

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4.00PM 31 OCTOBER 2011

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Morgan (Chair); Sykes (Deputy Chair), Cobb, Gilbey, Hawtree, Janio, Littman and Summers

PART ONE

24. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

24a Declarations of Substitutes

Councillor Summers was substituting for Councillor Jones

24b Declarations of Interests

There were none

24c Declaration of Party Whip

There were none.

24d 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.

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

25. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 5 SEPTEMBER AND 14 OCTOBER 2011 (CALL-IN)

25.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 5 September and call-in meeting held on 14 October were agreed and signed by the Chair.

26. CHAIRS COMMUNICATIONS

26.1 Councillor Morgan said that following the ECSOSC workshop on flood risk, a visit for to the Marina had been arranged for 18 November. Details would be sent to Members.

26.2 Deputy Chair Councillor Ollie Sykes told the meeting that Defra had replied to concerns from the flood risk workshop that he had Chaired. Defra had set out the national approach by the Environment Agency towards National Rail on provision of data; this is being followed up for the next stages of the flood study.

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

27.1 There were none.

28. MONITORING THE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF 20MPH LIMITS/ZONES

28.1 The Road Safety Manager Phil Clarke presented an update to the Committee following the Scrutiny Review of 20mph limits, summarising the three areas of on-going work.

28.2 The Speed Limit Review (A&B Class roads) and (20mph Speed Limits) had both been reported to 4 October Environment Transport and Sustainability Cabinet Member meeting. CMM had given permission to consult on reducing the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph on stretches of roads near schools in Neville Road, Hove and Trafalgar Road, Portslade. Permission to consult was also given on two pilot 20mph areas around schools and residential roads in Portslade and the Stanford area. The cost of the pilots areas was approximately £80,000, funded via the Local Transport Plan, LTP3. Replies to both consultations were now being received.

28.3 Taking into account the scrutiny recommendations, a City centre 20mph limit was being investigated, with a view to extending it to more residential and commercial areas. Scoping work was anticipated during this financial year. Future funding would be policy decisions.

28.4 The Road Safety Manager pointed out that the areas agreed for consultation are residential/commercial and not main routes and so already have relatively low average vehicle speeds. A small reduction in road speed can make a significant difference to the effect of any collision. The proposals were speed limits, rather than 'zones' or 'traffic calming,' which involved engineering works that would be more costly and potentially more unsightly.

28.5 He went on to answer questions. Regarding signage, as suggested by the Department for Transport, roundels on the road surface can be used, to reduce signposts to the legal minimum requirement. If speed reductions were to be time-relevant (eg day/night), then more street signage would be required. There were no plans to monitor vehicle emissions in the pilot areas although this was done at various locations across Brighton & Hove. Removal of speed limits had not been costed, as the intention was to extend areas and make them more affordable. New signage in extended areas would use the roundels as repeaters with the terminal signs being re-used.

28.6 It was clarified (report para 4.1) that the scrutiny panel visited Portsmouth where the UK's first city centre 'blanket' 20mph area had been introduced. Initial results from that scheme

(from low numbers) showed a small reduction in average speeds but did indicate that signs and road surfaces can influence driver behaviour for the better.

28.7 Asked about the extent of consultation, the Road Safety Manager explained the standard Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process; proposed amendments are published in the local newspaper and across a wide area, not only the areas directly affected. He would check on consultation with specific groups such as Local Action Teams and Local Residents' Associations.

28.8 The Police did not expect to be involved in activity-directed enforcement; however would enforce blatant disregard of speed limits if they encountered it.

28.9 Regarding how pilot areas were selected the Road Safety Manager said suitable significant areas around schools were chosen, in line with scrutiny recommendations, to test methodology and effectiveness. Collision hotspots are kept under continuous review for possible engineering or education measures; they are not being ignored in favour of the pilot schemes.

28.10 Members welcomed in principle steps to encourage lower speeds in residential areas. It was agreed to ask for a progress update on implementation at a suitable time, with an invitation to the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Public Realm. Further questions included identifying the most suitable pilot areas, to make best use of available funding; and the extent of consultation including with LATs and residents' associations.

28.11 An answer to a question on the timescale for replacing road traffic signals throughout the City would be provided in writing.

28.12 RESOLVED: (i) that the report be noted
(ii) that the Cabinet Member be invited to provide an update with a further monitoring report to a future meeting.

29. COUNCIL-SUPPORTED BUS SERVICES

29.1 The Road Safety Manager Phil Clarke introduced the report on Permission to Tender for Council-supported bus network, agreed at 4 October CMM with the caveat that he had limited knowledge of the subject as it was not his area of expertise. He was standing in for the Transport Planning Manager who had given his apologies for today's meeting.

29.2 He said the current contracts that expire in September 2012 were issued in 2007/2008 following a decision that combined consultation with permission to tender. This round differed in that the two stages had been separated.

29.3 Asked how the tendering exercise linked in with decisions on the Council's budget, the Strategic Director Place pointed out that Members would decide on which bus routes would be supported, based on available resources and Best Value.

29.4 In reply to a question on how routes were deemed to be commercially viable or otherwise, Members heard that bus operators had reliable estimates of costs and incomes; and the Council encouraged bus operators to look at new routes as well as established ones.

29.5 Members asked further questions on: the costs of the tendering exercise; how many bus companies were likely to apply; deregulation of bus services; and to what extent the analyses are based on historical data and on future predictions, for example how future journey options to key destinations (eg hospital) are considered.

29.6 Members queried whether additional routes, such as a supported bus route along the seafront eg from Portslade to the City Centre could be included.

29.7 Written replies would be provided to Members on determining viability of routes, how companies evaluate bus routes, forecasting journey demand and the potential for the Council to establish its own bus services, perhaps via an 'arms length' or other organisation.

29.8 ECSOSC agreed to question supported bus routes as part of the scrutiny of the budget process.

29.9 RESOLVED (1) that the report be noted

(2) that the supported bus network be included as part of scrutiny of the Council's 2012 – 2013 budget proposals.

30. MONITORING SCRUTINY REVIEWS: SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND OLDER PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

30.1 The Commissioner Community Safety Linda Beanlands presented monitoring reports on the outcomes of two Community Safety scrutiny reviews; Services for Older People and Victims of Sexual Violence.

30.2 The Scrutiny Review of Older People and Community Safety had led to the inclusion for the first time, of Older People as an additional priority in the current Community Safety Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2011 – 2014. Each of the Strategy's 13 Priority Areas typically has a dedicated lead officer, however it was not until October 2011 that an officer had specific responsibility to deliver the recommendations on Older People. There had therefore been less significant progress than anticipated, although much work in relevant areas for instance on domestic violence, sexual violence and acquisitive crime, was helping to improve the safety of older people as well as other age groups.

30.3 Members also heard of initiatives in Portslade that helped to bring younger and older people together.

30.4 There had been much progress on support services for victims of sexual violence, including setting up a Sussex-wide Sexual Assault Referral Centre with clinical and forensic services to meet immediate service needs. Joint Commissioning arrangements with the Police, NHS and East and West Sussex County Councils were established to give good value for money. As well as statutory providers, other local support services are commissioned to provide good opportunities for reporting, and for receiving medical support. There was much

support from independent Third Sector agencies such as the Survivors Network, Women's Centre, Rise, Oasis, Threshold and Mankind.

30.5 The Chair Councillor Warren Morgan mentioned Age UK being well placed in the Community to help support older people. He asked about the implications of substance misuse with regard to support services.

30.6 The Commissioner said drinking to excess was an added risk factor for both perpetrators and victims and it was a key aim to try to reduce this risk. In line with scrutiny recommendations it was important to ensure the City's workforce, especially police, housing officers etc, were able to identify alcohol as a factor in dealing with individuals. Referral pathways were now more developed to improve the connection between services.

30.7 She answered questions on the high number of victims and on improving awareness, reducing social tolerance and promoting healthy relationships through City events (eg one in November) and via schools and colleges. Social density had not been shown to be a factor in incidences of the crime, though could potentially exacerbate severity.

30.8 Members were pleased at progress made against the scrutiny recommendations and requested case studies to show examples of the systems now in place.

30.9 RESOLVED that a further progress update be provided for both the scrutiny reviews, including case studies.

31. FUTURE OF CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY

31.1 The Head of Scrutiny Tom Hook presented a report on the future of Crime and Disorder Committees in light of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 that established Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) and Police and Crime Panels (PCP). He outlined the current situation and the protocol between the Community Safety Forum and ECSOSC, and made proposals for future scrutiny of community safety issues (section 7 of the report). Members were invited to comment on these, and on local arrangements for accountability of Sussex Police.

31.2 Commissioner Community Safety Linda Beanlands confirmed that the PCPs would hold the PCC to account; this was an entirely separate function from providing scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership that would remain with the local authority. Good working relationships would be needed between all the functions however. She also confirmed that there was no change (under the Crime and Disorder Act) to the requirement for a Community Safety Partnership ('Safe in the City', chaired by the Council's Chief Executive and the Police Chief Superintendent) or to Councillors responsibilities for community safety in the City.

31.3 The Chair Councillor Warren Morgan explained that Councillor Ben Duncan the Cabinet Member, Chair of the Community Safety Forum and the (one of 17) current Member of the Sussex Police Authority, was unwell and had given his apologies.

31.4 He said Community Safety was a high priority in Brighton & Hove and a Crime and Community Safety Scrutiny body was of great importance in dealing with local people's concerns. He referred to the dilemma of the requirement for a Crime and Disorder Committee - the role presently undertaken by ECSOSC - when the Community Safety Forum attended by

Communities of Interest, being Chaired by an Executive Member , was unable to perform this formal scrutiny function.

31.5 Members generally felt that, compared with adjoining areas also covered by Sussex Police, Brighton & Hove's position in terms of population and business, was dissimilar enough to warrant additional representation for the City on the PCP.

31.6 The Commissioner advised that the Secretary of State had approved greater PCP representation elsewhere. A transition team of officers and relevant Members including from Scrutiny, was being proposed to establish appropriate arrangements with partner authorities.

31.7 On behalf of the Committee the Chair Councillor Warren Morgan said there were many options. More discussion was needed. He asked that the transition team draw up proposals with a 'road map,' including for community safety scrutiny, for consideration by January Governance Committee.

31. 8 RESOLVED that the transition team of officers and relevant Councillors including scrutiny representation develop proposals for the Sussex Police and Crime Panel and for scrutiny of crime and disorder in Brighton & Hove, for agreement at January 2012 Governance Committee.

32. ECSOSC DRAFT WORK PLAN

32.1 Members noted the draft ECSOSC work plan.

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

33.1 There were none.

The meeting concluded at 5.30pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of