



Minutes of the meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 1, East Pallant House on Tuesday 17 March 2015 at 10.00 am

Members Present: Mrs C M M Apel (Chairman), Mr R J Hayes (Vice-Chairman), Mr A D Chaplin, Mr P Clementson, Mrs P M Dignum, Mrs N Graves, Mrs E Hamilton, Mr G H Hicks, Mr S Lloyd-Williams, Mr G V McAra, Mr H C Potter, Mrs J A E Tassell, Mr N R D Thomas and Mr M Woolley

Members not present:

In attendance by invitation:

Officers present: Mrs L Grange (Housing Delivery Manager), Mr S Hansford (Head of Community Services), Miss L Higenbottam (Member Services Assistant), Mrs J Hotchkiss (Head of Commercial Services), Mrs B Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Mr J Merker (Assistant Web Officer), Mr S Oates (Economic Development Manager), Mr P E Over (Executive Director), Mr R Robinson (Facilities Manager) and Mrs E Thomas (Wellbeing Manager)

237 **Chairman's Announcements**

No apologies for absence had been received. Mrs Apel welcomed Council Members, the press and members of the public. Mrs Apel informed the committee of the resignation of Councillor Tinson from Chichester District Council, saying Mrs Tinson would be missed and had been a hard working and focussed Member and that her absence would be a loss to the committee.

Mrs Apel drew attention to posters on the committee room wall which gave details of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its achievements over the past four years.

238 **Minutes**

Mrs Dignum asked for clarification as to whether all additional committee reports would be sent by email to Members who had been used to receiving paper copies. Mr Hansford explained this had been necessary as there had been a large number of reports outstanding for this final meeting of the committee. Members had been encouraged to send questions to the relevant report author in advance of the meeting in order to make best use of the committee's time.

Mrs Dignum asked if all agendas would be published with 'Public Document Pack' at the top. Mrs Jones explained this would be the future format of agendas which were now being produced on the newly introduced modern.gov committee management system.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the OSC meeting held on Tuesday 18 November 2014 are approved as a correct record.

Accordingly, Mrs Apel signed and dated the official version of the minutes.

239 Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

240 Declarations of Interests

Mrs Hamilton declared a personal interest in the report from the Tourism Task and Finish Group (item 7) as a local bed and breakfast owner.

Mr Hayes declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the report on the Chichester In Partnership (CIP) Health Action Plan (item 10) as his work at West Sussex County Council involves working with children with special educational needs.

241 Public Question Time

As a question had been posed in relation to the briefing paper on Community Land Trusts (agenda item 10), the Chairman agreed to move this item forward and take the question at the same time.

242 Community Land Trusts

Mr J Snell asked a question in relation to the briefing paper as follows:

I am aware that Horsham District Council has already planned to provide 200 self build plots in land north of Horsham. That Fareham Borough Council is making provision for no less than 1% of all homes in the new village of Welbourne shall delivered as custom-built plots. Welbourne is located north of the A27 Junction 10 and will provide in the region of 6,000 homes. The demand for plots has been based on evidence provided by Estate Agents who maintain lists of clients seeking plots to build their own homes.

My question is that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee requests the Cabinet to authorise and research in Chichester District to ascertain the demand for self build plots. I suggest this could be done by an article in the Initiatives Magazine, Chichester Observer and by contacting local estate agents.

It is my belief that many residents in the District, working in the Construction Industry would welcome the opportunity to buy a self-build lot at the market price being paid by House builders in West Sussex.

Mrs Grange provided the following response:

We understand that a private members bill passed its last hurdle through parliament last week and awaits royal assent. We understand it will place a duty on local authorities to keep a register of individuals and community groups who have expressed an interest in acquiring land to forward self-build and custom-build projects. It is understood it also intends that Local Authorities should take account of and make provision for the interests of those on such registers in developing their housing initiatives, local plans and carrying out other functions including land disposal and regeneration.

What is not known is the exact wording or the extent and detail of the supporting regulations or guidance, it would therefore be premature to commence setting up a register without knowing the exact detail of the requirement and risk raising expectations which may not be met by the resulting regulations.

The Chair - Mrs Apel added the following:

We can assure the questioner that as soon as the statutory requirements are known we will ensure that the matter is progressed to policy and implemented.

Mr Chaplin commented that community land trusts (CLT's) had been useful in other parts of the country but would not be a complete solution for housing provision.

Mrs Apel asked whether CLT's would be an add-on to housing provision. Mrs Grange replied CLT's are likely to provide a relatively small number of affordable homes in the district. Approximately three parishes had shown interest in developing CLT's with Kirdford having already set up their own CLT. Mrs Grange explained CLT's provide a complimentary role in the provision of affordable housing.

Mrs Apel asked if CLT's could be included in Neighbourhood Plans. Mrs Grange replied that this was an option communities could explore.

Mrs Dignum asked if all parishes had been made aware of CLT's as a concept. Mrs Grange explained that not all parishes were familiar with the concept but Action in Rural Sussex had provided information and officers would be meeting with Action in Rural Sussex shortly to discuss how further information could be disseminated to the parishes.

Mr Chaplin asked if CDC had turned down rural housing finance from central government. Mrs Grange replied that changes to government policy means that affordable housing contributions can no longer be sought on sites of 10 units or less. However authorities may choose to implement a lower threshold of 5 in rural areas designated under section 157 of the Housing Act 1985, which includes national parks and areas of outstanding national beauty. Although most of Chichester district is designated as rural under the Housing Act 1996 (this act relates to the Right to

Acquire of housing association tenants), the rural parishes in the district are not designated as rural under the Housing Act 1985 which relates to the Right to Buy of council tenants. It therefore seems that we are unable to apply the lower threshold which would allow us to require affordable housing contributions in the form of a commuted sum on market sites of 6-10 units. Officers believe this to be an oversight of DCLG and Mr Carvell has written to DCLG requesting that the national planning practice guidance is amended to include reference to the Housing Act 1996 so that the lower threshold can be applied in both stock owning and non-stock owning rural authorities. The South Downs National Park is in the process of adopting the lower threshold.

Mrs Tassell asked if Compton and Marden had not created Neighbourhood Plans due to their location in the South Downs National Park. Mrs Grange explained this was not the case, they have not as yet shown an interest in developing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Mr McAra asked if land would be sold specifically for self-build projects rather than on the open market. Mrs Graves asked where land would be expected to come from as the scheme had not been made clear when many Neighbourhood Plans were produced. Mrs Grange explained there would be three potential sources of land; planning policies requiring a certain percentage as self-build, exception sites for affordable housing and land in public ownership.

RESOLVED

That the role of CLTs and custom/self-build in the delivery of housing be noted.

243 Community Safety Partnership Task and Finish Group Final Report

Mr Hayes, Chairman of the group, introduced the item saying that he had been impressed by how much had been covered in a short space of time.

Mr Hansford explained that the review was a statutory duty. Partners in attendance had included the police, the Communities Intervention Manager, West Sussex County Council, Councillor Lintill (as a member of the Police Crime Panel) and other council officers. Mr Hansford highlighted discussions surrounding community projects which engaged the whole community such as Swanfield. He highlighted work in respect of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation particular Police initiative which had reduced missing person incidents by a third. The Police Crime Commissioner would provide the same level of funding for the coming year as last year.

Mrs Dignum asked what level the raised awareness of human trafficking, child exploitation and radicalisation needed to be for this area. Mr Hansford explained the increased awareness reflected the national scene including expectations from Ofsted. West Sussex is a popular area for privately run children's homes and many children are placed from outside the district and may be at risk from running away back to their home town.

Mr Hansford emphasised the importance of utilising front line staff that come to the council for licenses such as taxi drivers and pubs, as well as awareness of college/university students who could be targeted by radicalisation. Parishes and districts need to be aware of groups booking parish and district buildings. There is a referral process to the police.

Mrs Dignum asked if any mention would be made in applications for licenses. Mr Hansford explained nothing would be put in the applications but training and alerts are offered as appropriate.

Mr Hayes added that the Community Safety Task and Finish Group were reassured by officers' knowledge.

Mrs Graves suggested promoting the good work of the community's intervention team at community forums.

RECOMMENDED TO THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

1. That the committee supports the proposed priorities of the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2015/16.
2. That the Partnership consider encouraging the amalgamation of Rural Watch, Farm Watch, Horse Watch and Boat Watch to provide a more comprehensive Community Watch service.
3. That the Partnership focuses on utilising technology to effectively and efficiently spread community safety information.

244 Tourism Task and Finish Group Final Report

Mr McAra introduced the item emphasising the importance of the visitor economy. Mr Oates outlined the main findings of the report. Much duplication had been found across organisations and other authorities which in turn duplicated resources, time and money. Mr Oates explained everyone is a tourist at some point whether it is for a day trip or an overnight stay. The government are focussing an initiative on growing tourism, including non-traditional tourist destinations with the aim of boosting the economy and jobs.

Mrs Apel asked for more information in relation to section 6.2 of the report which states that 'visitor satisfaction with West Sussex is among the lowest in the country.' Mr Oates explained this was based on Visit England research. Councillor Cullen emphasised that the figure was for the whole of West Sussex and therefore wider than just Chichester.

Mr Woolley asked what action the council was taking to increase the number of hotel beds in the district. Mr Oates explained that once a destination has a focus on the visitor economy hotel brands may begin to become more interested. Mr Oates explained that Chichester needed to create a welcoming environment for attracting visitors all year round and this should generate more hotel interest.

Mrs Tassell suggested an exhibition hall or concert hall that the university could focus on to attract all year round interest.

Mrs Tassell asked what was being done about the reporting litter button on the website. In some cases nothing appeared to happen after litter was reported. Mr Hansford agreed to report back this issue to Mr Darton for a response.

Mrs Dignum asked for clarification on paragraph 7.1 on what 'infrastructure, amenities and assets might only exist with the help of tourism'. She also asked what would be done about the duplication of people, time and financial resources. Mr Oates replied that amenities such as the Cathedral, Theatre and Gallery as well as coastal amenities in Selsey and Bracklesham in some cases only exist with the help of tourist spend, and in other cases their maintenance and development are considerably boosted by tourism spend, therefore also benefitting the local population. On the second point, Mr Oates said that the aim was to avoid duplication of resources through creating a cohesive tourism offering, under strong leadership, and focusing on what the customer wants, not just what we want to offer.

Mr Hayes explained shops compensate with additional ramps to make improve the city's disabled. He also commented on the unattractive bus station. Mrs Hotchkiss explained these areas will be covered in work surrounding the vision and future of the city.

Mrs Apel asked for clarification of how destination management would be financed. Mr Oates replied that visitor destination management nationally has been public sector driven but increasingly destinations have encouraged the private sector to take the lead with public sector support. Funding streams are available from Visit England and central government, and there are potential private sector funding streams now being rolled-out in other areas Mrs Hotchkiss added that creating a destination would involve talking to neighbouring authorities.

Mrs Hamilton commented that in her experience Visit Chichester had started creating resources to be built on. Mr Oates replied that Visit Chichester is a voluntary organisation and, with very limited time and financial resources, has worked hard to try and keep the District on the map, but the area needs a much stronger full-time resource, particularly if the aim is to create a year-round visitor economy.

Mrs Graves suggested greater promotion for events such as the Turner Exhibition in Petworth, the Weald and Downland Museum and West Dean Gardens themed weekends.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

That Option 4 as set out in section 9.4 of the report be agreed and, in particular, that:

the Council sets out a brief but clear three to five year plan which sets the aspiration, establishes the baseline information and leads the initiative required to bring partners together to develop the visitor economy under one robust and coherent strategy.

245 **Committee Audio/Visual Recording Task and Finish Group Final Report**

Mr Lloyd-Williams introduced the report as Chairman of the Audio/Visual Recording Task and Finish Group. Mr Lloyd-Williams invited Mr Hicks to explain the process. Mr Hicks explained Mrs Dodsworth had provided members with a comprehensive review of three microphone systems. Areas such as price, battery life, number of microphones, configuration, voting capacity and audio recording were analysed. Mr Lloyd-Williams added that audio recording would require a need for greater discipline of introducing each speaker and ensuring their microphone is turned on. Mrs Apel added that portability of microphones to other venues was very important.

Mrs Dodsworth explained three demonstrations had taken place with various members present. A system had been selected with 60 microphones, two control units and two Chair units. The option has the ability to be charged whilst in its case and an automated vote through the integration of member's current ID badges. With additional software audio recordings can be attached to minutes. The aim is to bring the purchase under the £70,000 asset replacement budget whilst still providing the option to explore webcasting at a later date.

Mr Thomas asked the timeframe of the project and training provision. Mrs Dodsworth explained the plan to purchase and install prior to the election with the aim of training new members following election.

Mr Clementson asked why 60 microphones would be purchased. Mrs Dodsworth explained that the microphones are stored in 12's so this was the most appropriate number.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

1. That a new microphone system be purchased with the capability of making audio recordings of council meetings.
2. That a one year pilot be approved to audio record and publish Council, Cabinet, Planning and Overview and Scrutiny meetings online.

246 **Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2014/15 Annual Report**

Mr Hayes reinforced the important work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee over the last four years and thanked Mrs Apel for her contribution as Chair.

Mrs Apel thanked the committee and officers for their hard work.

RESOLVED

1. That the 2014/15 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report be agreed.
2. That the Chairman be granted delegated powers to sign off the final version of the report prior to presentation to Council.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

That the 2014/15 Annual Report be noted.

247 Reports circulated to Members prior to the meeting

CIP Health Action Plan – review of progress

Mrs Apel asked if a possible increase in mental health budgets from central government would increase the local government budget. Mrs Thomas explained she was unsure at this stage but the focus was working on prevention and building resilience in children.

Mrs Dignum drew attention to a dementia training day she had attended at Chichester Festival Theatre that had brought together Pallant Gallery, Weald and Downland museum amongst others to look at what can be done to increase access for those with dementia and their carers. Mrs Dignum showed the committee a Dementia Festival leaflet. The Members Bulletin will feature further information on the Dementia Festival.

RESOLVED

That progress against the CIP Health Action Plan be noted.

Think Family Neighbourhoods – Selsey Project Evaluation

Mrs Apel invited Mrs Purnell to comment. Mrs Purnell explained the project had produced SelseyWorks which has helped many residents. The project lost a grant from the Department for Work and Pensions because it was too successful to qualify. Other revenue streams were being explored. Mr McAra asked if the committee could visit the project to see the work. Mrs Purnell suggested after new premises had been sourced.

Mrs Dignum praised the work of Mr Hansford and his team noting the great success in a short period of time. Mrs Graves emphasised how money had been saved by reducing unemployment.

RESOLVED

1. That the findings in the Think Family Neighbourhoods Selsey Project Evaluation report be noted.
2. That the lessons learnt at paragraph 5 be noted and that the continued support for the Think Family Neighbourhood work in the areas identified at paragraph 5.10 be endorsed.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

1. That the Council supports the SelseyWorks project in its transition to a sustainable service model and commits to continue the Council's services outreach support.
2. That the Council notes the lessons learnt and endorses continued support for the Think Family Neighbourhood work in the areas identified.

Chichester City Centre Partnership

Mr Oates stated that, as the Council's Economic Development Manager, he was not part of the Business Improvement District (BID) but was working more closely with them and would endeavour to answer any questions, or if necessary, take any further questions back to the BID.

Mr Lloyd-Williams suggested the BID focus on small things people notice such as broken pavements and pedestrianized areas in North Street and the number of charity shops now in the city. Mr Oates explained that pavements and street roads were a West Sussex County Council Highways responsibility. The BID can only influence as it does not own any of these areas. Mr Chaplin asked if CDC could write to the BID regarding the pavements. Mrs Apel suggested getting residents to write to the BID or Highways.

Mr McAra asked for clarification on what the five years worth of money had been spent on. Mr Oates explained that a lot of funding goes into events and Christmas lights. As part of the BID board Mr Cullen explained the difficulties of getting all parties together to take action. He informed the committee that individual maps would soon be available from static map points.

Councillors discussed the complexity the BID experienced in having to deal with several levels of local government and whether some of the actions could be carried out by Chichester City Council as the parish council.

Mrs Apel drew the committee's attention to the BID objectives on page 52 and the BID achievements on page 58.

RESOLVED

1. That the Chichester BID's progress to date against its Business Plan be noted.
2. That the Chairman of the BID be requested to provide a further report to the committee in six months' time.

248 Late Items

There were no late items considered at this meeting.

249 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The press and public were not excluded for any part of the meeting.

The meeting ended at 12.31 pm

CHAIRMAN

Date:

