



Minutes of the meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held in Old Court Room, The Council House (Chichester City Council), North Street, Chichester on Tuesday 14 June 2016 at 9.30 am

**Members Present:** Mrs C Apel (Chairman), Mrs N Graves (Vice-Chairman), Mr P Budge, Mr M Cullen, Mrs P Dignum, Mr N Galloway, Mr G Hicks, Mr S Lloyd-Williams, Caroline Neville, Mr H Potter, Mr J Ransley, Mr A Shaxson, Mrs J Tassell and Mr N Thomas

**Members not present:** Mrs P Plant

**In attendance by invitation:** Mrs S Taylor

**Officers present:** Mr R Dunmall (Housing Operations Manager), Mr A Frost (Head of Planning Services), Mrs L Grange (Housing Delivery Manager), Mr S Hansford (Head of Community Services), Miss L Higenbottam (Member Services Assistant), Mrs B Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer) and Miss A Loaring (Partnerships Officer)

## 80 **Chairman's announcements**

Mrs Apel welcomed members and officers. Mr Dignum, Mrs Hamilton, Mrs Knightley, Mrs Lintill and Mrs Purnell were all present.

Apologies had been received from Mrs P Plant.

## 81 **Minutes**

In reference to minute 75, paragraph five, bullet point two Mrs Dignum requested that the answer was amended to read 'Cabinet agreed to purchase seven electric vans which are on order. It made a bid for extra charging points in car parks as part of the government scheme where 75% of costs are paid for by CDC'.

In reference to minute 75, paragraph five, bullet point nine Mrs Dignum requested that the answer read 'All stallholders will be required to use the same reasonably sized gazebo stalls. The market will run one day a week. There will be no selling from vehicles and traders.'

In reference to minute 75, paragraph five, bullet point 12 Mrs Dignum requested that the word 'there' be added to the end of answer.

In reference to minute 77 paragraph two, bullet point one Mr Shaxson requested that the letter to the Police be sent. Mr Hansford advised that he was due to meet

representatives from Sussex Police shortly but agreed to send the request for information to Sussex Police. Mr Ransley asked that future wording show a clear recommendation requiring action.

Members discussed the use of the audio recording which provides an opportunity to clarify wording for the minutes.

## **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the OSC held on Tuesday 10 May are approved as a correct record subject to the additions above.

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

## 82 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

## 83 **Declarations of Interests**

Mrs Apel declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 7 as a trustee of Stonepillow.

## 84 **Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

## 85 **Planning and Housing Portfolio**

Mrs Taylor had been invited to present her priorities and areas of focus over the next year and to answer questions from the committee on progress towards achieving the aims and targets of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities.

The recommendations from the previous meeting of the committee were answered as follows:

1. Request the Planning and Housing Services portfolio holder to develop the Council's own local planning performance standards (as the national standards are not considered to be a useful measure on their own any longer). *Planning used to have localised targets but these were removed following national changes. Government are also tightening the planning designation criteria as discussed at Planning Committee and the Development Plan and Infrastructure Panel (DPIP).*
2. Request the Planning and Housing Services portfolio holder to add an additional bullet point to the key priorities in the Housing Strategy to read 'Provide development which has a positive impact on the area in which it is built and in the wider district'.

Mrs Taylor explained that drafting the Housing Strategy had been challenging due to changing government legislation. The strategy does however aim to be proactive to

meet future challenges such as the Local Plan review in July 2019 and the A27 consultation.

Mrs Taylor acknowledged that the Government has put emphasis on home ownership which is difficult for first time buyers in the district as house prices are high and wages low. Mrs Taylor has discussed the provision of affordable housing with the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) as 40% of the park is within the district and CDC are the housing authority.

Members asked the following questions:

- Are the 2500 planning applications handled by Development Management every year majors and minors? *The figure of 2500 is inclusive of both majors and minors.*
- How many planning officers make up the Development Management team? *Roughly 17-18 full time planning officers.*
- Is there evidence that the pre-application process speeds up the formal application process? *A Planning Task and Finish Group are currently considering this issue. Pre-application work is likely to lead to better quality applications. The findings of the group will be shared with OSC.*
- Can local performance indicators be considered? *Until the government finalises its proposals to extend designation criteria, it would be premature to introduce further local indicators. Designation is the term describing government powers to enable applicants to bypass the local planning authority in relation to the planning application process and applies where the timescales for determination of planning applications falls below set thresholds. Planning Services operate local targets for planning appeals, pre-application enquiries and Planning Enforcement. Development Management exceeded government targets for planning application performance last year.*
- What is the timespan of the continued progress in meeting affordable housing targets? *The targets (achievements) were measured until 31 March 2016 and the new priorities relate to 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.*
- How many market/affordable homes are there in the district? *There are just over 50,000 properties.*
- How will the district deliver more housing to prevent young people moving away? *Alternatives are being promoted such as self-build, Community Land Trusts and co-ownership. Mrs Taylor and officers are attending many community forums and events in order to inform the public about the options available. Rural Housing week begins on 11 July and there will be posters, radio and newspaper coverage as part of the publicity. Members will also receive a presentation.*
- Is the council tracking how many young people move out of the district and how many council employees live in the district? *Information will need to be gathered to answer this question.*
- Will there be a full study of housing which will be updated on a regular basis? *A study takes place approximately every five years which feeds into the Local Plan and Housing Strategy.*
- What are cross boundary housing issues? *Consultation with neighbouring authorities. Areas such as strategy, structure, roads and facilities are all*

*considered on a wider scale. It is a way of objectively assessing the needs in other districts. The prime purpose is to assist across Local Plan processes to demonstrate the required duty to cooperate. A joint statement of objectives is produced.*

- *What is the latest information on increasing permitted development rights? Consultation took place via Planning Committee and DPIP in March and April. There has been no response from the government yet.*
- *What is the main emphasis of the Chichester conservation area boundary review consultation? The decision to alter and/or extend the conservation area boundary was deferred by Cabinet due to the significant level of interest. Additional time has allowed officers the opportunity to address all the issues raised. The matter will be reported to Cabinet in September.*
- *14% of all homes in the district are second homes. What can the council do to restrict this practice? Second home owners pay full council tax rates. Many of the possible methods of restriction being explored by other authorities would be very difficult to enforce.*
- *Research shows that planning applications have not been followed through to development stage. Is this a problem in this district? Information will need to be gathered to answer this question.*
- *Is there a clause in the warm homes initiative to ensure that landowners do not increase rents as a result of property improvements? There is a clause which prevents an increase in rent for 10 years. If landlords breach they are required to pay back the funds received. In the first instance landlords must contribute the first £1000 towards works.*
- *Will landowners be approached to lease land for housing? Landowners are currently being approached with the intention to increase homes for the community in perpetuity through community land trusts which are exempt from the Right to Buy.*
- *Where does the £264,000 housing funding go? Cabinet allocated £1.3 million of funds to a number of affordable housing schemes in May. The Council are currently meeting its overall affordable housing target. 189 homes have been enabled by the council in the year to 31 April 2016, 49 more than the overall target of 140.*
- *Have starter homes and affordable homes diluted the need for social housing? The adopted Local Plan requires 30% affordable housing on larger development sites. Starter homes fall within this definition and subject to forthcoming regulations, it is expected that 20% of homes on sites of a certain size may be required to be starter homes meaning that only 10% would be delivered as either affordable rent or shared ownership.*
- *Is the demand for housing in the district falling? There is no evidence to suggest this is the case. There has been an increase in larger planning applications.*
- *What is the relationship with SDNPA? There is a proactive relationship. Officers and members of SDNPA and CDC have held a number of joint meetings over the last 2 months and SDNPA is setting up a Land Owners Conference which Cllr Taylor will attend.*
- *What arrangements are in place with Havant, East Hampshire and Waverley councils? There is a dialogue with these local authorities as part of the duty to cooperate.*

- What are the alternative options for Building Control? *A report is due to OSC on 5 July. For some time, neighbouring authorities have been considering alternative models for delivery of the service in ways that might also enhance future service resilience.*
- Is there enough resource in the Housing Delivery Team? *Officers have been looking at alternative housing options for the last 12 months and are very proactive in promoting these options to the community.*
- Are there any restrictions for planning applications requesting development of bungalows to dormer houses? *Bungalows can provide a useful downsizing option but there is little supply. Planning applications that propose alterations and extensions to increase the size of bungalows are considered on their individual merits having regard to matters such as the effect on the character of the area and the amenities of neighbouring properties.*
- What is being done to identify vulnerable under 35 year olds welfare arrangements? *In future they will only be entitled to benefits for a shared house. Registered providers only provide single person accommodation (not shared accommodation) and there is potential that these adults would be left without accommodation. The issue has been identified and officers are looking at ways to address the problem.*
- How can members influence planning and housing on a larger scale? *Mrs Taylor has written to Members of Parliament.*

Mrs Apel thanked Mrs Taylor and officers for answering questions and requested that members send any further questions directly to Mrs Taylor.

## **RESOLVED**

That the committee notes the Housing and Planning portfolio holder's progress towards achieving the aims and targets of the Corporate Plan priorities and notes the areas of focus over the next year.

## **86 Chichester in Partnership Plan 2016/17**

Miss Loaring explained that since 2012 there had been no duty to retain a Sustainable Community Strategy or have a Local Strategic Partnership but the Council along with their partners have agreed to continue with Chichester in Partnership (CIP) as it has been delivering useful projects. CIP is active and has continually increased its links with additional partners. Every year CIP produces an annual report and forward plan which outlines the chosen priorities for the year ahead. The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) also reports to CIP. The Sustainable Community Strategy has been reviewed and refreshed as more concise and focussed document for 2016 – 2021 will be taken to Cabinet in July (now called the Community strategy). Some of CIP's achievements in the past year are:

- The Choose Work project has been successfully running for three years focussing on helping those without employment. It is now jointly funded until March 2017
- Working with new organisations such as Hyde Martlet, Christians Against Poverty and the Citizens Advice Bureau on tackling financial exclusion

- Selsey Works now has a full time worker funded and hosted by Selsey Town Council A successful Living with Dementia Arts Festival
- A successful showcase event in the Novium for partner organisations which received positive feedback from participants and was attended by over 80 different organisations

Members asked the following questions:

- Will meetings of the partnership be held in the northern part of the district? *Historically they have but attendance from partners was reduced when held elsewhere. A venue such as the Grange or SDNP could be considered the idea will be put forward to the partnership.*
- What is a Community Assessment Tool? *Information from data and statistics held about communities and projects and developed into a succinct “weather report” on the area. It is a way of finding out the impact work has had on the communities involved.*
- Which areas of public transport will be discussed as part of the Sustainable Community Strategy? *This was discussed at the last core group and the decision was made to focus on access to services which we will be scoping in the near future.*
- How much personnel time is available for community hubs? *Services are already supplied in some local areas. A service in Chichester South is in the development stage.*
- What happens during a structured drop in session such as the one at St Pancras, Chichester? *This particular session is run by the Richmond Fellowship and is referred to as a ‘tea and chat’ community support event. Chichester Mind also run events in Midhurst which provide an opportunity for people to discuss a number of problems. Members are welcome to attend these open sessions.*
- How can communities initiate their own gardening projects? *Lots of gardening projects are set up in communities. Advice and guidance is available for those wanting to start a new project. A new project would require clear support from the community to be sustainable.*
- How has CIP survived where other authorities have failed? Are responsibilities being taken on which should lie elsewhere? *Some authorities have combined their strategic partnerships. CIP also includes the Health and Wellbeing Partnership. Not all authorities have a dedicated Partnerships Officer. It enjoys good support from partners to share concerns and deliver focussed projects and activities.*
- Is CIP’s work funded by the European Union (EU)? *No, the partnership has none of its own funding. Some project funding is currently being applied for through the Local Enterprise Partnership which does receive EU funding.*
- What are “Our Place” neighbourhoods? *Community projects which have been recognised by Department of Communities and Local Government for funding to support local delivery plans.*
- On page 12, section 6.3 is the district or neighbourhoods being referred to? *The reference is to areas of work covered.*

- How does West Sussex County Council fit into CIP? *CIP is one of the only places where public, voluntary and private sector organisations come together. WSCC county council attend as officer and Councillors.*
- Is CIP taking on a greater responsibility of dementia than the district council is required to? *CIP choose the areas to focus on and identifies gaps where services are not already being provided. They review their work every year.*
- What is the holistic approach taken by CIP? *The approach is to consider the 'distance travelled' by the service user and how the service has helped them move on with their lives.*
- Will CIP work be taken into schools? *A programme 'Five ways to wellbeing' will be taken into schools. There are also plans to work with youth groups on topics such as work and health and wellbeing.*
- How is CIP involved with SDNP? *SDNP were involved in the development of the community strategy and are members of the core group .*
- Are there a more recent statistics than the 2011 Census? *This is the most recent Census information available.*
- With 1300 homes without central heating what is able to be done to help? *Health and Wellbeing projects are addressing these issues. An update can be provided to members.*
- Is Pallant House Gallery a CIP partner? *Yes through the Chichester Learning Arts Partnership.*
- Are there changes to the Petworth bus services? *Mrs Lintill was able to advise that the 99A bus will be discontinued on a Sunday only due to lack of use.*
- Can New Homes Bonus funding be used to help fund CIP? Could Cabinet consider a fund for times of hardship? *This would need to be suggested to Cabinet in the recommendations below.*

Mrs Apel thanked Miss Loaring for answering member's questions.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the committee notes the progress achieved by Chichester In Partnership in 2015/16.

#### **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET**

1. That the revised Community Strategy 2016-2021 be endorsed and recommended to Council for adoption.
2. That consideration be given to establishing an emergency fund for Chichester In Partnership for the period 2016-2021 to ensure its ability to function in times of hardship.

#### **87 OSC Annual Report 2015/16**

Mrs Apel announced some amendments to the Annual Report as follows:

- There were 17 recommendations
- 15 recommendations had been agreed by the committee
- One recommendation was not agreed by the Community Safety Partnership

- One recommendation is yet to be considered by Council

Members agreed the report inclusive of the amendments above.

#### **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

That the 2015/16 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report be noted.

#### **88 Forward Plan**

Mrs Apel invited the committee to comment on the Forward Plan and members made the following comments:

- When discussing the cultural grant for the Pallant House Gallery will the major repairs taking place be considered? *The two aspects of Pallant House Gallery are very separate and will be treated as such.*
- Does the Pallant House Gallery lease recognise the needs of the building? *The lease recognises the special need of the older part of the building.*
- The A27 now has a 10 week consultation period. *This will be fed back so the Forward Plan can be amended accordingly.*
- When will the Shared Services business case be discussed? *The business case will come to the special OSC on 5 July.*
- The committee needs to be aware of the A27 delivery, delivery of affordable housing, the Local Plan and how these interlink. *Linkage can be considered at the point of discussion for each relevant item.*
- Can the A27 effects on public transport, tourism, emission fumes and jobs be considered? *Again the linkage can be considered at the point of discussion for each relevant item.*

Mrs Apel informed the committee that if any new items are added to the OSC work programme that existing items may need to be removed.

#### **89 Late Items**

Members discussed the nomination process that had taken place for an OSC representative to sit on the Novium Task and Finish Group, which will commence its work following the options appraisal. Some members were unhappy that the nomination had been discussed and agreed with the Leader of the Council prior to this meeting. It was explained that the appointment of the OSC member was subject to ratification by the committee at this meeting. Not all members took part in the vote to approve Mr Galloway's appointment.

#### **RESOLVED**

That Mr N Galloway be appointed as the committee's representative on the Novium Task and Finish Group.

#### **90 Exclusion of the Press and Public**



There were no restricted items for consideration.

The meeting ended at 12.10 pm

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CHAIRMAN

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Date: