

Unconfirmed minutes – to be agreed at the next meeting of the Environmental and Community Services Select Committee

Environmental & Community Services Select Committee

11 March 2016 – At a meeting of the Select Committee held at 10.30 a.m. at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mr Tyler (Chairman)

Mr Circus
Dr Dennis
Mr G Jones

Mr M Jones
Mr S Oakley
Mrs Phillips

Mr J Rogers
Mr Whittington

In attendance by invitation: Mr O'Brien (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport)

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Brunsdon and Mr Rae.

Mr Barrett-Miles was absent

Declarations of Interests

194. In accordance with the Code of Conduct, the following personal interests were declared:

195. Mr S Oakley as a member of Tangmere Parish Council in receipt of Operation Watershed funds in relation to Operation Watershed; and as a member of the Task and Finish Group (TFG) in relation to the Draft Minerals Local Plan.

196. Mr J Rogers as Chairman of the TFG in relation to the Draft Minerals Local Plan.

197. Mr Tyler as a member of Rustington Parish Council in relation to Operation Watershed.

198. Mr Whittington as Chairman of the Cycling and Walking TFG, Cycling and Walking Champion and Chairman of Rights of Way Committee in relation to Highways Improvement Schemes Process.

199. Mr G Jones declared a prejudicial interest as a member of the Executive TFG in relation to Highways Improvement Schemes Process; he joined the Cabinet member in answering questions on this item.

200. He also declared a personal interest as a member of the TFG in relation to the Draft Minerals Local Plan.

Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee

201. Resolved – that the minutes of the Environmental and Community Services Select Committee held on 10 February 2016 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

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Highways Improvement Schemes Process

202. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Highways and Transport and Highway Improvements Manager (copy appended to signed minutes) which set out a proposed new process for Highways Improvement Schemes prioritisation.

203. Alex Sharkey, Highways Improvements Manager introduced the report. Recommendations in the report are based on the review and findings of the Executive Task and Finish Group (TFG) set up to look at the process. The TFG have proposed a system which will result in a more manageable programme of works.

204. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport thanked the TFG for the careful consideration given to the process and hoped that this has given a good direction of travel.

205. The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:

- Recognised that the scoring criteria is key to the prioritisation to ensure a strategic approach is taken, but emphasised the importance of involving local members and communities in developing schemes for their areas. Some level of geographical spread could be helpful to avoid accusations that one area was generally favoured over another. There was some support for involving CLCs in this matter. The Committee also recognised that some moderation of scoring criteria should be undertaken to ensure consistency across the County.
- Requested reassurance that joint working be encouraged within the scoring system for cross border CLCs taking part in joint schemes.
- Highlighted the need for any available funding sources to be accurately identified and channelled to meet locally agreed priorities and form part of the scoring process. This should include S106 and CIL monies.
- Questioned what would happen to schemes already prioritised by the CLCs. Officers confirmed these would be assessed using the proposed process and if successful would be proposed for a future works programme.

206. Mr M Jones made the following proposal, seconded by Mr Circus which the Committee considered: -

207. That the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport may be better advised to consider Option 2 (CLC approach) of the report as a fairer way of allocating improvement schemes for progression rather than Option 3 (strategic approach).

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208. A vote was held and the proposal was lost.

209. Resolved – That the Committee:

- a) Whilst recognising that this is a new process, requests that the availability and management of S106 monies be built into the prioritisation process.
- b) Requests a review of the scheme to come back to the Committee in 12 months' time; to include details of any changes required to the process and scoring system.

IWP 2016/17 Proposed Schemes

210. The Committee considered a report by the Interim Executive Director Residents' Services and Interim Director Highways and Transport (copy appended to signed minutes) which set out a new prioritisation for scheme delivery and a proposed delivery programme.

211. Peter Smith, Project Manager for Asset Management, introduced the report.

212. The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:

- Welcomed the general IWP approach and questioned whether the Department for Transport (DFT) was likely to provide good levels of funding towards its delivery. Mr Smith advised that the DFT would provide an element of its funding as "incentive funding", based on the effectiveness of asset management systems that the County Council puts in place. It was hoped that the County Council would remain at the higher end of individual council funding.
- Asked whether drainage infrastructure maintenance and repair were being considered for transition funding spend. It was noted this was not for the consideration of this committee. Mr Smith stated that drainage elements are considered when schemes to improve the highways are under design.
- Commented on the maintenance and repair of existing assets to ensure there is a balance between asset management and new schemes, particularly in relation to traffic signals.

213. Resolved – That the report be noted and supported.

Operation Watershed

214. The Committee considered a report by the Interim Executive Director Residents' Services and Interim Director Highways and Transport (copy appended to signed minutes) which outlined the achievements of the scheme since 2013 and advised of a new fund to continue this work.

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215. At the invitation of the Chairman, representatives from Angmering Parish Council addressed the Committee on their experience of the scheme. Sylvia Verrinder, Vice Chairman and Claire Fullman, Administrator gave a presentation (copy of slides appended to signed minutes) which included the following key points:

- The June 2012 flooding of Angmering village and the subsequent impact on local properties and businesses.
- An emergency committee was set up which identified a need for the safe viewing of a key culvert in the village to give early warning in future flooding instances.
- An application to Operation Watershed for the funding and provision of a web camera to monitor the culvert grille was successful and funding was received at the beginning of July 2015. The camera has now been installed and went live to residents in February 2016.

216. Peter Smith Project Manager, Operation Watershed introduced the report.

217. The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:

- Welcomed the proposed reintroduction of the Operation Watershed fund and was pleased to note the implementation of schemes to date. It asked how local groups and organisations would be made aware of the scheme and what support is offered to non-Parish Town Council areas. Mr Smith confirmed that officers worked closely with borough and district councils who helped to identify areas or groups that may need help, including residents associations and the establishment of Flood Action groups.
- Asked whether any groups had experienced problems when dealing with contractors. Mr Smith confirmed that there had been problems in a small number of cases. The County Council had supported the affected groups to each resolution.

218. Resolved – That the Committee supports the scheme and recognises the value for money that Operation Watershed represents and supports the proactive working with community groups, Parish/District and Borough Councils to identify schemes for the future.

Draft West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (Regulation 18 stage)

219. The Committee considered a report by the Acting Executive Director Residents' Services and Strategic Planning Manager (copy appended to signed minutes) which set out the Draft Plan which was proposed for public comment.

220. Rupy Sandhu, Senior Planner introduced the report.

221. The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:

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- Noted the significant reduction in the number of possible extraction sites and questioned whether this could lead to industry challenges. Mr Sandhu confirmed that in November 2015 the level and type of demand became clearer – the evidence confirms the need for soft sand. He confirmed that the County Council has undertaken engagement in the spirit of the duty to co-operate with neighbouring Mineral Planning Authorities. Evidence suggests there are sufficient sources of soft sand available outside of the South Downs National Park, therefore there are no exceptional circumstances to warrant sites being developed in the National Park. This evidence should reduce the risk of a successful challenge.
- Questioned whether policy M7 on hydrocarbons was appropriate, given widespread concerns about the potential risks. Mike Elkington, Strategic Planning Manager, advised that the policy was consistent with national policy and that there is protection in place for national park areas.

222. Resolved – That the Committee supports the Plan and request that the TFG be consulted on any changes in relation to Policy M7, in response to the recommendations by the South Downs National Park Authority.

Business Planning Group Report

223. The Committee considered a report by the Chairman of the Business Planning Group (copy appended to the signed minutes).

224. Resolved – That the Committee endorses the contents of the report and particularly the Committee's Work Programme for 2016/17, revised to reflect the Business Planning Group's (BPG's) discussions. With a request that a review of the Highways Improvement Schemes be brought back to the Committee in 12 months' time and that an update report on Railways and On-street parking be considered by the BPG.

Forward Plan of Key Decisions

225. The Committee considered the Forward Plan April to July 2016 (copy appended to signed minutes). The Chairman advised Members that the entry relating to the A27 in Chichester had been amended to reflect Highways England's announcement that its consultation timetable had been delayed.

226. Resolved – That the Forward Plan be noted with a request that a report on Highways Roundabout Maintenance and Sponsorship, to include consideration of a joint contract or co-ordinated work with Highways England; be brought to the Committee.

Date of the Next Meeting

227. The Committee noted that its next scheduled meeting will take place on 17 March 2016 at 2pm at County Hall, Chichester. This is to consider the Call-

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In request for Proposed Decision – Strategic Economic Plan reserve allocation: Beautiful Outdoors LDR 19 (15/16).

The meeting ended at 12.45pm

Chairman