



Public Document Pack

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20 August 2020

OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Overview Select Committee will be held in Will be held virtually via zoom on Tuesday 1 September 2020 **at 6.00 pm** and you are requested to attend.

Members: Councillors Northeast (Chairman), English (Vice-Chair), Bennett, Bicknell, B Blanchard-Cooper, Mrs Catterson, Mrs Cooper, Dendle, Dixon, Elkins, Gunner, Huntley, Miss Needs, Miss Seex and Tilbrook

PLEASE NOTE: *This meeting will be a 'virtual meeting' and any member of the press and public may listen-in and view the proceedings via a weblink which will be publicised on the Council website at least **24 hours** before the meeting.*

Different meeting arrangements are in place for the period running from 4 April 2020 to 7 May 2021 from the provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and the meeting regulations 2020, to allow formal 'virtual meetings'.

This Council's revised Rules of Procedures for 'virtual meetings' can be found by clicking on this link: <https://www.arun.gov.uk/constitution>

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact: committees@arun.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are invited to make any declaration of pecuniary, personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this agenda, and are reminded that they should re-declare their interest before consideration of the items or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

Members and Officers should make their declaration by stating:

- a) the item they have the interest in
- b) whether it is a pecuniary/personal interest and/or prejudicial interest
- c) the nature of the interest

3. **MINUTES**

(Pages 1 - 14)

The Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Overview Select Committee held on 9 June 2020.

4. **ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

5. **LOCAL POLICING - CHIEF INSPECTOR CARTER**

Chief Inspector Jon Carter, District Commander Arun and Chichester, has been invited to attend the meeting to give a general presentation on policing within the Arun District and answer questions from Overview Select Committee Members.

6. **COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT TASK & FINISH WORKING PARTY MEMBERSHIP**

A meeting of this Working Party is required to be held in October 2020 in order to receive a report from the Revenues & Benefits Manager in relation to the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2021/2022.

Membership of this Working Party is made up of Members from the OSC Committee.

The Committee is required to agree its Membership for the Working Party. As Chairman of OSC, Cllr Mike Northeast will be the Chairman of the Working Party also.

7. **COVID-19 UPDATE**

(Pages 15 - 20)

The Committee are requested to note the action taken by the Council.

8. **CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS AND UPDATES**

- (i) Cabinet Members will update the Committee on matters relevant to their Portfolio of responsibility.
- (ii) Members are invited to ask Cabinet Members questions and are encouraged to submit these to the Committee Manager in advance of the meeting to allow a more substantive answer to be given.

9. **WORK PROGRAMME 2020/2021**

(Pages 21 - 26)

The Work Programme will be presented by the Group Head of Policy.

Note : Reports are attached for all Members of the Committee only and the press (excluding exempt items). Copies of reports can be obtained on request from the Committee Manager).

Note : Members are reminded that if they have any detailed questions would they please inform the Chairman and/or relevant Director in advance of the meeting.

Note : Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings – The District Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. This meeting may therefore be recorded, filmed, or broadcast by video or audio, by third parties. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council and as available via the following link – [Filming Policy](#)

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OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

9 June 2020 at 6.00 pm

Present: - Councillors Northeast (Chairman), English (Vice-Chairman), Bennett, Bicknell, Clayden, Coster, Dendle, Dixon, Elkins, Gunner, Huntley, Miss Needs, Miss Seex and Tilbrook.

Councillors Charles, Cooper, Mrs Cooper, Coster, Edwards, Mrs Gregory, Lury, Oppler, Mrs Pendleton, Roberts, Mrs Staniforth, Stanley, Dr Walsh and Mrs Yeates were also present during the meeting.

[Note: Councillor Northeast was absent from the meeting during consideration of the matters referred to in Minute Corporate Plan Item 173 [part].

166. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Members, Officers and members of the press to the first virtual meeting of the Overview Select Committee.

The Chairman provided a brief summary of how the meeting would be conducted and the protocol that would be followed and how any break in the proceedings due to technical difficulties would be managed.

167. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Blanchard-Cooper and Mrs Catterson.

168. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman, Councillor Northeast, declared a Personal Interest in relation to Agenda Item 6 [The Council's Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation] as he was married to a member of Arun District Council staff.

169. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 10 March 2020 were approved by the Committee as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

170. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman confirmed that he wished to bring to the attention of the Committee that he had been consulted on an urgent Individual Cabinet Member decision that had been taken on 1 June 2020 regarding the delivery of the Discretionary Business Grant Scheme.

Overview Select Committee - 9.06.20

171. MEETING START TIMES

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the start time of meetings during 2020/21 be 6.00 pm.

172. THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC SITUATION

The Committee received a report from the Chief Executive, and it was explained that this was very similar to what had been submitted to the last meeting of Cabinet that had taken place on 1 June 2020 – the key highlights were:

- The report had been updated based on the weekly Councillor Briefings (sections 1.1.1 to 1.1.51).
- it covered the lessons learned and recovery in terms of what this could look like as lockdown restrictions started to ease
- it acknowledged how important it was for the local economy and this Council's financial recovery to take place whilst at the same time accepting that this process would not be easy as the Council would be severely limited by restricted income
- the need to continue to influence the County Council, the LEP, the DCN and the LGA to press the Government to lead recovery with sufficient financial support.
- Referring to the Business Rates reset that had been delayed, it was still to be confirmed by Government whether this would be postponed or would continue in 2021/22. It was emphasised that this would have a significant negative effect on the Council's finances.
- It looked at what could have been done better in terms of the Council's communication plan. Messages had not always been consistent until communication links had been established between senior Officers, the Leader/Deputy Leader, Cabinet and Group Leaders.
- The Council had been slow in setting up homeworking for some staff due to insufficient laptops being available. A vast number of staff had and remained to work from home since 18 March, a week before the official Government Lockdown.
- Video conferencing had not been trialled and a number of platforms had to be tested and researched, whilst those same IT Officers were trying to help staff to achieve working from home. This had slowed progress. However, the IT team had achieved getting the Council up and running very quickly.
- The Council had been criticised over its cautiousness with virtual meetings.
- The Community Hub was based on a model with Chichester District Council, West Sussex County Council and Arun. Whilst we believed that our plan worked well, and we would still follow that model in the future, there had been confusion across West Sussex, as there had been differing methods being used by other Councils. One model across West Sussex would have been ideal.
- Looking at the remaining sections of the report, on recovery, "what we have done" and a Coronavirus Exit Strategy and "What next Arun?", it was clear that

the Council would need to reboot or reset what it did as a Council – and this would undoubtedly be different.

- It was necessary to think about ambitions for the future and what they might look like, as opposed to pre-March 2020.
- Things would probably be very different for at least 12 months, if not for ever, so urgent and early discussions were needed. A further report would be taken to Cabinet on 22 June 2020 with proposals to establish a Task and Finish Group to address this need
- Next Monday, 15 June 2020, the Lockdown for High Streets would be eased. The Council had planned a media campaign to help people feel safe and comfortable to return to the District's High Streets
- Corporate Plans would need a fundamental re-examination to see if they would be fit for a Coronavirus free future world.

The Chairman then invited questions and comments from the Committee. Questions were asked on and responses were provided to the following:

- On the IT situation and the purchase of laptops, what had been the cost? A question was also asked about the Council's Policy in place to renew laptops every five years and whether any PCs or laptops had been recycled to assist the working from home exercise required. The Chief Executive responded stating that although he could not provide a cost, he could confirm that many old laptops had been rebuilt to save on the cost of purchasing new ones and these had been rolled out to staff. Some new laptops had been purchased too – the important message was that the work undertaken had meant that all staff had been able to work from home in the early stages of the pandemic and that this exercise had placed the Council in good stead for any future emergency situations.
- On the grant aid for high streets – how was the funding being received from Government going to be spent and when would Councillors receive an update on this? Would one-way barriers be used in the High Street and major shopping areas? The Director of Place confirmed that three schemes were being progressed in Littlehampton, Bognor Regis and Arundel for effectively repurposing highways. The requirements of the fund meant that the Council had to pay for any necessary works related to that work first and so was working with WSCC on these schemes. It was outlined that the Council had engaged with all Town and Parish Councils to understand what their needs were so that appropriate funding could be set aside for that purpose. To date not many responses had been received and so the Council was in the process of chasing these up. The Council was also looking to invest in Business Wardens that would work in the community with shops/businesses and the public. It was explained that the Council needed to ensure that not all of the funds received should be spent in the early stages of lockdown restrictions easing as this would not leave any surplus funds for the Council to respond to any issues arising post 15 June 2020. The funding would also be used for promotions and marketing including signs. The issue of barriers had been considered but discounted as it had been identified that

they narrowed social distancing space and often created as many issues as they tried to resolve.

- It had been Councillors understanding that these funds were for the purpose of assist shopping precincts. Concern was expressed that this fund was being spent on WSCC highways when the priority was to get high streets up and running and in the safest way possible. The Director of Place confirmed that the guidance confirmed how Councils could use this funding and that this had only been released recently. His understanding was that the monies received were to be used for the repurposing of highways or the widening of pedestrian areas. He was happy to share this guidance with the Committee.
- Concern was raised about who would police the two-metre social distancing requirements. The Director of Place confirmed that this was a complicated issue with businesses being initially responsible, however, they could call upon the services of the Council's Environmental Health if complaints were complex. In looking at the main footfall in terms of Bognor Regis and Littlehampton, as they were highways, technically this came under WSCC and in Rustington, the responsibility of Store Properties. The funding could not be used for any private areas either. Due these complexities, the Council's Communications Team was running a campaign to enlighten and encourage the public to return to the High Street safely and use facilities in the right way in line with social distancing rules. It was outlined that the public had their own fears and concerns and so a careful balance was needed. The Council's campaign ran much wider to get the message out that the District was open for business not just in the main shopping areas but also its open spaces; beaches and parks.
- Comments were made on the some of the Urgent Decisions taken by Officers using their emergency powers during this crisis. It was pointed out that the Council's Constitution did allow for this considering the Pandemic situation. It had been accepted that some Group Leaders' preference was for Cabinet Members to have made decisions, it was explained that in view of the timescales being worked to the right decisions had been made at the right time.
- That virtual meetings had been slow to start.
- That there should have been more Cabinet Member involvement in the Urgent Decisions taken.
- The payment of Business Grants had been 'sluggish'.
- The Community Hub had taken too long to get up and running.
- What plans were in place for recovery?
- The Council needed to ensure that it would do all that it could to assist businesses to get back on their feet.
- The Council needed to revisit its strategic priorities.
- A skills audit should be drawn up and collaborative work initiated with the University of Chichester and the Greater Brighton Economic Board as well as working with the District's bank of volunteers to evaluate opportunities and engage in the Council's activities.

- The Council should view the change to the Committee system as a way of engaging the public and as a way of addressing the skills gap in the local economy.
- A multi-agency group should be established so that the Council could liaise with business representatives; local employers; the NHS to address the post Covid-19 issues facing the District. The suggestion was made to establish a Recovery Task Force to address these issues.
- The Chief Executive provided a response covering en block the points raised above. The way the Council was now working digitally was key to the Council's efficiency moving forward and the majority of the Council's customers had accepted this enhanced way of working and had confirmed that this had worked for them. On the skills audit, the District Councils Network was pushing for this to happen and was working with Universities. The need to upskill people to do different things was seen as high importance in view of the employment situation as well as the need to capitalise on the level of volunteers who were willing to become involved in local projects and schemes. A Recovery Task and Finish Group would be established and discussed at Cabinet on 22 June 2020 which would be cross-party with the aim of determining how the Council would move forward with Covid-19 recovery. The issues raised by Councillors would be taken on board.
- Closing some public highways to assist with social distancing and some village centres have very narrow pathways had this been mentioned with WSCC as concern was expressed at the width of some pathways in shopping areas such as Rustington and that this could cause issues with shoppers trying to social distance. The Director of Place explained the two separate schemes with WSCC that were in place to improve cycleways and to provide more established walking routes in Bognor Regis and Littlehampton. In Arundel, the Council was working with the Town Council on a scheme for the high street. These were the current schemes in place, and it was explained that the Council could then look at other schemes though the work involved was significant and this was explained to the Committee.
- A request was made to look at Rustington as this was such a vibrant and busy shopping area. The Director of Place reconfirmed that the Council had engaged with its partners and had invited them to submit ideas for their own areas – not many responses had been received.
- On virtual meetings, were the Local Government Association or DCN looking to keep this a permanent policy? The Chief Executive responded stating that he believed this to be the case.
- The same focus on ensuring that Towns would be ready for reopening also needed to be given to villages.
- The work of refuse collectors was praised, especially in clearing rubbish left at popular areas such as beaches and parks from visitors.
- This led to concern that some areas of beaches and foreshores were not always left litter free, especially around bank holidays and when the weather had been exceptionally good. The Committee was interested to hear what methods had been put into place to address this and how was the Council planning to respond to this problem? The Director of Services responded

reminding Councillors that this was an unprecedented situation which had led to a surge of people visiting the District's parks, gardens and foreshores and as a result of the lifting of lockdown restrictions – this was a county-wide issue. The Council had been very active working with its contractor in conjunction with its Cleansing and Parks teams who had targeted these areas and had put extra measures in place which had been effective. There had been full bins in places and sometimes there had been litter build up overnight, but this had been cleared daily with relatively few complaints being received.

- In response, it was felt that a contributory factor had been popular areas where cafes were operating a takeaway service. Due to this increase in litter, was the Council planning to provide an increase in bin facilities in coastal areas that were extra busy? The Director of Place explained that additional skips had been dispersed across the District to speed up the bin emptying process in exceptionally busy areas, this was a quicker response compared to the commissioning and installation of additional bins.
- In response, for parishes based on coastal areas – could parishes be supplied with additional bins in areas where litter was a problem? The Director of Services explained that due to limited resources, any Parishes requiring this, would have to fund their installation and emptying. The Council did not have bins that could be used on a temporary basis, this had been why the skip scheme had been progressed allowing for a much more rapid response to take place.
- How were the Leisure Centres planning to open and be able to apply social distancing requirements? The Director of Services responded confirming that the Government was due to issue more guidance on what would be expected and when leisure centres and swimming pools could open. Social distancing would be observed, and fewer people allowed to participate in each class. There would be a massive increase in hygiene and cleaning arrangements with one-way systems being introduced along the lines of what had been adopted in high streets. The Council was working closely with Freedom Leisure on the financial implications of this and was working towards a possible partial opening in July 2020 to allow as many residents as permitted to return to exercise and leisure again.
- Had the recommendations made by the Council's Insurers in respect of Business Continuity been implemented and in relation to this crisis? The Chief Executive confirmed that the Council did undertake regular tests in terms of its overall readiness and response to an emergency. The last such exercise had been in 2019, following this the Council had revisited its Risk Register to ensure and plan for an enhanced response to any future situation. This had put the Council into a good situation for dealing with this pandemic in terms of reacting to the Civic Centre being closed.
- The future financial position of the Council was an issue of concern. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) had been looking closely at the Council's finances. It was impossible to confirm now, in the middle of a pandemic situation, how big the financial impact would be.

- Had the concern about a reduction in Council Tax collections been raised with the Government as the Council still had to pay its share. The Chief Executive confirmed that the DCN were raising this with Central Government. Discussions had also taken place with WSCC as this problem would increase as unemployment figures would rise further. A close eye would be kept on Council Tax income with the Council possibly needing to come to some arrangement with WSCC in the future.
- The need to ensure that cycleways conformed to WSCC own standards to allow social distancing. The cycleways needed to support cycling and its renewed popularity as a result of Covid-19 ensuring that cycle racks and other opportunities were considered. It was recognised that the huge increases in cycling would have an effect in the future. The Council working with WSCC would need to look at how to enable people to cycle in places that they could not cycle in before.
- Had the rent deferment for businesses in Arun owned premises had a good take up was it a success? The Director of Place confirmed that take up had not been as significant as first thought. The reasons for this were not yet clear and so the Council needed to continue to engage with tenants so that it could consider what to do next and from June onwards. Recommendations would be put to Members in due course but before then there was a need to evaluate better why take up was not as strong as anticipated.
- The Arundel Chord needed to be pushed forward as a priority and a feasibility study drafted. It was felt that this needed to be considered by the Covid Recovery Group. The Chief Executive and the Director of Place responded confirming that this matter had been raised with the LEP and that a meeting had taken place with the train company. The update provided was that this was not a high priority for them in the current climate.

Other Members not on the Committee also asked a range of questions – which have been summarised below:

- How much was the Council spending on housing the homeless at Butlins per month and did the Contract in place provide flexibility for the Council to end the contract with ease once the Pandemic came to an end? The Director of Services responded confirming that the Council had exercised a Contract with Butlins in line with Government guidelines to meet the stipulation that hotels and other complexes volunteer to enter into a contract to house homeless people off the street. The contract had recently been extended to July but with a reduced number of units being used. The Government had provided funding in a block grant to fund the housing of the homeless and rough sleepers to assist with the managing of the pandemic. This had been a direct instruction from Central Government with very clear guidance in terms of how Councils had to respond to it.
- In response, how much had the Council spent? The Director of Services confirmed that as figures changed over the term of the contract the exact figure could not be confirmed.

Overview Select Committee - 9.06.20

The Committee then noted the content of the report provided.

173. CORPORATE PLAN - Q4 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE OUTTURN

(As the Chairman was experiencing technical issues, the Vice-Chairman took over as Chairman for this item).

The Committee received a report from the Group Head of Policy setting out the Quarter 4 performance outturn for the Corporate Plan performance indicators for the period 1 January to 31 March 2020 outlining that the performance of these indicators was reported to the Corporate Management Team every quarter and to this Committee and Cabinet every six months and at year end.

It was explained that the Council might need to consider implementing a new Corporate Plan in 2021 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, subject to the timing of the end of the Covid-19 lockdown. Further consideration would need to be given to this and reported back to a future meeting in due course.

It was explained that this item had two appendices. Appendix A provided detail for Q4 only grouped by status. Appendix B provided a more detailed spreadsheet showing historical data for each indicator including data from Q2 2019/20 and data from the previous 5 years (where available).

It was explained that there were 11 Corporate Plan indicators and out of these six were measured at Quarter 4. A Full commentary for each indicator had been provided in the appendices to the report. The Group Head of Policy then provided an overview of how various indicators had performed. The Committee was also advised that the Corporate Management Team had given its comments in Appendices A and B attached to this report believing that no remedial action was required for any of the Corporate Plan indicators at Q4. However, there were some impacts due to Covid 19 requiring several indicators to be monitored during 2020 as the Council recovered from the pandemic with some indicators unlikely to achieve their target at Q4 2020/21 – these were highlighted as:

- **CP3:** Council Tax collected – did achieve 99% of target
- **CP5:** Number of visits to Council Leisure Centers per annum
- **CP7:** Homelessness applications where homelessness is prevented
- **CP8:** Number of new Council homes built or purchased per annum
- **CP9:** Number of new homes completed (net)
- **CP10:** total rateable business value for the Arun District

Set out below is a summary of the questions asked by the Committee which were responded to at the meeting.

- CP3 – this was behind target - could this totally be attributed to Covid19 as the timeframe covered did not include the Pandemic period. Was the failing target more to do with capacity within the Council to chase outstanding payments as

opposed to the cancelling of payments. The Chief Executive confirmed that the normal turnout at the end of year was very close to the 98% mark and this was when the team started to focus on Covid-19. Just before the end of the financial year was when the final data was collected. This showed about a 1% reduction. As courts were not active and not following cases up at this point – this was a temporary situation as the team were excellent at getting high % of the return – this was being closely monitored in line with the continuing unemployment situation.

- CP7 – with homelessness during Covid19 – was it not the case that the Government made it illegal for private landlords to evict residents what was the process that the Council followed if they became aware of a case and was it expecting to see a huge surge once these rules then stopped - had there been any such cases during Covid-19. The Director of Services confirmed that she was not aware of any cases and that it was impossible to predict what could happen. The Council would to deal with any homelessness presentations as they arose.

(The Chairman, Councillor Northeast re-joined the meeting)

- Questions were asked about the Council's poor record of building council homes and the Council was selling off its own land to developers when this land could be used for building council houses. The Director of Services confirmed that the Council was not selling off Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land. It was committed to a big housing development programme in line with the HRA Business Plan to increase HRA stock. It was better for the Council to work with developers as money earned from doing this had enabled the Council to fund other projects such as the purchase of the Bognor Regis Arcade. It was confirmed that the number of units in the development process was 90 and that they were currently under discussion and that the Council was starting to move forward really well in expanding the HRA account. The Business Plan was updated on an annual basis and would need to reflect the Council's changing financial situation and refreshed targets.
- CP8 – how was the Council financing the capital cost of these houses, was this from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) or other means? This was through the HRA business plan and any slippage as a result of Covid-19 had already been mentioned.
- CP11 – this target had been increased from 40 to 50% and was not achieving. Could the Council investigate making the garden waste collection a free service to residents so that these figures could be added to the figures to meet the increased target? Questions were also asked about WSCC's Food Waste Trial and when this might be launched, accepting that Covid-19 had delayed plans. It was explained that increasing this figure had a high cost to it. The Government's Waste Strategy had been delayed due to Covid-19 as had other options; the more favoured option was to bring in mandatory food waste collections – but more detail was awaited. There would an opportunity for Members to look at the whole of the Council's collection regime nearer to 2023 when a new waste contract would be in place. It was not possible, in the middle of a contract, to request the financing of green waste which was currently a subscription service

Overview Select Committee - 9.06.20

and so not something that could be changed mid-term. In terms of a Food waste pilot, no clear announcement had been received from Government due to Covid-19.

The Committee then noted the content of the report and the updates provided at the meeting.

174. SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN - Q4 AND END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE OUTTURN

(Councillor Northeast resumed his role as Chairman at the commencement of this item).

The Group Head of Policy presented this report and explained the outturn performance figures as detailed in the report and the associated appendices.

As with the Corporate Plan report, the Committee was advised that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic situation was likely to adversely impact future performance and would result in the need to closely monitor indicators SDP4, SDP5, SDP7, SDP16, SDP18, SDP19, SDP21 and SDP23. SDP1, 3 and 10 would also need close monitoring in attempt to improve performance.

The following questions were asked by the Committee:

- SDP4 – raised question at previous meetings asked for what incentives had been given to new businesses in terms of business rate brakes to encourage new start-up businesses to move into empty shops, prior to Covid-19, if not a priority then this should be now. It was explained that due to Covid-19 this was almost irrelevant now. Even before the pandemic, retail had been going through very difficult times, and the full impact of Covid-19 was not yet known. A fundamental rethink on the high street and its purpose was needed, undertaking a series of interventions was not the right way forward.
- Points were made that the future of the High Street needed a total rethink and relaunch and needed to be more leisure based and what the impact Covid-19 would have on the High Street problem.
- SDP 10 – there were concerns that the number of corporate complaints were increasing and that it was important for the Council to learn from complaints. The Chief Executive confirmed that although complaints were increasing, they still represented a small number of issues over the year with the number being presented to the Ombudsman and being successful being very low. Overall and putting all of the services that the Council provided into perspective, the Council had performed very well. Its recent Residents Satisfaction Survey confirmed this. Mistakes were made and the Council did learn from these by encouraging residents to provide feedback.

The Committee then noted the report and the updates provided at the meeting.

175. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS AND UPDATES

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Dr Walsh outlined that he very much welcomed the collaborative working of Group Leaders on the current Covid 19 pandemic and was now looking to working on the recovery for the District. The establishment of a Recovery Task and Finish Group, mentioned earlier, would allow for brainstorming sessions to achieve this. As part of this work, Councillor Dr Walsh stated that he and this Group would welcome the input from all Councillors and so he wanted to hear everyone's ideas so that they could stimulate the Council's activities to assist businesses and help the Arun economy to get moving again.

A wide range of questions were asked by the Committee to Cabinet Members. These have been summarised below and responses were provided at the meeting.

- The future of the High Street and how businesses needed to be supported was again discussed.
- That the Council needed to promote its High Streets as safe areas to visit
- That there were other measures to boost the economy such as increasing pedestrian and cycle access to main interest areas
- That the High Street needed to become more leisure and social based focusing on night-time activities
- Business rate holidays needed to be given to new businesses for the first 3-6 months of trading – an issue for the new Task Group to consider
- What was happening with the public conveniences on the esplanade in Bognor Regis. The Cabinet Member for Technical Services provided an update confirming that the situation was frustrating for all Members as well as the public. Not much information could be shared as this was confidential since they were contractual disputes. Every effort was being made to resolve the issue and progress was being made. What was important to note was that temporary toilets would be in place for the summer holidays.
- Could information be provided on what the three regeneration options were for Bognor Regis? What can residents expect from these options which had not yet been seen? The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Support confirmed that the regeneration options were in the early stages of development. An initial report had been submitted to a previous meeting of Cabinet and that would be progressed.
- How was the transfer of the ownership of the Bognor Regis Town Hall to Bognor Regis Town Council progressing? The Cabinet Member for Technical Services confirmed that any transfer or purchase needed both parties, Arun District Council and Bognor Regis Town Council involved. At the current time this was not being progressed due to Covid-19.
- At Cabinet last week, the Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing talked about shower facilities with the increased interest in cycling and how the Council needed to ensure that showering and other appropriate facilities such as cycle storage racks could be provided. The Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing responded stating that she did mention also cycle storage and the need for

Overview Select Committee - 9.06.20

larger companies to provide the storage of equipment and that the provision of showers was just a small part of that.

- Further questions were asked on the progress of regeneration in Bognor Regis. The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Support confirmed that he had already responded to similar questions asked earlier.
- Could the Leader of the Council continue to publish regular vlogs on District matters post Covid as these had been very well received? The Leader of the Council outlined that it was his intention to continue to provide these in response to the positive feedback received and as this would be a positive addition to the Council's Communication Strategy, but that the broadcasts would be less frequent.
- Some Councillors wanted to know more about the Sir Richard Hotham project. It was confirmed that the Council has determined not to proceed with this project.
- What other ideas did the new Cabinet Member have for the District in terms rejuvenating the High Street and other popular visitor areas? What other income generating ideas were in the pipeline? The Cabinet Member for Commercial and Business Development responded confirming that in terms of taking on his new portfolio area it was early days. He would be developing a Commercial Strategy and looking at income generating ideas which he believed should have input from the whole of the Council and so he hoped that all Councillors and Officers would submit good ideas to consider.

176. WORK PROGRAMME 2019/2020

The Group Head of Policy explained that confirming the detail of this year's work programme was proving difficult considering the Covid-19 pandemic and the effect this would have on the Council's major contractors, of which some reported into the Committee on an annual basis. The Committee was advised that further liaison would need to take place with these Contractors such as Freedom Leisure before the Committee's final work programme could be confirmed.

The Group Head of Policy turned to the Committee's next meeting on 1 September 2020 and confirmed that it was likely that the Citizens Advice report would need to be deferred to a later meeting. What was positive news was that confirmation had been received from Chief Inspector John Carter that he could attend to provide an update on local policing. The Committee was asked if it would prefer this to be a Special meeting for this one item and to allow for a presentation and then a question and answer session. In response this idea was very much welcomed with the Committee asking the Group Head of Policy if she could expand this item to also include the newly appointed Chief Constable who could then explain the views and priorities of the Police for the whole area.

Following further debate, the Committee agreed that 1 September 2020 should be a Special Meeting and it then discussed ideas for its Work Programme for the remaining year. The Committee confirmed that it wished to have a range of issues discussed such as the increase in domestic violence over the pandemic period as well

as receiving up to date crime figures for the Arun District with comparisons to previous years.

The issues put forward were:

- The Arundel Chord – the previous Chairman had made a promise to write a letter to pursue this, but this had not been actioned. Councillor Northeast assured the Committee that he would follow this matter up.
- That single agenda meetings were an excellent idea as they allowed for more thorough scrutiny
- The idea of pre-Committee meetings was welcomed so that the approach to take at a meeting could be agreed and prepared.
- It was hoped that presentations from the Environment Agency and Southern Water could be organised as Special meetings.
- That there should be Special meetings for just questioning the Cabinet.
- Did 1 December meeting needed to be divided into two meetings?

Following further discussion, the Group Head of Policy confirmed that she would undertake further work on the Work Programme so that this could be approved on 1 September 2020.

(The meeting concluded at 22.20 pm)

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ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2020

SUBJECT: THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC SITUATION

REPORT AUTHOR: Nigel Lynn, Chief Executive
DATE: 18 August 2020
EXTN: 37600
PORTFOLIO AREA: Corporate Support

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: This report updates the Overview Select Committee on the Council's response to the pandemic situation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- i) OSC is requested to note the actions taken to date

1. BACKGROUND:

This report provides an update on progress since the last OSC report on 9 June 2020 in relation to the Covid-19 response by the Council.

A report is going to Cabinet on 21 September 2020 which will cover these main points but it will also highlight the main themes discussed at the Covid-19 Recovery Working Party meeting which took place on 23 July 2020 and the next Working Party which is taking place on 8 September 2020. The minutes and any recommendations from these meetings will also go to Cabinet on 21 September 2020 for discussion and approval. The 21 September 2020 Cabinet report will be presented to the Overview Select Committee meeting on 6 October 2020 to give the Committee the opportunity to scrutinise the actions taken and proposals for the future recovery of the Council and its services.

Members should note that it has not always been possible to follow the preferred route for Covid-19 reports in particular, ie for all reports to go to OSC before Cabinet due to the additional Cabinet meetings (reserve meetings not normally used) which have been required since the start of the pandemic.

Members should also note that this report is primarily a summary of what has previously been sent to members in the weekly Councillor Briefing from Cllr Walsh and Nigel Lynn.

Welfare of Staff and Members

- 1.1.1. Restricted access to the civic buildings continues, with the majority of staff still working from home where they are able to, in line with Government guidance. Staff are permitted to return to the office from 27 July 2020 for 1 designated day a week sitting at an allocated desk, if they have agreed this with their line manager. The offices have been made Covid-secure and calculations for the volume of staff permitted in the building, based on the 1 metre plus Government ruling, have been adhered to. One-way routes through the building have been made and toilets are all unisex and only permit 1 user at a time. Plans for allowing staff to return to the office for more than 1 day a week is being considered by CMT in the future, with consideration being given to the safety and wellbeing of staff, Members and contractors.

The Council's Finances

- 1.1.2. The final picture regarding the Council's financial position will not be known until the emergency is over. The latest prediction, in our return to MHCLG is that the potential cost to the Council will be approximately £5m.
- 1.1.3. On 16 July 2020, Local Government Secretary Robert Jenrick confirmed allocations for individual councils from the £500 million of additional support for coronavirus-related spending pressures. The funding will help councils in England continue to deliver crucial frontline services, support those most in need and meet new spending pressures so they can deliver for residents.
- 1.1.4. Arun's confirmed allocation for the third tranche of funding is £264,767 as highlighted in the table below.

First Tranche of Covid-19 Funding	Second Tranche of Covid-19 Funding	Third Tranche of Covid-19 Funding	Total Covid-19 Additional Funding
£64,612	£1,609,640	£264,767	£1,939,019

- 1.1.5. On 23 July 2020, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP, has written to chief executives of billing authorities notifying them of his decision that the Small Business Grants Fund, the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants Fund and the Discretionary Grants Fund should close by Friday 28 August. The letter notes that local authorities have now made £10.76 billion grant payments to over 875,000 hereditaments, which equates to more than 92 per cent of those identified as in scope for the first two schemes. It also states that, once the final payments have been made on all schemes, it will be necessary for local authorities to return any unspent funds to BEIS.

Communications

- 1.1.6. Contact via social media continues to be a popular means of gathering information. Weekly reminders of our news bulletins and social media posts are issued including regular reminders about social distancing, avoiding busy places and considerate use of our beaches and town centres.

Homelessness

- 1.1.7. At the peak of the lock down period we offered 61 households emergency accommodation in line with government guidance. During that period, 21 clients moved to more permanent accommodation. Of the remaining 40, we have provided more settled housing for 50 per cent of them and 50 per cent have chosen not to engage with the services offered. For those that have returned to their previous circumstances, we are working with partners and our out-reach teams to offer support where needed.
- 1.1.8. On 18 July 2020, the Housing Secretary launched the Next Steps Accommodation Programme on 18 July 2020. Councils and their local partners can apply for funds from the government's Next Steps Accommodation Programme to cover property costs and support new tenancies for around 15,000 vulnerable people who were provided with emergency accommodation during the pandemic.
- 1.1.9. A total of £105 million is now available to ensure interim accommodation and support continues for those who need it and can be used to help people move into the private rented sector, extend or secure alternative interim accommodation or where possible help people to reconnect with friends or family.
- 1.1.10. In addition, first wave funding, totalling £161 million, is also available to provide 3,300 additional supported homes this year for those currently housed in emergency accommodation. This is part of a total of £433 million to provide 6,000 long term, safe homes for those in need.
- 1.1.11. Council officers will be looking into this further and taking the necessary actions.

Local outbreaks – local authority powers

- 1.1.12. The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No.3) Regulations 2020 came into force on Saturday 18 July. The new regulations give local and national government additional powers to stop local transmission of the virus.
- 1.1.13. These will allow them to restrict local public gatherings and events, and close local businesses premises and outdoor spaces.
- 1.1.14. The Department of Health and Social Care has published statutory guidance for Councils in England on what the new regulations allow them to do and how they should exercise those powers, how those powers should be enforced and guidance for those affected by local authority directions.
- 1.1.15. Council officers will be looking into this further and taking the necessary actions.

Parks & Open Spaces

1.1.16. From 4 July 2020 all playgrounds in the district reopened and these all have new signage which will include messages around social distancing.

Support to Local Businesses

1.1.17. The Business and Planning Bill proposes to make it easier for businesses serving food and drink such as restaurants, cafes and pubs to seat and serve customers outdoors, to assist them in managing social distancing to control the spread of Covid-19. The temporary pavement licences process introduces a streamlined consent route to allow businesses to obtain a licence to place temporary furniture, such as tables and chairs outside of cafes, bars and restaurants quickly.

1.1.18. As above, the Council has paid significant sums to local businesses by way of the three grant funds (Small Business Grants Fund, the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants Fund and the Discretionary Grants Fund).

1.1.19. The reopening of the High Streets has gone smoothly and safely and no significant concerns have been reported. Customers are following guidelines and social distancing measures and shop owners have appreciated the support from wardens and the Council. The Community Information Officers (Wardens) have been extremely proactive in resolving some hot spots and pinch points in both busy locations.

1.1.20. Pier Road in Littlehampton has been closed temporarily to allow for social distancing in the area.

1.1.21. Cleansing continues at an advanced level including the regular cleaning of public seating/benches in Littlehampton due to high usage.

Leisure

1.1.22. Freedom Leisure opened its Leisure Centres in the District on 25 July 2020, in response to new Government guidance. Strict guidelines are being followed to ensure that the facilities are Covid-secure with booking systems, limited numbers and cleaning regimes.

Council Decision-Making

1.1.23. Since the last report to Cabinet on 20 July 2020, virtual Committee meetings have been held including:

- Full Council on 22 July 2020
- Covid Recovery Working Party on 23 July 2020
- Constitution Working Party on 17 August 2020

2. PROPOSAL(S):

OSC is requested to note the Council's response to the pandemic situation.

3. OPTIONS:

- i) To note the Council's response to the pandemic situation
- ii) To request further information from officers

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		X
Relevant District Ward Councillors		X
Other groups/persons (please specify)		X

5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)

	YES	NO
Financial	✓	
Legal		X
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		X
Sustainability		X
Asset Management/Property/Land		X
Technology		X
Other (please explain)		

6. IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 The final picture regarding the Council's financial position will not be known until the emergency is over. We predict that the potential cost to the Council could now be will be approximately £5m although the Council has received only £264,767 in the third tranche of funding, bringing the total Covid-19 funding received to just £1,939,019. Clearly the shortfall in funding against total costs to the Council will affect the Council's finances significantly going forward and this will be considered with the Covid Recovery Working Party and Cabinet when recommendations are considered for future work to address the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic on the authority.

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

For OSC to note the Council's response to the pandemic situation.

8 EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE DECISION: 1 September 2020

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

[Arun Webpage - Covid-19](#)

[Cabinet report 1.6.20](#)

[OSC report 9.6.20](#)

[Cabinet report and minutes 22.6.20](#)

[Cabinet report and minutes 20.7.20](#)

**OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME – 2020/2021**

Date of Meeting: 09 JUNE 2020			
Report Deadline for Agenda Prep: 27 April 2020			
Date of Agenda Prep: 12 May 2020			
Final Report Deadline: 25 May 2020			
Policy/Strategy Reviews			
Agenda Items	Subject	Lead Officer/Member	Comments
	Citizens Advice Report	Robin Wickham	Due to Covid-19 this item will be moved to a later date
Performance Reviews			
1	Corporate Plan 2013-2018 – Q4 and End of Year Performance outturn for 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019	Gemma Stubbs – Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive	
2	Service Delivery Plan 2013-2018 – Q4 and End of Year Performance outturn 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019	Gemma Stubbs – Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive	
Contractor/Partner Performance Reviews			
	There are no items for this meeting		
Partner Reviews			
	There are no items for this meeting.		
Feedback from Joint Scrutiny in West Sussex			
	There are no items for this meeting.		
Holding Cabinet to account			
3	Cabinet Member Questions and Updates	All Cabinet	
Work Programme			
4	To agree the work programme for 2020/21	Jackie Follis	To be reported to Full Council on 15 July 2020

**OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME – 2019/20**

Date of Meeting: 01 September 2020			
Report Deadline for Agenda Prep: 20 July 2020			
Date of Agenda Prep: 4 August 2020			
Final Report Deadline: 17 August 2020			
Policy/Strategy Reviews			
Agenda Items	Subject	Lead Officer/Member	Comments
	There are no items for this meeting		
Performance Reviews			
1	Covid-19 Update from CEO	Jackie Follis/Nigel Lynn	
Contractor/Partner Performance Reviews			
2	Chief Inspector Carter – Local Policing	Jackie Follis	
Partner Reviews			
	There are no items for this meeting.		
Feedback from Joint Scrutiny in West Sussex			
	Feedback from Police and Crime Panel Meeting held on 26 June 2020	Cllr Mrs Yeates	Moved to October meeting
	Feedback from HASC meeting held on 10 June 2020	Cllr Bennett	June meeting cancelled – no update to give
Holding Cabinet to account			
3	Cabinet Member Questions and Updates – focus for this meeting on reviewing performance against the Corporate Plan and Service Delivery Plans	All Cabinet	
Work Programme			
4	Work Programme – 2020/21 – Update	Jackie Follis – Group Head of Policy	

**OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME – 2019/20**

Date of Meeting: 06 October 2020			
Report Deadline for Agenda Prep: 24 August			
Date of Agenda Prep: 8 September 2020			
Final Report Deadline: 21 September 2020			
Policy/Strategy Reviews			
Agenda Items	Subject	Lead Officer/Member	Comments
	Equalities & Diversity	Jackie Follis	Moved to March 2021 meeting TBC
1	Overpaid Housing Benefit Policy 2014 Review	Andrew Dale	TBC
2	Cust Sat Survey Results	Jackie Follis	
Contractor/Partner Performance Reviews			
3	Covid-19 Update from CEO	Jackie Follis/Nigel Lynn	
Partner Reviews			
	There are no items for this meeting.		
Feedback from Joint Scrutiny in West Sussex			
4	Feedback from Police and Crime Panel Meeting held on 26 June 2020 & 25 September 2020	Cllr Mrs Yeates	
5	Feedback from Meeting of HASC held on 9 September 2020	Cllr Bennett	
Holding Cabinet to account			
6	Cabinet Member Questions and Updates	All Cabinet	
Work Programme			
7	Work Programme 2020/21 – Update	Jackie Follis – Group Head of Policy	

**OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME – 2019/20**

Date of Meeting: 01 DECEMBER 2020			
Report Deadline for Agenda Prep: 19 October 2020			
Date of Agenda Prep: 3 November 2020			
Final Report Deadline: 16 November 2020			
Policy/Strategy Reviews			
Agenda Items	Subject	Lead Officer/Member	Comments
	Citizens Advice Report	Robin Wickham	Moved to March 2021
Performance Reviews			
1	Corporate Plan – 2018 – 2022 – Q2 Performance outturn report for the period 1 April 2020 – 30 September 2020	Gemma Stubbs – Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive	
2	Service Delivery Plan – 2018 – 2022 – Q2 Performance outturn report for the period 1 April 2020 – 30 September 2020	Gemma Stubbs – Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive	
Contractor/Partner Performance Reviews			
	Leisure Contract Annual Report	Robin Wickham	Moved to Jan 2021
3	Combined Cleansing Services Contract – Biffa	Oliver Handson	
Partner Reviews			
	There are no items for this meeting		
Feedback from Joint Scrutiny in West Sussex			
4	Feedback from Meeting of HASC held on 11 November 2020	Cllr Bennett	
Holding Cabinet to account			
5	Cabinet Member Questions and Updates	All Cabinet	
Work Programme			
6	Work Programme 2020/21 – Update	Jackie Follis [Group Head of Policy]	

**OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME – 2019/20**

Date of Meeting: 26 January 2021			
Report Deadline for Agenda Prep: 30 November 2020			
Date of Agenda Prep: 15 December 2020			
Final Report Deadline: 11 January 2021			
Policy/Strategy Reviews			
Agenda Items	Subject	Lead Officer/Member	Comments
	There are no items for this meeting		
Performance Reviews			
1	Council Budget – 22/23	Alan Peach – Group Head of Corporate Support	
	Greenspace Management Contract	Oliver Handson – Greenspace & Development Manager	To be moved to March 2021
Contractor/Partner Performance Reviews			
2	Leisure Contract Annual Report	Robin Wickham	Unless there is a specific aspect Members want to review, there does not need to be an annual report on this contact – next review could be 2021.
Partner Reviews			
	There are no items for this meeting		
Feedback from Joint Scrutiny in West Sussex			
3	Feedback from the Meeting of the HASC Panel held on 13 January 2021	Cllr Bennett	
Holding Cabinet to account			
4	Cabinet Member Questions and Updates	All Cabinet	
Work Programme			
5	Work Programme 2020/21 – Update	Jackie Follis [Group Head of Policy]	

**OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME – 2019/20**

Date of Meeting: 23 MARCH 2020			
Report Deadline for Agenda Prep: 8 February 2021			
Date of Agenda Prep: 23 February 2021			
Final Report Deadline: 8 March 2021			
Policy/Strategy Reviews			
Agenda Items	Subject	Lead Officer/Member	Comments
1	Equalities & Diversity	Jackie Follis	
2	Citizens Advice Report	Robin Wickham	
Performance Reviews			
3	Greenspace Management Contract	Oliver Handson – Greenspace & Development Manager	
Contractor/Partner Performance Reviews			
	There are no items for this meeting		
Partner Reviews			
	There are no items for this meeting.		
Feedback from Joint Scrutiny in West Sussex			
4	Feedback from Sussex Police and Crime Panel Meeting held on 29 January & 15 February 2021	Cllr Mrs Yeates	
5	Feedback from the Meeting of the HASC Panel held on 24 February 2021	Cllr Bennett	
Holding Cabinet to account			
6	Cabinet Member Questions and Updates – focus for this meeting on reviewing performance against the Corporate Plan	All Cabinet	
Work Programme			
7	Work Programme 2020/21 – Update and Work Programme planning for 2021/22	Jackie Follis – Group Head of Policy	