

SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

12TH MAY 2014

Present: Councillors: George Cockman (Chairman), Brian Donnelly, Philip Circus, Roger Clarke, David Coldwell, Leonard Crosbie, Brian O'Connell, Kate Rowbottom, David Sheldon, Diana van der Klugt

Apologies: Councillors: John Chidlow, Laurence Deakins, Duncan England, David Skipp, Tricia Youtan

Also present: Councillor Roger Arthur

Officers: Natalie Brahma-Pearl, Director of Community Services
Katharine Eberhart, Director of Corporate Resources

SO/73 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3rd March 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

SO/74 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

SO/75 **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chairman reminded Committee Members of the training session '*Building on good practice: developing Scrutiny and Overview to get the best value and outcomes*' on Monday 30th June 2014 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

SO/76 **REPLIES FROM CABINET/COUNCIL REGARDING SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee considered the response from the Cabinet Member for a Safer and Healthier District to the recommendations of the Health Provision Working Group Report.

The Director of Community Services led the Committee through the answers in that response and stated that Horsham District Council was working closely with the two Clinical Commissioning Groups: Horsham and Mid Sussex CCG and the Coastal West Sussex CCG. The Council, via its involvement in the Strategic Outline Case (SOC), had encouraged proposals about the future use of Horsham Hospital and seeking opportunities to provide and extend services there. The CCG was continuing to develop the SOC; the Council had supported the suggestion of provision of more outpatient facilities at

SO/76 Replies from Cabinet./Council regarding Scrutiny and Overview recommendations (Cont.)

Horsham Hospital, and had lobbied for extended hours and days of opening at the Minor Injuries Unit.

The Director of Community Services agreed to enquire about the SOC which was being prepared by the Horsham and Mid Sussex CCG and also the SOC report for Crawley CCG and the Horsham and Mid Sussex CCG; if these were public documents, they would be circulated to Members. The SOC report looks at ways to devise a health and wellbeing plan and potential partnerships with the District Council and voluntary groups; to examine local services and what could be commissioned and delivered locally to reduce the need for local residents to travel to other hospitals and health providers; and to consider the estate and infrastructure and the impact of providing additional or increased services.

The Director of Community Services reported that local GPs referred a significant number of people to the Council's Horsham District Wellbeing hub which offered support to get families fitter, people into regular exercise, weight management, to deal with stress, to tackle substance misuse and to improve general wellbeing.

Providing certain health services more locally would mean those patients had less distance to travel and that should help to reduce non-emergency attendances at hospital A&E departments. The Council was supportive of proposals in the SOC to provide more outpatients services at Horsham Hospital to reduce unnecessary travelling to other hospitals.

The planned closure at short notice of the Mill Stream Medical Centre in Storrington was discussed and the impact that would have on local residents and other practices that would increase capacity to provide health care to those affected. The Director of Community Services reported that the Council was working with other surgeries on this matter but that it was for the CCG to lead on this. The Committee agreed that the Chairman of the Committee would write to the CCG to express concern and dismay at the situation in Storrington and invite a representative from NHS England to a future meeting to provide an update on patient care assessments in Storrington; a copy of the letter would be sent to the West Sussex Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASc).

The Cabinet Member, in response to the recommendation that the Council press for an overall administrator or manager at Horsham Hospital, had stated that this was not a role for the District Council. The Committee felt strongly that a manager was required, even more so if health services were to be developed and extended; it was agreed to continue to recommend that the CCG be requested to provide a hospital manager.

SO/76 Replies from Cabinet/Council regarding Scrutiny and Overview recommendations (Cont.)

RECOMMENDED TO THE CABINET MEMBER
FOR A SAFER AND HEALTHIER DISTRICT

1. To continue to encourage the CCG to provide an overall administrator or manager at Horsham Hospital to support the various health service providers located there.
2. To continue to support, where possible and relevant, the provision of more health services locally and react when local health services are removed.

SO/77 **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT WORKING GROUP - TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29TH APRIL 2014**

The Chairman of the Business Improvement Working Group presented the tabled notes of the meeting held on 29th April 2014.

The Working Group had received an update on the roll-out measures identified within the Development Management Improvement Plan, the majority of which had already been implemented. That included the recent introduction of the Enterprise system, a caseload management system to assist with tracking performance.

There had been significant improvement in planning performance figures with 88% of major applications being determined for the period from April 2013 to March 2014, and 66% of minor applications and 85% of other applications.

The scheme of delegation had reduced the number of applications referred to committee for decision but it would be reviewed to see whether major applications that were not contentious could also be dealt with under delegated authority.

The Council would soon be introducing charging for pre-application planning advice. It was hoped that would help to ease the planning application process for applicants by clarifying what was required of them when submitting an application.

A new Director of Planning, Economic Development and Property, when recruited and in post, would be asked to consider career grading for planning officers to assist with the recruitment of staff and to reward any high performance by existing staff members.

The Working Group had completed its review of the S106 process and had noted the revised protocol between the planning and legal departments for dealing with planning applications that required a S106 agreement which

SO/77 Business Improvement Working Group - To receive an update from the Chairman and notes of the meeting held 29th April 2014 (Cont.)

would be beneficial to the process. The Chairman of the Working Group highlighted the need for a Community Infrastructure Officer (CIL) Officer. CIL would be introduced and, in due course, would negate the need for a Planning Obligations Panel.

The Chairman of the Working Group would prepare a report for the Committee meeting on 7th July 2014 which would present any final conclusions and recommendations.

The Working Group would review progress on the Development Management Improvement Plan at its meeting on 27th January 2015; it would at a future date review progress on and performance of the S106 process.

The Chairman thanked the Chairman and Members of the Working Group for their work.

RESOLVED

That the notes of the Business Improvement Working Group meeting, held on 29th April 2014, be received.

REASON

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

SO/78 **CRIME AND DISORDER WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7TH MAY 2014**

The Chairman of the Crime and Disorder Working Group presented the tabled notes of the meeting held on 7th May 2014.

The Working Group had reviewed the protocol for the scrutiny of crime and disorder matters and decided that no amendments were required.

The Chairman of the Working Group had attended the quarterly meetings of the Horsham District Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and reported that she felt that the CSP was working well. The Chairman was disappointed with the decision to end Joint Action Group meetings.

The Working Group had received details about the performance of the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan for 2013/14; Horsham District Council had taken the lead on that. The Working Group had noted the five action plans for 2014/15: reducing anti-social behaviour, community engagement and reassurance, reducing violence against the person, casualty reduction to

SO/78 Crime and Disorder Working Group – To receive an update from the Chairman and notes of the meeting held on 7th May 2014 (cont.)

reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on District roads, and tackling issues in relation to drugs and alcohol.

The Working Group had received a presentation from the Community Safety Officer which outlined the reform of anti-social behaviour powers. The numerous new powers provided means to tackle anti-social behaviour and created new statutory duties for local authorities. The presentation could be given to Committee Members at a future date.

The Working Group had moved from quarterly meetings to meeting once or twice a year; the first meeting to review the previous year's CSP Plan and performance in delivering the action plans, and a second meeting to seek clarity on any matters by requesting CSP partners to attend.

The Working Group, at its meeting on 7th May 2014, had not received information about the performance in relation to the action plans which had been allocated to the other CSP partners. A further Working Group meeting would be convened to consider that information. Following that the Working Group would meet again and request CSP partners to attend to discuss their action plans and performance for 2013/14. The Working Group could then feedback its comments and any recommendations to the CSP Board.

The Committee queried the accuracy and methodology of crime statistics recorded by the Police. The Chairman suggested that the Chairman of the Crime and Disorder Working Group might raise that subject when Sussex Police, as a CSP partner, attended the Working Group meeting.

RESOLVED

That the notes of the Crime and Disorder Working Group meeting, held on 7th May 2014, be received.

REASON

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

SO/79 **FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

There had been no further meetings of the Finance and Performance Working Group.

The Chairman of the Finance and Performance Working Group had met relevant officers and decided that the Working Group would, in future, meet on a quarterly basis to deal with the main items of regular business for both finance and performance matters. In addition there would be four monitoring meetings scheduled around two weeks after the main meetings to deal with any queries, issues or further information arising from the main meeting.

RESOLVED

That an update from the Finance and Performance Working Group be received.

REASON

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

SO/80 **SOCIAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

There had been no further meetings of the Social Inclusion Working Group and therefore there was no update from the Chairman.

RESOLVED

That an update from the Social Inclusion Working Group be received.

REASON

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

SO/81 **HEALTH PROVISION WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

There had been no further meetings of Health Provision Working Group. The Chairman could not attend the Committee meeting but would provide an update at the next meeting.

SO/81 Health Provision Working Group – To receive an update from the Chairman (Cont.)

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/82 **TRADE WASTE WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE THE FINAL REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP AND NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26TH MARCH 2014**

The Chairman of the Trade Waste Working Group presented the final report to the Committee following the review of the Council's trade waste collection and trade recycling services and consideration of how it might be able to increase its commercial market share.

The Chairman of the Working Group reported how, as the review commenced, there had been a 3% increase in customer numbers and contributions of around £30,000 which was ahead of budget predictions. The business had been growing but those figures had not been available at the time of the review's commencement in October 2013.

Operational Services had been running a recycling trade waste pilot project. There was an unmet demand for recycling of certain wastes which would be investigated to see how that demand could be met.

A survey had been undertaken of leaving and returning customers. Some had left to find a better price but discovered that the costs from other providers could be higher because of hidden charges and could sometimes be less efficient. The strength of the Council's service was that it was often better tailored to the needs of clients.

The Working Group had concluded that the Trade Waste service was conducted with a high degree of efficiency and customer satisfaction but that there were opportunities to increase the customer base.

The Director of Community Services welcomed the report findings and would discuss its recommendations with the Trade Waste team and look at ways to further expand the business and attract new customers.

The Committee approved the recommendations.

The notes of the meeting held on 26th March 2014 were also received and noted by the Committee.

SO/82 Trade Waste Working Group – To receive the final report of the Working Group and notes of the meeting held on 26th March 2014 (cont.)

RECOMMENDED TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

1. Continue researching competitor prices and strategies through analysis of leavers and joiners, using this intelligence to inform future pricing strategies
2. Continue researching the views of customers and use this intelligence to inform pricing and targeting strategies
3. Implement the proposed re-routing to free up resources to take on additional customers
4. Further investigate costs and benefits of opting for larger vehicles more suited to the service during the upcoming procurement exercise
5. Adopt the proposed expansion strategies and associated increases in revenues and operating costs
6. Adopt the recycling pilot as a fully integrated element of the trade service
7. Investigate the costs and benefits of town centre trade waste recycling and the potential wider benefits of capital investment in improved vehicles for the pedestrianised areas
8. Retain in-house service provision and review options for outsourcing after the expansion strategies have been delivered
9. Adopt the ad-hoc service improvements outlined in “Other improvements to the service” as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

SO/83 WEST SUSSEX JOINT SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD – COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES ADVICE CONTRACT

The Committee was reminded of the previous extension of the Community Legal Advice Contract for the provision of generalist and legal advice to the public across West Sussex. The contract, held by West Sussex Citizens Advice Bureau, had been extended to March 2015.

SO/83 West Sussex Joint Scrutiny Steering Board – Community Legal Services Advice Contract (Cont.)

The Joint Scrutiny Task and Finish Group had been reconvened to deal with the approaching tender process. Councillor Donnelly would again participate at those Group meetings and report back.

SO/84 **TO RECEIVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW WORK PROGRAMME**

a) Suggestion from Billingshurst Parish Council

A suggestion had been received requesting a county-wide approach to counter flooding on the strategic road network. The Committee felt that this matter could be referred to West Sussex County Council for attention and perhaps to the West Sussex Flood Risk Management Operations Group which met quarterly to solve local flooding issues; Horsham District Council was represented on that Group.

Councillor Duncan England would also be requested to consider this request because he had been the Council's representative on the West Sussex Joint Scrutiny Flooding Task and Finish Group.

The report of and information arising from the District Council's former Scrutiny Flooding and Drainage Working Group could also be sent to the Parish Council.

b) Suggestion from the Parish Clerk for Slinfold and Broadbridge Heath Parish Councils

A suggestion had been received requesting a guidance note outlining the S106 and CIL processes to assist parish councils and inform them about how to claim relevant S106 monies. The Business Improvement Working Group had noted this and decided its Chairman would send a response to state that the information was available about the S106 process and about the changes that would be introduced for CIL.

SO/85 **ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA BUT CONSIDERED URGENT**

There were no urgent items.

The meeting finished at 7.23 p.m. having commenced at 5.30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

