley Borough Council

Minutes

82. The minutes of the Environmental & Community Services Select Committee meeting held on 27 September 2012 be approved as a correct record, subject to changes to the minutes on Government Consultation on the Draft Aviation Policy Framework.

Cabinet Member Responses

83. The Committee considered responses to its recommendations made on 27 September by the Cabinet Member for Public Protection regarding the Future of the County's Gypsy and Traveller Sites, and the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport regarding the Council's response to the Government Consultation on the Draft Aviation Policy Framework (copies appended to the signed minutes).

84. Resolved – That the Committee notes the responses.

Performance of the Highways Maintenance Contract

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

86. Geoff Lowry, Head of Highways and Transport, told the Committee that representatives from Balfour Beatty were not in attendance as promised because the relationship between the Council and Balfour Beatty needed to be bottomed out first, but representatives would attend a future meeting.

87. The report was introduced by Stuart Smith, Highways Commissioning Manager, supported by a PowerPoint presentation (copy appended to the signed minutes). Mr Smith highlighted the following points:

- The Balfour Beatty tender predicted savings over five years of £29m against the Council's requirement of £9m
- Extra savings on planned schemes could equate to £15m to £20m over five years
- A higher number of in-year works than expected put a strain on the lean Balfour Beatty team and also on the smaller, restructured Council team
- Balfour Beatty had responded well to the default notice served on it with performance currently standing at 98.4%
- The National Highways and Transport (NHT) Survey was a performance indicator in the Total Performance Monitor, but looked at much more than highways maintenance so was therefore somewhat misleading
- The Council wanted to adopt performance measures that were more "leading" than "lagging"
- The survey showed that whilst speed of repair was slightly down on last year, the quality of repair was slightly higher – this refers to work that is covered by the contract with Balfour Beatty
- 45% of the county's roads were in the upper quartile in the country for condition - More needed to be done to get this information out to residents

88. Summary of Members' questions and comments, and answers provided:

- Balfour Beatty was committed to the contract and, as the largest company of its type in the country, would be able to sustain it
- Council supervisors monitored the quality of work carried out under the contract, but were not able to check every job
- An Overall Condition Survey was to be undertaken to assess problems with line marking and signage
- The new 'Love West Sussex' App for fault reporting and planned communications improvements would not use money set aside for highways maintenance
- The condition of rural roads had declined – the Council had to consider the impact of spending £30m for the surface dressing of minor roads, and whether or not to maintain D roads fully, or only carry out safety repairs
- It was unfortunate that a new contract had to be negotiated at the time the Highways department was being restructured
- New IT systems within the Council could allow more local information to be gathered from existing data
- An overall figure was given for low, medium and high risk areas – all were within prescribed performance levels
- The Committee was concerned that bus service satisfaction might fall when the reduced services had been in force for a full year
- Work was on-going to resolve drainage issues – problems included the highest water table for ten years and land where water ran off owned by third parties – the Council was trying to delegate responsibility for drainage back to the district/borough councils as previously, and was contacting parish councils for information on priority areas
- £3.5m was to have been spent on footpaths, but a bad winter meant that the money had to be spent on roads
- Infrastructure plans proposed last year were for four years – the first phase was going ahead for next year
- The survey was wider than just highways maintenance performance issues

89. Resolved – That the Committee: -

- I. Recognises the savings accrued and commitment of Balfour Beatty to deliver a more efficient highways service for West Sussex, and seek the commitment of officers to hold Balfour Beatty to account, as it delivers performance improvements, moving forward.
- II. Asks for plans to be developed for the efficient delivery of in-year community based works.
- III. Supports more effective highways service two-way communication channels.

Building For Growth: Investment in infrastructure to support growth (Kickstart)

90. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Communities & Commissioning and Head of Capital & Infrastructure (copy appended to the signed minutes) which was introduced by Kevin Carter, Programme Manager, Customers and Change, with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation (copy appended to the

signed minutes) who highlighted that Kick Start was mainly about delivering local economic benefit including the creation of jobs.

91. Summary of Members' questions and comments, and answers provided:

- The scheme was progressing well
- Worthing Borough Council had difficulty in identifying schemes, and there were concerns whether those identified would achieve the aims of KickStart – other district/borough councils also had difficulty identifying schemes and might have identified better ones if they'd realised they had more time to decide
- The Council could not dictate what type of schemes the district/borough councils should put forward or impose time limits on them
- Schemes submitted by district/borough councils were accompanied by product justification forms to show they met the aims of the KickStart programme – these had been fully reviewed and robustly challenged where appropriate.
- The move of Worthing College to a new site and the planned new housing development on the old site wouldn't have happened without KickStart money
- A view was expressed that supporting Chichester Festival Theatre was not a countywide initiative
- Shoreham footbridge was an overspend more than a kick start
- Money used to bring forward capital maintenance in schools would help local contractors
- A review of KickStart should be carried out to measure its success

92. Resolved – That the Committee supports the preparation of a KickStart Outcome Report to summarise the programme outcomes delivered, or forecast to be delivered, at the end of year two of the programme.

The Green Deal

93. The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director Finance and Performance and Head of Capital Asset Management (copy appended to the signed minutes) which was introduced by Colin James, Head of Capital and Asset Management, with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation (copy appended to the signed minutes).

94. Mr James highlighted the following points:

- The Green Deal was a response to rising demand for, and cost of, energy, and would replace grants that were available in this area
- In West Sussex, those in fuel poverty would be targeted to take up the Green Deal
- A Green Deal delivery partner would be sought to oversee the scheme with equipment being fitted by local contractors
- Payment for improvements would be over a fixed period of time and remain with the property if occupants changed
- Payment would be to the energy supplier, which would then make payments to the County Council's Green Deal Finance Vehicle
- Energy companies were obliged to spend money (ECO) on hard to treat properties or the properties of residents meeting fuel poverty criteria to make them more energy efficient. A Green Deal delivery partner would help to ensure that this funding is spent in the county rather than elsewhere

95. Summary of Members' questions and comments, and answers provided:

- The scheme would be available to all residents and landlords in the county
- To encourage residents to sign-up to the scheme there would be close working with district/borough councils and health and social care teams regarding how to market it. The Council was also bidding for funds for demonstrator homes
- Customer propositions were being developed to encourage take-up of the scheme – both private landlords and registered social landlords would be informed of the scheme
- To avoid cherry picking by Green Deal providers of affluent early adopters, measures would be included in the procurement contract of the Green Deal delivery partner
- Of the £2m set aside for the procurement of a Green Deal delivery partner, it was hoped that only £1.5m would be used, leaving £0.5m for mobilisation for ensuring that the partner, once in place, could rapidly implement measures.
- The Green Deal independent assessor would recommend what equipment was needed for each house, using the best technology with warranties that included guarantees and quality assurance to protect residents. The procurement should also would bring cost benefits from the partner buying large quantities of equipment
- Local authorities could make exceptional borrowing or get eco funding to pay for the next phase

96. Resolved – That the Committee recommends that, following completion of a Green Deal business case, the Cabinet Member proceeds to procurement of a delivery partner through competitive dialogue.

Total Performance Monitoring Report to 31 August 2012

97. The Committee considered a report by Executive Director Customers and Change, Director of Business Change and County Fire Officer (copy appended to the signed minutes) which was introduced by Andy Thorne, Finance and Performance, who highlighted the following points:

- The savings programme was on track
- There was some concern about when savings from the Sussex Control Centre would come online
- There were concerns at the increased cost of Shoreham footbridge
- Performance was generally on target with a few low risks being managed

98. Summary of Members' questions and comments, and answers provided:

- The money taken from portfolios and moved to the Early Intervention Reserve due to projected underspend would have to be found from within portfolio if the projected underspend did not materialise
- The 60% target around Love West Sussex was for take-up of the system

99. Resolved – That the Committee notes the revenue, savings, capital, performance and risk position as at the end of September 2012.

Budget Update and Business Planning

100. The Committee considered a report by Director Finance and Assurance and Director for Resources and Performance (copy appended to the signed minutes) which was introduced by Duncan Barratt, Communities & Infrastructure, who told the Committee that objective 10 would be changed following comments at the Members' Seminar – a measure was needed about control and influence.

101. Summary of Members' questions and comments, and answers provided:

- Any contract as a result of objective 10 would be let within West Sussex if possible
- The Council would work with the Police Crime Commissioner to develop a Community Safety policy
- The Troubled Families initiative could be a way for the Council to engage with some hard to reach groups
- There should be enough highways volunteers to cover the whole county – the volunteers would provide information to the Council
- The measure regarding volunteers in objective 22 would be expanded
- Changes would be made so that it was clear that the Council would be working with all local councils, not just parish councils

102. Resolved – That the Committee asks the Policy & Resources Select Committee to: -

- I. Ask for broader wording around targets for parish councillors to reflect that partnership working will be undertaken with all kinds of community groups.
- II. Request that learning from Community Action Pilots is taken forward.
- III. Ask that Objective 24 should include reference to improvements, and not just aspire to "maintain".
- IV. Ask for clarification of what was expected of the volunteers and volunteering as mentioned at different points in the draft performance framework

Forward Plan of Key Decisions

103. The Committee considered extracts from the Forward Plan for November 2012 to February 2013

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

Date of Next Meeting

105. The next meeting of the Committee will be on 16 January at 10.30am in County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 13.49pm

Chairman.