



Minutes of the meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 2, East Pallant House on Tuesday 5 July 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, Mrs P Plant, Mr H Potter, Mr J Ransley and Mr A Shaxson

**Members not present:** Mrs J Tassell and Mr N Thomas

**In attendance by invitation:**

**Officers present:** Mrs J Dodsworth (Head of Business Improvement Services), Mr A Frost (Head of Planning Services), 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 Mildred (Corporate Policy Advice Manager), Mr S Oates (Economic Development Manager), Mr R Pugh and Mrs D Shepherd (Chief Executive)

91 **Chairman's announcements**

Mrs Apel welcomed members, officers, the press and guests Mr Andrew Fynamore, Mr Colin Hicks and Ms Charlotte Wickens from Chichester Business Improvement District (BID).

Apologies had been received from Mrs Tassell and Mr Thomas.

92 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

93 **Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

94 **Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

## 95 Chichester City Centre Management - Renewal of Chichester BID

Mr Oates explained that the BID had been established four years ago and had achieved success in a number of areas. The BID acknowledges that some aspects of the first term did not go to plan but this was common around the country.

Regulations require the Council to request a renewal ballot for the BID every five years. All BID levy payers are invited to take part.

Mr Oates introduced Mr Finnamore the outgoing Chairman of Chichester BID and Mr Colin Hicks the proposed incoming Chairman.

Mr Hicks outlined some of the areas the BID had seen first term success:

- Public realm
- Access
- Christmas lights
- ChiBac – businesses against crime

Mr Hicks acknowledged the importance of the BID's relationship with Chichester District Council (CDC), Chamber of Commerce and other local authorities.

Eight focus groups have been established since April 2016 to establish the opinion of a variety of business owners. Feedback suggests a need for greater marketing of the city promoting a clearer understanding of what the city has to offer in order to raise Chichester's profile.

The BID propose a 25% levy increase with the increase ring-fenced for promotion of the city centre. To date around £250,000-£270,000 levy monies has been raised. The BID aims to increase this to £340,000-£350,000. BID levy payers will receive a detailed proposal.

Mr Finnamore explained that the city has fared well during economic uncertainty with most shop sites full. The BID would like to focus on other aspects of the city to draw visitors. To help with this Visit Chichester could be moved into the BID offices to work alongside the BID and the Chamber of Commerce. The BID is encouraging of a joined up approach. Mrs Wickens explained that a second term needs a greater strategic focus to create a brand for Chichester.

Members asked the following questions:

- Have the BID established the future availability of PSCO's from Sussex Police? *Conversations have taken place and a contract is being reviewed. Funding is provided to ChiBac for business owners to receive handheld devices with a direct line to report problems. ChiBac has a proactive rather than reactive approach.*
- What is the BID's view on car parking in the city? *The BID sends a representative to CDC's Parking Forum. BID would like greater pay on foot facilities in Northgate and the Cattle Market car parks. The BID would encourage a regular late night shopping evening although acknowledge this*

would require changes to car park payment machines. Chichester is an appropriate size for a walk and ride scheme or a BID electric shuttle bus. Other BID's have electric shuttle buses. Visitors have commented that they would stay longer if car park pre-payment is not a problem.

- Is there a lack of cultural events? *There is a lack of transparency of events to businesses. Many businesses work off an Intranet rather than the Internet and therefore only see flyers or articles in the local paper. Many shop staff are unaware of events until they have happened. The recent window competition for the Festival of Flowers was an example of how the BID facilitates businesses getting together and involved in local events.*
- What will the BID do to address its four main lessons (stated below)?
  - City Licensing would work better under one central roof.
  - The timescale required to achieve CDC Planning and WSCC Highways permissions should be shortened.
  - The best way to engage and share information with BID members is through face to face meetings rather than corporate communications.
  - The loss of small incubator spaces for independents and offices is having a negative impact on young entrepreneurs and business development in Chichester.

*The BID only has just over two full time staff who have to provide an element of signposting to relevant organisation. The loss of small independent shopping hubs such as the Cattle Market, Boardwalk and Little London was due to difficulties through the recession. Many landlords took the option of one rent from a larger company. There are proposals to enhance the environment in parts of the city centre. It is important that the BID helps to make planning and licensing processes as easy as possible for small businesses.*

- Why is Chichester City Council not listed as a BID partner? *It is only possible to have one local authority which is CDC.*
- It is fundamental that the city is promoted and that BID and other partners influence relevant bodies to create a stronger offering. How will a strong Visit Chichester work in the future? *Promotion of the city, with the city at the heart of the visitor economy is a key focus. Central to the BID's work is providing funding to the visitor economy and working with a strong destination management authority. Visitors need to want to visit 52 weeks of the year.*
- Should Visit Chichester be centralised with the BID? *It would make sense to have both organisations under one roof as the city is at the heart of both.*
- What other lessons have been learnt from the first term? *The lack of BID ownership means that any events require contact with multiple authorities and organisations in order to provide relevant approvals. BID also lacks powers to deal with 'A' boards and buskers. There is a logistic problem with some events due to the timescales required for licenses and agreements. BID have found through measuring footfall from mobile phone usage that good events drives footfall into the city. The recent flags for Roman week brought vibrancy to the centre. The BID is also investing time speaking to Goodwood to find joined up ways to promote the city during its events.*
- Is there funding to improve the condition of the pedestrianised/pavement areas of the city as these areas can affect visitors returning to a city? *The BID can only provide additionality and cannot do the work of the local authorities.*

*In many of these cases the expertise lies within specific local authority departments. WSCC are unlikely to be able to commit a large sum to one specific area. The exception being a planned restoration project following the gas works in South Street. BID have requested work takes place in the new year.*

- *How will the BID achieve a greater than 44% response to their survey? A team will be speaking to businesses ahead of a levy ballot. There will be media coverage including the BBC who will film a short regarding the impact of Brexit.*
- *What is the reaction to the increase in levy proposal? Some independent businesses are concerned and the team will be speaking to businesses in greater detail about the proposals.*
- *Does the increase in online shopping include groceries? Figures include all types of shopping.*

Members also made the following comments:

- BID has improved the city centre, environment and safety.
- Drawing up lessons learnt from the first term is a positive step into a possible second term.
- In reference to the last words of page 11 of the agenda pack 'looking marvellous' - the streets need to have a better surface and access rather than looking good.
- Terms such as 'Purple Flag' and 'City Ranger' need explaining earlier in the report.
- Many members support the renewal of the BID.
- Southern Gateway offers opportunities for a business incubator in the city.
- Encourage Goodwood to include the city centre businesses on its database.

#### **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET**

1. To recommend to Cabinet that the Renewal Business Proposal prepared by Chichester Business Improvement District (BID) be agreed and, accordingly, renewal of the BID for a further term of five years be supported.
2. That the level of support provided by this Council to the BID's strategic partnership be considered and that a brief report be requested (to Council or this committee) that identifies how our joint objectives can be better delivered.

#### **96 Preparing a Vision for Chichester City**

Mr Oates explained some key points the Vision project hopes to address:

- The impact of activities in and around the city centre
- The reduction in footfall due to online retail.
- Socialisation activities.
- Underutilised city centre assets.
- Employment and jobs.

The Vision will set out how the city of Chichester should look in 20 years' time.

Mr Oates explained the importance of high level of analysis from the right type of research. So far there have been workshops and focus groups and satisfaction surveys. A public consultation will begin in September.

Mrs Shepherd added that the vision is a partnership project working with WSCC, the BID, Visit Chichester, Goodwood, the University of Chichester and Chichester College.

Members asked the following questions:

- Why is there little reference about the need for overnight accommodation? *There is a lack of accommodation in the city and during large events all accommodation is booked. There is a need for more overnight accommodation which will provide an increase in visitor spend. Tourism South East Research are considering options.*
- What is being done about the insufficient hotel accommodation? *Within the city walls there is a 36 bed hotel. There are also two branded hotels. To attract hotel chains to the city there needs to be serious intent on increasing the value of the visitor economy. The city should attract people from a 50/60 mile radius for short breaks. More events are needed throughout the year.*
- How will access to the city be addressed? *Stagecoach and Southern Railways are involved in project groups. The WSCC Road Space Audit will provide greater information on travel routes in and out of the city. It will also be important to consider how visitors will find their way around once they are in the city and how accessible the city is.*
- Will the final decision be taken by Cabinet or Council? *A draft Vision will be considered at Cabinet before being approved Full Council.*
- Why is there no mention of the A27 impact? *The vision is concerned with attracting people to the city. It is not possible to take into account the A27 at present as it is a changeable entity.*
- Can the need to develop a night time economy be clarified? *The evening or night time economy could be bigger and better than it already is. There is a lack of linkage between large numbers of visitors to the theatre and visitors to the city. There are no jazz clubs, comedy clubs, concert halls or late meal eateries. There is also a lack of provision for students, although this does not have to mean a nightclub. Late night shopping is also a possibility. There are smaller centres than Chichester which are more vibrant.*
- Which towns and cities have Vision's in place relevant to Chichester? *Canterbury, Dorchester, Ipswich, Leeds, Sheffield, St Albans, Winchester, Worcester and York either have areas of similarity or strong Vision processes which Chichester can learn from.*
- How can we get more young people into the city given the lack of evening transport? *Some transport operators take young people out of the city to Brighton and Portsmouth. Operators will provide transport if there is serious intent that it will be used.*
- Are there plans to remove the level crossing at the station which blocks access to the city? *A view will need to be taken on what is technically possible outside of the Vision project.*

- Will opening up to the sea be part of the Vision? *The scope does not extend to opening the canal up to the sea.*

Members were concerned that there was a lack of attention being given to the access to and from the city and wished to see the long term provision improved.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the committee notes the progress to date in preparing a Vision for Chichester City.

#### **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET**

That the committee's concern regarding the lack of attention being given to access to and from the city be noted and that the long term provision be improved.

### 97 **Shared Services**

Mrs Dodsworth explained that a final report on Shared Services will go to Cabinet in February. There are six services being considered:

- Audit
- Customer Services
- HR
- IT
- Legal
- Revenues and Benefits

The three authorities involved are Chichester, Arun and Horsham although Horsham already has shared arrangements in some of the service areas.

The key principles of the projects are:

- One employer.
- One system.
- One manager.
- Innovation in service design.
- A consistent or improved service for the customer.
- Learning from best practice.

If Shared Services are progressed high level business cases will be established which will require some initial investment. A Joint Board will also be created as part of the governance arrangements. At this stage it appears that savings can be made. There are already examples of some CDC services working with Arun such as Estates, Procurement and Printing. Shared services would retain an element of control over services being provided for CDC regardless of whether it remained the employing authority.

Mrs Dodsworth explained that all affected staff and Union representatives have been briefed.

Mrs Shepherd explained that she had been attending Steering Boards with relevant Cabinet members from all authorities and the other Chief Executives.

Mr Mildred explained one of the key reasons for undertaking the project is to establish ways to continue to provide good service in difficult economic times.

Members asked the following questions:

- Would the savings be for Chichester or split with the other authorities? *Savings will be split fairly between the three authorities. The detailed business case will finalise the method of recharges to each authority.*
- Are the three local authorities the right local authorities and should more be included to maximise savings? *Specialist consultants confirmed that three is the advised maximum. The project started with Arun and Chichester. Horsham later showed interest. Adur and Worthing already have shared working and East Hants is part of bigger partnerships.*
- Has outsourcing (in a similar way to printing) been considered? *The printing service agreement with Arun is not a tendered outsourcing contract it is based on a service level agreement and Chichester pays for what it uses. How successful has Census been and has it provided other authorities with savings? Horsham is part of Census and has arrangements with IT and Revenues and Benefits. It is important to have a robust business and good governance in place are two of the key lessons to be taken from the Census partnership.*
- Due diligence is key when will this be apparent to members? *Due diligence will be at the next stage of the project.*
- Consideration needs to be given to where a manager and service will be located. *If the upfront costs out way a possible return then Shared Services will not go ahead. One employer and one set of accommodation for a service should provide rental potential for spare accommodation.*
- The greatest costs are staff costs, are the figures credible? *A model will be built based upon the workloads now and in the future. Time recording takes place across the council for each service to help provide these figures.*

A number of members supported the principle of Shared Services.

#### **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET**

That detailed business cases and implementation plans be developed for all of the six service proposals.

#### **98 Building Control Service Delivery Options**

Mr Frost explained that Building Control is a regulatory service. The purpose of the report is to outline the progress on preparation of a full business case to see if a shared service is appropriate. Currently Horsham and Crawley authorities provide a joint service. The main reason for considering a shared service arrangement is due to the difficulty in attracting and retaining suitably qualified staff and a shared service would give greater resilience for the future. The project is at the early stages of

analysing data and options. A workshop will take place later this week to consider what a shared service could mean and what the preferred option would be. There are three options:

- Stay as is.
- Join a shared service.
- Become a local authority trading company.

Once decided the full business case will be reported to Cabinet.

Members asked the following questions:

- What percentage of work goes to private businesses? CDC has a market share of around 75%. *A high percentage of work is carried out by private companies who can choose which work to take on. The council is obliged to not make a profit over a three year period which makes it difficult to compete. Approved inspectors have no enforcement powers so the council has to carry out this work but no fee can be charged.*
- Why were the local authorities selected? *Crawley and Horsham already provide a shared service as Sussex Building Control and together with Arun have shown an interest in working together. As two of the authorities adjoin Chichester and we already share some services with Arun, it was considered appropriate to explore the potential in relation to Building Control. As the project progresses one or more authorities may decide not to continue. Other nearby local authorities already have shared service arrangements in place.*
- What is the current status of CDC recruitment? *There has been one vacancy since June 2016 but previous vacant posts have now been filled.*
- Have Arun and Horsham had similar recruitment problems? *It is understood that both have unfilled posts.*
- Do officers record jobs on a case by case basis? *Separate timesheets are kept for fee earning and non-fee earning work.*
- Is it cost effective using inspectors from out of area? *It is common practice for many companies to use inspectors from far afield who visit infrequently.*

## **RESOLVED**

That the committee notes the ongoing work (including options appraisal) to investigate the business case for a shared Building Service with Arun and Horsham District Councils and Crawley Borough Council.

## **99 Late Items**

Mr Lloyd-Williams asked the committee to consider a response to the recent news that Southern Rail is cancelling 341 trains a day.

Members discussed sending a letter of concern requesting an explanation of how the matter will be resolved.

## **RECOMMENDED TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**



That a letter be written to the Government Minister and to the two local Members of Parliament expressing the Council's concern at the recent decision to reduce Southern Rail services, highlighting the impact on residents, businesses and visitors and seeking an explanation of how the situation will be resolved.

100 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There were no restricted items for consideration.

The meeting ended at 12.52 pm

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CHAIRMAN

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Date: