

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4.30PM 6 JUNE 2011

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Morgan (Chair); Sykes (Deputy Chair), Cobb, Gilbey, Jones and Littman

PART ONE

1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1.1 The Chair Councillor Warren Morgan welcomed everyone to the meeting especially new Councillors and in particular Councillors Ian Davey and Pete West, Cabinet Members for Transport and Public Realm, and Environment and Sustainability respectively. Councillors including those new to this Committee introduced themselves.

1a Declarations of Substitutes

There were none.

1b Declarations of Interests

There were none

1c Declaration of Party Whip

There were none.

1d Exclusion of Press and Public

In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 100I (1) of the said Act.

1.2 RESOLVED: That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 APRIL 2011

2.1 **RESOLVED**; that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 April 2011 be agreed and signed by the Chair.

3. CHAIRS COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 The Chair Councillor Warren Morgan congratulated the Scrutiny Team on winning the national Good Scrutiny Award for Innovation for the Scrutiny Panel on Climate Change Adaptation and on being shortlisted for Scrutiny Team of the Year.

3.2 Councillor Morgan noted the changed Cabinet portfolios for Environment and Community Safety issues.

3.3 He had received a note for the Committee from Councillor Ben Duncan, Cabinet Member for Communities and Community Safety which would be circulated.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS/ LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS/REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES/NOTICES OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL

4.1 A letter had been received from Councillor G Theobald requesting scrutiny of gypsies and travellers policy. A report would be added to the agenda for the next ECSOSC, 5 September.

5. DISCUSSION WITH CABINET MEMBER; INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENT SERVICES

5.1 The Strategic Director Place, Geoff Raw, told the meeting that the central Policy Team had made an early analysis of election manifestos and alternative policies. He referred Members to the new Cabinet portfolios in the areas of environment and community safety, that had been agreed at 19 May full Council. Extracts from the Scheme of Delegation for Cabinet were included with this agenda.

5.2 The new policy agenda was now being developed and it was important to support ECSOSC to help reach the best possible decisions. There would be clear timetables of meetings and agendas to assist with this.

5.3 Councillor Ian Davey, Cabinet Member for Transport and Public Realm, said that environment was a colossal area of work for which responsibility had now been split between three Cabinet Members, who would work together at all levels.

5.4 The City faced huge challenges and Cabinet members would look to work with scrutiny to make improvements. Scrutiny was valued and key issues would be brought to the committee. Councillor Davey gave examples of recent scrutinies; significant progress had been made in starting to implement the recommendations of the 20mph scrutiny review and new criteria for pedestrian crossings were being implemented for instance.

5.5 Large public realm issues were high priorities for the new administration - such as Brighton Station Gateway, Valley Gardens and streetscape in general.

5.6 Councillor Pete West, Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability, told the meeting he looked forward to a beneficial, productive, open and inclusive relationship with Scrutiny. He said he was already tackling a number of key issues.

5.7 For example the administration was looking to renew the Travellers Strategy and in recognising the needs of travellers, would also have to be mindful of concerns of the settled community..

5.8 Councillor West said the State of the Local Environment report made grim reading. Asked to expand on this, he referred to indicators on recycling, drinking and seawater quality and the Council's carbon footprint. There was plenty of scope for improvement and he looked forward to working on policy development with scrutiny and bringing the City to a much stronger position.

5.9 The Chair Councillor Morgan reminded Members that the State of the City report, to go to tomorrow's Overview and Scrutiny Commission, set the scene and would influence the scrutiny agenda. He encouraged Cabinet Members to bring forward more issues than formerly, for pre-decision scrutiny. Councillor Davey remarked that scrutiny input into a planned review of citywide parking, would be useful.

5.10 Councillor Morgan said he wished to discuss the current protocol between the Community Safety Forum and ECSOSC with Councillor Ben Duncan the Cabinet Member for Communities and Community Safety, whom he would invite to a future meeting.

6. INTRODUCTION TO SCRUTINY

6.1 The Head of Scrutiny Tom Hook gave a brief introduction to scrutiny; a booklet was available for Members. The Committee's terms of reference extracted from the Council's Constitution, plus the protocol for working between ECSOSC and the Community Safety Forum, were tabled at the meeting.

7. COMMUNITY SAFETY, CRIME REDUCTION AND DRUGS STRATEGY 2011-2014

(Note this report was considered after item 8)

7.1 The Commissioner Community Safety introduced her work and the draft Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2011- 2014. She manages the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Team that delivers the Strategy and oversees the production of priorities.

7.2 The Council had an equal duty with the Police to reduce crime in the area and to publish a 3- year Strategy. Priorities as listed on Page 19 of the Strategy, are based on detailed crime analysis, an audit of crime and disorder, annual strategic assessment and consultation with communities of interest and neighbourhood communities.

7.3 The Commissioner explained that previously, consultation at the start of the 3-year period had elicited only limited response rates. Now, on-going consultation and dialogue is built in and Local Action Teams (LATs) are especially useful in developing a real understanding of the priorities. The draft Strategy is included in the Consultation Portal and published on the Safe in the City website and is subject to change to reflect the feedback from consultation.

7.4 The Community Safety Partnership had received accolades from the Home Office as a 'mature' partnership, good at calculating and dealing with the causes of offending.

7.5 Further developing integrated offender management and reducing youth reoffending linking in with other plans for instance Children's Services, were key elements of current work, she said. The aim is to reinvest more in prevention and early intervention services.

7.6 Members thanked and congratulated the officers on their work.

7.7 Asked how Intelligent Commissioning (IC) linked in, the Commissioner pointed out that the draft Strategy would still change to reflect the Commissioning Strategy in the areas of the three Pilots on domestic violence – the most advanced IC area– alcohol-related harm and drug-related deaths, where there would likely be most change.

7.8 In reply to questions Members heard that lead officers' names could be provided. A potential list of 'outcomes' rather than targets was being drawn up and these would be reported to the Community Safety Forum.

7.9 Regarding potential root causes of crime such as some areas of high dwelling densities, lack of amenities and facilities, and general health and well-being, the Commissioner pointed out that CSP does not lead on those areas but does suggest and encourage crime reduction measures eg in planning and major projects, supporting events such as White Knights. Crime and disorder is considered in all decision-making, as set out in other strategies. Root causes and breaking the cycle of crime are addressed where possible in dealing with individual offenders, by integrated offender management.

7.10 An investigation was suggested of how 'crime and disorder' is incorporated into strategic plans, including any potential correlation between housing issues/crime and disorder, and housing for offenders.

7.11 The Committee asked about crime trends, how the priority areas are established, which officers or bodies have responsibilities in each area and how resilience to all types of extremism is being developed. They heard that the published annual strategic assessment forms the basis for setting priorities and analytical performance reports are provided regularly to the Community Safety Forum. Moving towards a positive Community Cohesion approach with the Communities and Equalities team was now under way.

7.12 The Commissioner clarified the meaning of scrutiny panels (page 56, point 11.2 refers) that were convened by the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences rather than Scrutiny Councillors.

7.13 ECSOSC noted that this was a working document undergoing development and recommended that the adopted Strategy:

- i) provide information on statistical trends and cross-refer priorities to relevant data in the Strategic Assessment, State of the City report, etc
- ii) include information on the lead bodies on each priority area

iii) ECSOSC recommends that how crime and disorder issues are incorporated in Strategic Plans, be added to its scrutiny work plan.

8. PROCUREMENT OF VEHICLES AND PLANT

8.1 *(Note this item was considered before Item 7)*

The Fleet and Maintenance Manager and the Head of Strategy and Projects introduced the report seeking approval for a 7-year programme of Procurement of Vehicles. The aim was to reduce carbon emissions, make savings, reduce the overall number of vehicles and reduce maintenance and fuel costs. Capital expenditure for vehicle replacement had been approved in March.

8.2 Answering questions, the Fleet and Maintenance Manager said the current fleet comprised 440 vehicles. Procurement and maintenance had previously been done on an 'ad hoc' basis but now for example it was possible to ensure all vehicles are fit for purpose, identify vehicles with very low mileage that could be taken out of the fleet, potentially reduce insurance costs and look for other ways to reduce the need for vehicles.

8.3 It was proposed to replace around 90% of the vehicles under the structured programme. Older vehicles were generally sold at auction. Replacement of gritter vehicles were being dealt with separately and would be reported to the next ECSOSC meeting.

8.4 Members commented that whole life costs and more details of the business case, calculations of the carbon impact and alternatives that had been considered would be helpful.

8.5 Officers stated that more details were readily available. Electric vehicles had been tried, unsuccessfully, for recycling. Research was on-going and detailed specifications were still being developed. Work areas such as social services and Cityclean had different needs and for example it had been found possible to reduce the size of the City Car Club fleet.

8.6 ECOSC agreed to forward its comments and recommendations to 9 June Cabinet;

8.7 ECSOSC welcomed the aims of the vehicle replacement programme, reducing carbon emissions and increasing Value for Money. More information on current vehicle usage, the business case for change, evaluation of alternative options and environmental considerations would be beneficial.

8.8 ECSOSC recommends:

i) That the Council be able to account for all its vehicles and plant, including records on maintenance, insurance and other running costs.

ii) That anticipated reductions in the size and the carbon impact of the vehicle and plant fleet be tracked and reported.

- iii) That disposal of the existing vehicles takes environmental impact into account, as far as possible.
- iv) That any further practical measures be considered that would reduce the operational need for vehicles across the council.
- v) That technological developments including improved 'hybrid' vehicles be fully investigated.
- vi) That consideration be given as to whether there are further opportunities to re-evaluate the fleet for low carbon emissions.

9. ECSOSC DRAFT WORK PLAN AND FORWARD PLAN

9.1 ECSOSC noted that the next meeting would include reports on Gypsies and Travellers and Monitoring the Winter Service Plan scrutiny recommendations.

9.2 Members agreed it was preferable at this stage to keep the agenda light to enable items from the Forward Plan to be included.

9.3 All the Committee Members were invited to bring forward potential subjects to the Head of Scrutiny.

10. ITEMS TO BE REFERRED TO CABINET MEMBER, CABINET OR FULL COUNCIL

10.1 There were none.

The meeting concluded at 6.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of