

OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

15 March 2016 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: - Councillors Dingemans (Chairman), Blampied, Mrs Harrison-Horn, Hitchins, Hughes, Mrs Oakley, Oliver-Redgate, Mrs Rapnik, Warren and Dr Walsh.

Councillors Chapman, Cooper, Elkins and Mrs Pendleton were also present for either all or part of the meeting.

[Note:- Councillor Dr Walsh was absent from the meeting during consideration of the matters referred to in Minute 528 to 532 (Part) and Councillor Mrs Oakley – Minute 533 (Part) to Minute 540].

528. WELCOME

The Chairman, welcomed Members, officers, and representatives from Town and Parish Councils to the meeting.

529. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Ballard, Mrs Bence, Mrs Daniells, Edwards and English and from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Brown and the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance, Councillor Wensley.

530. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Monitoring Officer has advised Members of interim arrangements to follow when making declarations of interest. They have been advised that for the reasons explained below, they should make their declarations on the same basis as the former Code of Conduct using the descriptions of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

Reasons

- The Council has adopted the Government’s example for a new local code of conduct, but new policies and procedures relating to the new local code are yet to be considered and adopted.
- Members have not yet been trained on the provisions on the new local code of conduct.

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- The definition of Pecuniary Interests is narrower than the definition of Prejudicial Interests, so by declaring a matter as a Prejudicial Interest, that will cover the requirement to declare a Pecuniary Interest in the same matter.

Where a Member declares a “Prejudicial Interest”, this will, in the interests of clarity for the public, be recorded in the minutes as a Prejudicial and Pecuniary Interest.

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

#### 531. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 26 January 2016 were approved by the Committee as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

#### 532. ENGINEERING SERVICES ANNUAL REVIEW 2016

The Engineering Services Manager presented the first of an annual update on the Council’s Engineering Services Area. Members were advised that in the past the Committee had received separate reports on the Council’s coastal defence assets and its land drainage activities. The report provided an update to issues addressed in the preceding year and it outlined matters that had arisen or were foreseen for the coming year across the whole of this service area.

The following areas were highlighted:

- Coastal Defence
- Partnership Funding
- Asset Management
- Pagham Beach
- Flood and Erosion Management Strategies
- Strategic Regional Coastal Monitoring
- Working with Neighbouring Councils
- Revenue Works
- The Planned Capital Coast Protection Programme for 2016/17 and future years
- Land Drainage
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)
- Drainage Plans and Strategies

- Major Schemes
- Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs)
- Structural and General
- The other range of tasks and services undertaken by the Engineering Services Section
- Other major issues such as the River Arun wall collapse at River Road, Arundel.

Fuller updates were provided in relation to the following issues:

#### Pagham Beach

The Engineering Services Manager outlined that the whole of the spit and harbour area was dynamic and subject to a number of national and international environmental designations and so there were many processes that had to be worked through in addressing and responding to the numerous issues along the beach. The spit was continuing to grow eastwards, causing the scour and erosion also to spread eastwards. Additionally, the beach in the area of the Yacht Club was subject to erosion caused by incident wave energy and the interruption of longshore drift of shingle. Lately, the spit had been subjected to localised lowering and so the area was difficult to predict with any degree of certainty.

There had been widespread call from the local community for the issue to be resolved by cutting through the spit. Following the appointment of external consultants by Pagham Parish Council, a planning application had been submitted to the Council to undertake this work. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) had also been prepared and it was stated that it was likely that an Appropriate Assessment would be required prior to the determination of the application. A similar application, running in parallel to the one made to this Council, had been made to Chichester District Council due to the geographic location of the proposal. The Engineering Services Manager reported that last Friday, 11 March 2016, problems had been experienced with Groyne 3 but that the urgent repairs already undertaken had worked well.

#### Structural and General

West Sussex County Council had asked Arun’s Engineering Services to deliver a project to replace the bus shelters in Anchor Springs, Littlehampton to make the facility fit for purpose for the new Stagecoach 700 coastline service. This work included changes to the bus stop locations, street furniture and provision of Real Time Passenger Information Displays.

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The total cost of the project was £37,277, including a long-term maintenance sum of £7,568. Members were advised that all monies were being funded by WSCC via Section 106 contributions as well as a contribution from Stagecoach. Whilst Arun was able to undertake the project at no net cost, spending authority had unfortunately not been sought prior to undertaking this project. As a result, the Committee was being asked to regularise the financial situation by asking Cabinet to approve the draw-down of funds to undertake this work.

The Chairman thanked the Engineering Services Manager for his comprehensive report. Before inviting the Committee to discuss it and ask questions, the Chairman confirmed that he wished to firstly address the questions that had been submitted in advance of the meeting by coastal Town and Parish Councils. The questions submitted and the responses provided are set out below:

**(1) From Councillor Buckland on behalf of Littlehampton Town Council**

We are greatly concerned about the impact of the deteriorating West Works/Training Wall, at the west of the mouth of the River Arun, and the impact of this on the area immediately surrounding this. The resulting problems are the erosion of Arun District Council land behind the training wall and a severe reduction in the ability to “maintain and sustain” the existing coastline.

Councillor Buckland extended his submitted question. He stated that as a Member of the Littlehampton Harbour Board (LHB) he had grave concerns about the impacts for the area as erosion to the land owned by Arun mentioned above was not reducing and could be overtopped at high tide and so there was the threat that the road around the Ropewalk area could be washed away. He therefore urged Arun’s Officers to liaise with the EA and the LHB as this needed to be addressed. Councillor Buckland stated that he understood that local businesses might give some form of remuneration for the maintenance of the road leading up to the Golf Club and car park if a breach did occur, so he wished to know how the Council would deal with this.

Councillor Buckland also asked how the Council, through this review, was looking to ensure that coastal and West Bank defences would be maintained to a high standard?”

### **Response from the Engineering Services Manager**

The Westworks and the associated training wall were both LHB navigation assets.

The dunes (seaward side) were in this Council’s ownership and the beach was not currently subject to erosion – in fact material built up here, enabled the EA to recycle some of the material to the west.

The LHB regularly inspected its various structures (with professional assistance from the Arun Engineering Team) and put in hand repairs as necessary – indeed, repairs were due to be undertaken to the concrete section by the week ending 18 March 2016.

The condition of these structures had been appraised as part of the River Arun to Pagham Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy; further, the effect of a failure (of the structures) on the ability of the River to drain was also assessed; whilst there would be an effect on navigation, the modelling showed that the River would continue to operate without undue increased risk upstream.

Whilst parts of the land on the west bank were in the Council’s ownership, flood defence was administered by the EA. The Strategy (above) assessed the typical standard of defence to be 1 in 10 for this area of the west bank; the preferred option was to sustain this standard – meaning that this standard should keep pace with the effects of climate change and not reduce over time. The preferred option would, however, not be fully funded from Government grant – accordingly, third party Partnership Funding would be required.

With regard to the area of the southern end of Rope Walk (the car parking area), concern had been raised in the past regarding erosion of the bank, with a perceived increase in flood risk. This Council maintained the bank, usually by working closely with the EA when beach recycling operations were underway, topping up the levels in that area.

The Engineering Services Manager confirmed that he had no knowledge of the remuneration that Councillor Buckland had referred to and how this might operate. The area from Ferry Road to the golf course was a public highway and so not part of the road and so he was not sure why businesses would be involved in the upkeep of the road to the beach.

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It was confirmed that the Engineering Services Manager would investigate the remuneration issue further and that Councillor Buckland would receive a written response to his question, as requested.

## **(2) From Pagham Parish Council**

Due to reported “ministerial intervention” the Regulatory Authorities are now actively assisting our consultants in the completion of the remaining tasks associated with final approval of the Scheme. The PPC Steering Group has been in contact with several sources of corporate funding, and initial results appear promising. We are grateful for the ongoing “beach management” activities by ADC Engineers, though much of the frontage is now either near or past emergency trigger level. It appears that planning consent will be achieved during late April (per ADC Planning Officers) – and that our remaining funding can be in place very soon after – when that becomes the situation, can we be assured that ADC as “Operating Authority” will adopt the scheme and proceed, in partnership, with implementation? We expect there to be conditions pertaining to Planning Consent, and, in that case, we will work towards providing funding for the necessary maintenance of the new channel, as it might arise.

### **Response from the Engineering Services Manager**

Whilst it was not appropriate to comment upon the Planning Application currently being evaluated, before the Council could consider becoming the competent authority for the proposal, it would need to be satisfied that the project was viable in line with the EA’s business case appraisal process (the 5 Case Business Model). Therefore, it would be expected that a business case be prepared and this would form part of the report that could go before the District Council for consideration.

Separate from the application, it was confirmed that the Council had submitted a scheme to the EA to recycle approximately 10,000m<sup>3</sup> of material onto the beach. This had been successful; quotations had been received; and a contractor appointed. It was confirmed that the Contractor was the same Contractor who had undertaken work on the beach recently. Work would commence on 21 March 2016 in the area of the Yacht Club and East Front Road and so shortly a recovery in the width of beach frontage would be seen.

The Engineering Services Manager outlined that material would be taken off the intertidal part of the spit and that this would have negligible detrimental effect on the spit and its geomorphology.

The Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Councillor Chapman, outlined that it was a tricky operation in getting the plant out to those banks to do this work. The works that would be starting on 21 March 2016 would on that day involve a very early start time to establish a route out there using spring tides. Once this had been completed, then the machinery should only need to make a minor top up in the coming days. The Contractor would recover the material with dumpers and plant. Letters confirming these arrangements had been hand delivered to all beach-front properties to explain this action, which would at the end of the day be a benefit for these residents and so it was hoped that no complaints would be received. The Committee was advised that the works were covered by EA grant and were within the £40k budget set.

The Committee then asked the following questions:

On Pagham Beach, concern was expressed over the information provided in the report relating to changes in the Council's beaches at Unit 22 – Pagham to West Bognor Regis – showed a net loss in beach cross sectional area of 1.0%. Concern was expressed that as these figures were over a year old, they may be out of date and well below the real problem that existed, especially as the beach changed from day to day. The Engineering Services Manager was asked if the Council had ever considered 'caging' the amount of rock that was constantly being placed onto the beach to add stability. He explained that such caging involved surrounding rock with metal wire which, once abraded, in the longer term then caused a health and safety hazard to those walking along the beach. Worthing Borough Council had tried this method.

Councillor Hitchins pointed out that East Front Road was experiencing more erosion now. The Engineering Services Manager stated that a major part of Pagham had a natural open beach with a start of a bay going into Aldwick and then West Bognor. He felt that if the spit was not there, he was confident it would still remain to be relatively stable, it was the spit that was causing the problem and that the issues evident on the western end of East Front Road had been there since Christmas, hence the need to recycle the 10,000 m<sup>3</sup> of material now. Referring to the figures quoted at Unit 22, the loss incurred since the figures had been produced was that the spit itself had shrunk over the summer by 15 metres but was growing now and was not far from swallowing up Groyne 3. Councillor Hitchins stated that work needed to be undertaken to check that erosion did not spread from East Front Road going towards Aldwick Bay.

The Engineering Services Manager responded by stating that work had been undertaken on 11 March 2016 recovering this situation at Groyne 3.

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Councillor Dr Walsh confirmed that his intended question related to the question that Councillor Buckland had asked on behalf of Littlehampton Town Council.

His observation was that the training wall was fine but that it was the erosion behind this wall, where ground was being sucked away, that was the problem. Replacing it with shingle was not a permanent solution, though one needed to be found urgently.

The Engineering Services Manager confirmed that water did flow onto the area and that the closer you put shingle to the flood wall, the more that shingle would be affected, it was a balancing act. The permanent solution could be to fill the area with concrete but this was too expensive. The use of shingle was a low cost yet an efficient alternative.

Councillor Dr Walsh asked why there had been no mention of Operation Watershed in the report and as Phase 3 of this project had very recently been announced with £500k made available. His view was that this scheme had achieved quite a lot for the District and he asked if the Council had any schemes planned that could tap into the £500k which would be available from 1 April 2016. Councillor Dr Walsh stated that there were many small ditches that had become filled in at the rear of gardens and where they abutted highways. As such action had caused a lot of flooding he asked if the Council could comment upon the scale of this problem and if it had plans to improve this issue.

The Engineering Services Manager confirmed that although the Council could not access Operation Watershed funding directly, as this was intended for flood action groups and Parish Councils to improve problem areas, it did facilitate by assisting such groups with applications and by providing advice and information. Close work was also taking place with WSCC’s legal team on work to get ditches reinstated.

Councillor Oliver-Redgate queried why the eastern part of the District around Ferring had not been mentioned within the report and as he had concern about the Ferring Rife, especially as two new housing estates and the supermarket Asda had been constructed. He wished to know the views of the Engineering Services Manager in relation to the flow from the Ferring Rife and major schemes, issues about risk management and information about the Ferring outflow. He asked if he could be updated on the Ferring out-flow. The Engineering Services Manager confirmed that the Ferring Rife was a main river (EA) and the outfall by Sea Lane was a WSCC highway drain. There were plans to renew this completely and designers were currently working on this but no progress on site would be made until the next financial



year. It was outlined that the new houses would be covered by Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) – this had been explained at Paragraph 1.3.4 of the report.

The Committee then

RECOMMEND TO CABINET – That

- (1) Agreement be given to the report forming the basis of the Coast Protection Capital Budget for future years, subject to sufficient resources being available to fund the Council’s proportion of the total costs (i.e. the minor ineligible costs);
- (2) Authorisation is given to the Engineering Services Manager to prepare details and make the necessary applications to enable the schemes noted in the body and annex of the report to proceed to the appropriate next stages. Further reports to Cabinet might be necessary regarding the proposals and/or funding;
- (3) Authorisation be given to the Engineering Services Manager to send a copy of this report to the Environment Agency for the benefit of the Agency’s supervisory role in coastal defence; and
- (4) Approval is given to the drawdown of funds to undertake the bus shelter works, including long-term maintenance in Anchor Springs (zero net financial effect to Arun).

*(During the course of the discussion on this item, Councillor Dr Walsh declared a Personal Interest in his capacity as a Member of West Sussex County Council, a County Member of the Littlehampton Harbour Board and as a Member of Littlehampton Town Council).*

533. PLANNED REVIEW OF THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUSINESS PLAN

The Chairman asked the Committee if it could agree to consider this item and the items highlighted by the Cabinet Member for Housing at Agenda Item 7 (Cabinet Member Questions and Updates) together. This was agreed.

The Chairman welcomed the Head of Housing and the Director of Customer Services to the meeting and invited them to address what was planned in reviewing the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan.

As an introduction, the Committee was advised that back in 2012 a Business Plan for the HRA had been compiled to support the Council in managing the HRA self-financing reform. The Plan had been reviewed in March 2015 and had updated key objectives for the next ten years as well as establishing the strategic operational and financial framework.

A driver for the Plan needing to be changed had been the Council's desire to build council housing. A target of 30 houses per year for 5 years had been confirmed. At the same time up to £1 m pa expenditure had been set aside for improving sheltered housing schemes.

The Director for Customer Services then updated the Committee on the latest position with the Plan, this was that:

- The Council was working through a tender exercise to build 22 houses at Wick and 2 on the Glenlogie site. Building would commence later on this year.
- Sixteen properties would be purchased at Angels Nursery, Barnham which was a WSCC scheme. The planning application had been refused recently and a re-application date was awaited.
- The Council was purchasing 9 units of housing from a developer at Garden Crescent, in Barnham and this was at the contract stage.
- Work in reviewing the Plan had been progressing until Central Government had announced that the Council would have to reduce its council house rents by 1% per annum for 4 years from 1 April 2016. The impact of this was that £500k of rent would be lost in the first year of this change. This loss would increase year on year resulting in an overall loss of £2.1m. This had had a massive impact on the plans in place and meant that the Council needed to radically review its HRA Plan.
- Tough decisions on what could be taken forward in the future would need to be made which would be reflected in the Plan. Due to this, it was unlikely that the Plan would be ready to be considered by Cabinet as planned on 31 May 2016. It would be much later around October/November time.
- Central Government had also extended the Right to Buy scheme so that this could apply to tenants renting from housing associations. In order to fund this, the Government was asking local authorities for money on the sale of high value council houses. Whether the Council sold these or not, it would be asked to provide money to Central Government and the amount would not be known until the end of the year.

- Pay to Stay – The Housing and Planning Bill would require the Council to pay Central Government the estimated additional income whether this had been collected or not. This Bill had not been through Parliament yet and so the final detail and implications for the Council were still not known.
- The Council met with the Treasury on 29 February 2016 to outline its concerns over the changes being introduced and to explore alternative funding options in view of future challenges. No opportunities for additional funding had been offered and no changes or revisions to the loan arrangements that the Council already had in place could be made. Discussion had taken place as to whether there was any opportunity to reschedule the Council’s HRA debt but this would result in the Council having to pay considerable extra charges for this re-arrangement.
- Full Council, at its meeting held on 13 January 2016, had agreed an HRA supplementary estimate of up to £2.3 m to fund the purchase or building of council houses and had noted the impact this would have on the HRA business plan’s agreed outcomes. This being that there would not be funding to improve sheltered schemes or building the remainder of the Council’s targeted 150 houses and other initiatives.
- The development of green energy for council properties – the full detail was still to be confirmed by Central Government.
- Other welfare reforms, such as Universal Credit, would have other implications for the Plan. Housing Benefit would be paid instead to tenants to encourage their financial inclusion. It was anticipated that this would cause some major collection issues for the Council.
- All of the above were pressures that would impact the HRA Business Plan.
- Council tenants still had the right to exercise their right to buy Arun’s council houses. Over time the impact for the Council was that it would lose rental income. Twenty four properties had been sold last year resulting in a £120k drop in rent a year.

Comments were made about the Right to Buy scheme which depleted the Council’s housing stock and the Council’s announced target of building council houses. An update was requested and provided on when building would start on the schemes mentioned earlier. It was confirmed that in Wick construction work would commence this Summer. At Glenlogie, a contract was in place for the build of two 4 bedroom houses. The Council was also looking at other sites but suitable land was a problem and so discussions were ongoing with developers to find other suitable locations on land that the council owned to get nearer to achieving its confirmed target.

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The Head of Housing confirmed that discussions were taking place with WSCC with regard to its Elm Grove scheme in Littlehampton with a view to purchasing some of these properties which could then be offered to tenants at a social housing rent level. The Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Elkins, outlined that the Council was investigating every opportunity it had within the assets it had to provide more social housing but that this was not a quick process.

The Chairman asked if the Council had explored Community Land Trusts as he understood that these were exempt from the ability for tenants to apply for Right to Buy. The Head of Housing confirmed that the Council would be exploring this as an option.

The Chairman thanked the Director of Customer Services and the Head of Housing for attending the meeting and for providing a very useful and informative update on the current position with the HRA Business Plan.

534. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS AND UPDATES

Councillor Dr Walsh asked the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Councillor Chapman, about the latest position with the sea defence wall at East Bank, Littlehampton as the position had remain unchanged since he had provided an update to the last meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Chapman confirmed that the EA was undertaking scoping and costing to complete the missing link. The existing gap could be filled under permitted development, however, the EA was also looking at an option to build the flood defence in land which would require a planning application to be submitted. The EA still had legal issues to resolve and Members were advised that the Council would not be party to these discussions as this was an EA responsibility. The temporary flood barriers remained available for use if exceptionally high tides were expected.

Councillor Dr Walsh thanked Councillor Chapman for his update and stated that he endorsed this approach but that the EA should be looking to complete the river defences where they were currently positioned. He wondered whether the time had come to undertake some sort of compulsory action to push the EA, with the support of this Council and the LHB.

The Chairman asked the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Councillor Chapman, a question relating to play areas, as raised at Full Council on 13 January 2016. He asked what was being done to ensure that proper consultation was being undertaken with people who lived near and used a small play area before any more were closed?

Councillor Chapman responded by stating that in accordance with the approved Play Strategy 2011-2016 underused play areas were decommissioned on a site by site basis by notifying the Ward Members and public and inviting comments and representations from the properties surrounding the sites. This practice would continue. Councillor Chapman also stated that he had extended the offer of a meeting with Littlehampton Town Council as some Town Councillors still had concern. Councillor Chapman confirmed that he would be happy to meet with any Councillor who had a concern or questions on this matter.

A concern was expressed by Councillor Dr Walsh that a previous play area site in Rustington had become a smoker’s and drinker’s paradise since it had closed and that this problem needed to be addressed.

*(During the course of the discussion on this item, Councillor Dr Walsh declared a Personal Interest as a County Council Member of the Littlehampton Harbour Board).*

535. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT TASK AND FINISH WORKING PARTY – 2 MARCH 2016

The Chairman of the Council Tax Support Task and Finish Working Party, Councillor Hitchins, presented the Minutes from the meeting of the Council Tax Support Task and Finish Working Party meeting held on 2 March 2016. These Minutes had been circulated to Members separately from the agenda.

Councillor Hitchins referred to areas of the scheme that the Working Party was reviewing and that it was hoped that savings could be made.

The Committee noted the Minutes and that recommendations would be presented to its next meeting on 7 June 2016.

536. FEEDBACK FROM WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL’S JOINT SCRUTINY GROUP – 27 JANUARY 2016

The Committee noted the feedback report that had been submitted by the Chairman, Councillor Dingemans, following his attendance at the County Council’s Joint Scrutiny Group held on 27 January 2016.

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537. FEEDBACK FROM WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S JOINT SCRUTINY GROUP'S HOUSING PROVISION FOR CARE LEAVERS REVIEW – 2 MARCH 2016

The Chairman, Councillor Dingemans, provided a verbal feedback to the Committee following his attendance at West Sussex County Council's Joint Scrutiny Group's review of Housing Provision for Care Leavers held on 2 March 2016.

This review aimed to consider the current housing provision for care leavers in West Sussex to help improve the co-working between District and Borough Councils and the County Council.

The Task and Finish Group (TFG) aimed to complete this review by May 2016 and two further meetings were planned over the next two months. The meeting held on 2 March 2016 had confirmed that 20% of care leavers did not make the transition without the risk of homelessness and that many care leavers had some form of mental health problem to cope with as well.

The meeting had agreed a Protocol called the Pathway Plan which would look at where care leavers wanted to live and when they would leave care. So far the procedures in place had not been working. It was hoped that to implement a joint protocol properly would help by reviewing the pathway and looking at different transitions for those with mental health problems. The next TFG would hear from two young clients who were already on the pathway about what had been their experiences.

The Committee noted the contents of the updated provided.

538. FEEDBACK FROM THE MEETING OF WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMMITTEE (HASC) HELD ON 10 MARCH 2016

The Committee received and noted two verbal feedbacks from Councillors Blampied and Dr Walsh.

The meeting had received a report from the Chief Executive of the Sussex University Hospital in relation to its new clinical services models.

Councillor Dr Walsh outlined that the main issue was the blockages faced by patients waiting to be admitted into the hospital system from ambulances. Up to 150 ambulances from the South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAM) were being tied up in any one day waiting to discharge patients into hospital. This problem meant that hospitals were breaching their 4 hour ruling on admissions and also their discharge timings due to bed

blocking. Both of these issues were national pressures facing the NHS but were particularly acute in the South East due to its increasing ageing population.

539. FEEDBACK FROM MEETING OF THE SUSSEX POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD ON 18 FEBRUARY 2016

The Chairman confirmed that this item had been withdrawn as there had not been a meeting of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel held on 18 February 2016.

540. WORK PROGRAMME 2016/2017

The Committee received a report from the Head of Democratic Services which reminded Members that the Council’s Constitution required the Overview Select Committee to make a report annually on its future work programme and amended working methods, where appropriate.

The Committee was asked to consider its work programme for the 2016/2017 year and to identify any issues to develop or review working to the key themes of the Committee’s responsibilities so that these could be included within a draft work programme coming forward to its next meeting on 7 June 2016 and then onto Full Council on 20 July 2016 for approval.

Before inviting the Committee to re-think its role and focus for the coming year the Head of Democratic Services asked Members to consider two things. Firstly, when looking at ideas, to consider the capacity in the Officer team to support reviews. Secondly, she referred to the two Scrutiny training session that had been held in February 2016 as they had provided some ideas about what scrutiny should focus on and what Members might want to see from meetings in the future. She hoped that the training had encouraged Members to think about what they might particularly wish to review.

The items so far identified by the Officer team that could come forward in the coming year had been set out at Paragraph 2.2 of the report. The Committee was alerted to two areas that it might particularly wish to review. These were how Cabinet Members were “held to account” and whether the current format for receiving Joint Scrutiny updates was working. The Head of Democratic Services encouraged Members to come forward with ideas that would bring value to the Council.

In discussing the possible topics that Members might wish to review, the following were agreed:

- To receive a further update on how the review of the HRA Business Plan was progressing before this was submitted to Cabinet. The Head of Democratic Services suggested that this be put to the Committee’s July meeting so that an update on review progress could be received before the revised Plan was submitted to Cabinet.
- Council Tax Support Review – recommendations would be reported to the June and September meetings.
- Space should be kept available in the work programme to address the outcomes of each stage of the Vision work
- Community Land Trust – this could tie in with work progressing on the HRA Business Plan
- A further feedback on the Local Plan a year on from when this was reported to the Committee to address if a clear project plan had been worked to; how this assisted the Council in meeting deadlines. It was agreed that as the Local Plan was likely to be put to Full Council in November for approval, such a review should come to the Committee’s meeting in January 2017 but this would be need to be subject to Officer capacity.
- A review of the Committee Suite sound system was requested.

This draft work programme was noted so that further work could take place on it between now and the Committee’s meeting on 7 June 2016.

(The meeting concluded at 7.49 pm.)