

Council
27 APRIL 2022

Present: Councillors: David Skipp (Chairman), Kate Rowbottom (Vice-Chairman), Matthew Allen, Andrew Baldwin, Tony Bevis, John Blackall, Martin Boffey, Toni Bradnum, Karen Burgess, Peter Burgess, Jonathan Chowen, Philip Circus, Paul Clarke, Michael Croker, Ruth Fletcher, Joan Grech, Billy Greening, Tony Hogben (Deputy Leader), Nigel Jupp, Liz Kitchen, Lynn Lambert, Richard Landeryou, Gordon Lindsay, John Milne, Colin Minto, Christian Mitchell, Mike Morgan, Jon Olson, Bob Platt, Louise Potter, Josh Potts, Sam Raby, Stuart Ritchie, Ian Stannard, Cilve Trott, Diana van der Klugt, Claire Vickers, Belinda Walters, Tricia Youtan and James Wright

Apologies: Councillors: Chris Brown, Christine Costin, Ray Dawe, Brian Donnelly, Tim Lloyd, Roger Noel and Jack Saheid

Absent: Councillors: Alan Britten

CO/85 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held 9 February and the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meetings held on 1 March and 24 March were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman, subject to amendments to the attendance details on 9 February and 1 March to show that Councillor David Skipp attended those meetings.

CO/86 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Item 9: Water Neutrality Resourcing: Councillor Nigel Jupp declared a personal interest because he was also a West Sussex County Councillor.

Item 13: Notice of Motion:

- Councillor Philip Circus declared a personal interest because he was a landlord of properties outside the district.
- Councillor Nigel Jupp declared a personal interest because he was a trustee of housing within the district.
- Tony Hogben declared a personal interest because of property investment outside the district.
- Councillor Toni Bradnum declared a personal interest because of property investment in the district.
- Councillor Sam Raby declared a personal interest because he rented out a property in the district; he left the room during the determination of this item.
- Councillor Ian Stannard declared a personal and prejudicial interest due to his own arrangements and left the room during the determination of this item.

CO/87 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman of the Council commented on the Ukrainian prayer sung by the Reverend Canon Lisa Barnett at the start of the meeting and acknowledged the work that she and her team were doing to support the 19 families in the district who are hosting Ukrainian refugees.

Councillor Jonathan Chowen, Leader of the Council, announced that he and members of the Cabinet and the Chief Executive were taking part in three 'Big Conversation' question and answer events in May in different parts of the district. These would engage with local communities and over 50 questions had already been submitted. Councillors were welcome to attend.

Councillor Toni Brandum, Cabinet Member for Recycling & Waste, made the following announcements:

- The Re-use initiative introduced last August and funded by WSCC had come to an end for the time being. Similar schemes would be introduced across the country. There were still 70 items available to purchase on-line. The scheme had saved over 193 items from landfill.
- Councillor Bradnum thanked her predecessor, Councillor Philip Circus, for introducing the small electrical items and textiles collections service. It had been very successful, with over 4,000 household collections; 21 tonnes of textiles, 11.5 tonnes of electricals and nearly five tonnes of batteries had been collected. Options for extending this valuable service were being investigated.
- Recently there had been a lot of work to pick up litter on major roads, in particular the A264 and A24. The problem existed because of irresponsible behaviour, and the Cabinet Member would be working with the new Head of Service to ensure the Council takes a robust approach to stop the problem.

Councillor James Wright, Cabinet Member for Environment & Rural Affairs, announced that Cabinet had agreed the next part of the Climate Change Strategy. The Council had cut its own emissions by 30% since 2019 and the strategy looked to cut a further 30% by 2025. He thanked the work of officers and Cabinet Members for helping to push this agenda forward.

CO/88 **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No questions relevant to the business of the meeting had been received.

CO/89 **PETITIONS**

The Leader of the Council received the Petition of over 3,300 signatures regarding the swans at Southwater Park called 'save the swans, remove the gate'. He stated that Councillor Roger Noel, Cabinet Member for Leisure &

Culture, had met with the petition organiser and other concerned residents and a solution to the problem had been found.

CO/90 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET**

a) Highway Community Centre Development proposal

Councillor Josh Potts, Deputy Cabinet Member for Leisure & Culture, gave a brief summary of the report, which outlined the history of the scheme and the business case for the construction of a new community centre and nursery in Highwood, West Horsham. He summarised the extensive work that had gone into preparing the proposal, including consultation with local residents and a review of daytime users, including nurseries, with a view to securing an income stream. Councillor Potts drew attention to the financial aspects of the scheme, as set out in the report, and stated that the recommendation to approve the capital budget for the scheme was on social grounds. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Christian Mitchell.

RESOLVED

- ii) To approve a capital budget of £2.75m – for the purpose of building the community facility and nursery at Highwood – allocated £2.5m in 2022/23 and £250,000 in 2023/4.

REASON

- i) To provide community facilities in accordance with the Land West of Horsham Masterplan 2008.

b) Developer Transport Modelling: update to Fees Schedule

Councillor Lambert reminded Members that in March 2019 the Council had commissioned a Strategic Transport Model to support ongoing work on the Local Plan. The proposals set out in the report gave an opportunity to recoup some of the cost of this work by making the Transport Model available to developers for a fee. She emphasised that this was a baseline study, which could not predetermine or give advantage when determining planning decisions. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Liz Kitchen.

In response to a question from Councillor Mike Croker, Leader of the Green Group, Councillor Lambert agreed that when the Stage Two Transport Model is undertaken it would include modes of sustainable transport.

RESOLVED

- i) That the proposed new Schedule of Fees with supporting Protocol for third party access to the Horsham Transport Model as set out in Appendix A of the Cabinet report be approved.

REASON

- i) To ensure that the Council is appropriately reimbursed for expenses incurred in the development of the Horsham Transport Study Model by those seeking commercial use of the model and supporting data, to promote development.

CO/91 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES**

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Final report of the Sustainable Travel Task & Finish Group

Councillor Mike Croker, Chairman of the Task & Finish Group, outlined the work undertaken by the Group over several months. The recommendations were the culmination of evidence-based research and consultation. He thanked the Group and officers who had contributed to the work.

Members were broadly supportive of the proposals. The benefits of the Mid-Sussex methodology and potential routes for an LCWIP project, referred to in recommendation ii) c, were discussed. It was noted that consultation was currently underway on a safety scheme outside Forest School in Comptons Lane.

The challenges of bringing sustainable travel solutions to the rural areas within the district were acknowledged.

Councillor Tony Bevis, Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, moved the recommendations as set out in the report. The motion was seconded by Councillor Bob Platt.

RESOLVED

- i) For Horsham District Council to consider pursuing implementation of a highway matters screening method similar to that employed by Mid-Sussex District Council for planning applications.
- ii) For Horsham District Council to consider:
 - a. the Group's recommendations for specific changes to Policy 41 in the draft Horsham District Local Plan as laid out in Appendix 5 of the report
 - b. a much stronger emphasis on sustainable transport, as required by NPPF para 112, incorporating themes expressed in Appendix 6, are reflected in the Local Plan and in supporting design and other planning policy guidance.

- c. focussing initial capital investment on a single LCWIP project meeting LTN1/20 standards and of sufficient scale to enable people to cycle more complete trips and to act as a flagship for further routes.
- iii) For Horsham District Council to pursue and enable policy and measures to reduce the need to travel (especially by private car), including shifting trips from private car to active travel and public transport, reducing trip length and enabling the option of working from home.
- iv) For Horsham District Council to develop and to support local groups to develop further LCWIPs, especially for larger villages across the District.

REASON

- i) Recommendation (i) will harness local Members' knowledge of potential highway issues associated with proposed development, leading to better decisions from the Highways Authority.
- ii) Recommendation (ii) reflects the Group's view that, whilst the draft Reg.19 policy 41 is stronger than that at Reg.18, the changes do not go far enough to enable walking and cycling within Horsham district as a whole. Accordingly, both detailed changes to the current Reg.19 draft and, ideally, a rewrite of Policy 41 to better reflect central government policy, are recommended.
- iii) Recommendation (iii) concerns HDC's own operation, where the Group seeks to encourage further policy changes as part of the 2030 net zero carbon target.
- iv) Finally, although the Group recognised the funding limitations around LCWIPs, Recommendation (iv) should ensure that the LCWIP process follows central government's policy ambitions, avoiding excessive focus on Horsham town.

CO/92 **WATER NEUTRALITY RESOURCING**

Councillor Lynn Lambert summarised the impact of Natural England's position statement on water neutrality and the need to demonstrate that development within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone does not increase the use of mains water. Work to prepare a Water Neutrality Mitigation Strategy was being undertaken jointly by all affected local authorities.

The Cabinet Member explained that the £100,000 grant to West Sussex County Council from the Local Enterprise Partnership would enable staff to be recruited to assist in delivering this strategy. It was noted that there would be no cost to

this Council as the budget required to enable this work would be funded by the grant to WSCC. The motion was seconded by Councillor Jonathan Chowen.

RESOLVED

- i) To agree an expenditure budget of £100,000 in 2022/23 to enable the recruitment of a Water Neutrality Project Manager and other support staff which may be required, and the income budget of £100,000 from West Sussex County Council that it sourced from the LEP.

REASON

- i) Additional resourcing is required to deliver the Mitigation Strategy for Water Neutrality. Horsham District has the largest geographical area affected by this issue and is a central location within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone. It therefore is logical to act as the host authority for the additional post. As West Sussex County Council initially secured LEP funding for this additional resource it will be necessary to recharge the County Council to access the agreed funds.

CO/93 **APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES AND S.151 OFFICER**

Councillor Tony Hogben, Cabinet Member for Finance & Parking and member of the Employment Committee, spoke in support of the appointment of Dominic Bradley as Interim director of Corporate Resources and Chief Finance Officer. The motion was seconded by Councillor Stuart Ritchie, Chairman of Audit Committee, who gave his wholehearted approval.

RESOLVED

- i) To note the Employment Committee nomination of Dominic Bradley as the Interim Director of Corporate Resources and s.151 Officer;
- ii) To agree the appointment of Dominic Bradley to the position of Interim Director of Corporate Resources with effect from 28 April 2022, at a salary of £94,270 p.a. (subject to national cost of living award);
- iii) To agree the designation of Dominic Bradley as Chief Finance Officer, s.151 Officer, of Horsham District Council with effect from 28 April 2022.
- iv) To agree the duration of the interim post to be six months, in which to start the appointment process to the substantive role, and as necessary until such date as a substantive appointment is made and the appointee commences their duties.

REASON

- i) To comply with the legal requirements set out above, to appoint a person responsible for the Council's financial affairs ("s.151 Officer").
- ii) To ensure a timely and smooth transition to the Director of Corporate Resources and s.151 Officer role, following the appointment of the previous postholder Jane Eaton as Chief Executive on 16 April 2022, until a permanent appointment can be made.

CO/94 **INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

Jane Eaton, Chief Executive, explained the rationale behind recruiting a new member to the Independent Remuneration Panel so that the Council had a functioning panel. This was required so that an interim review of the Members Allowance Scheme could be undertaken before the next required full review in three years' time. It was noted that Ms D'Amico had been interviewed by three Councillors including the Leader of the Council, as detailed in the report.

RESOLVED

- (i) To delegate to the Chief Executive the approval of the appointment of Cinzia D'Amico to sit on the Independent Remuneration Panel.
- (ii) That the appointed Panel Members each be paid a sum, to be determined by the Director of Corporate Resources, proportionate to the work undertaken at the conclusion of an interim review and that any travelling and subsistence expenses should be paid at the current approved rate for Members.

REASON

- (i) To comply with statutory requirements, in particular (i) the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and (ii) the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.
- (ii) The IRP received £700 each at the conclusion of the full review in 2021, a sum benchmarked with other local authorities. It is reasonable to remunerate Panel Members for further work undertaken.

CO/95 **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Councillor Diana van der Klugt, the Council's representative for the South Downs National Park, reported on the following items:

- The SDNP Authority had submitted a response to National Highways A27 Arundel bypass consultation. The response welcomed avoidance of incursion into the Park itself but raised concerns regarding its adverse impact on the Park's setting and impact on wildlife and biodiversity.

National Highways were expected to submit their application to the Inspectorate for examination later this year.

- The SDNP Authority had submitted a response to the government's consultation on the Glover Landscapes Review regarding the role of National Parks and AONBs (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) in England. The SDNP Authority's response broadly welcomed the ambition of the proposal but expressed concern that it had missed the opportunity for national parks to take a leading role in nature recovery and tackling climate change. DEFRA will examine all responses before considering next steps.
- Councillor van der Klugt sat on the working group that were drafting a Shoreham Cement Works Area Action Plan. An Issues and Options draft paper will be consulted on in June. The action plan will be a development plan for the delivery of an exemplar mixed-use development at the site.

CO/96 **NOTICE OF MOTION**

The Motion, as set out on page 55 the agenda, was moved by Councillor John Milne and seconded by Councillor Jon Olson.

Members discussed the ambition and complexity of the motion that sought the reduction of domestic energy use across the district.

Councillor Tricia Youtan, Cabinet Member for Housing & Public Protection, proposed an amendment to the motion, in order to ensure that sufficient research and discussion could take place involving the three Cabinet Portfolios responsible for aspects of the motion.

She proposed that the motion be deferred for three or four months to allow for consideration at the Housing & Public Protection, Environment & Rural Affairs and Planning & Development Policy Development Advisory Groups. The amendment was seconded by Councillor Claire Vickers.

On being put, the motion, as amended, was CARRIED and the motion deferred.

CO/97 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Councillor Ruth Fletcher asked Councillor Lynn Lambert, Cabinet Member for Planning & Development, the following question:

“Statements have been made to the press and in public forums which suggest that some, or possibly all, of the strategic sites proposed in the new Local Plan will not go ahead, as a side effect of the Water Neutrality issue. Can you confirm which sites, if any, are definitely in, or definitely out?”

“The full list of strategic sites is West of Ifield, Kingsfold, West of Southwater, West of Billingshurst, East of Billingshurst, Buck Barn, Adversane, and Mayfield near Henfield.

“Rookwood was one of the sites, but has previously been withdrawn by HDC. Can you also confirm this remains the case?”

The Cabinet Member replied:

“The work on the solution to Water Neutrality will inform this Council on the level of development the Local Plan will be able to accommodate. This work is not complete and it is therefore not possible to state which sites can or which sites cannot be included in the Local Plan at this stage. I can confirm that Rookwood remains unavailable for development.”

Councillor Fletcher asked a supplementary question:

“Can you assure the Council, given that no sites have been included or excluded, that no further misleading claims will be made, for example that Buck Barn, Adversane or any other site has been saved from development? Also we have heard from the Leader that the Water Neutrality timescales are likely to be 12 months or more so could you also confirm when we’ll be hearing about our plans as a Council for consulting on further development of the Local Plan and the timescale for this and any interim guidance which you are going to be publishing?”

The Cabinet Member replied:

“The timescale, until we have a Mitigation Strategy, is unknown. We are waiting for the Mitigation strategy. This strategy is to enable the development of the Local Plans in the affected areas. Once we have that Mitigation Strategy we will know how many mega-litres of waters per day will be available for the affected area. This then has to be divided up between the affected boroughs and districts. We will then know what our proportion of that is and we will then know how many homes this Council can develop. I can assure you that no sites are in and no sites are out until we have a strategy.”

Councillor Fletcher responded by saying that she was concerned about the timescale of the Local Plan because, once the Water Neutrality issue was solved, there would be an urgent need to be ready to move forward with the Local Plan. Contingency plans were therefore required so that the Council will be ready to proceed when that point is reached.

CO/98 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 8.22 pm having commenced at 6.00 pm

CHAIRMAN