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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

20 January 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Edwards (Chair), Staniforth (Vice-Chair), P. English, Goodheart, Bicknell, Needs, Warr, Thurston, Bennett (Substitute for Worne), J. English (Substitute for Chace) and Haywood (Substitute for Huntley)

Councillors Elkins, Gunner and Pendleton were also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

[Note Councillor Paul English was absent from the meeting during Item 582]

573. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Huntley, Worne and Chace.

574. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Declarations of Interest were made:

- Councillor Paul English declared a personal Prejudicial Interest, as a landlord to private properties, in Agenda Item 8.
- Councillor Joan English declared a Prejudicial Interest, as a landlord to private properties, in Agenda Item 8.
- Councillor Goodheart declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 6, in reference to tree planting due to his links with Park Vision.

575. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2021 were approved by the Committee. These would be signed at the end of the meeting.

576. 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 explained to Committee that he wished to make a change to the published order of the agenda, by moving Item 10 (1-2-3 Food Waste & Absorbent

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Hygiene Products (AHP) Collection Trial Progress Update) to before Item 6 (Committee Revenue and Capital Budgets 2022/2023) due to the presence of a guest from West Sussex County Council attending for the item. The Committee approved this change by a show of hands.

577. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed that no questions were submitted for this meeting.

578. 1-2-3 FOOD WASTE & ABSORBENT HYGIENE PRODUCTS (AHP) COLLECTION TRIAL PROGRESS UPDATE

The Chair welcomed and introduced Kelly Hellyer, Partnership Manager within the Waste Service Team at West Sussex County Council (WSSC).

Upon the invitation of the Chair the Environmental Services & Strategy Manager presented the report to the Committee. He introduced the additional recommendation which was 'To approve the continuation of the 123 trial from May 2022 until February 2023 and expiry of the current combined cleansing services contract (as set out in the Cabinet report dated 16.11.2020'.

The Environmental Services & Strategy Manager highlighted some key areas of the report including that this was a trial for which they were only 6 months in. The work of the Project Team which comprised of Officers from both Arun & WSSC was a great example of partnership working and had ensured a successful roll out of the trial. Participation and capture rates were around 90% per household and 60% for flats, which were well in excess of pre-trial targets. They had captured 86 tonnes of food waste, which was equivalent to a 36% reduction in the residual waste stream. AHP collection had been well in excess of targets, and at the 6 month stage they had collected almost 13 tonnes of AHP. The face-to-face resident survey captured responses from 500 trial households. Of these 85% were either satisfied or very satisfied with food collection service. 73% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the general waste collection service. The complaints and issues had been few and isolated. The team had taken learning points from the trial.

Members then took part in a question and answer session as summarised below:

- What was being done to try to encourage people in flats to take part? The Partnership Manager within the Waste Service Team at WSSC confirmed they had been completing site inductions, and they monitored bin stores regularly; they communicated with managing agents; they had a doorstepping team to inform residents and remind them how to use the service; there was a waste prevention team also offering guidance.
- Clarification was requested around communal bins for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
- Could a scheme for AHP be rolled out to other household's in the District not participating in the trial? The Partnership Manager within the Waste Service

Team at WSCC confirmed they were working with the contractors who were taking data from the trial to supply to designers and contractors to create a recycling facility. Students from Brighton University were also being worked with, in order for them to hopefully create a unique design solution.

- The future collection cycle should ensure that the dry recycling was collected frequently enough.
- Had the seagull proof bags been tested? How successful were they? The Environmental Services & Strategy Manager would provide a written update to Members regarding this separate project.
- Clarification was requested over the trial figures.
- The situation regarding overflowing bins and whether residents would receive additional or larger bins.
- It was a fascinating exercise.
- Could more waste be composted in the future.
- Thanks was given to the teams implementing the trial.
- Whether changes would be made to the trial over the next 6 months.
- Whether Care Homes would be included in the roll-out.

The recommendations were Proposed by Councillor Bicknell and Seconded by Councillor Bennett.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

- (1) They acknowledged the positive results to date of the 1-2-3 Food Waste and AHP collections trial.
- (2) They acknowledged the efforts of residents in the trial area who have sustained high participation and capture rates of food waste and AHP and delivered considerable reduction of these materials in the residual waste stream.
- (3) They acknowledged the effectiveness of the Arun and WSCC joint project team in ensuring smooth delivery of the trial.
- (4) The continuation of the 123 trial from May 2022 until February 2023 and expiry of the current combined cleansing services contract (as set out in the Cabinet report dated 16.11.2020) be approved.

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579. COMMITTEE REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2022/2023

[Councillor Goodheart had declared a Personal Interest in this item]

Upon the invitation of the Chair the Interim Group Head of Corporate Support and Section 151 Officer introduced this report, reminding Members that this was the first year that the Council's Budget had been produced under the new Committee style of governance. The Committee was provided with a brief reminder of the process in formulating the Budget for 2022/23. The detailed budget papers for this Committee to consider were set out in Appendix A of the report and only contained essential/committed growth items. Members were asked to note that there had been significant pressure on establishment budgets, which assumed a 1.75% pay award this year and a 2.5% pay award for 2022/23, and a 1.25% increase for employer's National Insurance contributions. The uncommitted growth items for this Committee were included in Appendix B and totalled £55,000. The Capital Programme in Appendix C totalled £1.945 million. The maintenance of Corporate Assets was the responsibility of the Economy Committee, and their budget had been approved the previous evening. The Policy and Finance Committee would be requested to agree £180,000 contribution to the flood fund in the current year as detailed in the report. The proposed budget for 2022/23 was being presented for the Committee to agree before being considered as part of the total budget, by the Policy & Finance Committee. Members were reminded of the Budget Briefing to be held on 16 February 2022.

Members (and non-Committee Members given permission to speak) then took part in a question and answer session as summarised below:

- Clarification was requested around income/surplus from car parks.
- Clarification was sought regarding the loss on cleansing facilities and the rise in income from cemeteries.
- The Coast Protection and Land Drainage had increased significantly. The Interim Group Head of Corporate Support and Section 151 Officer explained that there was a £40,000 increase for shingle clearance. This would be for the purpose of coastal protection.
- Was there a budget for clearance of shingle from promenades? It was confirmed there was a budget for this.
- The increase in workforce for parks and open spaces was welcomed.
- There were further questions on the figures regarding cemeteries. A written update would be provided by Officers.
- Further information was requested around plans for Bersted Brooks, which was provided by the Leader of the Council.

The recommendations were Proposed by Councillor Paul English and Seconded by Councillor Goodheart.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

- 1) The 2022/23 Revenue Budget as illustrated in Appendix A of this report be agreed;
- 2) The 2022/23 list of uncommitted growth items as illustrated in Appendix B of this report be agreed;
- 3) The 2022/23 Capital Programme as illustrated in Appendix C of this report be agreed; and

The Committee also

RECOMMEND TO THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

- 1) That the Revenue Budget, list of growth items and Capital Programme for this Committee be included in the overall General Fund Budget when considering the overall budgets on 10 February 2022.

580. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT CHARGE RECYCLING POLICY

Upon the invitation of the Chair the Principal Environmental Health Officer presented the report to the Committee. She explained the Council were responsible for administering disabled facility grants to private sector residents, enabling them to live independently in their own homes. There was a West Sussex Disabled Facilities Grant Policy, approved by Cabinet in December 2019, which allowed a local land charge to be put on owner-occupied adapted property. The cost of works between £5,000 and £10,000 could be put on the local land charge register, and if the property was sold within 10 years of the works being completed the Council asked for the money to be repaid. The report asked for those funds returned to the Council to be specifically used for more disabled facilities grants. On average the returned funds were around £30,000 per year.

Members then took part in a question and answer session as summarised below:

- The maximum grants available, and recovery on this.
- The process if the property was sold due to death. It was confirmed if the property was sold due to a death, the Council would try to recover the costs.
- The differences in grants provided by Arun District Council and West Sussex County Council (WSCC). It was confirmed WSCC provide equipment, whereas Arun provided more fixed assets.
- The numbers of grants provided per year, and how these properties were monitored afterwards.
- Whether the grants would cover the costs to have plans drawn up. The Principal Environmental Health Officer confirmed that grants did cover fees,

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and also the Council did not charge the Planning fees for disabled adaptations.

- Where the funds would go if they were not recycled into additional Disabled Facilities Grants. It was confirmed these would go into the general fund.

The recommendations were Proposed by Councillor Bicknell and Seconded by Councillor Needs.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

Any funds received by the Council via repayment of Disabled Facilities Grant charges, be recycled to fund further adaptations for private sector residents

581. ENFORCEMENT POLICY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING, LICENSING AND CLEANSING

[Councillor Paul English and Councillor Joan English re-declared their Prejudicial Interests at the beginning of this item]

Councillor Paul English Informed Committee that he had received advise from the Monitoring Officer during the early part of the meeting, who had said that he did not have significant enough interest in the item to prevent him from remaining in the meeting or asking questions. Councillor English confirmed however, that he would be abstaining from voting.

Councillor Joan English informed the Committee that the same applied to her as applied to Councillor Paul English with regards to advice from the Monitoring Officer about her Prejudicial Interest in the Item.

Upon the invitation of the Chair the Principal Environmental Health Officer presented the report to the Committee. She explained there was a joint policy for Environmental Health, Private Sector Housing, Licensing and Cleansing, that had been adopted. The report sought Committee approval for some amendments. The main changes were to include civil financial penalties for offences that came under 3 particular pieces of legislation relating to energy efficiency, electrical safety standards and smoke & carbon monoxide alarms. In addition to the policy there were 2 statements of principle, which were required to be published under the Electrical Safety Standards and the smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Regulations.

Members then took part in a question and answer session as summarised below:

- Whether Gas Safety legislation was covered. It was confirmed this was not.
- Documentation relating to checks should be visible to residents at the property.

- This was an excellent report and covered everything already being done by responsible landlords.
- Whether HMOs were covered in the policy. It was confirmed that they were.
- Whether Gas could be included in the over-arching policy document. The Group Head of Technical Services confirmed the Policy was to detail the way the Council enforced legislation that it was the regulator for. There was an obligation for Gas Safety certificates to be shared with tenants. This was however, outside of the scope of the legislation that Arun District Council were responsible for.
- Whether Arun District Council properties were included in the policy. It was confirmed the policy only related to private sector housing.
- Clarification was sought around why juveniles were included within the Policy.

The recommendations were Proposed by Councillor Bicknell and Seconded by Councillor Bennett.

During the vote Councillor Paul English and Councillor Joan English abstained from voting.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

- 1) The amendments to the attached Enforcement Policy for Environmental Health, Private Sector Housing, Licensing and Cleansing be adopted.
- 2) The Statement of Principles for the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector Regulations 2020 and the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Regulations 2015 be adopted.
- 3) Delegated Authority be given to the Group Head of Technical Services or their nominated representative to make any necessary consequential changes to the attached Enforcement Policy for Environmental Health, Private Sector Housing, Licensing and Cleansing and the Statement of Principles for the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector Regulations 2020 and the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Regulations 2015, as a result of new legislation or alternative practices.

582. AWARD OF CONTAIN OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT FUNDING

Upon the invitation of the Chair the Group Head of Technical Services presented the report to the Committee. He explained that Environmental Health had worked with WSCC throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, via the Covid Health Protection Board following the Outbreak Management Plan agreed across the County. This delivered a series of preventative interventions and responding to service requests whilst continuing to deliver other statutory environmental health work. Throughout that time joint bids had been submitted to WSCC by the Environmental Health teams across the

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County, for Contain Outbreak Management funding, which was provided to the County by Government. The purpose was to enhance the capacity of Environmental Health teams to deliver the additional Covid work whilst minimising the impact on their ability to deliver the other statutory environmental health work. Examples of additional Covid work included 118 workplace based outbreaks of covid that had been investigated; 2797 proactive compliance monitoring visits of businesses; they had investigated 938 service requests relating to covid, such as complaints about practices and requests for advice; they had also been working with the Health & Safety Executives and provided them with 1400 businesses to undertake spot checks on; working with event organisers and larger businesses within the tourism and food sectors to ensure adequate Covid risk assessments were in place. Over the summer a further funding bid for £361,000 per Local Authority was applied for, however the fund was oversubscribed. They had been allocated £144,000.

There were no questions from Members.

The recommendations were Proposed by Councillor Goodheart and Seconded by Councillor Warr.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the application of the £144,364 external funding as outlined in the body of the report be approved.

583. WORK PROGRAMME

The Group Head of Technical Services updated Members on the Work Programme.

Members then discussed the Work Programme and it was noted that it was a shame the Environment Agency could not have been invited to give an update to Committee prior to the next cycle of meetings, however the reasons for this were understood.

A non-Committee Member was given permission to speak and asked about the poor condition of the car park at Ferring. It was requested that this be put on the Work Programme, which the Committee agreed to, however after discussion it was decided that this came under the remit of the Economy Committee. The Vice-Chair of the Economy Committee was present at the meeting, and confirmed he would ensure this was put on the Work Programme for the Economy Committee.

The Committee noted the Work Programme.

(The meeting concluded at 7.55 pm)