

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee

Minutes of meeting held remotely on 30 November 2020 at 3.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Joe Miller (Chair).

Councillors Liz Boorman (Deputy-Chair), Robert Banks, Nancy Bikson, Roy Burman, Roy Clay, Stephen Gauntlett, Christine Robinson, Jim Lord, Adrian Ross and Steve Saunders.

Officers in attendance:

Millie McDevitt (Performance and Programmes Lead), Jo Harper (Head of Business Planning and Performance), Philip Brown (Property Lawyer), Andrew Clarke (Deputy Chief Finance Officer (Financial Planning)), Bill McCafferty (Revenues and Benefits Manager) and Tim Whelan (Director of Service Delivery).

Also in attendance: none

1 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2020 were submitted and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

2 Introductions and notification of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Milly Manley and Councillor Roy Clay was appointed as a substitute.

3 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Steve Saunders declared a prejudicial interest in item on the agenda as a trustee of CTLA and a voluntary assistant with Community Cars. Councillor Saunders advised he would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

4 Urgent Items

There were none.

5 Written Questions from Councillors

There were none.

5a Wave Leisure Partnership Support update

The Chair, Councillor Miller advised Members that officers had requested that, in view of the continuing changes to the restrictions imposed on leisure facilities and their ability to open during the current crisis, and until next set of conditions were known, and the support needed by Wave also being subject to change, the item be taken to the January meeting.

RESOLVED that the item will be considered at the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

6a Community Wealth Building

Jo Harper, Head of Business Planning and Performance, presented the report. During discussion the following points were highlighted:

The Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) had been chosen to provide the report as a national expert who had the ability to draw on best practice from other authorities. The Committee would be provided with the cost of the work following the meeting. There had not the capacity within the organisation internally to provide the information in the report, within the timeframe.

RESOLVED to support the recommendations in the report in full.

6b Support for local people in financial distress

Tim Whelan, Director for Service Delivery, presented the report. During discussion the following points were highlighted:

There was sufficient funding in the hardship fund to provide the award for every person of working age on the scheme and would be made prior to the annual billing of council tax. The award was for 2020/2021 year and a separate consultation would take place the following year on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The County Council and Police precepts would not be impacted on.

RESOLVED to support the recommendations in the report in full.

6c Quarterly Performance report Q2

Performance Lead, Millie McDevitt, presented the report. During discussion it was agreed that further detail would be performance indicators below:

- Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (the service was waiting for third-party verification of the figures).
- Total number of reported fly-tipping incidents (and the location of the incidents).
- Community & Customers: Number of Anti-Social Behaviour

- The decrease in the average number of days to re-let Council homes (excluding temporary lets)
- Exceeding government Planning targets for the % of major applications determined within 13 weeks and minor applications within 9 weeks.

Members were provided with updates on the following service areas:

- Planning service –
 - The post of planning enforcement officer had been filled and the incumbent started work on the 14 December. A Senior Planning Officer would be starting on March 2021 and interviews would be taking place over the following two weeks to provide additional resources within the Development Control team. The Service was looking to fill all posts across both authorities which were 3 Senior Advisors and between 5-7 customer advisors. This constituted 30 percent of the Service's workforce. The staff employed would be working in smaller geographical teams. Agency work would be considered if the positions remained unfilled. Over the previous two years, 3 officers had been supported in achieving their planning qualifications and this would continue, subject to resources.
 - There was confidence that the authority would meet the target for the 'percentage of appeals allowed against the authority's decision not to grant planning permission' over the course of the two-year period set for the target. Additional commentary would be included in future reports on the impact of the Government target.
 - The details of appeal decisions were reported to the Planning Committee on a quarterly basis. The main issue was around decisions that were overturned and how further training could mitigate the impact of these results.
- Performance indicators to measure customer satisfaction (including the Planning service) – this was an indicator that had been looked at but was difficult to quantify. The pandemic had delayed further investigation into how a meaningful indicator could be provided. Planning, equally, was difficult to measure as feedback was often guided by the outcome of the application. However, this was an area that was under consideration.

The Committee asked for its thanks to be passed on to the Customer Contact Team for the good work produced and the high degree of professionalism shown during a difficult period.

RESOLVED to support the recommendations in full.

6d General Fund Revenue Budget Update - to follow

Andrew Clarke, Deputy Chief Finance Officer, presented the report. There was no discussion on the item.

RESOLVED to support the recommendations in the report in full.

6e Community Infrastructure Levy Recommendations for Spending

Emma Kemp, Senior Planning Policy Officer, presented the report. During discussion the following points were highlighted:

- The bid from South Downs National Park (SDNP) authority of £100,000 (Egrets Way Phase 6 of the route from Newhaven to Piddinghamoe) was for a smaller amount and was to make up the shortfall from the source of an original, larger bid for the wider project.
- The bid from Community Transport for Lewes District Area (CTLA) was to support the Hill Crest base as it did not have a charging point that was needed to accommodate a condition in an alternative bid for an electric vehicle.
- The list of unsuccessful bids was not available, however, approximately 70 percent of the bids submitted had been successful. The ability to provide details of unsuccessful applications to the Committee would be looked in to.
- The successful cross-border bids related to bridleways that predominantly ran through Lewes District or were within walking distance of the boundary and benefited Lewes District residents. Bids had not been made to neighbouring authorities, in part, as not all the authorities had established Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedules.
- The bid by Sussex Police for automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras was to support police work on the busy south coast road.
- The remaining £80,000 in the CIL fund would remain and be included in the next round of bidding in 2021.

RESOLVED to support the recommendations in the report in full.

NOTE:– Councillor Steve Saunders left the meeting for the duration of this item and did not take part in the discussion.

6f Report on the Memorandum of Understanding between Environment Agency and Lewes District Council relating to coastal risk management at Telscombe Cliffs

Tim Whelan, Director of Service Delivery, presented the report. During discussion the following points were highlighted:

- There was a 'general clause' within the memorandum of understanding

(Mo) that referred to partnership working. The details of those partners and the level of involvement had not been finalised.

- The landowner referred to in the MoU would be the owner of land at the base of the cliff, where the assets would be based. The number of assets at risk from erosion and the number of organisations involved allowed funding applications. A South East Coastal Group meeting was due to take place and a development and engagement plan would be developed following the meeting.
- There was no budgetary impact from the MoU as it was the starting point for the project and further, complex work would be undertaken. The report stated that previous consultation had taken place and any future projects within the scheme would require significant consultation.

RESOLVED to support the recommendations in the report in full.

7 Forward Plan of Decisions

Members considered the Forward Plan of Decisions and raised the following points:

- It was requested that the ability for the Committee to have early access and input into policy development be looked at.
- The Chair, Councillor Miller, requested that a 'call-over' process for the Committee be investigated whereby Members would receive all reports on the agenda but by consensus, agree at the start of each meeting, which items it wished to discuss and which it considered did not require further discussion.
- The omission of the Council Tax Base report from the agenda would be looked into.

The following items from the Forward Plan were requested for inclusion on the agenda for the Committee's meeting on 25 January 2021.

- Recovery and Reset Programme
- General Fund Revenue Budget 2021/22, Capital Programme
- Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators 2021/22, Capital Strategy & Investment Strategy
- Voluntary Sector Report
- Annual Lewes District Community Safety Partnership Report.
- Denton Island Bowls Club

- Planning Technical Advice Notes

8 Exclusion of the public

RESOLVED, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Item 12 (North Street Quarter Delivery -update) on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) (information relating to an individual and information relating to the financial/business affairs of particular persons).

9 Policy and Performance Advisory Committee Work Programme

The Chair, Councillor Miller, presented the Committee's Work Programme.

There was no discussion on the item.

RESOLVED to note the Committee's Work Programme.

10 North Street Quarter - update on delivery

The Chair, Councillor Miller, introduced the item. The Committee was asked to agree that the meeting move into exempt session.

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED to support the recommendations in full.

The meeting ended at 5.10 pm

Councillor Joe Miller (Chair)