

**Environmental & Community Services Select Committee**

11 May 2016 – 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 S Oakley

Mrs Phillips  
Mr Whittington

In attendance by invitation: Mr O'Brien (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport) and Mr Barling (Cabinet Member for Residents' Services)

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Brunsdon, Mr M Jones, Mr Rae and Mr J Rogers.

Mr Circus was absent

**Declarations of Interests**

1. In accordance with the Code of Conduct, the following personal interests were declared:
2. Mr Whittington as Chairman of the Walking and Cycling Task and Finish Group in relation to Walking and Cycling Task and Finish Group Update.

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

3. The Committee considered the minutes of the last meeting and agreed that: -

Mr Barrett-Miles gave his apologies and was not absent on 11 March 2016.

4. a) Resolved – that subject to the amendment above, the minutes of the Environmental and Community Services Select Committee held on 11 March 2016 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.
5. b) Resolved – that the minutes of the Environmental and Community Services Select Committee Call-in meeting held on 17 March 2016 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

**Road Safety Framework**

6. The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director Communities and Public Protection and Director of Operations (copy appended to signed minutes) which presented the final version of the Road Safety Framework for West Sussex 2015-2026 following a public consultation. The Framework has been reviewed and revised in light of the 271 responses received from the consultation exercise and feedback from the Committee.
7. Gavin Watts, Director of Communities and Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Andy Ekinsmyth, Service Manager Transport and Countryside and Jon Forster, Road Safety Team Leader introduced the report.

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

- Welcomed the County Council's ambitions and aspirations with Vision Zero but queried whether the public would be convinced of its attainability. It was also acknowledged that a high number of consultation responses recommended enforcement and partnership working as important areas for consideration and it was agreed that behavioural change, education and training play an important role for all road users. An officer advised that behavioural change was a key priority and road safety was being actively promoted within town and parish councils, including educating local residents through home visits carried out by fire officers.
- Welcomed the promotion of Operation Crackdown and public incident reporting but raised concerns over the process for Injury Accident Data gathering and whether enough was being done to produce more accurate records, such as capturing data from insurance companies. An officer advised that the County Council has confidence in the data supplied by the police and is currently involved in a working partnership with Sussex Police regarding data and statistics. Although national work is being carried out, some insurance companies are less keen to share their data as it is deemed commercially sensitive. On a local level, a public reporting system is being trialled with some parishes and other organisations which feeds back information via electronic mapping, and is then compared with the Council's database. If successful, it will be made available on the West Sussex website for people to report incidents. Encouraging the public to report "damage only" incidents, or near misses, is seen as a way forward.
- Queried whether the issue of speed limits and visibility from side junctions should be linked and raised concerns over the withdrawal of bus stops on dual carriageways without alternative provision. An officer advised that studies carried out show that there is no strong link between accidents and poor visibility, although junctions are identified as potential hotspots. Maintenance of any obstructive vegetation is always carried out and traffic signals are of a high, up to date standard.
- Raised concerns over the governance structure with a lack of independent bodies on the Road Safety Board. An officer advised that the Board will carry out a monitoring process of the Framework supported by scrutiny. The progress will then be scrutinised by the Committee on an annual basis.

9. Resolved – That the Committee supports the final draft version of the Road Safety Framework prior to a decision on formal adoption by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport.

### **Review of Community Highways Volunteers Scheme**

10. The Committee considered a report by Executive Director of Communities & Public Protection and Director of Communities (copy appended to signed minutes) which outlined the proposals and options considered in relation to

the review of the Community Highways Volunteers Scheme.

11. David Barling, Cabinet Member for Residents' Services gave a brief overview of the scheme, set up in 2012. The proposal is to disband the volunteer group involved in reporting defects and direct them towards other groups and opportunities.

12. Phil Edwards, Principal Manager, Communities and Public Protection, introduced the report.

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

- Welcomed the use of volunteers elsewhere but questioned whether the County Council was confident that they would take up other roles and not be lost. An officer advised that although permission would be needed to release their details to the town and parish councils, this take-up of new roles would be actively encouraged.
- Raised concerns that as more town and parish councils were being encouraged to provide the resource, those areas without these could suffer. An officer advised that the volunteers don't undertake the remedial work, they just report the existence of the defect. The Love West Sussex reporting system is still available for those wishing to report Highways defects.

14. Mr O'Brien, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport advised that the County Council has been actively engaged in publicity to encourage reporting, with the emphasis on quality of photos, location, and a re-designing of the Love West Sussex website. The response from the public has so far been good with lots of information coming in.

15. Resolved – That the report be noted and supported, with a request that the Cabinet Member contacts all volunteers personally to advise them of the cessation of their services and offers them some other form of volunteering if deemed suitable, requesting if their details can be passed onto parish or town councils.

### **Highways Roundabout Sponsorship**

16. The Committee considered a report by Executive Director of Residents' and Environmental Services and Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Services (copy appended to signed minutes) which outlined the development of a new Roundabout Sponsorship Scheme and summarised future plans.

17. Jonathan Ullmer, Head of Highways Operations and Angela Redman, Commercial Business & Marketing Manager introduced the report.

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

## Agenda Item No.2

- Welcomed the consistent approach but queried if the current revenue from town and parish councils will continue if the contract is let to an external provider, and whether there would be any risks to the price modelling or local business advertising. An officer advised that there is a requirement in the new contract to sub-contract to local providers. The pricing needs to be consistent, without any increase, and good engagement with other councils was important. The County Council still wants local parties to continue to carry out maintenance work but an overall contractor will enable a good revenue return and streamline the service.
- Queried how commercially attractive the arrangements will be and whether any work has been carried out to look at roundabouts owned by Highways England. An officer advised that it was important to work carefully with marketing providers for the tendering process and evidence shows the majority of sponsors just want signage. Limited maintenance is currently carried out and a balance had to be struck between making sites more attractive and the cost to achieve this. Some of the Highways England roundabouts are prime advertising space, but there are some maintenance issues.
- Queried whether roundabouts located in the South Downs National Park (SDNP) will be subject to more vigorous action in the removal of non-authorized signs; and if any special consideration given for those in the park would disadvantage those outside. Also how the upkeep of special landscaping roundabouts are maintained in the event that a sponsor becomes defunct. An officer advised that the aspiration is for a one-size-fits-all approach for roundabouts, and the County Council is currently consulting with the SDNP Authority to get an agreement. Safety and visibility are important factors and the contract states any correct state needs to be restored upon cessation. Some areas are historic, so it is known that many need on-going maintenance. All local groups, town and parish councils are encouraged to challenge illegal advertising or clutter.

19. Resolved – That the Committee supports the proposal to begin designing the procurement framework and going out to tender on the contract. The Committee requested that once the new framework is designed it will be seen by the Committee's Business Planning Group (BPG).

### **Walking and Cycling Task and Finish Group Update**

20. The Committee considered a verbal update on the work of the Walking and Cycling Task and Finish Group (TFG) to date. The final findings will be reported to the Committee when the Group concludes its work later this year.

21. Andy Ekinsmyth, Service Manager, Transport and Countryside, introduced the update and made the following key points:

- There are now 353 separate ideas for schemes, which will then be ranked against criteria and formulated into a prioritised long list of schemes. The idea is to end up with urban routes, inter-urban leisure

routes and small walking-only routes. Fundamental to the strategy is that they are designed for dual walking/cycling use.

- The Government's draft Cycling and Walking Strategy is currently under consultation. The County Council will recommend a proposed response from the TFG findings, agreed by the Cabinet Member and a draft strategy list of schemes would be drawn up. These will then be put out for consultation, with the results being brought back to the Committee in July.

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

- Welcomed the on-going work of the TFG and agreed that it is a long-term work-in-process, but queried how often the strategy will be reviewed once certain schemes have been prioritised. An officer advised that the TFG will need to consider this, but that the Strategy will probably be subject to annual review.
- Suggested the project be integrated with local infrastructure business plans and S123 lists and that, once prioritised, the schemes be 'shovel ready' in order to bid for funding. An officer advised that the list of schemes should be shared with other district, borough and parish councils. Where there is development, it will also give planners better ideas and potentially lead to schemes being built more quickly.

23. Resolved – That the Committee notes and supports the update and looks forward to the final report coming to the Committee in July.

### **Business Planning Group Report**

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

25. Resolved – That the Committee endorses the contents of the report and particularly the Committee's Work Programme for 2016/17, revised to reflect the Business Planning Group's (BPG's) discussions.

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

26. The Committee considered the Forward Plan June to September 2016 (copy appended to signed minutes).

27. Resolved – That the Forward Plan be noted.

### **Date of the Next Meeting**

28. The Committee noted that its next scheduled meeting will take place on 22 June 2016 at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester.

## **Agenda Item No.2**

29. The Committee was invited to note that a joint meeting with the Performance and Finance Committee is also scheduled to take place on 22 June 2016 at 2.15pm at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 12.58pm

Chairman