

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

22 September 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Edwards (Chair), Chace (Vice-Chair), Bicknell, English, Goodheart, Huntley, Needs, Pendleton, Thurston, Warr and Worne

Councillors Gunner and Staniforth were also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

[Note: Councillor P. English was absent from the meeting for all or part of discussions at Minute Items 279 - 283]

279. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

280. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2022 were approved by the Committee. These would be signed at the end of the meeting.

281. 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

The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent matters for this meeting.

282. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed that no questions had been submitted for this meeting.

283. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2022-2026 - QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2022 TO 30 JUNE 2022

The Chair confirmed that the report was an information paper with no recommendations for the Committee to consider.

Members then took part in a question-and-answer session and the following points were made:

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- There did not appear to be a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) around tree planting and it was asked whether this could be added. The Chair explained that although this was not a KPI, there would be a report coming to Committee to update on this.
- CP22 (private sector dwelling return to completion) - the target was 50, the outturn 36, but it noted the Council were achieving, how was this? The Group Head of Technical Services explained this was because 50 was the annual target and they were ahead of target due to the Committee's decision to allocate more resources to this area.
- CP24 (recycling and composting) – it was noted that this had improved, however it seemed the Committee were being blamed for not being able to achieve this, and it was asked why. The Group Head of Environment and Climate Change referred back to the report that went to Committee in May and explained the recommendation from that report had set out alternative ways of collection, however the Committee did not adopt the recommendation.
- CP39 and 40 (building control) – these were disappointing results, and an explanation was requested. The Group Head of Technical Services explained there were vacancies and long term sickness within a relatively small team, and despite repeated attempts to recruit a surveyor, this had not yet been possible due to a national skills shortage. It was hoped that a trainee would soon be taken on as part of a national training programme run by the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) as well as a career grade post within the Council. Alongside those issues were unprecedented volumes of work.
- CP24 (recycling and composting) – it was thought some residents had withdrawn from the brown bin scheme and may be taking garden waste to the recycling centres instead. If all garden waste going to Littlehampton Recycling Centre was included in the figures, the target may be achieved. The Chair explained he did not think this would be possible to measure.
- CP39 (building control) – It was asked whether the lack of staff was the reason for delays regarding Planning. The Group Head of Technical Services explained the Building Control was a separate service from Planning.

Members then noted the report.

284. BUDGET 2023/2024 - PROCESS

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Interim Financial Services Manager presented this report to the Committee. He explained this was the second year of the budget preparation under the Committee style of governance. The proposed process was outlined in section 3. He drew Members attention to Appendix A, a flowchart showing the process, and Appendix B, a list of services managed by this Committee and their published budget for the year.

There were no questions from Members regarding the process.

The recommendation was Proposed by Councillor Chace and Seconded by Councillor Goodheart.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Budget process for 2023/24, as outlined in the report, be noted.

285. ACCESS AGREEMENT RELATING TO THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR THE SUSSEX COASTAL POLLUTION CLEAN-UP AND DISPOSAL SERVICE

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Emergency Planning Officer presented this report to the Committee. He explained the report sought the approval of the Committee to give the Group Head of Environment and Climate Change delegated authority to sign up to a framework agreement which provided access to a specialist clean-up and disposal contractor, at pre-agreed rates, to be used in the event of significant coastal pollution on Arun District Council's coastal shoreline. Typically, the pollution would be oil but other pollutants such as overboard cargo may be included. The objective of the framework was to be able to appoint specialist contractors to perform the coastal pollution clean-up role on behalf of district and borough councils and a coastal pollution waste disposal service on behalf of the upper tier authorities. The framework contractor would have the capability to provide a 24 hour emergency spill response; provide specialist staff; carry out sampling and analysis; conduct environmental site investigations; they had specialist clean-up equipment; were able to carry out remediation of contaminated sites; and they had waste disposal facilities. Benefits of signing up to the agreement included there being no requirement to conduct a costly and time-consuming procurement exercise, the framework agreement offered a means of calling off services that had already been competitively tendered, there would be no retainer fee incurred for Arun.

Members then took part in a question-and-answer session and the following points were made:

- It was asked how often anything like this had been used in the last five years. The Emergency Planning Officer confirmed such a service had not been required in the previous 5 years.
- Would this cover pollution coming from pipes from land into the sea? It was confirmed that only pollution coming from the sea would be covered.
- The issue of coastal pollution coming from land was discussed and it was felt this needed to be dealt with separately.
- Members expressed their support for signing up to the framework agreement.

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The Chair expressed his support for signing up to the framework agreement, however wanted to sign this himself on behalf of the Committee, rather than delegating authority for the Officer to sign it. The Chair then Proposed an amendment to the recommendation as follows:

The Chair of the Environment Committee sign the 'Access Agreement relating to the Framework Agreement for the Sussex Coastal Pollution Clean-up and Disposal Service'. If this is not possible, then the Environment Committee approve the delegated authority for the Group Head of Environment and Climate Change to sign the 'Access Agreement relating to the Framework Agreement for the Sussex Coastal Pollution Clean-up and Disposal Service'.

This amendment was Seconded by Councillor P. English.

The Chair invited debate on the amendment. It was stated that all that mattered was that the framework agreement was signed, and it was felt unnecessary to change the recommendation.

Following a vote, the amendment was confirmed as CARRIED.

The substantive recommendation was Proposed by Councillor Bicknell and Seconded by Councillor Edwards.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Chair of the Environment Committee sign the 'Access Agreement relating to the Framework Agreement for the Sussex Coastal Pollution Clean-up and Disposal Service'. If this is not possible, then the Environment Committee approve the delegated authority for the Group Head of Environment and Climate Change to sign the 'Access Agreement relating to the Framework Agreement for the Sussex Coastal Pollution Clean-up and Disposal Service'.

286. OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no updates from Members regarding Outside Bodies.

287. WORK PROGRAMME

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Group Head of Environment and Climate Change introduced the Work Programme. He confirmed that the Update on Tree Planting Strategy would be added onto this.

Subject to approval at the next Environment Committee meeting

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The Group Head of Technical Services explained that they would not be in a position to present the Car Park Charges Revue item at the November meeting, however they now planned to present a report proposing a wider review of the parking service.

The Work Programme was noted.

(The meeting concluded at 6.45 pm)