

Environmental & Community Services Select Committee

15 November 2017 – At a meeting of the Select Committee held at 10.30 a.m. at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mr Barrett-Miles (Chairman)

Mr Baldwin	Mr S Oakley**
Mrs Bridges	Mr Oppler*
Mrs Brunsdon*	Mr Patel
Lt Cl Barton	Mr Purchase*
Mr Jones	

In attendance by invitation: Mr Lanzer (Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure) and Mrs Urquhart (Cabinet Member for Environment)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr McDonald and Mrs Purnell

*Left the meeting at 1pm, 1.40pm and 12.50pm respectively

**Arrived at the meeting at 12.10pm

Declarations of Interests

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

- Mr Barrett- Miles as a member of Mid Sussex District Council and Burgess Hill Town Council in relation to Household Waste & Recycling Sites Opening Hours & Waste Performance/Fly-Tipping Update
- Lt Cl Barton as a member of the Executive Task and Finish Group in relation to Household Waste & Recycling Sites Opening Hours & Waste Performance/Fly-Tipping Update
- Mr Jones as a member of Crawley Borough Council in relation to Household Waste & Recycling Sites Opening Hours & Waste Performance/Fly-Tipping Update
- Mr Purchase as a member of Arun District Council, who campaigned in relation to Household Waste & Recycling Sites Opening Hours & Waste Performance/Fly-Tipping Update
- Mr Oppler as a member of Arun District Council, who campaigned in relation to Household Waste & Recycling Sites Opening Hours & Waste Performance/Fly-Tipping Update

Minutes of the 28 September Meeting

91. Resolved – that the minutes of the Environmental and Community Services Select Committee held on 28 September 2017 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's Recommendations on:

a) The Response to Highways England's Consultation on Proposals for A27 at Worthing-Lancing, Arundel and Chichester Improvement Schemes.

92. The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's Recommendations on the Highways England's Consultation on Proposals for A27 at Worthing-Lancing, Arundel and Chichester Improvement Schemes (copy appended to signed minutes).

93. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure thanked the Committee for its support and welcomed the momentum that had been achieved so far.

b) Highways Maintenance Term Contract

94. The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's Recommendations on the Highways Maintenance Term Contract

c) Annual Sustainability Report

95. The Committee noted the Cabinet Member's Response to the Committee's Recommendations on the Annual Sustainability Report

96. The Cabinet Member for Environment advised that she had received a response back from the Secretary of State which will be shown to the Committee.

97. Members requested that an update on this item come back to the Committee in a years' time.

Household Waste & Recycling Sites Opening Hours & Waste Performance/Fly-Tipping Update

98. The Committee considered a report by Executive Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Environment and Director for Energy, Waste and Environment (copy appended to signed minutes).

99. Steve Read, Director of Energy, Waste and Environment introduced the report which gave an overview of three main areas: Opening hours for Household Waste Recycling Sites, An analysis of flytipping trends within West Sussex and an overview of Strategic challenges for West Sussex in waste and material resource management. An Executive Task and Finish Group (TFG) had also been set up to look at the proposals and help inform the Cabinet Member for Environment.

100. Lt CI Barton, as a member of the TFG removed himself from the Committee for this item and did not take part in the debate.

101. The Cabinet Member for Environment thanked the TFG for its work and highlighted the need for action now to avoid any financial impacts on the budget.

Opening Hours

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

- Raised concerns over the inconvenience to residents and increase in queueing and congestion caused by the changes, in particular at the Bognor Regis site which had seen a significant increase in queues spilling out onto the A29 road, and a consequent effect on local businesses and staff based around the site. Mr Read advised that he and the Cabinet Member for Environment had met with traders from the Arun Business Park at Bognor Regis and the pilot reversion to earlier opening since the summer had subsequently resolved the issues to the satisfaction of the traders. Current planning restrictions at the site meant that it couldn't open until 9am at weekends.
- Suggested a case for an early 8am morning opening time at sites, particularly at Bognor Regis and East Grinstead.
- Raised concerns over a 6pm closing time in summer, the impact on working residents and the compression of traffic and activity onto the weekends; with a request that this be extended to 7pm. *The Cabinet Member for Environment referred to a chart in the report that showed that footfall at sites receded significantly after 6pm, and advised that significant additional costs would be incurred if this was extended to 7pm.*
- Raised concerns over the reputational damage inflicted on the County Council for a relatively small financial saving, with a request that more survey work be done at sites. Mr Read advised that there were significant savings and that survey results from sites were currently being processed, the results of which could be shared with members.
- Suggested that advice be available at sites for alternative options, in the event the site was closed, but raised concerns over the travel distance for residents between sites. Mr Read advised that next nearest site information was already provided at the gates.
- Thanked the TFG and the Cabinet Member for their work but raised concerns that effects of the changes were not properly relayed to the TFG. *The Cabinet Member for Environment noted that the Chairman of the TFG had, during the summer, visited all sites prior to opening to get a feel for any issues.*

User charging and restriction of vehicle types

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

- Welcomed the permit/ID system but requested further clarity over the type of system, how it would be implemented and the cost of administration. Concerns were also raised that the use of household utility bills as acceptable ID could be open to abuse. It was also noted use of vehicle number plate recognition could be

high risk and subject to data protection risks and that an increase in queuing that could result from permit checking. Mr Read advised that it would be an online system at a start-up cost of around £10,000, with running costs amounting to a few thousand pounds a year. *The Cabinet Member for Environment advised that the plans were to implement a 'light touch' ID system, using ID such as driving licenses, where possibly 1 in 3 users would be checked. Feedback from Viridor and other local authorities showed that users eventually get used to an ID system.*

- Raised concerns that any savings made would be absorbed by management, implementation and staffing of the new system; and of the possible impact on Viridor employees of enforcing the system. Mr Read advised that in respect of enforcement, all sites already had an allowance for some staff time to be involved in enforcing the exclusion of rogue commercial operators.
- Queried what evidence there had been to suggest that West Sussex would be flooded with waste tourism from neighbouring Surrey and suggested that the assertions were currently unsubstantiated. *The Cabinet Member for Environment advised that as Surrey limit opening of some of its sites to 4 days a week, along with a reduction in opening hours, it was highly likely West Sussex would see an increase in cross-border usage. The data available from a recent site survey suggested that around 10% of users of the East Grinstead site were from Surrey.*
- Suggested a Business Case should be actioned and seen by members. *The Cabinet Member for Environment advised that a Business Case could delay the implementation for up to a year, and add to financial costs.*

Flytipping

104. Mr Read advised that overall the national picture was that flytipping was increasing and there was no specific evidence to suggest the introduction of charges in West Sussex had had a particular impact.

105. Bob Riley, Contracts Manager, Chichester District Council (CDC) and Paul Willis, Waste Strategy Manager, Adur & Worthing Councils were in attendance to give an overview of the effect of flytipping on the district and borough councils, from a rural and urban perspective respectively.

106. Mr Willis advised that there was a link between flytipping and local demographics. Although Worthing town centre had seen an increase, there was already an existing problem before the changes. Incident numbers had risen but surprisingly the weights were down. He could find no evidence to confirm if there was a link or any impact from the change to opening hours

107. Mr Riley advised that there had been a spike in flytipping since October 2016, but that the trend was rising anyway. The numbers were bigger but not overly so. The impact of opening hours had not really been an issue, as

flytipping in the Chichester District area was predominately of the commercial/building type, as opposed to household. There was a particular problem in the West of the District close to the Hampshire border.

108. Fiona Baker, Principal Community Officer gave an overview on flytipping and the County Council's response to the issue as part of a multi-agency initiative involving the police, fire service and CDC known as 'Operation Bluebottle'. An opportunity arose to bid for funds via the Proceeds of Crime Act that allowed for the recent purchase of 3 CCTV cameras, currently being trialled within Chichester District Council boundaries. Once the trials were complete in March 2018, it was hoped that these could be rolled out to other district and boroughs around the County.

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

- Raised concerns that the introduction of an ID/permit system could increase flytipping incidents and whether any increase had already been reported, brought about by the introduction of new opening hours or charges.
- Queried how rogue traders were managed and whether there were any forms of auditing in place that ensured companies comply. Mr Read advised that traders were required to have a waste carrier's license and a transfer note. Catching and prosecuting flytippers without video evidence was often difficult. Overall it was important to increase public awareness of the issue.
- Welcomed Operation Bluebottle but highlighted the need for initiatives to combat flytipping and suggested that a proactive staff presence could be the best deterrent. An officer advised that Operation Bluebottle was a good multi-agency approach and currently offered the best way of tackling the issue using effective joint working.
- Requested that the Cabinet Member write to the Secretary of State to stiffen the penalties for flytipping

110. Mr Purchase made the following proposal, seconded by Mrs Brunsdon which the Committee considered: -

111. That the Committee supports Option 6 of the options considered by the Task and Finish Group, subject to summer closing hours being extended to 7pm for all sites, or if not feasible due to the cost envelope, then to apply this to just the sites that are open for only 5 days a week.

112. A vote was held and the proposal was lost.

113. Mr Barrett- Miles made the following proposal, which the Committee considered: -

114. That Option 6 of the options considered by the Task and Finish Group be the preferred option.

115. A vote was held and the proposal was carried.

116. Mr Purchase requested that it be recorded that he voted against this proposal.

117. Resolved – That the Committee recommends that:

- 1) Option 6 of the options considered by the Task and Finish Group be the preferred option.
- 2) In principle, supports the introduction of permit/ID schemes to restrict usage of Household Waste and recycling Sites to West Sussex residents, but requests that site survey data and options be considered by the Committee at its meeting in January 2018, prior to a decision being made.
- 3) Notes the trends in respect of fly-tipping and initiatives to combat the problem and welcomes the Operation Bluebottle initiative; with a request that the Cabinet Member write to the Secretary of State to change the law in reference to deterring flytipping
- 4) Agreed to defer consideration of the strategic challenges to the January 2018 meeting.

Community Highway Schemes

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

119. Michele Hulme, Assistant Head of Highways Operations introduced the report which gave an update on the new prioritisation process for Community Highways Schemes which was implemented by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport in 2016 after consultation with an Executive Task and Finish Group (TFG) and the Committee. It was agreed that there should be a review of the new process one year after its implementation.

120. Matt Davey, Director of Highways and Transport highlighted that the process had been implemented after member agreement and TFG involvement and had allowed delivery of previously planned schemes. The current outcome was that a project going into the scheme would now be realised and implemented in the community within 2 years.

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

- Welcomed the work of the moderation panel but raised concerns that involvement of members was inadequate.
- Queried what happens if a scheme exceeded the financial budget after the design stage, if this would then be put into the following

year's programme of works and whether this had a knock on effect for other schemes. Mr Davey advised that this would affect other schemes, but ultimately the approval of works programme each year rests with the Cabinet Member. If a specific scheme doubles in costs then it would be discussed and revisited with the Cabinet Member and the Local member.

- Raised concerns that emergency vehicle access had not been included as criterion on the scoresheet, and suggested that comments from residents and County Local Committees (CLC's) might also be included. Also whether the Cabinet Member might consider allowing members to sit on the moderation panel. *The Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure advised that member involvement on the moderation panel may mean less objectivity and that officers may offer more merit in terms of technical assessment.*
- Suggested that members be involved at the time that initial scoring was undertaken and then again at the conclusion of the process for any unsuccessful proposed scheme, to allow for better understanding of rejection issues.

122. Resolved – That the Committee recommends that:

- 1) Local members are engaged at the time the initial scoring is undertaken
- 2) Local members are engaged at the conclusion of the process for any unsuccessful proposed scheme, so that they can be better informed about the reasons for rejection.
- 3) Emergency vehicle access is included as a criteria on the scoresheet
- 4) Members and residents are better signposted/informed on the process and timelines.

Business Planning Group Report

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

124. Resolved – That the Committee endorses the contents of the report and particularly the Committee's Work Programme for 2017/18, revised to reflect the Business Planning Group's (BPG's) discussions.

Approval of Draft Work Programme

125. Resolved – That the Committee approves the Draft Work Programme.

126. Members requested that the following items also be considered:

- Gatwick Airport, additional runway update

- Household Waste Permitting system

Forward Plan of Key Decisions

127. The Committee considered the Forward Plan December 2017 to March 2018 (copy appended to signed minutes).

128. Resolved – That the Forward Plan be noted.

Date of the Next Meeting

129. The Committee noted that its next scheduled meeting will take place on 30 November 2017 at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 1.50pm

Chairman.