

SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

8TH JULY 2013

Present: Councillors: John Chidlow, Philip Circus, Roger Clarke, George Cockman, Leonard Crosbie, Brian Donnelly, Duncan England, Brian O'Connell, Kate Rowbottom, David Sheldon, Diana van der Klugt, Tricia Youtan

Apologies: Councillors: Laurence Deakins, Jim Goddard, David Skipp

Also present: Councillor Roy Cornell

Officer: Katherine Eberhart, Director of Corporate Resources

SO/1 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED

That Councillor George Cockman be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing Council year.

SO/2 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED

That Councillor Brian Donnelly be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing Council year.

SO/3 **TIME OF MEETINGS**

RESOLVED

That meetings of the Committee be held at 5.30 p.m. for the ensuing Council year.

SO/4 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13th May 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

SO/5 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

SO/6 **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chairman welcomed Councillors Clarke and van der Klugt as new Members of the Committee.

The Chairman announced that the Scrutiny and Overview Annual Report 2012/13 had been posted on the Council's website. A hard copy of the report was tabled.

SO/7 **REPLIES FROM CABINET/COUNCIL REGARDING SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee noted that the Council had adopted the revised Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Corporate Policy and Procedures Document.

SO/8 **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE STANDING WORKING GROUPS**

The Committee appointed the Members of the standing Working Groups for the ensuing Council year.

(a) Business Improvement Working Group

The following Members were appointed by the Committee to the Business Improvement Working Group:
Councillors Peter Burgess, John Chidlow, Malcolm Curnock, Frances Haigh, David Jenkins, Brian O'Connell

The Committee noted that there was a vacancy which was being filled in consultation with the relevant Group Leader.

The Committee noted that the following Members had been co-opted for the purpose of assisting with the review of Development Management and Planning Services:
Councillors Philip Circus, Leonard Crosbie, Duncan England, Jim Goddard

(b) Crime and Disorder Working Group

The following Members were appointed by the Committee to the Crime and Disorder Working Group:
Councillors David Coldwell, Christine Costin, Duncan England, Jim Goddard, Frances Haigh, Kate Rowbottom, Jim Sanson

SO/8 Appointment of the Standing Working Groups (continued)

(c) Finance and Performance Working Group

The following Members were appointed by the Committee to the Finance and Performance Working Group:
Councillors John Bailey, John Chidlow, George Cockman, Leonard Crosbie, Brian Donnelly, Jim Goddard, Frances Haigh, Brian O'Connell, Stuart Ritchie

(d) Social Inclusion Working Group

The following Members were appointed by the Committee to the Social Inclusion Working Group:
Councillors Peter Burgess, George Cockman, Duncan England, Christian Mitchell, Godfrey Newman, Kate Rowbottom, David Skipp, Tricia Youtan

SO/9 **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT WORKING GROUP - TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman of the Business Improvement Working Group presented the notes of the meeting held on 28th May 2013.

The Working Group had noted the organisational structure of Development Management and had received details that outlined the planning application process. Members of the Working Group had completed the first phase of the review of Development Management by speaking to certain planning officers in the Development teams. The next phases would be meetings with staff members in the Planning Support and Compliance teams, and a meeting with relevant agents and planning professionals in August 2013 to ask for their experiences of the Council's planning application process. The public who used the planning service would also be surveyed. All of the comments from these exercises would be collated and reported to the Working Group meeting on 12th September 2013.

RESOLVED

That the notes of the Business Improvement Working Group meeting, held on 28th May 2013, be received

REASON

All notes of Working Group meetings are to be received by the Committee.

SO/10 **CRIME AND DISORDER WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman of the Crime and Disorder Working Group presented the notes of the meeting held on 19th June 2013; the notes had been emailed to Members of the Committee and were tabled at the meeting.

The Working Group had been reassured that the level of analytical support provided by the County Council to the Horsham District Community Safety Partnership would be sufficient despite a reduction in the provision of wide range in-depth analysis.

The Head of Planning and Environmental Services had informed the Working Group that Sussex Police were automatically consulted in respect of planning applications submitted for developments of ten residential units or more with a view to trying to design out potential crime implications within such developments. The Working Group suggested that the Community Safety Partnership should be a consultee, and an automatic consultee on major applications, to enable all of its partners to have an input and comment on possible ways to achieve crime reduction.

The Working Group would discuss a key priority from the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013/14 at each meeting and monitor progress on the relevant action plans. Sussex Safer Roads Partnership representatives would be invited to attend its next meeting. The Working Group would invite the Council's representative on the Sussex Police and Crime Panel to attend one of its meetings to discuss current policing resources and for the Working Group to suggest issues that could be raised at the Panel meeting.

Members of the Committee suggested that the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, or her deputy, could be invited to attend a meeting with all Horsham District Councillors to discuss resources for policing in the District and other relevant matters.

The Chairman of the Committee stated that he would raise the issue of resources for policing and the recording of crime statistics at the next meeting of the West Sussex Joint Scrutiny Steering Group.

The Committee welcomed the appointment of five community youth workers who were engaging with young people in the District and asking what services and support they required. It was hoped that investment in youth services by others would not be cut and that the Community Safety Partnership could encourage such funding because it might contribute to reducing potential anti-social behaviour.

SO/10 Crime and Disorder Working Group – to receive an update from the Chairman (continued)

RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR A SAFER AND HEALTHIER DISTRICT

To request that the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner be invited to a meeting with Horsham District Councillors to discuss her vision for policing for the District, resources, recruitment and any other relevant matters.

RESOLVED

That the notes of the Crime and Disorder Working Group meeting, held on 19th June 2013, be received

REASON

All notes of Working Group meetings are to be received by the Committee.

SO/11 FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman of the Finance and Performance Working Group presented the notes of the meeting held on 15th May 2013.

RESOLVED

That the notes of the Finance and Performance Working Group meeting, held on 15th May 2013, be received

REASON

All notes of Working Group meetings are to be received by the Committee.

SO/12 SOCIAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman of the Social Inclusion Working Group presented the notes of the meeting held on 17th June 2013.

Members of the Working Group had been invited to visit the Horsham Information Shop for Young People on 11th July 2013, along with the students from Tanbridge House School who had recommended changes to the centre and how its services were delivered to young people.

SO/12 Social Inclusion Working Group – To receive an update from the Chairman (cont.)

A sub-group would meet the Senior Youth and Older Persons Officer prior to the visit to coordinate the approach to the visit and devise questions to ask on the day.

The Working Group was concerned at the relatively narrow representation in the Council's representation on outside bodies and recommended that the Committee request the Cabinet to review this matter.

RECOMMENDED TO THE CABINET

- (1) That the Cabinet consider reviewing the methods and criteria for appointing Members to represent the Council on other bodies, and
- (2) That a system of regular reporting back to Council by Member representatives on other bodies be re-established.

RESOLVED

That the notes of the Social Inclusion Working Group meeting, held on 17th June 2013, be received

REASON

All Working Group updates are to be received by the Committee.

SO/13 HEALTH PROVISION WORKING GROUP

The Health Provision Working Group had met on 6th June 2013. The Chairman could not attend the Committee meeting but would provide an update at the next meeting.

RESOLVED

That an update be given in respect of the Health Provision Working Group

REASON

All Working Group updates are to be received by the Committee.

SO/14 **SOUTHERN RAIL'S PERFORMANCE IN SEVERE WEATHER WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman of the Southern Rail's Performance in Severe Weather Working Group presented the notes of the meeting held on 30th May 2013.

The Working Group had reconvened to hear from representatives of Southern Rail and Network Rail about their performance during the winter of 2012/13. There had, when compared to the disruption to rail services in December 2010, been a significant improvement in the provision of train services during recent spells of severe weather. A new control centre for Southern Rail and Network Rail had been built at Three Bridges and it would be operational around August/September 2013. The Chairman of the Working Group hoped to visit the new centre and would report back.

The Working Group had requested Southern Rail and Network Rail to continue to keep the Council informed on a regular basis of their actions to maintain services during times of severe weather. The Committee agreed that a further meeting being planned for May 2014 to assess the ongoing improvements would be beneficial.

The Working Group had welcomed Southern Rail and Network Rail's engagement in the review process, and their openness and willingness to answer questions and provide detailed information.

RESOLVED

That the notes of the Southern Rail's Performance in Severe Weather Working Group meeting, held on 30th May 2013, be received

REASON

All Working Group updates are to be received by the Committee.

SO/15 **WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14**

The Committee noted the Scrutiny and Overview work programme for 2013/14.

The Cabinet Member for the Environment had asked that the review of trade waste be deferred because the lead manager was on extended sick leave. The Committee felt that it would be best if the review was commenced and a start date set; the Cabinet Member would be informed and consideration given to the timing of the review to ensure relevant officers could participate without any adverse impact on delivering the trade waste service.

The Committee agreed to defer for a short time the planned review of the Communications Policy.

SO/15 Work Programme 2013/14 (continued)

The Committee noted that proposals would emerge from the Business Transformation Programme and that the Committee might be involved in scrutinising proposals.

The Committee noted the reviews which its working groups would undertake and that there were some outstanding reviews from 2012/13 that the Business Improvement Working Group was completing.

SO/16 **TO RECEIVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW WORK PROGRAMME**

There were no suggestions for the Scrutiny and Overview work programme.

Parish and Neighbourhood Councils would be asked if they had any suggestions.

SO/17 **ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA BUT CONSIDERED URGENT**

There were no urgent items.

The meeting finished at 6.49 p.m. having commenced at 5.30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN