

Local Economy Policy Development Advisory Group
9 APRIL 2019

Present: Councillors: Gordon Lindsay (Chairman), Peter Burgess, Liz Kitchen, Lynn Lambert, Adrian Lee and Stuart Ritchie

Apologies: Councillors: David Coldwell, Leonard Crosbie and Tony Hogben
Absent: Councillors: John Chidlow and Paul Marshall

25 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Group received the notes of the meeting held on the 6th February 2019.

26 **CONTRACT FOR REPLACEMENT ANPR CAR PARK SYSTEM**

The Head of Parking gave a presentation about the contract for the replacement of the ANPR car park system. The intention was to replace pay and display in Pavillions car park and replace the current ANPR system in Swan Walk, Forum and Piries Place. One of the main advantages of introducing an ANPR system was to allow for card and contactless payments. It also allowed day permits and season tickets. An additional key benefit of the new system was that it removed entrance and exit queues to car parks. It also got around the problem of lost tickets. Operational improvements also included improved usage data, an improved auditing process and business engagement.

The system included pay stations, cameras, barriers, back office support and varied payment options. Remote management was a key benefit of the new system as was an improved customer experience. It was possible to see when periods of low usage occurred. The Head of Parking Services saw it as a particular focus to get the new ANPR system into the new Piries Place Car Park for its opening date of 29 July 2019. He felt it needed to be in place in the other multi-stories before Christmas 2019.

To ensure we address Horsham District Council's needs the method used with the tender process has been to state what Horsham District Council wanted to achieve and ask the supplier how they could achieve that.

The project had already gone out to tender. It went to informal cabinet on 28th March 2019, it went to the Local Economy Policy Development Advisory Group on 9th April 2019, tenders will be received by 23rd April 2019 and evaluation will occur by 20th May 2019. A contract will be drawn up on 23rd May 2019 and the contract will go to Cabinet on 6th June 2019. It was noted that Cabinet wish to make a decision about the bid on 6th June 2019. This would allow the suppliers to deliver to the 29th July deadline. The cost will be approximately £340,000. Six site visits have currently been completed.

Members were keen to know whether Horsham Council had contacted the new Premier Inn which was located by the new Piries Place Car Park. The Head of Parking Services informed Members that the Premier Inn had been contacted but had shown little interest in the new car park before they were on site.

Members also asked the Head of Parking Services whether it was possible to mix and match pre-payment for car parking with contactless payments. The Head of Car Parking Services said that it was, for example one could pre pay for a specific time frame only, but it will all be reliant on what the offers from each tender are.

Members raised concerns over the parking at Horsham Hospital. The Head of Parking Services confirmed that the Hospital Car Park was not one of our car parks although we managed the enforcement. The Head of parking Services had informed Horsham Hospital about the replacement of payment equipment at its car parks but the hospital had said they wanted a system in place by March 2019. They do not have a new system in place but are looking into getting one.

The Chair of the Committee thanked the Head of Parking Services for his presentation.

27 **INWARD INVESTMENT PROSPECTUS**

The Head of Economic Development informed Members that with the large planning projects in North Horsham, including a new business park, there was an increased need to attract new business to the area. The Head of Economic Development circulated Slough Borough Council's Policy for a Business Rates Discount Scheme to attract Inward Investment 2018-2019 onwards as an example of what another local authority had done to attract new businesses to their area. Differed business rates were an option Slough had offered as an incentive to businesses which could prove they were investing in the area. Members were encouraged to inform the Head of Economic Development of any other schemes they knew of as the Head of Economic Development plans to devise a marketing plan for Horsham District and a help guide for new and small businesses investing in the area.

28 **BID (BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT)**

The Head of Economic Development informed Members that the Cabinet had approved the budget for improvements to Horsham town centre. The next step was a project to find out key issues and then generate a business plan beginning in 2020. Big businesses in Horsham town centre including Marks and Spencer have been consulted and were very supportive of a BID.

29 **GIGABIT PROJECT**

The Director of Place informed Members that the Gigabit Project aimed to deliver much faster download speeds in buildings owned by the County Council across the District. Businesses will be able to link into it. The scheme is being run by West Sussex County Council and funded by the Strategic Infrastructure Fund. The upgrade to internet download speed involved road works, especially in Horsham District, particularly West Street as new fibres are being put in and copper casing is being removed to deliver a faster connection. Gigabit is approximately four times faster than the next best download option available.

The Director of Place informed Members that Horsham District Council needed to wait until the work was completed before we could promote Gigabit. Members were concerned about internet access in rural areas. The Director of Place noted that the Gigabit Project is focussed on the main towns in the District but there is another project to look at more rural areas.

30 **LEAP FUNDING UPDATE**

The Head of Economic Development reminded Members that LEAP funding was for small businesses and informed them that a further two years of funding had been agreed by West Sussex Council leaders.

31 **RETAIL TRAINING FEEDBACK**

The Head of Economic Development informed Members that in 2018 support for independent retailers had included £20,000 funding from SIF for workshops on shop improvement. There had been 6 workshops, 2 in Henfield, 1 in Stenning, 1 in Billingshurst and 2 in Horsham. 18 businesses had attended. Topics covered had included merchandising and refits. The workshops had been a success with 98% of those attending saying the content had been above expectation. Opportunities for future workshops included longer workshop times for topics including digital marketing and potential question and answer sessions on Council procedures.

The Head of Economic Development also informed Members that there had been a good take up of shop improvement grants. The impact of these grants had included a business being able to diversify, a business selling to local businesses and putting in place a future sandwich delivery service to other businesses. Another business had ordered a lap top so customers could order goods themselves.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Economic Development for their update.

32 **FORWARD PLAN EXTRACT FOR THE LOCAL ECONOMY PORTFOLIO**

The group noted the relevant items appearing on the Forward Plan.

The meeting closed at 6.23 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN