



Public Document Pack

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15 March 2021

OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Overview Select Committee will be held virtually via Zoom on Tuesday 23 March 2021 **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 - 8)
The Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Overview Select Committee held on 26 January 2021.
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. GREENSPACE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT (Pages 9 - 14)
This report provides members of the Overview Select Committee with an annual performance review for the Council's Greenspace Management Contract and will include a presentation from Tivoli Group Ltd, the Council's current contract provider.
6. COMBINED CLEANSING SERVICES CONTRACT - BIFFA (Pages 15 - 24)
This report provides members of the Overview Select Committee with an annual performance review for the Council's Combined Cleansing Services Contract and will include a presentation from Biffa Municipal Ltd, the Council's current contract provider.
7. COVID-19 UPDATE (Pages 25 - 34)
This report updates Overview Select Committee on the Council's response to the pandemic situation.
8. EQUALITIES & DIVERSITY (Pages 35 - 42)
This report sets out an overview of what Arun District Council has in place to create and sustain an inclusive environment where equality of treatment and opportunity for employees, potential employees, users of Council services and those who wish to access council services is both accepted and expected.

9. FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS OF THE SUSSEX POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD ON 29 JANUARY & 15 FEBRUARY 2021

A verbal report, following Councillor Yeates' attendance at the meeting of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel held on 29 January and 15 February 2021, will be given at the meeting.

10. 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.

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

26 January 2021 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Northeast (Chairman), English (Vice-Chair), Bennett, Bicknell, B Blanchard-Cooper, Mrs Cooper, Dixon, Elkins, Gunner, Huntley and Tilbrook

Councillors Coster, Mrs Gregory, Lury, Roberts, Mrs Staniforth, Stanley and Dr Walsh were also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

Apologies: Councillors Mrs Catterson, Dendle, Miss Needs and Miss Seex

433. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Blanchard-Cooper declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 5 – [Leisure Operating Contract Covid 19 Review] in his capacity as President of the Littlehampton Musical Comedy Society which was one of the users of the Windmill Centre that Freedom Leisure operated.

Councillor Northeast also declared a Personal Interest in this item in case any debate focused on Arun District Council staff, as he was married to a member of Council staff.

434. MINUTES

The Committee approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2020 and agreed that the Chairman would sign these as soon as practicably possible.

Having approved the minutes, Councillor Mrs Yeates then confirmed that the word 'radio' had been omitted in Minute 334 [Cabinet Member Questions & Updates] new digital shop radios – the word 'radios' was missing, this was noted by the Committee.

435. LEISURE OPERATING CONTRACT COVID-19 REVIEW

The Group Head of Community Wellbeing presented his report where he provided members with a summary of the support that had been delivered by the Council during the pandemic and the effect that lockdowns and other restrictions had, had on the leisure services. He and Mr Ivan Horsfall-Tuner the Managing Director from Freedom Leisure then took questions from members.

Members had asked several questions in advance of the meeting these were;

- Could an update on the current financial position, including reserves be provided?

- Do they estimate that they would need further financial support from the Council? If yes, how much and over what timeline?
- What would the consequences be for them if the Council offered no further financial support?
- How long can they survive without further support?
- What would happen if other Councils withdrew their financial support? (i.e. if one or two withdraw support does the pack of cards fall?)
- Was there any possibility of further government support?
- Are they in any danger of going into administration?
- What else can we do (excluding finance) to support them?
- Going forward would Freedom Leisure endeavour to ensure that they are able to get enough funding to maintain and upkeep a good quality of disabled facilities in their leisure centres?

In answering the above questions, the Managing Director from Freedom Leisure advised the Committee that there had been a good level of support from other local authority partners, although not all of their costs had been covered. At the end of November 2020, a loss of £1.1 million across the business had been recorded, this meant that the impact on the reserves had been much greater as they could not be reliant on customer receipts. He went on to explain that while the business was not about to fail, it was facing significant challenge and that the only way to recover and survive would be to be open and operate at full capacity, however he did not expect that to be until after the end of the financial year now. He confirmed that the Council had made an application for a government grant of £310,000, that would cover from December 2020 to end of March 2021 and he was hopeful² for a further grant scheme to be made available from April 2021 onwards.

In terms of support he stated that, the support had been great so far, but he would be looking for support from members in getting the message of reopening out across the District and to engage all demographics to use the services available as soon as restrictions allowed.

Further questions were asked at the meeting where the following issues were raised;

- What work would be done to support the Windmill entertainment centre and would the closure time be used to complete redecoration work as well as consideration to be given to use the venue in other ways. It would be good to see the council apply for an Arts Grant to help this side of the business.

- Had comparisons been investigated in terms of both building's running costs (Arun Leisure Centre and The Littlehampton Wave)? Had any differences been highlighted where further costs could be saved?
- Recovery of lost fees

The Group Head of Community Wellbeing/ and the Managing Director from Freedom Leisure gave detailed and positive answers to all issues raised.

The Committee noted the report update.

436. COUNCIL BUDGET - 2022 - 2023

The Financial Services Manager presented her report to members and confirmed that a balanced budget had been achieved for 2021/22, chiefly due to additional government grant funding that was announced as part of the Settlement on 17 December 2020. She also highlighted the following key areas of her report;

- New Homes Bonus dropped by £1.2 million as predicted
- 3 new grants totalling £1.7 million announced in December 2020
- Council Tax Band D to increase by 2.65%
- HRA 1.5% rent increase in accordance with the provision of the rent standard
- Capital Budget table 8.4 showed enhanced capital programme
- Covid uncertainty adds significant risk to the budgets in the General Fund, which had been mitigated by the income compensation scheme for Q1 2021/22 and the contingency budget.

The Committee noted the report update.

437. COUNCILS RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Chief Executive presented his report to members, he advised that a new version of a member briefing update had been circulated to Members with more accurate detail as this report had been written on 15 January 2020.

Members then asked the Chief Executive a number of questions on the following topics;

- Has there been a further update as to when lockdown restrictions may be eased?
- Accessibility to the two vaccine centres in Angmering and Rustington and should people have difficulties in getting to one of these centres for their vaccine, they should be advised to contact Community hub for help. The contact number for the community hub is on the Council website.

Overview Select Committee - 26.01.21

- Staff and public welfare were a priority for the Council; however, a concern was raised that one member had received complaints from residents regarding campaign leaflets that had been posted out

The Chief Executive provided answers to all issues raised and the Committee noted the report update.

438. UPDATE FROM THE RESIDENTS SURVEY WORKING PARTY

The Chairman of the Residents Survey Working Party gave a brief introduction to members advising that working party had hoped to change some of the questions contained within the survey, however due to the short timeframe and that the questions were tied into the Corporate Performance Indicators which have already been set and agreed, they had focused on how to obtain broader engagement and how to achieve a more successful survey response rate across the District.

The Group Head of Policy then thanked the members of the Working Party for the work they had completed in a tight timeframe. She then went on to provide the Committee with key highlights from her report and referred members to the recommendations that had been put forward by the Working Party.

Members then took part in a debate where the following issues were raised;

- Questions around the budget for this work, it was agreed that an answer would be provided outside of the meeting
- It was felt that the issue surrounding the western side of the District having a lower up take on completing the surveys had not been addressed, it was advised that different approaches would be looked into in an attempt to address this issue, however there was no guarantee that it would produce results of rectifying the issue we are currently facing with a lack of up take from the Western side of the District

The Committee

RESOLVED

1. That the Council carries out its 2021 Residents Satisfaction Survey using methods identified by the Working Party to improve participation across age groups, which can be implemented within budget, these are:
 - a) Increase number of surveys, potentially offsetting this cost by not sending out follow up letters, numbers to be determined with the survey provider
 - b) Carry out an open online survey alongside the targeted survey
 - c) Explore options for incentives for survey completion to be vouchers for local businesses

- d) Explore options for invitations to participate being sent in a more appealing format.
 - e) Carry out an additional sample geographically targeted survey to target younger respondents
2. That delegated authority be given to the Group Head of Policy to work with our chosen provider to deliver the most representative survey for 2021, within existing budgets based on the recommendations of the Residents Satisfaction Survey Working Party and in consultation with the Chairman of the Working Party
 3. That the effectiveness of the changed methodology be reviewed in the 2021 survey report and developed for future years

439. FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS OF THE HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SELECT COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2021

The Chairman advised that the report had been circulated with the agenda and asked the Committee if they had any questions for the Council's nominated representative, Councillor Bennett.

Councillor Bennett referred members to the last paragraph of his report where he reported the proposed cut to the West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) budget, estimated at £5.4 million and that most of it would come from reductions made to care packages for adults who were still in their own homes. It was felt that this did not fit with the aim of helping people to remain in their own homes.

The Committee noted the update.

440. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS AND UPDATES

The Chairman invited members of the Cabinet who had not provided a written update to the Committee to provide a verbal update on any matters.

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Leader of the Council advised that he had attended a meeting with Greater Brighton Economic Board (GBEB) where they agreed in principal that Officers look at the wholesale decarbonisation of housing stock. The board meeting also detailed the ambition for Greater Brighton areas to become a hydrogen powered economy for England. Furthermore, a small update was received by the Board on the city fibre expansion and I.T roll out across some of the GBEB area. He also confirmed that he had made a plea for a report covering the Network Rail contribution, specifically relevant to the importance of the Arundel Chord

The Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing advised that today a press release had been published that confirmed that Arun had been successful in being awarded funds to increase outreach engagement and communication with residents who were disproportionately likely to be impacted by Covid-19, particularly those with disabilities and from the Black And Minority Ethnic community relating to the mis-information regarding the Covid-19 vaccinations that was currently in circulation. The

Wellbeing team have continued to offer services which can be found on the Councils website and have a number of support projects running currently that residents could benefit from. She also advised that a workplace wellbeing project had also been rolled out to offer support to Council staff with a particular focus on emotional support due to the difficult last 12 months. Community safety update was that a community warden project was due to commence in March 2021 that would focus on anti-social behaviour hotspots across the District. She concluded her update with a request to the voluntary sector voluntary action Arun and Chichester for all their work and support.

The Cabinet Member for Technical services provided members with an update on his attendance at last month's Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group meeting, where Beach Safety and Coastal suicide prevention was discussed. He advised members that he would provide them with a link to the report in relation to beach safety. In summing up he thanked that Licensing Team manager and her team for the work they completed in collecting and rehoming 44 stray dogs.

The Chairman then thanked Cabinet Members who had provided written updates to the Committee ahead of the meeting and then invited members of the Committee to ask any questions. These have been summarised below;

- A question to the Cabinet Member for Technical Services in relation to his comments made at the Cabinet Meeting held on 11 January 2020. regarding Members of the Development Control Committee having a tough job when voting on applications because they did so based on representation from local residents and as he was the Chairman of the Planning Working Party did he feel that this was the best way of determining planning applications? In response the Cabinet Member explained that the intention behind his comments at that meeting was about how difficult it was for members to balance the comments and feeling made by residents against the planning reasons.
- A question to the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Business Development was that as he had now been in post for 8 months, how many of his ideas had made it into the budget? In response the Cabinet Member advised that there would be a report going to Cabinet shortly. Interviews had also taken place for the position of commercial consultant; however, a suitable candidate had not yet been found as it was a difficult time to recruit during the pandemic. Due to the same reasons that vacancies in the Property and Estates and the Monitoring Officer post had not been filled yet. He advised that until a team was in place to complete the work, the work could not be completed. The Chief Executive confirmed that a report had already been drafted for Cabinet to receive in March.
- A question to the Cabinet Member of Economy and Leader of the Council in relation to Highways England having misrepresented the views of this Council and when would he be confirming that he had addressed this issue. In response the Leader of the Council advised that there had been 5 or 6 responses given on this matter. The Chief Executive also confirmed that the next opportunity to address this would now be when

the proper consultation comes through as Full Council voted not to discuss the A27 matter at its meeting on 13 January 2021.

- A question to the Cabinet Member of Economy and Leader of the Council in relation to the 3D art in Littlehampton having been confirmed by the Director of Place as being jointly funded by Arun District Council and Littlehampton Town Council and not the Restoring Highstreets Fund and would he like to correct his previous comments made at the last OSC meeting held on 1 December 2020? In response the Leader of the Council apologised if he had incorrectly advised where the monies had come from. He also explained that whilst in this instance the artwork had not had the desired impact, he believed that it was the right thing to pursue in order to try and attract people to Littlehampton Town.
- A final question to the Cabinet Member for Economy and Leader of the Council was asked in relation to leafletting of Liberal Democrat literature at this current time. It was confirmed that the guidance from government had only been put in place on Saturday 23 January 2021 where previously there had been none.

441. WORK PROGRAMME 2019/2020

The Group Head of Policy advised members that there would be a presentation to members on the Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester (VAAC) and the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) in March 2021.

(The meeting concluded at 7.56 pm)

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ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE ON 23 MARCH 2021

PART A : INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: Annual Review of the Greenspace Management Contract

REPORT AUTHOR: Oliver Handson, Environmental Services & Strategy Manager

DATE: 23 March 2021

EXTN: 37955

PORTFOLIO AREA: Neighbourhood Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report provides members of the Overview Select Committee with an annual performance review for the Council's Greenspace Management Contract and will include a presentation from Tivoli Group Ltd, the Council's current contract provider.

This report includes an overview of the scope of operations delivered by Tivoli, how the contract is managed and outlines how Arun District Council and Tivoli have worked in partnership to continue to deliver services during the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members of the Overview Select Committee are asked to;

1. Note the information contained within the annual update report for the Council's Greenspace Management Contract.
2. Recognise the significant challenges our parks and greenspaces have experienced in the last 12 months and the extraordinary efforts of front-line Tivoli staff and Tivoli management involved on the Arun contract, who have continued to deliver the best possible service for our residents since the start of the Covid pandemic.
3. Note the ever more critical role that parks & greenspaces have in supporting the health and wellbeing of our communities.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Following a competitive tender process, Arun District Council awarded its ten-year Greenspace Management Contract (GMC) to ISS Facility Services Landscaping (ISS FSL). The contract commenced on the 1 January 2017.
- 1.2 The contract was novated to a new provider - Tivoli Group Ltd (TGL) whose holding company Amistha Holdings Limited purchased the trade and assets of ISS Facility Services Landscaping in the summer 2018.
- 1.3 The contract is a ten-year contract, with an optional extension of up to 5 years. The annual value of the contract is approximately £1.25 million. The retender delivered a saving to the Council of approximately £250k per annum on the previous contract, therefore contributing to the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

2.0 Contract scope

- 2.1 The GMC covers approximately 250 hectares (*the equivalent of 500 football pitches*) of diverse public open space, spread across approximately 500 sites which range from small garage compounds to large Nature Reserves.
- 2.2 Grounds maintenance operations include but are not limited to; grass mowing, litter picking, bin emptying, hedge trimming, shrub maintenance, bedding plant supply and maintenance, wildflower meadow maintenance, cemeteries maintenance and grave digging.
- 2.3 The contract includes the grounds maintenance, management & marketing of the Council's Outdoor Recreation Service, which includes bookings for and use of sport facilities e.g. football pitches, bowling greens, tennis courts, par 3 golf, adventure golf etc. These services are accessed by approximately 80,000¹ customers annually. These services are currently delivered under the Tivoli 'Lifestyle' brand.
- 2.4 Play area repairs & maintenance plus fortnightly inspections of 80 play areas.

3.0 The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our parks and greenspaces and the GMC

- 3.1 National lockdowns followed by the closure of hospitality, gyms and leisure centres put parks in the national spotlight for the first time in decades. Parks became destinations for millions to pursue exercise and socialising. Parks in the Arun District were (like other coastal towns) witnessing significantly higher numbers of visitors than at any other previously known time. The public conscience began to recognise the value parks has on their health and wellbeing
- 3.2 At Arun we quickly predicted that our parks and greenspaces would become even more valuable to our communities and that the maintenance of them should continue as it always had. Staff were not initially furloughed or redeployed elsewhere.
- 3.3 The impact of the pandemic on the GMC at first involved ensuring Covid safe working environments for all staff. Mobile teams were adjusted, more site-based working was undertaken (and continues). Supervisory and management staff worked on rotation at the Ford depot. Whilst Arun and Tivoli agreed that no member of staff should be

¹ In a normal year

furloughed at the instruction of either party, approximately 10% of the Tivoli were furloughed for shielding or self-isolating purposes.

- 3.4 As our communities continued to use their parks and greenspaces, more than they ever had before, followed by a boom in 'staycationers', came increased challenges in delivering the GMC;
 - 3.4.1 In 2020 there was a 20% (*with peaks as high as 50% during school holidays*) increase in litter collected overall compared with 2019. 52 35yard skips in total were used to handle the litter collected; enough to fill 13,000 park bins. Using additional bins in priority areas became key in keeping up with demand. However, we were continuing to see lots of discarded litter (including PPE) left on the ground.
 - 3.4.2 We needed to prioritise grass mowing at locations which had the highest impact to ensure enough resource was reserved for litter collection
 - 3.4.3 Contingency planning was regularly adapted as supply chain issues developed which meant on occasion PPE supplies for staff were difficult to obtain early in the pandemic
 - 3.4.4 Keeping up with regularly changing Government guidance was, at times, difficult to implement, for example; play area/skate park/outdoor gym closures, funeral service arrangements, enforcing social distancing messaging, coping with takeaway only hospitality, Outdoor Recreation services, events management etc.
 - 3.4.5 Through the summer months vandalism became an increasing issue and one which often diverted the GMC from delivering core work to resolve
 - 3.4.6 By Autumn wear and tear in some of our parks became more apparent than in previous years
 - 3.4.7 Encouraging compliance of the Covid Regulations in our parks and greenspaces has become increasingly difficult to manage. A significant minority have continued to breach the regulations which has often led to the diversion of resources available to replace signage, locks, fencing etc.
- 3.5 The Tivoli Lifestyle service (Outdoor Recreation) faced significant challenge at times during 2020 having to either close the service completely or operate in a Covid-safe manner.
- 3.6 Although there have been plenty of challenges much of our decision making has been the result of networking with other GMCs and other Councils. Engaging with others led to local improvements in service delivery, learning from the experience of others.
- 3.7 Summarising the efforts of the past 12 months has been a valuable exercise and something which Tivoli have also recognised with the publication of their 'white paper' which they will run through as part of their presentation.

4. Contract management

- 4.1. The Council has continued to proactively manage and monitor the performance of the GMC, as follows;
- 4.2. Regular auditing and site monitoring of performance against contract standards.
- 4.3. Regular site visits with contract supervisors and site based operational staff to plan and review works.

- 4.4. Operational compliance was regularly reviewed including but not limited to the following; risk assessment, PPE, vehicle and equipment checks, environmental awareness/impact etc.
- 4.5. Weekly operational meetings between the Environmental Services & Strategy Manager/Parks & Cemeteries Manager and Tivoli Contract Manager/Tivoli Regional Manager. These meetings cover staffing updates, GM & Lifestyle operational updates, health & safety updates, machinery updates and contract administration.
 - 4.5.1. Over the past year operating in a 'Covid safe' environment and overcoming the logistical challenges of these restrictions has been the consistent focus at all levels of the client/contractor relationship
- 4.6. Monthly meetings between senior Arun & contractor management.
- 4.7. An annual Health & Safety compliance review of all contract operations and subsequent report, shared with Arun's Corporate Health & Safety Officer.
- 4.8. Many key staff, from both the client and contractor, have been involved with this contract for a considerable period of time. Therefore, experience of the district, the open spaces themselves and an understanding of each organisations respective aims have developed. Almost all Tivoli operatives on the Arun contract plus all of the local Tivoli management team reside in the district, which promotes pride of place in contract delivery.

5. Performance Monitoring

- 5.1. For the purposes of consistency, the impact of the pandemic on the delivery of contractual standards was not taken into consideration when monitoring performance. This is therefore reflected in the scoring which can be seen below.
- 5.2. On occasions throughout 2020 performance monitoring needed to adapt to the Covid-19 national restrictions in place at the time. Arun officers and Tivoli operational staff were not, at any time, put at unnecessary risk in undertaking performance monitoring.
- 5.3. The targets set within the Greenspace Service's Service Delivery Plan (SDP) require that the GMC delivers a prescribed level of performance in delivering operational tasks.
 - 5.3.1. GM Operational tasks include, but are not limited to; grass mowing, litter & leaf collection, hedge, shrub and tree whip maintenance etc. Each task is scored out of 40 using a scoring matrix. An overall percentage score for the inspected site is returned once all applicable operational task scores have been inserted. An average score across all sites returns an overall percentage score for the performance of the contract.
 - 5.3.2. Lifestyle operational tasks include; customer care, signage, health & safety and cleanliness.
- 5.4. Performance monitoring is undertaken by all Greenspace officers and is ongoing throughout the year.
- 5.5. At quarterly intervals the performance monitoring figures for the previous 3 months are officially recorded and then discussed at a quarterly contract meeting.
- 5.6. Once a year (at both this meeting and the Annual Contract Review meeting) the results of the previous 12 months are officially recorded and discussed.

5.7. The minimum contractual performance target is 66%

5.8. Performance to date for 2020/21 is as follows;

Contract package/site typology	Score (April 20 – March 21)
Premier Parks	67.4%
Recreation & Leisure Grounds	66.6%
Amenity Parks and Greenspace	66.7%
Housing Parks and Greenspace	71.2%
Cemeteries and Church Yards	71.5%
OVERALL SCORE FOR GMC	68.7%
OVERALL SCROE FOR LIFESTYLE SERVICE	73.1%

5.9. Performance in 2019/20 (for comparison)

Contract package/site typology	Score (April 19 – Mar 20)
Premier Parks	84.6%
Recreation & Leisure Grounds	71.9%
Amenity Parks and Greenspace	74.3%
Housing Parks and Greenspace	68.9%
Cemeteries and Church Yards	76.5%
OVERALL SCORE FOR GMC	75.2%
OVERALL SCROE FOR LIFESTYLE SERVICE	70.5%

5.10. Whilst the scores in the above table exceed the minimum contractual performance requirements, they are less than the scores achieved in 2019/20. As previously mentioned, the pandemic has not impacted on how sites have been scored. Also, as previously mentioned, litter had been a significant challenge throughout 2020 and this is reflected in the reduced scores shown above.

5.11. Throughout the past 12 months both Tivoli and Arun District Council have developed and strengthened their long-term partnership. Day to day issues which occasionally do arise are often swiftly resolved. We are pleased to confirm that no contractual defaults were issued. Standards were generally maintained to high levels which met expectations and excellent progress has been made over the winter period in terms of pruning and enhancement work.

5.12. The GMC includes undertaking of inspections, repairs and maintenance of the Councils play areas. The element of the contract continues to run efficiently, with two dedicated operatives undertaking various work identified at weekly review meetings with Arun officers. All staff involved in this area of the contract have been fully trained in play area inspection and maintenance and are DBS checked.

6. **Achievements & Tivoli presentation**

6.1. In 2020 the Council was awarded its 6th Green Flag Award for Brookfield Park in Littlehampton. This park joins Hotham Park, Mewsbrook Park, Marine Park Gardens, Old Rectory Gardens and Norfolk Gardens sports site in achieving this coveted award, which recognises best practice in green space management.

6.2. Tivoli will present further successes and an overview of the business as part of a five minute presentation.		
2. PROPOSAL(S): Members to note the contents of the report		
3. OPTIONS: N/A		
4. CONSULTATION: N/A		
Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify)		✓
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial		✓
Legal		✓
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		✓
6. IMPLICATIONS: N/A		

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION: N/A

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE ON 23 MARCH 2021

PART A : INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: Annual Review of the Combined Cleansing Services Contract

REPORT AUTHORS: Oliver Handson, Environmental Services & Strategy Manager & Daniel Cox, Cleansing Operations Manager

DATE: 23 March 2021

EXTN: 37955/37688

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report provides members of the Overview Select Committee with an annual performance review for the Council's Combined Cleansing Services Contract and will include a presentation from Biffa Municipal Ltd, the Council's current contract provider

This report includes an overview of the scope of operations delivered by Biffa, how the contract is managed and outlines how Arun District Council and Biffa have worked in partnership to deliver services during the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members of the Overview Select Committee are asked to;

1. Note the information contained within the annual update report for the Council's Combined Cleansing Services Contract.
2. Recognise the significant efforts of front-line Biffa staff and Biffa management delivering the Arun contract under extremely challenging circumstances since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

1. BACKGROUND:

1.0 Introduction & background

- 1.1 On the 1 February 2017 the Council commenced a new three year plus optional three year Combined Cleansing Services Contract (CCSC) with Biffa Municipal Ltd. Biffa were awarded the contract following a competitive tender process.
- 1.2 The contract was extended following Cabinet approval in December 2017 for a further three years. This decision was based a number of key factors including;
 - Retention of a high performing and cost-effective service

- Extension would provide cost certainty until 2023, supporting the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- Retention of current service model for refuse/recycling collections

1.3 The annual contract value is approximately £4.5m. This delivered an approximate saving of £400,000 on the previous contract, which aligns with the Council's 2020 Vision and supports the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

1.4 This report is intended to provide members of the Overview Select Committee with a summary of how the current contract operates and current contractual performance. NB this is not a report which considers future service delivery options or wider waste strategy. This will be reviewed with members at an appropriate point as part of the future contract retender process.

2.0 Scope of the Combined Cleansing Services Contract

2.1 Refuse Collection Service

Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 allows waste collection authorities to determine their methods and frequency of collection, with which residents must comply.

The current contract provides Arun residents with a weekly refuse collection for approximately 75,000 properties. Residents are free to put their waste out in black sacks, dustbins or a privately owned wheelie bin. The weekly limit on refuse collected from one household is 5 black sacks which is roughly the equivalent of one 240 litre wheeled bin.

2.2 Recycling Collection Service

The contract provides a fortnightly mixed recycling collection for approximately 75,000 properties. This is a co-mingled collection which includes provision for;

- Yoghurt, cream and soup pots, ice cream and margarine tubs, food and ready meal trays, fruit/vegetable punnets, cosmetic pots and tubs
- Fruit juice cartons, long life milk cartons, smoothie cartons, other cardboard cartons
- Food cans, drink cans, pet food cans, empty aerosol cans
- Coffee jars, drink bottles, sauce bottles, jam jars
- Aluminium foil, foil containers
- Newspapers, magazines, food packaging sleeves, envelopes, junk mail, cards, wrapping paper, telephone directories, catalogues, egg boxes, cereal boxes
- Drink bottles, milk bottles, shampoo bottles, detergent bottles, washing up liquid bottles (not bottle lids)

Each household is supplied a 240 litre recycling bin. In purpose-built flats and for houses of multiple occupation alternative containment options including bulk bins are provided for residents to use. Approximately 500 properties across the District that are unsuitable for a wheeled bin receive a sack collection service, with the majority of these in Arundel.

All kerbside recycling is sent to the West Sussex County Council operated Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) in Ford.

2.3 Street Cleansing

The scope of Street Cleansing Services encompasses;

- Cleansing of 400 miles of road
- Emptying and cleaning of approx. 619 Litter Bins and 468 Dog Waste bins
- Cleansing of specified beaches for which Arun have responsibility, foreshores, promenades and coastal walks
- Cleansing of all Arun District Council Car Parks.

It is a contract requirement that Biffa undertake all operations at a frequency to maintain Cleansing standards based on an output performance standard. All roads are 'zoned' based on priority, which is determined by usage, and type. These are graded and judged as per the Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse (COPLAR).

It is a contract requirement to keep all Town Centre (Zone 1 areas) free of weeds. The responsibility for weed control in all other areas of the district and public highway lies with West Sussex County Council as the Highways Authority.

Dog & Litter bins on this contract are numbered for ease of reporting. It is intended that contact details will be placed on all bins within the near future for ease of public reporting.

2.4 Public Conveniences

The contract provides a Cleansing service for all of the Council's public conveniences. A seasonal attended service operating between the 1st June through to 6th September is provided for some public conveniences in Arundel, Bognor Regis and Littlehampton.

2.5 Small Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) collections

The collection of WEEE was introduced as a new service with the current contract. This is a weekly collection with residents invited to leave items out in a small carrier bag next to their refuse. Biffa vehicles have cages fitted to enable the separate collection of these items.

2.6 Green Waste Services

A fortnightly collection of garden waste operates throughout the year, Biffa established and provide this service on behalf of the Council. The scheme known as the 'Green Waste

Club' begun in 2005 and continues to grow in popularity with over 23,500 subscribers currently and increase of over 2,000 on the previous year.

The green waste collected is taken to the Woodhorn Group in Tangmere and can be purchased as part of the Earth Cycle range of composting products available to buy locally.

2.7 Clinical waste

The Council provides a weekly clinical waste collection service for residents. This includes the support and registration and is for collection of needles and syringes, offensive and infectious waste and is in line with all relevant laws and legislation.

This service is carried out by specialist clinical waste contractor Medisort, who are based in Littlehampton, on behalf of the Council. It was awarded as part of a West Sussex County wide framework agreement.

This service undertakes approximately 1500 collections every week.

2.8 Street Washing Service

A new street washing service was introduced as part of the contract. This operates five days a week and generally focusses on public realm areas within Bognor Regis and the public realm/seafront areas of Littlehampton, including Riverside Walk. The service is flexible in its deployment and also utilised across other areas of cleansing for example for bin washing and localised clean ups.

2.9 Bulky Waste Collection Service

A chargeable on-demand separate collection of bulky waste takes place. This service has been rebranded and advertised to residents through Biffa with bookings through a dedicated contact centre. Discounts are provided on the collection of multiple items and this will be promoted further in the forthcoming year.

2.10 Fly tipping

Biffa remove fly tipping through the contract as part of the Street Cleansing requirements. This allows for an efficient and reactive service when instances of fly tipping are reported to the Council.

Whilst it is not relevant to a report focussing on contractor performance, the issue of fly tipping and initiatives to combat it are currently the focus of West Sussex Waste Partnership discussions.

3.0 The challenges of operating the CCSC during a global pandemic

3.1 Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the service has seen an unprecedented increased demand on all collection and street cleansing services.

3.2 Refuse services have been unaffected throughout the Covid-19 pandemic with a minimal impact to recycling and garden waste collection services during the first few weeks of the

first national lockdown. Therefore, Biffa operated the service throughout the peak of the pandemic, with no extra cost to the Council. Based on a national report compiled by Adept, there was significantly less disruption to services in Arun both in terms of frequency and duration compared to the average of other local authorities.

- 3.3 National trends from a Local Authority survey undertaken during 2020 indicate that from March 2020 most Local Authorities were reporting greater than usual waste arisings across many waste streams. Notable exceptions included bulky waste, street sweepings and commercial waste. The breakdown of Arun’s waste trends are shown below and are in line with National trends where 90% or more of Local Authorities surveyed have reported increases across these waste streams between 0 – 20%.

Table 1 – Summary of year-to-date tonnage increases (April 20 to January 21)

Material	Percentage increase	Tonnage increase
Comingled Recycling	8.3%	922.51
Black bag waste	10%	2342.00
Green waste	6%	503.99
Litter	14%	38.45

- 3.4 Staffing levels have fluctuated during the pandemic. Absence due to Covid-19 symptoms and self isolation peaked at 30% of the workforce at the end of March /beginning of April 2020. Biffa introduced a number of safeguards and control measures with staff to ensure their Health and Safety. They have followed industry best practice Waste Industry Safety and Health Forum (WISH) guidance and actively sought to support staff as key frontline workers.
- 3.5 Business Continuity Plans have been revised throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and are continually under review in relation to any potential service disruption.
- 3.6 Foreshores had unprecedented visitor numbers as lockdown eased which put a strain on the service. Whilst there was a 15% rise in litter, the effect in busy locations was more profound and service priorities were adjusted accordingly.
- 3.7 Whilst not directly related to the performance of Biffa it is worth noting that Arun’s littering enforcement services provided through East Hampshire have been largely switched off throughout the pandemic.

4.0 Contract Management

4.1 Arun District Council Cleansing Team Structure

The contract is managed by the Cleansing Service. The Cleansing Operations Manager (Daniel Cox) has overall responsibility for liaising with Biffa over the day to day running of the contract, including agreeing variations to work.

Monitoring of contract standards and troubleshooting for street cleansing is predominantly undertaken by the two Street Scene Officers. The District is split in two (East/West) with each Inspector responsible for the proactive monitoring of contract standards and to resolve and investigate all enquiries in relation to street cleansing, litter and fly tipping. The Inspectors also undertake monitoring at weekends in order to ensure standards are maintained during peak times.

Enforcement related issues are dealt with by a dedicated Street Scene Enforcement Officer

The service has a Street Scene Co-ordinator that is responsible for dealing with abandoned vehicle reports, liaising with Sussex Police to deal with them through Operation Crackdown.

The team has recently employed a Senior Cleansing Service Officer, who working alongside the Projects Officer, oversee the day to day running of the service with Biffa including the resolution of service complaints. In addition, they co-ordinate the introduction of new services to the District, working on campaigns and education initiatives to improve recycling and inevitably make the District cleaner.

4.2 Contract meeting structure

The Council requires that the Contractor attends the following meetings with the Council to ensure smooth service delivery and effective management of the Contract.

- Monthly Contract Valuation Meeting to agree Contract payments and Contract performance.
- Monthly Contract Operations Review between the Cleansing Operations Manager at Arun and the Business and Operations Manager at Biffa. Resolve operational issues and plan joint initiatives/projects.
- Monthly Waste collections meeting;
- Monthly Street Scene Meeting
- Monthly Health and Safety Meeting that includes workforce and Trade Union representatives
- An annual review to evaluate overall performance, service proposals, initiatives and health and safety and environmental standards;
- A 6 monthly review of operations and strategic planning between the Group Head of Neighbourhoods, Environmental Services & Strategy Manager, Cleansing Operations Manager and representatives from Biffa up to regional director level.

4.3 Dealing with resident enquiries & complaints

All resident enquiries & complaints are managed through the Council's Contract Management System, with the majority of these being dealt with at the first stage through Arun Direct. This provides a log of all contact relating to the Cleansing service. Customer

enquiries are managed through this system with a record of actions taken, including when issues have been rectified. The system is used to run off monthly reports on the number of enquiries and key performance indicators

5.0 Performance measurements

5.1 Corporate plan & Service Delivery Plan indicators

A number of indicators which link with the performance of contractual operations are included within the Council's Corporate Plan and Service Delivery Plans

5.1.1 Corporate Plan - Household waste sent for recycling and composting 19/20 Target 50% Actual 43.04%

This is an improvement overall on the combined recycling and composting rate of almost 1% over the previous year. This is made up of a dry recycling rate of 26.76% and composting rate of 16.28%.

5.1.2 The year to date information for 20/21 suggests there will be a decrease in overall recycling rate by up to 1% due to the additional tonnages of residual waste collected during the pandemic. This figure will be ratified as part of the final Corporate Plan Indicators submission.

5.2 **It should be noted that the targets for recycling, composting and residual waste per household are influenced by factors beyond the direct performance of Biffa. Major factors include waste disposal and processing streams introduced by West Sussex County Council, and the waste collection model operated by the authority which in turn dictates or influences resident behaviour.**

5.3 Biffa routinely undertake a customer satisfaction survey maintain the following statistics for the contract that are reviewed regularly. The latest took place in November/December 2020 and had a total of 2251 responses. The results showed high satisfaction levels with the services run.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Total
Refuse collection	65.17% 1,467	31.94% 719	2.00% 45	0.80% 18	0.09% 2	2,251
Kerbside recycling	45.27% 1,019	37.23% 838	14.93% 336	2.13% 48	0.44% 10	2,251
Street Cleansing	16.84% 379	46.56% 1,048	24.03% 541	10.40% 234	2.18% 49	2,251

6.0 H&S management & review

6.1 Health and Safety compliance and monitoring is both a Council and Biffa priority. This is reviewed on a monthly basis, at the Health and Safety at Work meeting with the workforce and Trade Union representatives.

6.2 A full annual Health & Safety compliance review is undertaken by the Cleansing Operations Manager.

6.3 To assist with Health and Safety monitoring the whole collections fleet is currently being fitted with 360 degree cameras.

7.0 Biffa presentation

7.1 Damien O’Neill from Biffa will present a PowerPoint presentation to members outlining the service structure in place at Biffa to deliver the Arun contract and provide an overview of Biffa as a company.

Contacts: Oliver Handson – Environmental Services & Strategy Manager 37955
Daniel Cox – Cleansing Operations Manager 37688

2. PROPOSAL(S): Members to note the contents of the report

3. OPTIONS: N/A

4. CONSULTATION: N/A

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

5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES:	YES	NO
Financial		✓
Legal		✓
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		✓

6. IMPLICATIONS: N/A

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION: N/A

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

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ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE ON 23 MARCH 2021

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

REPORT AUTHOR: Nigel Lynn, Chief Executive
DATE: 8 March 2021
EXTN: 37600
PORTFOLIO AREA: Corporate Support

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

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Overview Select Committee is requested to resolve to:

- (1) note the actions taken to date.

1. BACKGROUND:

- This report provides an update on progress since the last report to Overview Select Committee on 26.2.21.
- Members are asked to note that due to the report being written in advance of the meeting, the information included in this report is to 8 March 2021 (the date of writing this report).
- Members are asked to note that the detailed work that all officers are doing across all departments in relation to responding to the Covid pandemic is causing significant strain and pressure on resources and many other projects and workstreams cannot be implemented to full capacity until after the Covid pandemic.
- On 22 February 2021, the Prime Minister gave a statement to Parliament on the roadmap for easing lockdown restrictions in England and published the 'COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021' roadmap. This roadmap sets out how the Government will begin to lift restrictions in England from 8 March, starting with schools and colleges. It outlines four steps for easing restrictions. Before taking each step, the Government will review the latest data on the impact of the previous step against four tests.
- The impact on the Council is (at the time of writing this report):
 - **Easing of restrictions** - The Council will be reviewing the latest guidance from Government in relation to the easing of restrictions and will implement the necessary actions to comply with each stage as directed by Government.

- **Office presence** - Staff attendance at the Council's buildings should be at an absolute minimum, with staff ONLY attending a Council building if they have agreed this with their manager. Councillors are not permitted to enter any Council building at the current time. After 21 June 2021, the government will complete a review of social distancing and other measures that have been put in place to cut transmission, in order to inform decisions on the timing and circumstances under which rules on 1 metre plus, the wearing of face coverings, etc, may be lifted. This will also inform guidance on working from home – which should continue wherever possible until this review is complete. The Council will not be allowing all staff back into the office or opening the Council offices (apart from the reception area for homelessness presentations) until guidance is received from Government.
- **Emergency Management Team** - The Emergency Management Team are meeting weekly to consider all current issues in relation to the Covid response. The EMT and CMT regularly review the capacity in each service area due to work pressures and staff absences. It should be noted that staff are under increased pressure from existing workloads as well as the Covid pandemic.
- **Leisure Centres, Play areas and Skateparks** - Our leisure centres and leisure facilities (such as adventure golf) have been closed and the Council will continue to work with Freedom Leisure to address the significant financial implications. Play areas remain open. Skate parks have been closed, as per Government guidance. In the Roadmap the following are anticipated reopening dates but these are subject to Government confirmation:
 - 29 March - Outdoor sports – tennis, golf, skateparks can reopen
 - 12 April - Leisure centres - reopening of gyms and swimming pools – no group classes
 - 17 May - indoor gym classes and cinemas may reopen
- **Covid Marshalls** – Arun has been working with East Hants to assist with this role including officers patrolling the District including hotspot areas. Arun's Environmental Health team have continued to patrol the smaller supermarkets, garden centres, click and collect premises, where they receive complaints from the public and where there are positive cases confirmed. East Hants have provided regular feedback reports to Arun so that appropriate action can be taken where necessary.
- **Environmental Health & Enforcement** - Work by Environmental Health continues advising and enforcing the business restrictions which have changed regularly, as well as managing workplace-based outbreaks.
- **Implementing Guidance** - The Council is working to ensure that all Government Guidance is adhered to and that all procedures for dealing with Covid related matters including grants, enforcement etc are followed.
- **Vulnerable assistance** - We continue to provide the necessary support to the most vulnerable in conjunction with WSCC, via the community hub.
- **Rough Sleepers** - We continue to work with partners such as Stonepillow and Turning tides to protect these individuals.
- **May 2021 elections** – officers are working to Government guidance to ensure that the elections are conducted in a safe and Covid secure manner. Information will be given to Councillors, the public and staff involved in the Elections as more clarification is received for all of the different aspects of administering and delivering the elections.

Communications

- 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. The public are being kept well informed of all key messages.
- Councillors, Partners of Arun and the Town and Parish Councils have been updated with new information from partners, other authorities and Government bodies via emailed briefing notes from the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive since the start of the pandemic in March 2020. These have been issued every week since 24 March 2020 and there have been 52 editions to date.

Welfare of Staff, Members and the Public

- Following the announcement of the January National Lockdown, staff are working from home unless they have made specific arrangements. Staff attending an office location must take all Covid precautions set out by the CEO.
- The Council has not opened its reception areas (apart from providing a service to homeless presentations), meeting rooms or communal areas in line with Government guidance and officers are working hard to ensure that the public can access all services either online or via our contact centre.
- After 21 June 2021, the government will complete a review of social distancing and other measures that have been put in place to cut transmission, in order to inform decisions on the timing and circumstances under which rules on 1 metre plus, the wearing of face coverings, etc, may be lifted. This will also inform guidance on working from home (which should continue wherever possible until this review is complete) and the reopening of Council offices to more staff and customers. The Council will not be allowing all staff back into the office or opening the Council offices (apart from the reception area for homelessness presentations) until guidance is received from Government.
- Arun is continuing to liaise with the County Council so that assistance is coordinated via the West Sussex Community Hub. Directing enquiries to the Community Hub as a single point of contact will ensure that residents are properly identified, and their issues logged so that their enquiry can be directed to the most appropriate service.

Covid-19 Prevalence

- Councillors, Partners of Arun and the Town and Parish Councils have been updated on the prevalence of Covid in West Sussex by way of the regular briefing notes since the middle of March 2020 on a weekly basis.
- The West Sussex Covid Health Protection Board continues to monitor prevalence of Covid-19 cases. The Corporate Management Team, relevant Group Heads and our Communications Team are being informed of the numbers of Covid cases in both Arun

and the whole of West Sussex and this is being communicated to officers and Councillors on a regular basis. Covid prevalence in the District is finally starting to reduce, although still high. Data is being collated and analysed every day to identify outbreaks. Interventions to support and manage the outbreak are delivered by WSCC Public Health or our Environmental Health team.

- In December 2020, WSCC agreed to provide an additional £75k for each District & Borough (in addition to the £75k already received) in relation to the management of local outbreaks of Covid-19. This is being used to supplement the capacity of the Environmental Health team. That team works with businesses and organisations where there appears to be a workplace-based outbreak.
- The Council is ensuring that social media and our website communications are regularly updated with information relating to the roll out of the vaccination programme so that the public are aware that their GP surgeries will contact them directly to arrange for a vaccination to take place. Councillors are also forwarded the regular West Sussex Vaccination Updates as they are received.
- The Council has been giving information to local businesses via social media, our website and targeted Arun Business Partnership publications regarding the Community Testing Programme (Lateral Flow Tests) for which can be provided for the delivery of asymptomatic testing to the following groups:
 - Testing for Businesses with more than 50 employees (established within the last month)
 - Community Testing (from 8 March 2021)
 - Testing for Adults with school age children (from 8 March 2021)
 - Testing in Schools and Colleges (from 8 March 2021)
 - Testing of nominated visitor to care homes (from 8 March 2021)

Financial Impact of Covid-19

- The financial effects of Covid-19 have been severe for the Council, in common with other local authorities across the country. The pandemic will continue to have financial implications for the Council.
- Arun has received the following Covid funding from Government to address wider cost pressures. Arun's allocation to date is £498,760.00.
- Details of all funding received by the Council as a result of the Covid Pandemic are listed in Appendix A which is **attached** to this report.
- WSCC have a £10m "Contained Outbreak Management" grant and receive more each month on a per capita basis. WSCC and District and Borough Councils are currently working through the detail of how to distribute this fund and how it could be best spent to ensure the following areas are considered:
 - Where resource constraint is an issue
 - Where income has adversely affected the Council's financial position which will be detrimental to its capability to support the Covid response
 - Additional initiatives that can positively impact on Covid control and mitigation of the financial and health resulting from the virus and the impact of the restrictions.

- Officers are working with Freedom Leisure to address the ongoing financial implications and Cabinet approved further financial assistance to Freedom at their meeting on 14 December 2020. The Council has applied to the recent £100 million National Leisure Recovery Fund to assist with the cost of our leisure centres. The fund will help meet the additional costs of operating the centres whilst the buildings have been closed.
- The Council has been giving information to local businesses via social media, our website and targeted Arun Business Partnership publications regarding the various grants available to them.
- Business premises forced to close in England can receive grants under the Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSG) and Discretionary Grants via the Additional Restrictions Support Grant (ARG). The Local Restrictions Support Grants (LRSG - rateable value based mandatory grants) is being dealt with by the Council's Revenues Team. The Additional Restrictions Support Grant (ARG - Discretionary Grants) are being dealt with by the Economic Development Team. In addition, people who have to self-isolate can receive a payment of £500 (for those on lower incomes who cannot work from home and have lost income as a result) and the Council continues to make payments receipt of a valid application. As of 8.3.21, the following payments have been made.

The Additional Restrictions Support Grant (ARG - Discretionary Grants):

Scheme Name	Submitted Claims	Claims Approved	Claims Approved Value
Additional Restrictions Discretionary Grant - Businesses with RV or property costs up to £15K pa R3	453	235	£799,620.00
Additional Restrictions Discretionary Grant - Business- RV or property costs over £15k to £51k pa R3	66	17	£100,000.00
Additional Restrictions Discretionary Grant - market trader / taxi driver R3	25	23	£22,550.00
Additional Restrictions Discretionary Grant - RV or Property costs of over £51K pa R3	13	2	£18,000.00
Discretionary Grant - Businesses with RV or property costs up to £15K pa R4	199	155	£531,325.00
Discretionary Grant - Business- RV or property costs over £15k to £51k pa R4	26	15	£88,000.00
Discretionary Grant - market trader / taxi driver R4	14	12	£11,700.00

Discretionary Grant - RV or Property costs of over £51K pa R4	2	1	£9,000.00
Local Restriction Support Grant (Open) Tier 2/3/4 Discretionary RV over £51K -2.12 - 25.12.20	32	19	£30,201.60
Local Restriction Support Grant Open T4 Discretionary RV / property costs up to £15K 2 - 25.12.20	152	63	£46,770.75
Additional Restrictions Discretionary Grant - Businesses with RV or property costs up to £15K pa R3	72	35	£37,118.27

The Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSB - rateable value based Mandatory Grants) and Christmas Support payment to Wet-Led Pubs:

Grant Type	No. of Applications received	No. of Applications paid	Value	No. of Applications awaiting assessments
Tier 2 Restrictions Grant for Closed Businesses	40	29	£17,382.50	0
Tier 4 Restrictions Grant for Closed Businesses	721	678	£382,711.00	4
Business Support Package for Lockdown from 5.1.21	870	804	£7,662,656.00	4
Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs (AAA) Fixed Value: £1,000	57	51	£51,000.00	0
Grant for Closed Businesses – 2.12.20-25.12.20	49	38	£31,174.00	0
National Restrictions Grant – November 2020	851	756	£1,190,700.00	8

2. PROPOSAL(S):

Overview Select Committee is requested to note the actions taken to date.

3. OPTIONS:

To note this update report or;
To request further information

4. CONSULTATION:		
Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		X
Relevant District Ward Councillors		X
Other groups/persons (please specify) - Cabinet	✓	
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES:	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:		
<p>6.1 The Council also has very limited funds to be able to make direct interventions to assist the public and businesses. The Council has continued to focus on good communication and Government grants available to businesses and the public. The Council has also been helping to provide community leadership.</p> <p>6.2 The Government has supported the Council with grants to assist our budgets, which covers a proportion of our losses, but there remains a significant shortfall of our income, which is concerning as we look to the future. This shortfall will affect the Council's finances significantly going forward, and, although the 2021/21 budget is balanced, this has been partly due to reduced spending to help cover our losses.</p> <p>6.3 The current Lockdown has increased implications on staff workload, capacity and mental health as we strive to continue to provide day to day services, whilst working from home, many with childcare issues (when the schools are closed). Members are asked to note that the detailed work that all officers are doing across all departments in relation to responding to the Covid pandemic is causing significant strain and pressure on resources and many other projects and workstreams cannot be implemented to full capacity until after the Covid pandemic. Despite the negative effect that the pandemic is having on normal officer duties, in the main, front line services remain fully operational.</p> <p>6.4 It should be noted that the easing of restrictions will be of benefit to all, however it will entail the continued hard work and dedication of staff to ensure that services are reopened and reintroduced over the coming months.</p>		

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION: For Overview Select Committee to note the Council's response to the Covid-19 Pandemic.
8 EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE DECISION: 23 March 2021
9. BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

Appendix A – Covid Grants received by Arun District Council to 8.3.21

	Amount (£)	Comments
Grants announced Since October 2020		
Local Restrictions Support Grants (Closed) Addendum (LRSG)	955,941	Mandatory;
National restrictions grant (Closed) Addendum (LRSG);	2,583,864	Mandatory;
Closed Business Lock down payments	15,685,154	Mandatory
Closed Business Lockdown payment (05/01 to 15/02)		Mandatory; funded from above
Closed Business Lockdown payment (16/02 to 31/03)		Mandatory; funded from above
Christmas Support Package	51,200	Mandatory
Local Restrictions Support Grants (Open) Addendum (LRSG)	506,840	Discretionary/Mandatory
Local restrictions grant for staffing support		Funded from above
Additional Restrictions Support Grant allocations.	4,643,182	Discretionary
Surge enforcement funding for local authorities (Ring fenced), MHCLG	75,314	Mandatory; spend includes commitments; Marshals fund,
Covid prevention planning (WSCC)	75,000	WSCC; spend includes commitments;
Covid prevention outbreak work (WSCC)	75,000	WSCC; spend includes commitments;
Test and Trace support grant (self-isolation)	162,800	
Test and Trace staff support		Funded from above
Sales, fees and services support grant	722,888	Up to 31/12/2020
From March 2020 to September 2020		
Council Tax - Hardship fund	945,239	
Covid-19 Support grant (2019/20) 1st trench	64,612	This was received in 2019/20
Covid-19 Support grant (2020/21) 2nd to 4th trench	2,373,167	5th Trench in April 2021
Rough sleeping Initiative	21,000	Applied to Corporate spend
New burdens payment associated with SBGF, RHLGF	270,463	£170k applied to Corporate spend
Re-opening the High Street Safely Fund	143,718	to be claimed; Coordinated by Economy
Business Support Grants (SBGF) Retail, Hospitality & Leisure Busi. Grant (RHLBG)	30,025,000	Finished
Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund	1,528,500	Finished
BID Covid-19 support grant	6,990	Paid to Bognor Regis BID
Leisure Funding (Bid to the National Leisure Recovery fund)	311,542	BID successful
Lottery funding for Consultancy advice	4,980	
DWP Northgate Covid-19 changes		
Community Champions Fund	131,176	Covid community engagement officers

Tax Income Compensation - up to 75% loss of CTax and NDR loss of income in 2020/21		Amount to be calculated at year end
Next Step Accommodation programme	262,047	
Protect Plus	105,000	Homelessness beds funding claimed for.
Allocated for 2021/22		
Local Council Tax Support Grant (LCTS)	209,000	for 2021/22; not directly Covid-19
Additional C-19 support grant	831,000	for 2021/22
Total Covid-19 Grants	62,770,947	

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

23 MARCH 2021

PART A : REPORT

SUBJECT: Equalities & Diversity Update

REPORT AUTHOR: Jackie Follis, Group Head of Policy

DATE: 7 March 2021

EXTN: 37580

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Arun is a diverse district containing a wide mix of ages, abilities, ethnicities and people with many other different characteristics. This report sets out an overview of what Arun District Council has in place to create and sustain an inclusive environment where equality of treatment and opportunity for employees, potential employees, users of Council services and those wish to access council services is both accepted and expected.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) That a consultant is appointed to carry out an in-depth Equality and Diversity Survey and advise on a best practice action plan for the Council
- b) That the Group Head of Policy be given delegated powers to appoint this resource within the available budget
- c) That the Council takes full account of Equalities and Diversity in the development of the new Corporate Plan 2022- 2027

2 BACKGROUND:

Equalities and diversity is a very wide and important area for the Council which should be taken into account and fundamental in everything we do. For ease of understanding the report has been split into a number of sections and includes links to a number of key documents which members can also refer to. The Council's Equalities and Diversity Policy can be found on our website at [Equality & Diversity | Arun District Council](#) along with the other documents and covers corporate governance, employment, access to services and partnerships and contractors. The Policy will be updated as part of the proposed Equalities and Diversity review.

All Councillors and employees are responsible for Equalities and Diversity

Equality Legislation

The equality framework for Local Government is enshrined in two key documents, these are the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the nine legally protected characteristics which are: age, disability, gender and gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. This Act challenges organisations to understand how these characteristics and the relationship between them, explains difficulties and opportunities arising from the diversity of local areas. Organisations are expected to use this understanding to demonstrate 'due regard' to the Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The full text of these documents can be found on our website.

Although not covered by legislation there are clearly many other characteristics that we must consider when providing local services which help us to understand the differences in outcomes and opportunities experienced by people in different communities in key areas of life such as health, education, community safety, housing, access to work and so on. Socio-economic status will also affect life chances

Corporate Governance

The Public Sector Equality Duty sets out six principles which public sector organisations should comply with. They are that:

- Decision makers must be made aware of their duty to have 'due regard' to the identified goals.
(including members as the ultimate decision makers for the Council).
- The due regard duty must be fulfilled before and at the time that a particular policy is being considered by the public authority in question.
(The decision cannot be justified after it has been taken).
- The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind.
- The duty imposed on public authorities ... is a non-delegable duty.
- The duty is a continuing one.
- It is good practice for those exercising public functions in public authorities to keep an adequate record showing that they had actually considered their ... duties and pondered relevant questions.

A consideration of any existing, or potential equality issues is a starting point for all Council policies and decisions and, in some cases, an Equality Impact Assessment can

also be utilised. As members know the standard committee report template includes a line under section 5 covering human rights and equalities, although the expectation is that services consider equalities issues at a very early stage as an integral part of any service planning and decision making however minor. Even where a formal Equality Impact Assessment is not considered to be necessary there is an expectation that authorities can demonstrate that equalities issues have been taken into account. Officers should be mindful of this when reporting.

Employment

From the start of the employment relationship at recruitment stage there is a focus on fairness. This includes:

- Recruitment adverts that include the opportunity to work flexibly
- In-house recruitment training that covers discrimination
- The introduction of an applicant tracking system that removes personal data from the shortlisting process
- Streamlining our recruitment process and advertising mediums to assist in attracting younger applicants
- A fundamental review of posts requiring criminal records checks

There is regular training for all staff including :

- Mandatory equalities training for all staff.
- E-learning equalities training for all new starters.
- Career coaching services available to staff and offered to staff returning from maternity leave
- Introduction of work experience for existing staff to encourage women in particular to consider career changes
- Confidence training for all staff but aimed at women in particular
- Opportunities for long distance or online training for staff with caring responsibilities
- Many training opportunities to ensure that our services are as accessible as possible to the widest range of service users, covering such areas as mental health awareness, specialist communication skills etc

Annual monitoring of employment takes place and the report for 2019-20 gives a very clear analysis of recruitment and the overall staff profile:
<https://www.arun.gov.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jjjm4n15926.docx&ver=16437>

In addition to this a staff survey identifying the barriers to employment and progression at Arun District Council was completed in 2017/18

Robust and transparent employment policies are key to supporting the organisation and the main ones are Dignity at Work, Flexible Working, a number of family friendly policies. These are all on the Equalities page on the website.

Member Training

Equalities training is provided regularly for members. Most recently there was an induction session which all members were invited to, following local elections in 2019. There was a further, very well received training session in early in 2020, which mirrored compulsory sessions held for staff, although this was not compulsory for members.

Service Delivery

Wherever possible communications and service delivery should be conducted in a way that meets service users needs. This report does not cover the detail of how individual services achieve this, but describes a number of corporate approaches / strategies which should be shared by all services, now and as we move forward. Two of the most important of these in the context of equalities are the Digital Strategy and the Customer Services Strategy

The approach to equalities set out in the Digital Strategy includes a new website:

- Website accessibility falls under the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 and applies to all public sector websites - we are working towards this, although still have issues with the volume of work involved in converting all our PDF files to a fully accessible format.
- An accessible website can help people with disabilities participate more actively, improve their life experience and promote greater inclusion. The new Arun website will be accessible for as many customers as possible including those with vision, hearing, motor and cognitive issues. This is due to go live in Summer 2021
- Text on the website is being re-written so that it is easier / clearer to read and more understandable for different reading audiences, we are optimising colour contrasts for those with visual impairments, making improvements to support screen readers better and ensuring the browsing experience is good no matter what type of device is being used.
- We are also building new digital services such as the planning notification service and electronic newsletters and these are based on best practice and user research carried out by Government Digital Services (GDS) Team who test the components via user personas with different needs.
- Webchat has been implemented on the main website for those users that are unable to access services through visiting us and where using the phone is difficult.

We also work with AccessAble to provide online access guides via our website, including detailed access guides for venues in the Arun District and detailed guided maps for popular pedestrian routes.

<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/arundel-bognor-regis-and-littlehampton>

The Customer Services Strategy is due to go to Cabinet on 22 March 2021. The Vision and Aims include a number of statements which explicitly support our accessibility aims for customers:

- encouraging all our staff to ‘think customer’ before acting
- invest in training for our staff to understand how to deliver the best customer care
- being committed to treating people fairly, to respect privacy and dignity and to pay attention to people who need more support
- continue to develop online services which are easy to access using any device, quick to use and available whenever they are needed
- asking customers for their feedback and use this feedback to improve our services
- promote self-reliance whilst continuing to support those that need our help.
- consult with focus groups to understand and accommodate access needs and assist with adapting our services wellbeing of people in the district.

The strategy also recognises issues around digital exclusion and that we must allow for people who don’t have access to the internet at home, and which may mean that they can’t access our information and services online. Where needed we will help people who don’t have access to the internet by providing support to use it at venues across the District including assisted self-serve.

As a result of the pandemic, there have also been positive developments in terms of community engagement. In addition to work we already do within the community, the pandemic gave all local authorities, working in conjunction with other organisations, a much greater incentive and financial support to actively seek out and work with a number of hard to reach groups in our community. It is hoped that this will lead to more sustainable initiatives in the future.

Contractors

We ensure that any company wanting to bid for Council services is a practitioner of good equality and diversity in both their employment and service delivery. We do this by asking equalities questions during the tender or bid process and if responses do not satisfy the Council’s criteria, the firm may not be shortlisted or awarded a contract.

We also ensure compliance after the award, by including equality-based conditions in all contracts. As a minimum, suppliers or contractors must have an equal opportunities policy and keep it in force for the duration of the contract to comply with statutory obligations. We will also ensure that all contractors directly supplying goods and services or executing works for, or on behalf of, the Council comply with the terms of equality policy.

Conclusion

Whilst it might seem to be an obvious statement, our employees really are our greatest resource and our employment and recruitment policies must reflect our commitment to equalities and best practice. The Council continues to monitor employment issues closely and make regular changes to policies as required legally or to improve the working environment and opportunities for staff and therefore the motivation and retention of those staff. The pandemic is likely to make flexibility a major factor in attracting and retaining staff who in many cases will be able to do their job virtually, so will no longer be tied to employers in a certain geographic location.

All of our services work hard individually to understand and engage with residents, customers and visitors and deliver responsive services. Although we believe we have a

good understanding of the issues facing our different communities we do not have the overview across all services which we need to be confident that we are meeting the needs of those communities. An in-depth review of Equalities and Diversity across all services will require external specialist resource. The Group Head of Corporate Services has confirmed that a budget of £10,000 will be available in 2021/2022 for this purpose.

2. PROPOSALS

- a) That a consultant is appointed carry out an in-depth Equality and Diversity Survey and advise on a best practice action plan for the Council
- b) That the Group Head of Policy be given delegated powers to appoint this resource within the available budget
- c) That the Council takes full account of Equalities and Diversity in the development of the new Corporate Plan 2022- 2027

3. OPTIONS

The Council does not have the internal resource to carry out a full Equalities and Diversity survey either in terms of officer time or specialist background. This is particularly important if we are to develop a meaningful action plan which meets our legal and best practice obligations. The appointment of a consultant is therefore the only practical way forward if members wish to proceed with this work.

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		x
Legal		x
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment	x	
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		x
Sustainability		x
Asset Management/Property/Land		x
Technology		x
Safeguarding		x
Other (please explain)		x

6. IMPLICATIONS:

Arun District Council must ensure that its approach to Equalities & diversity is regularly reviewed and actions taken to remedy any shortfalls

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To brief members on Arun's approach to Equalities and Diversity and identify future actions needed to move this forward

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Link to Equalities page on the Arun website [Equality & Diversity | Arun District Council](#)

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