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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

21 November 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Wallsgrove (Chair), Worne (Vice-Chair), Blanchard-Cooper, P. Bower, Brooks, Elkins, Greenway, Madeley, May, Warr and Wiltshire

Councillors Bicknell, Cooper, Mrs Cooper, Goodheart, Gunner and Haywood were also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

[Note: Councillor Worne was absent from the meeting during discussion of all or part of Minute 383]

376. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Greenway declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 7 as a Member of Bersted Parish Council and a Member of Friends of Bersted Brooks.

377. MINUTES

A query was raised regarding Minute 89 around the cost of producing the discs. Officers confirmed they believed this was showing correctly in the Minutes.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 07 September 2023 were approved by the Committee. These would be signed after the meeting.

378. 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

[During discussion of this Item, Councillor Greenway declared a Personal Interest as a Member of West Sussex County Council]

[During discussion of this Item, Councillor Elkins declared a Personal Interest as a Member of West Sussex County Council]

The Chair confirmed that there was one urgent item for the Committee to consider, which would be discussed under Item 4 of the meeting. She explained that following Wednesday night's Full Council meeting where the urgent item entitled 'Storm Ciaran and Flooding Impacts' was considered and approved, an urgent report had been circulated to Members of the Environment Committee entitled 'Arun Flood Forum Following Storm Ciaran'. This Item was business of such urgency as to require

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immediate attention by the Committee in accordance with Committee Procedure Rule 3.1(vii).

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Group Head of Environment and Climate Change introduced the report to Committee. He explained a report had been taken to Full Council on 08 November 2023 following Storm Ciaran which followed unprecedented rainfall in October 2023 and resulted in flooding impacts across the District. Full Council recognised the impacts on residents and business and recommended the Environment Committee establish a Forum to review the incident, to investigate and consider the contributing factors, impacts and possible solutions. The Forum would be made up of various partners responsible for flood preparation, planning and response, including the Environment Agency, Southern Water, West Sussex County Council and others. The Forum was to be Chaired by a suitably qualified independent person, and authority was delegated to the Environment Committee. In accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004 the District Council took the lead role in coordinating the recovery from an incident. He then took Members through the recommended Terms of Reference for the Forum, which were set out in Appendix 1, and explained this had been based on the model of other flood forums across the nation that were already operating.

The Chair then invited questions, and Councillor Greenway proposed an amendment to the Terms of Reference as shown in italics below. This was shared to the screen for Members to see.

Terms of Reference - Arun Flood Forum

1. Purpose of the Forum

The main purpose of the Forum is to:

- *Understand the issues behind the main flooding events which occurred within the District following Storm Ciaran in October 2023.*
- *Understand other recent flooding events which have occurred within the District where homes and businesses have been affected.*
- *To understand the impact new development **and climate change have both** had on these flooding events.*
- *To make recommendations on practical and deliverable measures to reduce the impact of flooding on the District's residents, businesses and the environment, and to promote the implementation of permanent and sustainable solutions to mitigate or alleviate flooding.*
- *The Forum will also seek to improve communication between the flood risk management authorities and representatives from flood affected communities.*
- *To **highlight and signpost to residents funding opportunities, and help educate residents about what more they can do to protect their own properties.***

2. Scope

The Forum will focus on areas of flood risk resulting from the Storm Ciaran event but will cover other areas of flood risk as determined by the Forum.

43. Objectives

The Forum will work to:

- *Clearly establish the impact of flooding following the events following Storm Ciaran*
- *Clearly identify the highest risk areas to flooding resulting from the above review – which communities and businesses are at highest risk.*
- *Hear from communities and businesses affected by the flooding events.*
- *Understand the relationship between new developments and the functional flood plan, how they are drained and the impact on existing built up areas.*
- *Understand the various agencies roles and responsibilities in dealing flooding both in terms of prevention and solutions.*
- *Set out measures to mitigate these risks, from those already established and identify additional measures to assist in future flooding events.*
- *Consider the key agencies' responsibilities and their working relationships with the Council and each other.*
- *Establish what arrangements there are for involving and consulting local communities in determining flood prevention plans and in flood response and recovery arrangements.*
- *Ensure that partners' own organisations are aware of and can respond to flood related issues within their assigned duties and resources.*
- *Review procedures for flood prevention, response and recovery.*
- *Arrange periodic and appropriate training or information exchange for relevant personnel, including partners' own workforces, emergency services, volunteers and other stakeholders on the operational aspects of flood risk management.*
- *Make recommendations for appropriate action by the Council and partner agencies.*
- *Actively address funding opportunities to support projects / proposals resulting from the Forum.*
- *Ensure that the Council's interests are represented at regional and national level in respect of flood policy development and funding.*

4. Chairing

- *The Forum will be chaired by an independent professional, **with experience of chairing meetings, creating action plans, and understanding technical issues.***
- *The Chair will be chosen by the Chief Executive's Recruitment and Selection Panel.*

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- **The Chair will be responsible for communicating and engaging with other bodies, partners, landowners and other stakeholders to facilitate their engagement with the forum.**

5. Membership Attendees

- ~~The Forum will be chaired by an independent professional.~~
- ~~Up to 4 District Councillors from flood affected wards (with not more than one representative from each ward). All other Members are able to attend to observe and ask questions.~~
- ~~Up to 4 Parish Council representatives, who should be the Chair or Vice Chair of their Parish Council, (with not more than one representative from each parish)~~
- **Any Arun District councillor, West Sussex County councillor and town/parish councillor within the Arun District can attend all meetings of the Forum.**
- Appropriate officer representation from Southern Water
- Appropriate officer representation from the Environment Agency
- Appropriate officer representation from West Sussex County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority
- Relevant officer representation from Arun District Council
- ~~The group may co-opt representatives of other organisations to sit on the group as appropriate.~~
- **Any affected business, resident, landowner or interested party within the District.**

6. Meetings and frequency

- The group will meet 4 times per year or as determined by the Forum.
- All meetings to be held in person.

7. Leadership and Governance

- The Forum would not be a committee, sub-committee or working party of the authority. Instead, it would be a body established by the Environment Committee and the appropriate statutory power for its establishment would be the Council's general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.
- Agendas and minutes of the Forum meetings will be reported to Environment Committee.
- Forum member representatives attendees will determine for themselves how they wish to report back to their own organisations and communities on the work of the group.
- **Attendance at Membership of the Forum meetings** provides no undertaking or commitment by any member organisation to make available funding for any scheme or proposal, but representatives will use their best endeavours to secure funding from appropriate sources.

- *ADC will provide secretariat services for the Forum.*

98. Decision-Making Process

- *The Forum will make recommendations to Environment Committee where they relate to ADC decisions. It will have no decision-making authority.*

109. Communication

- *Communication resulting from the Forum meetings will be shared through ADC Communications team.*

Proposed Forum topics /meetings—~~one subject per meeting~~

- *To hear from affected communities and business representatives*
- *National Flood Forum experience, role and responsibilities*
- *Environment Agency (EA) responsibilities and actions*
- *Southern Water (SW) responsibilities and actions*
- **ADC responsibilities and actions**
- *WSCC (Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)) responsibilities and actions and ADC's role*
- *Impact of planning and development*
- **Landowners responsibilities and actions**

Councillor Greenway explained that during the debate at Full Council, Members had commented that it did not just relate to storm Ciaran, so he had tried to remove reference to this in the amendment. He was disappointed that Climate Change had not been mentioned in the Terms of Reference, so the amendment reflected this under Purpose. He had also included ways that members of the public may be able to help themselves right now, such as highlighting and signposting funding opportunities, and helping to educate residents about what more they could do to protect their own properties. He felt there was also little mention of responsibilities of landowners and riparian owners, so he amended the attendees to include them. He felt the Membership contradicted itself as although only allowed 4 District Councillors, it mentioned other Members could attend and observe, and he questioned what the role of the designated District Councillors would be on the Forum. He wanted to open this up to include West Sussex County Councillors and Parish Councillors. Under the possible Forum topics he had added 'Arun District Council's Responsibilities and Actions', and had crossed out one subject per meeting as he felt this may not take up a whole meeting. He had added in a section for Chairing the meeting to include how the Chair would be chosen and what their responsibilities would be.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Madely.

The Interim Chief Executive Officer and Director of Environment and Communities explained to Members that the Chief Executive's Recruitment and

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Selection Panel would not be able to select the Chair of the Forum, as the purpose of the Panel was solely to select the Chief Executive.

With the agreement of the Committee the Chair announced a short adjournment to allow Members the opportunity to study the amendment.

Upon resuming the meeting, the proposer of the amendment, Councillor Greenway, with the agreement of the seconder, Councillor Madeley, altered his amendment as shown below in italics, which was shared to the screen for all Members to see. He explained that he had removed Paragraph 4 which related to the Chair, which he had done due to the advice of the Interim Chief Executive Officer and Director of Environment and Communities that the Chief Executive's Recruitment and Selection Panel would not be able to select the Chair of the Forum. He explained he would like Paragraph 5 to return to the Substantive, with the small amendment of allowing District and County Councillors to be able to attend the forum to observe and ask questions.

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- *To understand the impact ~~new~~ development **and climate change have both** ~~has~~ had on these flooding events.*
- *To make recommendations on practical and deliverable measures to reduce the impact of flooding on the District's residents, businesses and the environment, and to promote the implementation of permanent and sustainable solutions to mitigate or alleviate flooding.*
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The Forum will focus on areas of flood risk resulting ~~from the Storm Ciaran event but will cover other areas of flood risk~~ as determined by the Forum.

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The Forum will work to:

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- *Appropriate officer representation from the Environment Agency*
- *Appropriate officer representation from West Sussex County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority*
- *Relevant officer representation from Arun District Council*
- *The group may co-opt representatives of other organisations to sit on the group as appropriate.*

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- *The group will meet 4 times per year or as determined by the Forum.*
- *All meetings to be held in person.*

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- *The Forum would not be a committee, sub-committee or working party of the authority. Instead, it would be a body established by the Environment Committee and the appropriate statutory power for its establishment would be the Council's general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.*
- *Agendas and minutes of the Forum meetings will be reported to Environment Committee.*
- *Forum member representatives **attendees** will determine for themselves how they wish to report back to their own organisations and communities on the work of the group.*
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- *Environment Agency (EA) responsibilities and actions*
- *Southern Water (SW) responsibilities and actions*
- ***ADC responsibilities and actions***
- *WSSC (Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)) responsibilities and actions and ADC's role*
- *Impact of planning and development*
- ***Landowners responsibilities and actions***

Members were then given additional time to read the altered amendments to the Terms of Reference, as above. Members confirmed they understood these amendments, and the Chair invited debate as follows:-

- *This forum was important to residents as all areas were affected by flooding.*
- *It was felt important that Climate Change was included as there had been a dramatic increase to rainfall which had an impact, particularly where ditches were overflowing. It was asked whether this process would address the duties*

- under the Flood and Water Management Act of all the parties involved. The Group Head of Environment and Climate Change confirmed it would.
- It was asked how it would be decided which District Councillors would sit on the Forum, as it was felt that all wards were flood-affected. The Interim Chief Executive Officer and Director of Environment and Communities explained this would be decided by Members, but it would be a collaborative forum and would report back to the Environment Committee. It was an opportunity to examine the issues behind the main flooding events which had occurred within the District.

The amendment was put to the vote and was declared CARRIED.

Turning to the substantive, the amended recommendations were proposed by Councillor Blanchard-Cooper and seconded by Councillor Greenway.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

The Terms of Reference, as amended by Committee, be approved.

379. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed one question had been submitted, which is briefly summarised below:

1. From Jan Malpas to the Chair of the Environment Committee, regarding Beach Access for all.

(A schedule of the full question asked and the response provided can be found on the [Environment Committee Public Question Web page](#))

380. QUARTER 2 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer introduced the report to Committee. He explained that the report was a forecast of outturn verses budget as at Quarter 2 (at the end of September). He drew Members' attention to table 1 on page 14, the bottom line showed a revenue budget underspend of £55k, which was a change of around £58k from the previous quarter, smaller amounts in the overall Committee budget. The main reasons were outlined in Paragraphs 4.2-4.7 of the report. Building Control Fees were around £35k lower than budget, which he felt was due to the general economic downturn; Car Parking Income was £55k higher than budget income, parking fees were increased in January this year, and it was fair to say those had not generated the extra level of income hoped for,

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however it was higher than budget income; he corrected that Cemeteries and Churchyards should read £21k underspend not overspend and this was related to staffing costs; Cleansing Services were showing £152k overspend which was predominantly due to two reasons, inflation was still high, and there was a back-dated pay increase for the contract staff involved in delivering that service; Parks and Greenspaces were showing £125k underspend, which was largely due to staff vacancies; he corrected that Management and Support costs should say a £53k underspend change since quarter 1, the report incorrectly said £125k. With regards to the Capital Programme the only issue to report was the slippage of £200k on the skate park, which was a result of capacity issues.

There were no questions from Members.

The Committee noted the report.

381. BERSTED BROOKS PARK

The Chair confirmed that this Item would be withdrawn for consideration at this meeting without discussion, and would instead be on the agenda for the next meeting of the Environment Committee on 23 January 2024. The reason for this was that the Item was not time sensitive and Members had requested a briefing for Members of the Environment Committee and Ward Members by the Lead Officer.

382. ADDITIONAL HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION LICENSING SCHEME

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Principal Environmental Health Officer introduced the report to Committee. The report had originated from a Full Council resolution with two strands, the first relating to the quantity of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Planning Policy Committee had implemented Article 4 Directions in January 2023, which meant that any new HMOs in the wards of River, Hotham and Marine now required planning permission. This report related to the second strand, which was the quality of HMOs, and proposed an extension to the type of HMOs requiring a licence. Currently there was a mandatory national HMO licence scheme that required any property with five or more people forming two or more households, sharing facilities to hold a licence. The Housing Act 2004 gave Local Authorities the discretion to introduce additional HMO licensing schemes. This could be to extend the type of properties that required licensing and could apply to the whole district or certain wards. The Council commissioned a report by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) and following the evidence and data provided, a public consultation took place between 12 June – 20 August 2023 on the proposal to introduce an additional HMO licensing scheme in the wards of River, Hotham and Marine. This would include properties occupied by three or four occupants forming two or more households, sharing facilities. It would also include Section 257 HMOs, which were properties converted into self-contained flats where the conversion did not meet current Building Regulations, with less than two thirds of the flats owner-occupied.

The aims of the scheme was to improve the standard of accommodation in the three wards. The report included a summary of the consultation results and feedback. There had been 99 responses to the survey, 69 being owner-occupiers, 14 tenants, 10 landlords and 6 other. 5 individual representations had been made. In summary there was agreement and support for the types of properties to be included within the scheme, the wards to be targeted and what the aims of the scheme would achieve. However, it must be noted that the highest number of respondents were from either tenants or owner occupiers, as opposed to landlords.

The HMO Licensing was a cost recovery scheme, and an analysis of the current mandatory licensing regime had been undertaken to ensure the Council had used a clear evidence base to set fees in order to fully recover the allowable costs incurred in regulating these properties. The proposed fees were shown at paragraph 4.35 and would be set for the 5 year term of the license. There was a risk to realising this income, based on the accuracy of figures from the BRE and also the risk of potential for landlords to choose to move out of the market. Resources would be required in terms of a Team Leader, HMO Officer and Technical Support Assistants, which were identified at paragraph 4.29. The additional licensing scheme, if introduced, would be for a five year period, after which time the Council would be required to evaluate its success, undertake another public consultation and a report would be provided to Members again with regards to whether the scheme should continue and/or be expanded to other wards. Currently these properties were not proactively inspected, and this scheme was a cost recovery way of introducing such a programme to enable inspections to ensure minimum standards and improve private rented sector accommodation for some of the more vulnerable residents.

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

- It was felt the consultation response rate was disappointing, and there was concern not enough weight had been given to landlords' views. The Principal Environmental Health Officer agreed that the response rate was disappointing, however letters had been sent to all households and businesses within the three wards, two landlord events had been held, and the consultation had been widely publicised.
- There was concern around the costs. The Principal Environmental Health Officer explained that they had broken down all of the costs and the admin involved in the tasks, and were confident that the fees stated would cover the cost to provide the scheme. This would be kept under review.
- There was concern that some existing landlords may choose not to continue providing accommodation.
- One Member stated there were differences between the fire brigade fire conditions and Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) fire guidance. The Principal Environmental Health Officer explained that the LACORS guidance needed to be followed, which was enforced by the Local Authority as they were the lead for fire safety in HMOs.

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- There was concern this would apply to homeowners taking in lodgers. The Principal Environmental Health Officer explained that where people took in up to two lodgers the property would not be classed as an HMO.
- It was suggested that consultation in future be available in simpler English or multiple languages. The Principal Environmental Health Officer explained they had tried to provide the information as simply as possible, but took the comments on board.
- The National Residents Landlords Association (NRLA) had offered to work with the Council to develop a dispute resolution service, and Officers views on this were sought. The Principal Environmental Health Officer explained the Council had a good relationship with the NRLA, and had responded to say they welcomed the idea of sharing best practice.
- The letter on page 105 from a local property manager made one Member think this may not be a good idea, most of the small private HMOs were not badly managed and it could drive some landlords out of business. The Member felt Arun should not expand too far outside of its' statutory duties, and financially It didn't seem like a good time to be doing this.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Blanchard-Cooper and seconded by Councillor Worne.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

1. It recommends to Full Council to Designate the whole of the three wards of Marine, Hotham and River as subject to Additional Licensing under section 56(1)(a) of the Housing Act 2004 for all Houses in Multiple Occupation that contain three or four occupiers making up two or more households irrespective of the number of storeys, and those properties defined as Section 257 Houses in Multiple Occupation under Housing Act 2004. Such designation to take effect in the financial year 2024/2025 and last for 5 years, the specific date to be agreed by the Group Head of Technical Services in consultation with Legal Services.
2. The fees for Additional HMO Licensing as set out in 4.35 be agreed for 2024/25.
3. It recommends to Policy and Finance Committee that the resources as set out in paragraph 4.29 are agreed in order to implement the additional HMO licensing scheme within the three wards of River, Marine and Hotham.

383. AIR QUALITY STRATEGY

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Environmental Health Team Manager introduced the report, which concerned adoption of an Air Quality Strategy for Arun. Air pollution was associated with a number of adverse health impacts and was recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affected the most vulnerable in society. The Government had recently published their revised Air Quality Strategy (2023) and had revised the local air quality management framework which Arun followed, which now placed a new requirement on Local Authorities without air quality management areas to produce an air quality strategy, setting out the action that they would take to improve air quality in their area. Air quality monitoring carried out by the Council continued to indicate that there was good air quality within the District and the air quality objectives for Nitrogen Dioxide were being met. This was carried out through a system of 26 Nitrogen Dioxide monitoring tubes.

This first Air Quality Strategy set out the steps that were already being taken to help improve air quality, as part of the Sussex Air Quality Partnership and specifically within Arun, and the proposed priority areas. The air quality work was in relation to public health management and not directly to do with sustainability, although there were direct links as set out in part 14 of the report. The priority areas for focus within Arun included continuing with existing workstreams such as the NO₂ monitoring programme, amendments to the taxi licensing policy and our work as part of Sussex Air, which could be met within existing resources. Initial work to determine the feasibility of smoke control areas, investigate use of fixed penalty notice powers relating to idling vehicles, and evaluating options for proactive dust monitoring of large construction sites, would also be carried out utilising existing capacity within the Environmental Health Service. However, the ability to take some of these items forward, for example should it be determined appropriate to introduce a smoke control area or a programme of proactive dust monitoring, may be contingent on identifying additional capacity or resources, such as may be available through Defra grants, or revenues received from fixed penalty notice receipts.

Members (and a non-Committee Member given permission to speak) then took part in a question-and-answer session and the following points were made:

- It was asked what progress had been made across Arun regarding installation of on-street electrical charge points. The Group Head of Technical Services explained electric vehicle charge points were being rolled out across the County. There had been some lessons learnt from phase one roll-out where six charge points were being installed at every location, there was now a different approach involving earlier consultation with stakeholders. The intention was now to install two electric charge points at most locations, ensuring the infrastructure was there, and more could be installed as required.
- Clarification was sought on the impact of taxis. The Environmental Health Team Manager explained they were looking at revision of the taxi licence policy to look at introducing emission standards for taxi vehicles, and a report was going to Licensing Committee in December in relation to that matter.

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- It was asked whether buses would be monitored, in particular the measuring of particulates. The Environmental Health Team Manager explained the impact of busses would not be monitored directly. Any additional measures would need separate funding, however every year as part of the Sussex Air Quality Partnership there were opportunities to apply for funding through Defra, so this was something that could be looked at in the future.
- It was asked whether there were sufficient number of electric charge points at Harwood Road and Arun Civic Centre. The Group Head of Technical Services was confident there were sufficient numbers for Arun's modest fleet of electric vehicles.
- It was asked that the Group Head of Technical Services noted that electric vehicle charge points needed to be accessible.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Madeley and seconded by Councillor Bower.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

1. The Air Quality Strategy be adopted.
2. Authority be given to the Group Head of Technical Services to make minor and administrative amendments to the Strategy.

384. VARIATION TO PARKING FEES

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Group Head of Technical Services introduced the report to Committee. He explained The Off-Street Parking Strategy 2021-2026 set out that the Council would review the charges annually. Inflation over the last 12 months had been running at around 10%, Consequently, three car parking fee options had been prepared from which the Committee was asked to select one. Option A delivered the smallest increase in revenue for the Council, which had been achieved by increasing fees overall by 5%, and represented a below inflation increase and thus a real term cut in income. Option C delivered the highest increase in revenue, with higher increases across all fees. This had been based on inflation plus 5%, for a 15% increase in fees overall. Option B delivered a medium increase in revenue, with fees increasing broadly in line with inflation, which was the recommended option, and would prevent the Council's income reducing in real terms. He then went onto explain the other recommendations.

Councillor Blanchard-Cooper proposed an amendment to the Officer recommendations, which was to add an additional proposed amendment to the Parking Order under recommendation 2, as follows:

2.3e. To change West Green car park tariff banding to replace reference to 3 hours with 4 hours.

Councillor Blanchard-Cooper explained current parking times restricted the use of the Harvester restaurant and Windmill Theatre, and this change would be more suitable when these facilities were back in use.

This amendment was seconded by Councillor Warr.

Councillor Greenway raised a Point of Order asking whether the substantive recommendations should be proposed and seconded before an amendment could be made. The Committee Manager advised that in Committee it was often the case that amendments be made to the Officer recommendations prior to the substantive recommendations being proposed and seconded, however if Members wanted to Move the recommendations prior to amendments being put forward, this would also be acceptable.

Following the opportunity being given to debate the amendment, it was put to the vote and declared CARRIED.

Councillor Elkins proposed an amendment to recommendation 2.6 as follows (deletions are shown in ~~strikethrough~~):

- 2.6 The development of a plan for improving ~~and introducing fees to~~ the car park to the rear of the Bluebird Café, Ferring Rife, Ferring.

Councillor Elkins explained that the matter of introducing fees had been raised over a number of years. It was a very popular location, and had mixed ownerships and was often flooded with an enormous amount of water. Councillor Elkins felt the existing wording implied it was a prerequisite that fees would be introduced, and he felt this should not be the case.

This amendment was seconded by Councillor Bower.

The Interim Chief Executive Officer and Director of Growth suggested that Councillor Elkins consider rewording his amendment to (additions shown in **bold**):

- 2.6 The development of a plan for improving and introducing fees to the car park to the rear of the Bluebird Café, Ferring Rife, Ferring, **and to report the outcome of these investigations to Committee for further consideration.**

Councillor Elkins was happy with these changes to the amendment, but felt strongly the word 'consider' in relation to introducing fees, should be included. With the agreement of the seconder, the amendment was therefore altered to (additions shown in **bold**):

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- 2.6 The development of a plan for improving and **consider** introducing fees to the car park to the rear of the Bluebird Café, Ferring Rife, Ferring, **and to report the outcome of these investigations to Committee for further consideration.**

Debate was opened on the amendment and support was offered for this. One Member was concerned about the linkage between introducing fees and paying for the improvements to the car park. The Interim Chief Executive Officer and Director of Growth explained investigations had not yet been conducted and ownership had not yet been looked into, therefore they were not yet aware of the costings of improvements and so were not currently in a position to look at how this would be funded.

Upon taking the vote, the amendment was declared CARRIED.

Returning to the substantive, the Chair invited Members to debate and ask questions on the recommendations.

It was asked whether further information could be circulated to Committee regarding paragraph 4.14, the solar canopy for Mewsbrook car park. The Group Head of Technical Services explained they were looking for approval to develop a proposal, it would then be brought back to Committee.

One Member felt that increasing car park charges would not support the needs of businesses, workers, shoppers, commuters, and visitors. There was concern no usage report of the car parks was included in the report, and he felt that Option B rise was too high and would increase higher than inflation. Reassurance was sought that the new pay and display machines used by Arun would allow for periods of less than 2 hours to be purchased. The Group Head of Technical Services explained that this was correct regarding the parking machines, and the Parking Services Review would address the concerns around the usage information.

The Committee gave their permission for a non-Committee Member to speak. It was requested that Committee exclude the car park in Middleton-On-Sea from recommendation 2.3. It was felt Arun could establish user data in a cheaper and more user-friendly way. The car park was extremely well used and did not suffer from long-stayers or abandoned vehicles. The Parish Council wanted to encourage use of the car park and it was felt this may have the opposite effect. There were also concerns that charges may be required for this at some point in the future if ticket machines were installed. The Group Head of Technical Services explained that the car parks would remain free under the proposals.

Clarification was sought on the free tickets. The Group Head of Technical Services explained users would be obliged to obtain a free ticket from the machine. The purpose of this was to gather data on the usage of the car park and also to enable

enforcement of long-staying and abandoned vehicles. He pointed out that Felpham Parish Council, where two of the car parks were situated, had confirmed their support for the installation of the machines.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Worne and seconded by Councillor Wallsgrove.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

1. Parking fee option B be introduced with effect from 01 April 2024.
2. Authority be delegated to the Group Head of Technical Services to advertise, consider representation and determine the following proposed amendments to the Parking Order:
 - a. To agree the redefinition of all short and long stay car parks as 'town centre' car parks.
 - b. To agree to the addition of Eldon Way car park to Arun District Council's Parking Order and the associated charging tariff as set out in Appendix 1.
 - c. To agree the installation of parking ticket machines within the three free car parks operated in partnership with Middleton-On-Sea and Felpham Parish Councils.
 - d. To agree the cessation of refunds issued for the cancellation of virtual parking permits for Arun District Council car parks.
 - e. To change West Green car park tariff banding to replace reference to 3 hours with 4 hours.
3. Authority be delegated to the Group Head of Technical Services to introduce and revise annually an administration fee for road closures based on the cost recovery principal.
4. A feasibility assessment for the installation of a solar canopy in Mewsbrook car park, be undertaken.
5. The development of a plan for improving and to consider introducing fees to the car park to the rear of the Bluebird Café, Ferring Rife, Ferring, and to report the outcome of these investigations to Committee for further consideration.
6. A Parking Services Review be commissioned, and its scope as set out in paragraphs 4.17 – 4.30.

Environment Committee - 21.11.23

385. UPDATE ON BEACH ACCESS FOR ALL - BOGNOR REGIS

[During discussion of this Item, Councillor Madeley declared a Personal Interest as the Ward Councillor for Felpham West]

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Senior Coastal Engineer introduced the report to Committee. He explained this followed a report brought to Committee in February. The report illustrated the steps taken to meet the short-term objectives. A survey of existing ramps was attached as an appendix to the report, which presented methodology and identified that two ramps were suitable for future clearance. Those ramps were Blakes Road and Gloucester Road. The selection criteria applied principles from national standards and considered the entire access chain, thinking about transport, local infrastructure such as toilets, parking and cafes. It was important to note that the supporting provisions were extremely important when delivering accessible infrastructure. The report also begun to consider some of the medium and long-term objectives, exploring potential funding sources, possible stakeholders and talking to neighboring authorities about their experiences. Worthing Borough Council had kindly provided a statement under 4.6, they had their own issues in developing their model. Steps had been taken to commence stakeholder engagement and some positive meetings with Voluntary Action Arun & Chichester (VAAC), whose connections would help to progress stakeholder engagement along with the Vice-Chair of his Committee. Officers were looking to hold stakeholder engagement meeting in January.

Members then took part in a question-and-answer session which is summarised below.

There was concern that the two ramps to access the beach were in Gloucester Road and Blakes Road, which were used by jet skis and the sailing club. The Senior Coastal Engineer explained that they were looking to work actively with jet ski users and Felpham Sailing Club. There was a local business that had an interest in working with the Gloucester Road ramp, and it was hoped an agreement could be come to regarding managing this ramp.

It was suggested the best place for a ramp would be in the centre of Bognor Regis opposite Place St Maur, and it was asked whether the possibility of using ramps there had been excluded. The Senior Coastal Engineer explained the ramps that had been discounted were primarily due to them being covered in shingle, the shingle was the primary coastal defence. The possibility of a new ramp in that area would need to be looked at alongside a major capital project such as renewal of the sea defences.

The Senior Coastal Engineer and Group Head of Environment and Climate Change were thanked for their work on this report and also the Bognor Regis Beach Access Working Party, and it was clear they had wanted to support making the beach accessible. Immediate action had taken place allowing some access onto the beach during the summer of 2023, and this work would be continued for the 2024 season.

One Member was disappointed with what had been achieved so far, and hoped to see other things in place such as clearing shingle from more ramps, installing and a trial with beach wheelchairs, and he felt a budget was required. He hoped to see a metal roller ramp installed in the summer of 2024. The Group Head of Environment and Climate Change reminded Members that Committee agreed to the objectives set out in the report in February, and it was based on taking lots of small steps with the aim of helping as many people as possible. This was aimed at access for all, and the stakeholder meeting would invite people to make representations, to clearly understand people's aims and objectives. Nothing was discounted at this time, but Officers were keen not to embark on projects that would not be supported by stakeholders. One of the aims was for Bognor and the coast along this stretch to become an exemplar for access for all. The Senior Coastal Engineer explained that they needed to focus on the mental barriers as well as the physical solutions, and it was really important that supporting infrastructure was in place as this was instrumental in overcoming barriers, such as having toilet facilities etc.

A non-Committee Member given permission to speak by the Committee, and hoped that the stakeholder group were able to discuss the possibility of more Arun-owned ramps being cleared of shingle, so further investigations could take place.

The report was noted.

386. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2022-2026 - QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2023 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023.

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Group Head of Technical Services introduced the report, the purpose of which was to update the Committee with the Quarter 2 Performance Outturn for the Key Performance indicators for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023.

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

- CP39 (Building Control) – Were we continuing to see an increase in this return? The Group Head of Technical Services confirmed in October it had improved to 65%
- CP39 (Building Control) – Was there a reduction in people requesting Building Control Services, were people are seeking independent services? The Group Head of Technical Services explained Arun's market share in building regulation work was much higher than that of neighbouring authorities. Arun have been struggling for some time to recruit for a Senior Building Control Surveyor, however the market supplement for this had now been revised, and they were in a position to recruit for this post with a greater prospect of success. The team had been carrying out large volumes of work and also new competency assessment requirements that they were having to go through which was time consuming, so it was felt it was testament to the team's hard work that they were in the position they were.

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- CP24 (Household Waste and Recycling) – It was asked whether there was a plan to achieve the targets. The Group Head of Environment and Climate Change explained the insight gained in the food waste trial showed that where food waste was collected separately, recycling rates could reach upwards of 60%, and the Government had clarified this would be mandated from March 2026. A report would be going to the Committee in March 2024.
- CP25 (Contractor Green Space Management) – of 57 sites, 11 had failed to meet contractual standards and 7 had exceeded. Could Members be provided with a breakdown of this. The Group Head of Environment and Climate Change would provide a breakdown to Members after the meeting.
- CP37 and CP40 – these targets were both set at 100%, which neither were currently meeting, and it was asked whether the target was too high? The Group head of Technical Services felt a target of 99% would be more appropriate.
- CP24 (Household Waste and Recycling) – It was asked whether seagull proof bags and smaller boxes for people with no frontage, would be continued. The Group Head of Environment and Climate Change would circulate information regarding this to Members after the meeting.

The report was noted.

387. OUTSIDE BODIES

Upon the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Wiltshire gave a brief update on The Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group (LGA Coastal SIG), explaining they were currently a number of things they were promoting including Motion for the Ocean.

388. WORK PROGRAMME

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Group Head of Technical Services presented the Work Programme to Committee, explaining that the Disabled Facilities Grant Item had been removed from the January meeting, as this had to be adopted by all Districts before the end of the calendar year. Revisions to the policy were very minor and were all in relation to providing larger grants for people in the District, reflecting the construction inflation increases. A Bathing Water Quality report had been added.

The Group Head of Environment and Climate Change explained that the Rights to the River Arun, which was a Motion at Full Council, would also be added to the Work Programme in due course.

Members were concerned that there were no budget reports on the Work Programme. The Group Head of Finance confirmed a Budget report would come to the January Committee.

It was asked whether a scrutiny report around the cleansing services could be added to the Work Programme. At Policy and Finance Committee the results of the residents survey showed there was a distinct split of East and West around cleanliness, and it was hoped an item specifically around this could be brought in order that it be scrutinised.

A non-Committee Member given permission to speak was concerned that regular reports brought to Committee in the past, such as tree planting, an annual update on engineering service, food safety plan etc, were not currently showing. It was asked that a review be undertaken regarding this to ensure the previously regular items were added to the Work Programme. The Chair confirmed this would be looked into.

The Work Programme was noted.

(The meeting concluded at 8.45 pm)

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