



Minutes of the meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 2, East Pallant House on Tuesday 17 January 2017 at 9.30 am

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

Members not present: Mr S Lloyd-Williams

In attendance by invitation:

Officers present: Mr S Hansford (Head of Community Services), Mrs J Hotchkiss (Head of Commercial Services), Mrs B Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer), Mrs T Murphy (Parking Services Manager), Mr S Oates (Economic Development Manager), Mrs S Peyman (Sport and Leisure Development Manager) and Mr J Ward (Head of Finance and Governance Services)

124 **Chairman's announcements**

The Chairman wished all members of the committee a belated New Year. She welcomed new councillor, Mr J Brown, to the committee meeting and the member of the public attending.

Apologies had been received from Mr Lloyd-Williams.

125 **Minutes**

The committee considered and agreed the minutes of the last meeting held on 15 November 2016.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2016 be approved as a correct record.

The following comments were made under Matters Arising.

- Minute 118: Following the last meeting Mr Shaxson had posed some questions regarding the breakdown of sickness levels by department. Mrs Dignum advised that this question had been asked at the task and finish group and the response had been that Chichester Contract Services had the highest level of sickness

due to physical problems and the nature of the work. The Human Resources Manager had been requested to respond.

- Minute 119: Mr Potter requested information on behalf of a swimming group at Westgate Leisure Centre. Mrs Peyman undertook to come back with a written response.

126 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items for consideration at this meeting.

127 **Declarations of Interests**

Mrs Dignum declared a personal interest in agenda item 14 as she was a friend of The Novium Museum. Mr Connor declared a personal interest in agenda item 11 as one of the items on the Forward Plan was the Selsey Haven project.

128 **Public Question Time**

No public questions had been received.

129 **Budget 2017-18 Review - feedback**

Mr Ransley presented an oral report on the deliberations of the task and finish group, stating that members had concluded they were satisfied with the explanations on the projected variances on the 2017-18 budget.

Mr J Ward, Head of Finance & Governance Services, advised that the draft settlement had been received from the Government on the day of the review and confirmed that the figures in the draft financial model had been similar to those predicted. The projected funding in the draft settlement had been confirmed for 2016-17 plus three years. A variance of £300,000 deficit in the car parks budget had been identified which had been due to a budgeting error when the 2016-17 budget had been set based on the 2015-16 budget monitoring position at the end of the second quarter, which had forecast an increase in car park usage. This budget correction would be fed into the 2017-18 budget.

Mr Ransley thanked officers for being candid about budgeting mistakes and for the detailed presentations made to the group and for managing the council's accounts in an exemplary manner. The Chairman gave her thanks to the Task and Finish Group for its review.

130 **Education Review 2017**

The committee considered the report in the agenda (copy attached to the official minutes).

RESOLVED

- 1) That Mr N Galloway, Mrs P Dignum, Mrs J Tassell and Mrs N Graves be appointed as representatives on this group, with Mrs Dignum chairing the

review.

- 2) That the Terms of Reference be agreed.

131 **Community Safety Review 2017**

The committee considered the report in the agenda (copy attached to the official minutes).

RESOLVED

- 1) That Mr H Potter, Mr J Connor and Mr M Cullen be appointed as the representatives on this group with Mr Connor chairing the review.
- 2) That the Terms of Reference be agreed.

Following the meeting Mr J Brown agreed to take part on this review.

132 **Commercial Services Portfolio Holder address**

The Chairman welcomed Mrs G Keegan, Cabinet Member for Commercial Services, to the meeting along with Mrs J Hotchkiss, Head of Commercial Services, attending to support the portfolio holder.

Mrs Keegan gave an oral report on her priorities and areas of focus over the remainder of the year and on progress being achieving against the projects which appear in the council's Corporate Plan. She focused on the leisure centres, the City Vision, economic and business development and car parks.

Members made comments, including the following:

- In June 2016 the committee had nominated a member to serve on The Novium task and finish group. The group would be set up imminently.
- Queried the increase of 100% in visitor numbers at The Novium. Good exhibitions at the museum had increased visitor numbers however the Tim Peake exhibition had been a step change. The museum had achieved a status of accreditation which increased its reputation and recognition allowing better travelling and special exhibitions to be hosted.
- The Novium is viewed as a cultural service as it is subsidised by the council, however the driver is commercial i.e. how many visitors and how much they spend. A full review by the task and finish group will assess the further options for the museum.
- Queried current progress with marketing the Grange commercial site. The potential developer had pulled out and the council had gone back to the market, receiving one mixed use offer (residential and retail space). A deadline was set for a serious offer to be received however this deadline has passed. We will continue to market the site and will ensure that we get the right offer.
- Queried service and facility issues at the Grange. The task and finish group is monitoring these aspects. Members were advised to ensure that residents and parish councils raise complaints through the centre as the low number of

complaints received does not match what has been reported to members. It was suggested that the task and finish group meet with parish councils at the Grange to hear their views. The conveniences at the centre were built as unisex so that they could be multi-functional, however Mrs Hotchkiss undertook to discuss the operational requirements when there is a large event on at the centre and the allocation of toilet facilities

- Queried realigning of car parks to facilitate wider vehicles. The industry standard for car parking spaces is used.
- Queried the further provision of pay on exit facilities at the districts' other car parks. This project was reviewed by the parking forum. Mixed feedback had been received. Only a couple of car parks were physically able to have barriers installed. Since then new technologies had become available such as pay by phone which may override the need for pay on exit facilities.
- Enterprise Centre – Basepoint is taking operational liability of the facility and Neilcott are responsible for design and building. The two contracts would be signed co-terminous so that there is no risk to the council. We own the building and land and we have input into managing their performance. We will then look at the feasibility of investing in other enterprise satellites in Midhurst, Petworth and possibly Selsey.
- Queried the usage of the Grange car park in Midhurst. We take account of usage figures by reducing season tickets at less used car parks to try to manage usage equally in the districts' car parks.

RESOLVED

That the report from the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services be noted.

133 Developing a New Strategy for the Visitor Economy

The Chairman welcomed Mr S Oates, Economic Development Manager, to the meeting. The committee considered the report circulated with the agenda (copy attached to the official minutes).

The committee made comments, including the following:

- Statistics demonstrate that in spite of attractions in the district day visitors numbers are low .cannot be encouraged to become staying visitors. Queried whether the figures were skewed by Goodwood events. Research was carried out May to August through the core summer season and we have quarterly figures from Visit England going back a number of years. A joined up approach would help to attract more inward investment for bed spaces.
- A shortage in overnight tourist accommodation is identified in the studies. We need to get the visitor economy working, to extend the season, continue web and social media activity, linking to other demographics and activities. The first task is to open negotiations with Visit Chichester.
- Developers will consider accommodation more favourably once the tourism season is extended and there are better offers all year round; then major investment will come in.

- Partnership working with other tourist organisations to attract people to the district.
- The standard research sample size used by Visit England was 400-500 people. A number of questions were asked leading to the summary level information set out in the supporting papers.
- Queried building an exhibition hall in Chichester. That sort of facility could come into the district through existing projects and may be outside of the city.
- Queried the change required for Visit Chichester - There would be negotiations with Visit Chichester to establish whether they would be willing to change the shape of the organisation, taking into account the cost involved and investment required from the public sector to facilitate it with the two funding partners, Chichester BID and the council. Then it would need to go out to the market to encourage others to invest in the new destination management organisation (DMO).
- Tourist based industry represents 7.2% of all business in the district with a revenue of £411m in 2015. Queried the overall value of business revenue in the district. Mr Oates undertook to provide a written response on this.
- Car parking charges were not deterring visitors to the city. Research showed that visitors considered our car parking charges reasonable. Occupancy was also not an issue.
- Queried figures for serviced accommodation. Mr Oates undertook to provide this information if available. Mr Potter suggested ward members could establish how many providers there were in each area.

Mr Ransley stated that this council needed to encourage development of overnight accommodation for visitors in the district and to ensure that land for hotel accommodation was included in the Local Plan going forward. He suggested a further recommendation be added to Cabinet as follows: "That Cabinet sponsors a strategic review as to how this council can facilitate or encourage additional overnight accommodation in the district." This was seconded by Mr Potter.

On the recommendations being put to the vote they were declared carried.

RESOLVED

That the committee notes the outcome of the visitor economy review.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

- 1) That £50,000 annual partnership funding is allocated for five years from April 2017 to assist development of the district's visitor economy.
- 2) That a strategic review is sponsored as to how this council can facilitate or encourage additional overnight accommodation in the district.

134 **Forward Plan**

The committee considered the report in the agenda (copy attached to the official minutes).

Mr Galloway advised that he welcomed the report to be considered by Cabinet regarding litter clearance on the A27.

135 **Late Items**

There were no late items.

136 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The committee

RESOLVED

That the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that it is likely that there would be a disclosure to the public of 'exempt information' of the description specified in Paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and because, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption of that information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

137 **The Novium Museum Options Appraisal**

The committee considered the report (copy attached to the official minutes) and discussed the current operation and option appraisal

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

That the baseline and Trust options considered in the report were worthy of further consideration.

The meeting ended at 1.20 pm

CHAIRMAN

Date: