

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 March 2018

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea on Monday 19 March 2018 at 6:30pm.

Committee Members present: Councillors P.N. Osborne (Chairman), S.D. Elford (Vice-Chairman), J. Barnes, Mrs M.L. Barnes (ex-officio), G.S. Browne, C.A. Clark, S.H. Earl, R.V. Elliston, J. Potts, Mrs S.M. Prochak, G.F. Stevens and M.R. Watson.

Other Members present: Councillors Lord Ampthill (in part), J.J. Carroll (in part), A.E. Ganly, K.P. Dixon, K.M. Field (in part), I.R. Hollidge, I.G.F. Jenkins (in part) and D.B. Oliver (in part).

Advisory Officers present: Executive Director of Business Operations, Executive Director of Resources, Service Manager – Finance and Welfare, Service Manager – Community and Economy, Financial Services Manager, Operations Team Leader (in part) and Democratic Services Officer.

Also present: Dan Wallman – Managing Director (in part) and Paul Bailey – Project Engagement Co-ordinator (in part) from Bexhill Hive, Michael Horton – Project Manager, Parking (in part) and Carl Valentine – Head of Transport and Operational Services (in part) from East Sussex County Council and 3 members of the public.

OSC17/48. **MINUTES**

The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 29 January 2018 as a correct record of the proceedings.

OSC17/49. **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor G.C. Curtis.

OSC17/50. **PRESENTATION BY BEXHILL HIVE** (5)

Members were advised that Bexhill Hive had been awarded a one-off £30,000 grant through the Council's Community Grant Scheme in July 2016. Cabinet had requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive a presentation from Bexhill Hive to update Members on progress/success of the project.

The Chairman welcomed Dan Wallman and Paul Bailey of Bexhill Hive to the meeting who provided Members with a presentation on the new Creative Arts and Education Hub in Bexhill. Councillor Tony Ganly, the Chairman of the Council's Community Grants Panel was also in attendance.

During the presentation the following key points were noted:

- Established a high quality creative learning hub for community use in the former Job Centre building in St Leonards Road, Bexhill.
- The centre attracted the younger generation from inside and outside Bexhill into the town centre and was being used daily by young people, adults and community groups.
- A range of creative and community activities were scheduled to be launched during 2018.
- Local education provider Dv8 used the premises daily in term-time.
- As well as Rother District Council's (RDC) community grant, match-funding was received from Dv8 and other sources which assisted with launching, supporting the project and renovating the building using local suppliers and expertise. Renovation was completed in February 2017.
- The building included classrooms, practice rooms, flexible learning spaces, studio spaces, basement space and a large communal lobby space.
- 26 local people were employed which included Hive Project Co-ordinators and Dv8 staff.
- Over 80 young people (14-24 year olds) used the Centre weekly on Dv8 programmes.
- During August 2017, National Citizens Service used the centre; over 150 young people attended.
- Weekly evening Audio Active sessions were held.
- A Steering Group was formed consisting of local residents (Bexhill Central), first meeting to be held in March.
- Creative Careers day to be held at the centre in March.
- Approximately £118,000 revenue / income secured in 2017/18.
- Active Communities Grant: 144 workshops (three per week – half staff funded). Aim to increase local residents' involvement in activities, services and in the project's design and delivery; participants encouraged to lead, shape and develop the project; and create stronger connections between residents, enabling friendships and improved social networks.
- CCG Health Inequalities Grant (£10,000): Aim to engage 30 x 13-24 NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) year olds in creating a Band Project and Games and Media Development course from April to August 2018.
- Planned projects and partnerships for the future included: community arts venue; Bexhill FM partnership; commercial studio use; summer activities, development of community arts space; and support for self-employment and traineeship programmes.
- Overall the centre promoted positive activities for young people and local residents; provided a high quality space to offer training and support as alternative to mainstream further education, supported vulnerable client groups positively; and facilitated new networks of creative professionals and provided positive employment for local residents.

Members had an opportunity to put forward questions and the following comments were raised / discussed:

- Bexhill Hive was in contact with other organisations across the town, namely Heart of Sidley and the Pelham Community Hub.
- 10 year lease and partnership / commitment with Dv8 to use the premises.
- Various funding opportunities were being explored including an Arts Council bid to purchase essential IT equipment.
- The centre was being promoted through all social media platforms e.g. website, Facebook and Twitter.
- The centre was available for community use and Members were encouraged to promote the Hive as a rental space to their local community groups.

The Chairman thanked Dan Wallman and Paul Bailey for attending the meeting and providing a comprehensive presentation and congratulated Bexhill Hive on its achievements to date.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

OSC17/51. **CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE**
(6.1) **CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

The Chairman welcomed Michael Horton and Carl Valentine of East Sussex County Council (ESCC) to the meeting, as well as Councillor Ian Hollidge, the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment, Transport and Bexhill Town Centre.

Councillor Elford, the Civil Parking Enforcement Task and Finish Group (CPET&FG) Chairman introduced the report and briefly advised the Committee of the various tasks the CPET&FG had completed and principal key findings made since its inception, as well as recommendations proposed. He also thanked his fellow CPET&FG Members for their contributions and ESCC / Rother officers who had supported the meetings.

The recommendations were a result of a culmination of work commenced in October 2017 by the CPET&FG, flowing from evidence gathered and information provided by ESCC, stakeholder engagement and other findings from work over the last six months.

In November 2015, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) agreed to review on-street parking. On-street parking was currently the responsibility of Sussex Police. However due to the other policing priorities, Sussex Police would only undertake parking enforcement, if infringements were considered dangerous. By adopting Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE), ESCC would take over responsibility for parking enforcement from Sussex Police. It would also enable ESCC to deal with all common parking issues and retain fine income to fund enforcement and improve the local transport network.

The report identified what the CPE process encompassed which included a submission to the Department of Transport, review of the current Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO), two-year timeframe for implementation, as well as a consultation process on the proposed scheme. A copy of the proposed scheme and indicative timetable was

appended to the report as Appendices 2 and 3 respectively. Members were reminded introducing additional TROs to the current scheme could further delay the CPE process, as comprehensive consultation, agreement from relevant organisations and ministerial approval would need to be completed and sought. Objections might also be received which could further delay the process. Once CPE was introduced, annual reviews would be undertaken to consider the effectiveness / practicalities of the scheme. Therefore, suggestions for alterations would be considered and consulted on at that time.

Gathering evidence was a fundamental part of the CPET&FG's Terms of Reference (ToR). An engagement event was held in November 2017, where a number of organisations attended to present their views on the introduction of CPE across the district. Written responses were also received and the Chairman of CPET&FG attended meetings of Bexhill Town Forum and Rother Association of Local Councils. Overall, stakeholders were in favour of ESCC applying to adopt CPE and recognised that parking infringements were not considered a priority for Sussex Police. Despite a few concerns being aired regarding on-street charging, stakeholders agreed that the scheme should be self-financing.

The CPET&FG also reviewed current management of the Council's off-street car parks, including charging structures and the legislation under which they operated, and provision of electric vehicle charging points across the South East.

The Chairman led Members through each recommendation and during the discussion the following salient points were noted:

- Members were disappointed to note that Wealden District Council (WDC) had decided not to pursue CPE. As a result, it was noted that there would be no additional costs to Rother, however proposed economies of scale would not be realised and pay-back time extended. Recommendation 2) was not supported.
- Members agreed that operation of off-street parking remained under the control of the Council's current legislation.
- Members agreed that prior to making a decision on electric vehicle provision the Council should await further Government guidance.
- Members were led through the indicative timetable and noted each of the different stages.
- Members requested that information on the changes to the TROs be provided on a Ward by Ward basis. ESCC confirmed that this was achievable and could be provided.
- Members requested that Recommendation 8) be reworded to state that the CPET&FG be reconvened six months after CPE was adopted to consider the impact of the CPE Scheme in preparation for the first annual review.
- Members requested that Recommendation 9) be reworded to state that during the first annual review, the Car Parking Review Working Group be reconvened to assess the impact of CPE on the usage and charging structure of the Council's off-street parking operation.

After discussion, it was agreed that all of the recommendations be approved for Cabinet ratification apart from ESCC attempting to

recover shared costs with WDC. An additional recommendation was also proposed to notify Sussex Police that the Council supported ESCC making an application for CPE and that in the interim the Police continue to enforce illegal and dangerous parking.

ESCC advised that once formal commitment was received and during the interim period before the scheme was operational, all current parking restriction signage and yellow lines would be refreshed.

Members acknowledged the benefits of introducing CPE to the district which included potential income to improve the local transport network, positive impact on the economy and environment, as well as reduced congestion and reduction of illegal and inconsiderate parking.

The Chairman thanked Michael Horton and Carl Valentine for attending and supporting all of the CPE meetings.

RESOLVED: That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to Cabinet and then full Council that:

- 1) Rother District Council write to East Sussex County Council to support an application to be submitted to the Department for Transport for Civil Parking Enforcement to be adopted;
- 2) the recommendation for East Sussex County Council to recover costs from Wealden District Council not be supported;
- 3) the current charging structure and tariffs in Rother District Council's off-street car parks remain unchanged until the Civil Parking Enforcement decision is taken;
- 4) the Council's off-street parking provision remain under the current management framework of The District of Rother Parking Places Order 1983;
- 5) when the Council's Planning Core Strategy is reviewed, Electric Vehicle Charging Points be considered in planning policy, and subject to government advice received, as well as technological and industry advances;
- 6) the indicative timetable for Civil Parking Enforcement be noted;
- 7) future East Sussex County Council consultation on the detail of the Traffic Regulation Orders changes, includes liaison with the affected Ward Members to obtain the Council's comments for their areas;
- 8) the Civil Parking Enforcement Task and Finish Group be reconvened six months after Civil Parking Enforcement was adopted to consider the impact of the Civil Parking Enforcement Scheme in preparation for the first annual review;
- 9) during the first annual review, the Car Parking Review Working Group be reconvened to consider assessment of the impact of Civil

Parking Enforcement on the usage and charging structure of the Council's off-street parking operation; and

- 10) Rother District Council notify Sussex Police of the recommendation to Cabinet and full Council that the Council support East Sussex County Council making an application for Civil Parking Enforcement and that in the interim the Police continue to carry out enforcement of illegal and dangerous parking.

(Councillors J. Barnes, C.A. Clark, S.H. Earl, S.D. Elford and K.M. Field each declared a personal interest in this matter in so far as they are elected Members of East Sussex County Council and in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct remained in the room during consideration thereof).

OSC17/52. **PERFORMANCE REPORT: THIRD QUARTER 2017/18**
(6.2)

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director of Business Operations on the Third Quarter 2017/18 Performance Report. Members were given the opportunity to scrutinise progress of a basket of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) previously selected for monitoring.

The Service Manager – Community and Economy advised that there were seven KPIs reported for the second quarter (up to 31 December 2017). Three met or exceeded target and four were currently not on target, these were: Changes to Housing Benefit Claims on Time; Housing Sites Supply; Homelessness Applications Received; and New Affordable Homes.

During discussion the following was noted:

Homelessness Applications Received: The number of applications of homelessness from Rother households that had come into the Council. Quarter target was 30, result was 57 (lower was better). The result was attributed to the increase in number of homeless presenting themselves to the Council following introduction of new welfare reforms in November 2017. Restructuring of the current Housing team would be required. The Service Manager – Finance and Welfare advised that Government funding had been received to assist with recruitment of qualified staff and software upgrading.

Housing Sites Supply: The sites in the district ready for development expressed as a percentage of the planning housing site delivery that the District needs over the next five years. The target was five years, mid-year estimate was 3.23 years (64.6%). The result had slightly improved compared to the same time last year.

Members were reminded that the Housing Issues Task and Finish Group would be focusing on both homelessness and housing supply issues. The Groups' findings and recommendations would be presented to the Committee at the meeting scheduled to be held on 23 July 2018.

The Committee also noted by exception the corporate performance indicators that were exceeding or not on target and particularly mentioned the increasing numbers of households in temporary accommodation, as well as the decreasing number of new homes built.

Assurance was given that all KPIs currently not on target would be continuously monitored.

The Chairman paid tribute to Brenda Mason, Service Manager – Economy and Community who would be leaving the Council at the end of the month. Members thanked Brenda for her dedication, professionalism, contribution and support over the years and wished her well for the future.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

OSC17/53. **REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING**
(7.1) **TO 31 DECEMBER 2017**

Members received and considered the report of the Executive Director of Resources on the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring to 31 December 2017 which had been presented to Cabinet on 12 February 2018. The report detailed the significant variations of the Revenue Budget and updated Capital Programme (Appendices A and B).

Overall the cost of services demonstrated an underspend of £0.319m. This was attributed to underspends / savings a range of service areas. An additional £100,000 of income was also expected to be received from the investment in the Churches, Charities and Local Authorities Property Fund. Approximately £330,000 had also been received in respect of welfare grants.

The council tax collection rate as at 31 December 2017 was comparable to previous years and the total collectable was currently above the original estimate. The Council Tax element of the Collection Fund was expected to be in surplus at year end.

The Capital Programme spend had been updated and brought in-line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2022/23. The estimated outturn was shown at Appendix A to the report. It was confirmed that work continued to resolve the outstanding former Bexhill High School site issues with East Sussex County Council and resolution was anticipated during 2018/19. Estimated spend on Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) was £1m; the balance of funds would be transferred to reserves. Project spending on the 2020 ICT Investment scheme, Bexhill Leisure Centre, Corporate Document Image Processing System and IT essential maintenance would slip into 2018/19.

Overall the Council underspend was £1,188,000, of which £388,000 related to DFGs which would be transferred to earmarked reserves for future years.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

OSC17/54. **WORK PROGRAMME**
(8)

Consideration was given to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme and the following points were noted:

- Referred from Cabinet on 12 March 2018 (Minute CB17/77) – Coastal Environments Corporate Project – East Parade, Bexhill to be considered at the meeting scheduled to be held on 23 April 2018. Cabinet Portfolio Holder to be invited.
- Members were reminded that the informal Annual Scrutiny Work Programme meeting had been arranged for Tuesday 22 May 2018 at 3:00pm in the Council Chamber and all non-executive Members had been invited to attend. At this meeting Members would give consideration to the items they wished to see included within the Work Programme and to consider these with the Strategic Management Team and Service Managers in attendance.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme, as attached at Appendix A, as amended, be agreed.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 8:03pm

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME 2017 – 2018		
DATE OF MEETING	SUBJECT – MAIN ITEM (Capitalised)	Cabinet Portfolio Holder
23.04.18	COASTAL ENVIRONMENTS CORPORATE PROJECT – EAST PARADE, BEXHILL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call-in and Urgency Procedures • Draft Annual Report to Council (including review of Task and Finish Groups / Outcomes) 	Hollidge

WORK PROGRAMME 2018 – 2019		
DATE OF MEETING	SUBJECT – MAIN ITEM (Capitalised)	Cabinet Portfolio Holder
11.06.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Work Programme • Performance Progress Report: Year End and Fourth Quarter 2017/18 • Tourism Event Funding Review 	
23.07.18	HOUSING ISSUES TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT	Hughes
10.09.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Progress Report: First Quarter 2018/19 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring to July 2018 	Ampthill
15.10.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20 to 2023/24 	Ampthill
26.11.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Progress Report: Second Quarter 2018/19 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring to September 2018 	Ampthill
28.01.19	DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSALS 2019/20 KEY PERFORMANCE TARGETS 2019/20	Ampthill Maynard
18.03.19	CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE: TO RECEIVE AN REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Progress Report: Third Quarter 2018/19 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring to January 2019 	Ampthill Kirby-Green
29.04.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call-in and Urgency Procedures • Draft Annual Report to Council • Review of Task and Finish Groups / Outcomes 	-

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Portfolio Holder Updates • Rother Public Realm Strategic Framework progress [Minute OSC16/25 – 17 October 2016] • Special Expenses Review [Minute OSC17/47 – 29 January 2018] • Tourism Strategy (creation of a Tourism Task and Finish Group) to be held during 2019/20 [Minute OSC17/13 – 24 July 2017/ OSC17/47 – 29 January 2018] • Waste and Recycling Contract Update 	