

Monday, 7 December 2015  
at 6.00 pm



## Scrutiny Committee

Present:-

**Members:** Councillor Smart (Chairman) Councillor Ungar (Deputy-Chairman)  
Councillors Blakebrough, Murray, Miah, Rodohan and Smethers

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### **11 Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2015.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2015 were submitted and approved, subject to a proposed amendment by Councillor Ungar, seconded by Councillor Murray, that the words 'in response to a view that this appeared to be a very disappointing return on a £42m capital expenditure even if an estimated £10m expenditure is necessary repairs and refurbishment' be removed from minute 7 Devonshire Park – Review of Findings under the first bullet point of Key points relating to the economic rationale of the project. This amendment was approved (**by 4 votes to 3**) and the Chairman was then authorised to sign them as an accurate record.

### **12 Matters Arising.**

The Chairman requested that the Local Democracy Officer update the committee on the Annual Scrutiny programme actions from the 7 September committee.

Safe Walking and Safe Cycling Strategies - The Local Democracy Officer had written to East Sussex County Council informing of the request to be involved as an active stakeholder in the upcoming consultation on the future 'Safe Walking Strategy'. A response had been received agreeing to the inclusion of the four nominated Councillors.

Sussex Police District Commander for Eastbourne – the committee was receiving the requested presentation at this evening's meeting. Katy Bourne, Sussex Police Crime Commissioner was unable to attend due to a prior engagement.

The Towner Review – The Local Democracy Officer advised that due to the lack of information regarding this review it was proposed that a meeting be held with the Chairman (the originator of the request to review the Towner) and the Liberal Democrat nominee, to consider the scope and details of the review further.

A27 – The committee was advised that the Local Democracy Officer had been in contact with Rupert Clubb, East Sussex County Council regarding the request for a presentation on the proposed improvements to the A27 east of Lewes. Mr Clubb had advised that the County Council did not own or operate the trunk road network which the A27 forms part of and

therefore had no responsibility for the A27. As a result it was not East Sussex County Council who would be developing proposals for improvement or consultation thereon. Highways England had responsibility for the A27 and as such had responsibility for developing proposals, plans and consultation. The Local Democracy Officer agreed to contact Highways England directly to extend the invitation for a presentation to a special meeting of the Scrutiny committee on 15 February 2016, which had been tentatively agreed by the committee and would be subject to agreement and availability of all relevant parties.

Members were advised that a formal report from Capita was not yet available as their input was in various forms and was ongoing. This had been communicated to the Chairman following the meeting in September 2015 and reflected in the Cabinet report on 9 December 2015 under financial implications section within the report.

Capita had been requested to summarise their work to date in an interim report as at 31 December 2015. This will be supplied to the Chair and Deputy Chairman of Scrutiny by 31 January 2016.

**13 Apologies for absence.**

Councillor Sabri.

**14 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) by members as required under Section 31 of the Localism Act and of other interests as required by the Code of Conduct.**

There were none.

**15 Eastbourne Community Safety Plan.**

The committee considered the report of the Senior Head of Community which detailed the current performance of the Eastbourne Community Safety Partnership (ECSP) under the updated Eastbourne community safety plan and outlined issues that may potentially impact future crime and antisocial behaviour (ASB) performance.

The Eastbourne Crime Reduction Partnership Co-ordinator highlighted a 'smoothing-off' of the recent increase in reported crime and advised that Home Office statistics showed that Eastbourne when compared with similar towns fared particularly favourably. He also highlighted that budget reductions facing Sussex Police would have significant implications for the local partnership.

In 2000/06 Eastbourne was subject to around 11,000 crimes. For the performance year 2010/11 this had dropped to approximately 7,500 crimes and to the end of June 2014, this had reduced to around 5,700 crimes, a further reduction of 5% compared with the same period last year. Police recorded crime had, however, seen a considerable increase since the last report. Up to the end of June 2015 overall crime had gone up from 5,753 crimes to over 6,800, an increase of 18.5% compared with the same period last year. This increase was due to 2 factors; (i) Sussex Police strict

adherence to Home Office crime recording procedures and (ii) the PCC led initiative to increase crime reporting in a number of categories including, domestic abuse, hate crime and sexual offences.

The current plan (2014/17) had been developed in consultation with key partners including the police and other members of the ECSP. A copy of the action plan was appended to the report as appendix A. Priorities for 2015/16 and measurement criteria were attached as appendix B. Plan targets were reviewed at the end of each performance year and key performance targets had been incorporated into the relevant sections of the Council's corporate plan.

**NOTED.**

**16 Presentation by the District Commander, Sussex Police.**

Members received a presentation on the Sussex Police Local Policing Plan as requested at their meeting on 7 September 2015. The presentation was provided by Emma Brice, District Commander, Sussex Police, and was followed by a question and answer session.

The committee noted that the financial challenge for Sussex was considerable with 70% of the total budget for local policing coming from the government grant. Whilst significant savings had already been achieved, a further £57m within the next four years. 80% of the force budget related to pay and people so the workforce and roles would change. The Local Policing Programme was expected to save £29m annually by 2019 the structure of local policing was still being designed and no model was available as yet.

The Budget announcement on 14 December 2015 was unlikely to affect current identified savings as it was anticipated that part of the police budget would be allocated to increased firearms capability, cyber-crime, terrorism and communications systems. Sussex was the 4th lowest precept in the country and therefore more vulnerable to changes in the government grant. 2020 would see a very different organisation.

With regard to the Local Policing Programme key headlines were as follows:

Prevention:

- A focus on vulnerable locations and hotspots
- A named person for each ward
- Omni-competent officers reducing the need for specialisms and additional skills for PCSOs
- Partnership working and meeting attendance where mutual benefit

Members were advised that the number of PCSO's was likely to reduce, consultation would commence on 14 December 2015, and exact numbers could not be stated until the consultation was complete.

Response:

- Prioritising emergency calls, working across organisational boundaries
- Creation of a 'Resolution Centre'
- Introduction of mobile technology
- Improving service by reducing handovers between teams

It was anticipated that the Resolution Centres would be able to assist with incidents such as harassment on social media, shoplifting and parking disputes, freeing up officer time through the use of better technology and allowing a better response to 'absolute' emergencies. It was estimated that the Resolution Centre would be able to deal with approximately 61% of incidents did not require immediate response.

Investigation:

- Investigations based on threat, risk and harm
- Introduction of Investigation Framework
- One investigation team in each Local Policing Area
- Improving online self service, for example Face Watch

Members were advised that Eastbourne, Wealden and Lewes would merge with five districts across East Sussex reducing to two. A number of workshops were being held to allow consultees to put their views forward. There would also be wider consultation with the community.

Members discussed the following:

Reduction of Crime – To date 4300 crimes had been recorded, including burglaries, vehicle crime and criminal damage. Sussex Police had a team working with repeat offenders - 20% of offenders committed 80% of crimes – offender management was a key part of the team's work. When compared with the Force, Sussex detection rates were considered good.

Joint working and the potential reduction of PCSO's – It was hoped that demand would be reduced with the introduction of the Resolution Centres, and better technology, allowing Police more time to be visible. PCSO's would still be required; however they may cover a bigger area. There were currently five PCSO vacancies, which may mean there would not be an overall reduction in the numbers in Eastbourne, this was dependant on the consultation previously referenced.

Terrorism – It was recognised that PCSO's played a key role in getting to know their communities and gathering intelligence, however many other organisations had a duty of care to their community. The Community Safety Co-ordinator advised that a Prevent Plan had been written to help reduce / prevent radicalisation and included input from Eastbourne Borough Council, Sussex Police, local Schools and Community organisations, and training had been provided for Neighbourhood and Customer First Teams at Eastbourne Borough Council on the key issues to consider.

Roles of PCSO's – PCSO's would be upskilled to allow a better level of investigation without warranted powers. Changes would be implemented mid 2016.

PCC (Police Crime Commissioner) – Members queried the level of influence of the Police and Crime Commissioner on policing priorities. Priorities of the PCC cascade through from the Police and Crime Plan through to the Sussex Police Operational Delivery Plan. There were certain national aims set by the Home Secretary within the Strategic Policing Requirement such as maintaining capacity to deal with Civil Contingency plans. The PCC was briefed by the Chief Constable on the change programme.

Night time Economy Police presence – Police resources were allocated according to threat, harm and risk however, Eastbourne would have the ability to request resources from across Sussex if an incident required this.

Collection of data – Members were advised that individual agencies were responsible for the collection of data.

CCTV – The committee was advised that there were a number of mobile CCTV units within Eastbourne that had proved very effective. Members noted that the Community Safety Partnership had approved the purchase of two body cameras to be used in licenced premises.

The committee noted the excellent working relationship between Eastbourne Borough Council's Neighbourhood First Team and the Policing Unit at 1 Grove Road – a relationship which had been acknowledged by the Police Crime Commissioner.

Members agreed to conduct a review into the financial impact and impact on joint working following the introduction of the emerging Local Policing Programme. The timescale would be agreed in consultation with the District Commander and Local Democracy Officer.

The committee thanked the District Commander for the presentation and her attendance at the committee meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the Scrutiny committee conduct a review of the financial impact and implications joint working following the introduction of the emerging Local Policing Programme.

## **17 Corporate Performance - Quarter 2 2015/16.**

Members considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Senior Head of Corporate Development and Governance updating Members on the Council's performance against Corporate Plan Priority actions, indicators and milestones for Quarter 2 2015/16.

The committee was advised that Appendix 1 to the report provided a detailed report on the 2015/16 activities and outturns of the performance indicators listed within the Corporate Plan.

Of the 27 Key Performance Indicators reported in the Corporate Plan this quarter, 5 were currently showing as Red, 9 were showing as Green, 3 were

showing as Amber and 10 were data only or contextual PIs. The off target PIs were detailed as follows:

DE\_011 – Number of reported fly-tipping incidents reported  
CD\_008 – Decent Homes Programme  
CD\_051 – Difficult properties remedied/brought back into use  
TL\_026 – Total number of theatre users  
CS\_003 – Sickness absence

Members discussed:

Business Rate Appeals – Members noted the Business Rate deficit of £1,712,000 was as a result of a bigger than anticipated provision made in 14/15 for outstanding appeals. The total number of appeals outstanding as at 30 September 2015 was 248 with a total rateable value of £21.5m. The deficit represented 5% of the total debit for the year. The committee was assured that this was a national issue, with companies wishing to backdate their claims having to submit appeals by 31 March 2015, resulting in a huge backlog for the Valuation Office. Appeals would remain outstanding until the Valuation Office was able to consider each appeal.

The report provided members with the provisional outturn results for the general fund, the housing revenue account (HRA) and capital programme for the year 2015/16.

**RESOLVED:** That the following be noted: 1) The performance against national and local Performance Indicators and Actions from the 2010/15 Corporate Plan (2014 refresh) 2) The General Fund, HRA and Collection Fund financial performance for the quarter ended September 2015, as set out in sections 3,4 and 6. 3) The amended capital programme as set out in Appendix 3. 4) The transfer from reserves as set out in paragraph 3.5 of the report 5) The Treasury Management performance as set out in section 7 of the report.

The meeting closed at 7.40 pm

**Councillor Smart (Chairman)**