

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

**ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**4.00PM 8 NOVEMBER 2010**

**COMMITTEE ROOM 1, HOVE TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors Morgan (Chairman); Davis, A Norman, Rufus, Smart, West and Older

Also Present: Councillor McCaffery, Councillor Slmson

**PART ONE**

**22. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

**22a Declarations of Substitutes**

Councillor Older was substituting for Councillor Janio; Councillor Drake had given apologies. Both had been unwell and the Chairman sent good wishes to them on behalf of the Committee.

**22b Declarations of Interests**

There were none

**22c Declaration of Party Whip**

There were none.

**22d 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.

**23. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER, 5 OCTOBER AND UPDATE ON PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS**

23.1 It was noted at minute 18.4, that Councillor G Theobald, Environment Cabinet Member and a member of the South Downs National Park Authority was scheduled to attend the 25 January 2011 meeting.

23.2 The additional information on criteria for pedestrian crossings was welcomed and a further report on a reviewed methodology scheduled for January. There were questions on the reasons for the review and on how to take into account roads where people might wish to cross but did not feel confident to try to do so.

23.3 Members stated that it would be helpful to be able to give an indication to residents about whether or not a request for a crossing was likely to be successful. They therefore asked for an explanation of the criteria in 'lay person' language and also for specific examples, to see how the formula is applied at local sites.

23.4 **RESOLVED;** (1) that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 September be agreed and signed by the Chairman.

(2) Minutes of the call-in meeting were agreed subject to an amendment at 20.1a that Councillor Barnett was substituting for Councillor Drake. The minutes would be forwarded for signing to Councillor Janio who as Deputy, chaired the call-in meeting.

#### **24. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

24.1 Councillor Morgan the committee Chairman noted that the Winter Service Plan had been reported to the 4 November Environment Cabinet Member Meeting. A new gritter fleet was now being planned for 2011- 2012. Monitoring agreed actions following the scrutiny review would be added to the ECSOSC work programme.

24.2 Councillor Morgan had attended the Local Government Group Annual Safer Communities Conference and Exhibition in Brighton on 12 and 13 October.

#### **25. PUBLIC QUESTIONS/LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS/ REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES/NOTICES OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL**

25.1 Councillor McCaffery introduced her letter requesting a review of the council's parking policy in residential areas. She said this was not solely a ward issue although residents in her ward had been raising concerns for example about the impact of parking restrictions in Preston Park Avenue on parking in the Park.

25.2 She said controlled parking zones had the effect only of moving problems to other areas. Formal questions had been asked and petitions presented on a range of issues. There were long waits to obtain a permit and congestion in the city appeared to be increasing. There were areas where parking meters were unused. During consultations there were roads that had asked to be included in schemes that in the event were not, and vice versa.

25.3 Some restrictions limited to part-day could be effective. A resident in the centre of the city had complained that people with large driveways to accommodate several cars, do not pay for parking

25.4 Councillor McCaffery asked for a public scrutiny review. She acknowledged that the issue was complex and that an internal review was going on. She said that people wanted their information to be heard and to give evidence in public.

25.5 Some parking had been displaced to the outskirts of the city and, in her view if no changes were made, areas such as Patcham, Withdean, Portslade would become parking lots.

25.6 The Chairman commented that a number of Panels were already in progress. Asked about the feasibility of a full scrutiny, the Head of Scrutiny said this would be resource-intensive and at present there was little capacity to undertake such a review. There was also a risk of duplication with the current review.

25.7 It was generally agreed that there was a need for a scrutiny review with public input but that it would not be feasible at present. The Chairman would write to the Cabinet Member. This could be discussed at the next meeting, 25 January 2011, with a view to adding Parking Policy to the Committee's work plan during 2011.

25.8 **RESOLVED** that the Chairman write to the Cabinet Member as minuted above.

## **26. DISCUSSION WITH CHAIRMAN, COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM, INCLUDING CRIME TRENDS**

26.1 The Chairman welcomed Councillor Simson as Chairman of the Community Safety Forum to give a 6-monthly update on the work of the Forum. The draft minutes of the 18 October Community Safety Forum were tabled.

26.2 Councillor Simson said the Street Pastors were very active. She had personally seen them making a big difference in helping to support vulnerable people every Friday night.

26.3 The Local Action Teams and meetings of the LAT Chairs were also productive in dealing with issues in detail. Much work was being done to respond to late night noise problems in various areas of the city. Minimum service standards had been launched for victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour. The Family Intervention Project was also achieving success. The White Night on 30 October had been amazing including different faith groups singing and performing from the balcony of the Partnership Community Safety Team offices.

26.4 Looking at the crime trends report, overall crime had reduced by 4.8% compared with the same period last year. Violent crime, motor vehicle theft and hate incidents had all decreased.

26.5 The data had not been so good for domestic violence and sexual violence. However it was a positive development that more people felt able to report and some of the data referred to historical incidents. More offences were being detected with a high percentage of successful court cases.

26.6 The CSF meeting had been updated on the management of demonstrations by the Police. Engagement with residents prior to a recent demonstration had been commended. The

Forum had also received the scrutiny panel report on Support Services for Victims of Sexual Violence.

26.7 Councillor Simson and the Commissioner for Community Safety answered questions on developing the minimum standards for anti-social behaviour victims across the City and the RISE programme delivered in schools.

26.8 Asked about the future funding of the Partnership Community Safety Team, the Commissioner said that at present Community Safety Services were funded via ring-fenced budgets. It was important to maintain front-line services and the potential impact of significant changes would need to be clear.

26.9 Senior representatives of partner organisations were meeting to identify priorities, any duplication and where saving could potentially be made. Investing in integrated offender management would lead to savings elsewhere. For example some underlying causes of crime can be identified and diversion measures initiated; early intervention could help support individuals and also reduce the significant costs of criminal proceedings. The Intelligent Commissioning pilots were a good opportunity to develop this; and work to reduce Prolific and Priority Offending was expected to benefit from a similar approach.

26.10 Regarding monitoring performance in the absence of national indicators, the meeting heard that reporting would continue in a similar way so that trends could still be identified. A peak in crimes and incidents may be the result of the activity of just one person.

26.11 The Chairman thanked Councillor Simson for a thorough progress report.

26.12 **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## **27. BIOSPHERE RESERVE**

27.1 The Countryside Manager introduced the report on Biosphere Reserves and in response to questions gave additional details of some practical advantages of obtaining Biosphere Reserve status. It would be an accolade for the City to be successful; there were currently only three in England.

27.2 An application from Brighton & Hove would be a significant piece of work but the process could take some years. This will be supported by the UNESCO Man and Biodiversity Committee MAB, who had initially approached the City. The MAB Committee had recently held successful two-way question and answer sessions with a focus group in the city. Organisations such as the South Downs National Park Authority, National Trust, South Downs Society and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds were all supportive.

27.3 The Council had a stewardship role; the Biosphere Reserve application would be led by the City as a whole. A common understanding of the principles with residents and community groups would be key. Resources were needed to develop the application, which could cover an area beyond the ownership and boundary of the City, or natural land designations; possibly based on water catchment area. The buffer zones and transition zones were as important as the core zone.

27.4 Some of the outcomes could lead to mitigation of climate change by reducing carbon emissions; better preparation for climate change; increased levels of exercise, health and wellbeing with better access to green space; improved use of farmland; better conservation of water and cleaner seas.

27.5 The Committee welcomed the work already done and were keen to develop awareness of the advantages of an application and look at the wider implications. Members wished to circulate to all Members the details of the initiative together with an officer note of potential outcomes including urban areas that were not included in the report on the agenda.

27.6 **RESOLVED;** that all Members be contacted with details of the Biosphere Reserve application, officer details of the potential advantages and. link to the website.

## **28. OLDER PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY - MONITORING OUTCOMES**

28.1 The Commissioner for Community Safety presented the report on monitoring the scrutiny review of older people and community safety. A range of work was in progress on community safety for all groups.

28.2 A key finding had been that older people are less likely to be victims as they get older and so more work was needed on older people's perceptions of how safe they feel.

28.3 Good progress in line with the scrutiny recommendations had been made especially within the intelligent commissioning pilots, concerning the impact of alcohol drugs and domestic violence for older people as well as the rest of the population.

28.4 Following the scrutiny review, the Community Safety Strategy 2011- 2012 to be published in April 2011, is to take into account more particular needs of older people. Some other recommendations were being implemented by colleagues.

28.5 Councillor Morgan welcomed to the meeting Mr Jim Baker, Chief Executive of Age Concern Brighton Hove and Portslade who had originally brought attention to the matter.

28.6 Mr Baker said work had been excellent thus far. Age Concern was in receipt of an infrastructure grant from the Council and the charity would like to do more to help the Council to achieve its priorities. He commented on a number of aspects of the report:

- Council officers were limited as regards consultation with the many older people who live in private sector care homes.
- Education in schools is an important area (in addition to the intergenerational initiatives) but this was not included in the scrutiny report recommendations.
- More can be done to use technology and to 'design out' crime. A graphic booklet could include some ideas for older people.
- Local cafes could be good locations for consultations with older people

28.7 Members asked about progress against other recommendations such as social spaces for older people. The Commissioner undertook to make another progress report to the Committee.

28.8 **RESOLVED** that the Committee receive a further progress report.

**29. POLICING IN THE 21ST CENTURY SUMMARY**

29.1 The Commissioner for Community Safety outlined the national proposals on Policing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. She said that the Community Safety Forum would be kept updated.

29.2 There were concerns about a directly elected police and crime commissioner replacing Police Authorities, regarding experience, accountability, effectiveness as a public champion and the expense of an election.

29.3 The information was noted.

**30. ECSOSC DRAFT WORK PLAN INCLUDING SUMMARY OF LTP3 WORKSHOP**

30.1 Members who were present at the LTP3 workshop said that they appreciated the opportunity to ask questions and make comments to officers. A second workshop would be held early in the new year at a date to be arranged.

**31. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO CABINET MEMBER, CABINET OR FULL COUNCIL**

31.1 The Chairman would write to the Environment Cabinet Member about parking policy.

31.2 All Councillors would be contacted with details of the Biosphere Reserve.

The meeting concluded at 6.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of