



Minutes of the meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held in virtually on Tuesday 18 January 2022 at 2.00 pm

**Members Present:** Mrs C Apel (Chairman), Mrs T Bangert (Vice-Chairman), Mr G Barrett, Mrs N Graves, Mr T Johnson, Mr A Moss, Mr D Palmer, Mr C Page, Mr H Potter, Mrs C Purnell, Mrs S Sharp and Mrs S Lishman

**Members not present:**

**In attendance by invitation:**

**Officers present:** Mrs L Rudziak (Director of Housing and Communities), Mr N Bennett (Divisional Manager for Democratic Services), Ms P Bushby (Divisional Manager for Communities), Mr A Buckley (Corporate Improvement and Facilities Manager), Mrs D Shepherd (Chief Executive) and Mr J Ward (Director of Corporate Services)

#### 44 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman confirmed that due to a meeting clash she would need to hand over chairmanship of today's meeting to Vice Chair Cllr Bangert at 15:40pm. It was also confirmed that Cllr Johnson would be late joining the meeting.

#### 45 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2021 were approved.

#### 46 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

#### 47 **Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest made.

#### 48 **Public Question Time**

It was confirmed that there had 4 questions submitted for public question time. The Monitoring Officer Mr Bennett provided advice to the Chairman stating that as these questions were all addressed for Chief Inspector Carter and therefore did not meet the public question time criteria for members should the Chairman want these

questions to be heard it would be right that these be asked and answered at the start of item 6 [Chief Inspector carter – Sussex Police].

It was also confirmed by Miss Lavender that question two had been withdrawn by the member of the public.

#### 49 **Chief Inspector Carter - Sussex Police**

The Chairman read out each public question that had been submitted, welcomed Chief Inspector Carter to the meeting and invited him to provide the Committee with his answers to the questions and an update on current policing challenges and issues across the district.

C.I Carter advised members that policing of the hub is derived from a number of different sources, neighbourhood policing teams which include PCSO's and warranted officers. Chichester District has one named PCSO for every electoral ward, meaning there are 14 PCSO's with another 2 in training starting in the coming weeks. He explained that the reality of policing is that he could not tell members how many officers there were in any one place, at any time across the district as they operate a very flexible policing model to ensure they can spread the teams in order to place officers where they are needed to be at any point. He confirmed there are several different teams that the district benefit from, divisional response teams, force teams most visibly those are road, firearms, and dog policing teams. The Rural crime team at Midhurst which provides a significant benefit to rural communities. Finally, he highlighted to members a variety of policing incidents that had taken place across the district recently. He also addressed that there had been a number of significant concerns brought to his attention previously and more recently regarding speeding and the inappropriate use of vehicles, across the district he wanted to reassure members that the police are taking steps to tackle this issue. He confirmed that for the calendar year for 2021 up to 20 December 2021, Sussex Police issued 8716 tickets or summonses.

In turning to the questions submitted by members of the public he provided the following answers;

Answer to question one:

*"I am a Police Officer, I cannot become involved in politics, my job is to enforce the law that is enacted by parliament subject to tests, proportionality, necessity legitimacy and accountability."*

Answer to question three:

*"The riding of an e-scooter on anything other than private land (with the landowner's permission) is not currently permitted. They are mechanically propelled vehicles; you have to be licenced and insured and they have to be subject to testing. However, there is no offence of selling them. Officers do have powers to deal with escooters, but like all other powers the individual officers are accountable for their use and has to undertake a dynamic risk assessment of any action they are about to undertake and there are some very obvious risks when it comes to dealing with someone on a moving object. I am personally disappointed that Mr English has witnessed officers apparently ignoring persons on escooters. I have some clear*

*expectations that officers will, if it is safe to do so, intervene with someone using one. I have recently reiterated those expectations to my teams here following a separate incident elsewhere. Together with our partners, especially Chichester District Council, we have undertaken action and are planning further action, but this needs to be balanced against all the other competing demands on policing. There has been and continues to be work with retailers to emphasize the restrictions of their use as well as regular media campaigns about the law around scooters.”*

Answer to question four:

*“In connection with the medical cannabis access bill, I cannot be drawn into discussing the potential rights and wrongs of the bill. Specifically, in relation to drugs the focus of policing activity around drugs on this hub is principally aimed at reducing the harm caused by the supply and use of controlled substances. The vast majority of the policing activity is targeted against the supply and use of class A substances (not cannabis) and organised criminal activity. You heard from my introductory piece regarding the ghost-line the sort of work we are doing. I don’t know where Miss Eccott gets the figure of 1 day per month in the district to enforce road related matters as you’ve just heard with over 8700 summonses and ticket issues that I not the case. In the relation to the second point again I cannot be drawn into the potential rights and wrongs of the bill it has not yet passed through parliament, up until it receives royal assent a bill is subject to change and it is not possible to assess how or if the bill will impact on policing protest and again in relation to the comment about 1 day per month for road traffic enforcement, I have answered that earlier.”*

Chief Inspector Carter then provided answers to the questions put forward from members ahead of the meeting as well as answering the supplementary questions put forward. Further questions were then asked by the Committee a summary of the topics discussed is below;

- Discussion regarding local speed watch groups and the positive impact seen from those communities who can do this. It was also discussed that it was not always possible for speed watch groups to take place for safety reasons.
- Improved communications regarding the work being undertaken by Police was felt to be needed. It was confirmed that force communications via social media pages were received positively and this is where a number of residents can keep up to date on what activity is taking place. It was also advised that local surgeries will be starting up again, these had been impacted by the pandemic and members expressed they would like to be informed when and where these would be taking place so they can pass this information on to their residents.
- Non-emergency communication with the police through forums was also discussed where it was confirmed that there were several channels of contact for residents including writing to the police, using the police website, making contact through their local Councillor and or member of Parliament who have direct access to the district commander
- Discussion regarding the issue of domestic abuse and what the police were doing to tackle this issue. It was confirmed that one of the many ways the police are tackling this issue was going out, into schools and speaking with children and young adults.

Cllr Johnson arrived at the meeting.

Chief Inspector Carter confirmed to members that he would be leaving his current role as district Commander on 9 February 2022, and he would be in contact with members to advise who would be replacing him. The Chairman thanked Chief Inspector Carter for his time and congratulated him on his new role.

50 **Affordable Housing Task & Finish Group**

**RESOLVED**

The Committee agreed that the membership of the Affordable Housing Task & Finish Group were Cllrs Bangert, Lishman, Graves and Purnell. Cllr Bangert was elected as Chairman.

51 **Work Programme 2021-22**

The Chairman advised that she and the vice-chair would be undertaking work with officers to look at the items remaining on the work programme for the Committee's March 2022 meeting with a view to moving a number of these items to meetings of the committee scheduled for the new municipal year.

After a short discussion it was clarified that the Chichester Festival Theatre and Pallant House Gallery items had been suggested to report through the Environment Panel in the future. The Chairman confirmed that the committee would be provided with a draft agenda to pre approve for March's meeting.

52 **Late Items**

There were no late items.

53 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Cllr Apel read the part II resolution in relation to agenda item 11. This was proposed by Cllr Apel and seconded by Cllr Purnell.

**RESOLVED**

That with regard to agenda item 11 the public including the press should be excluded from the meeting on the grounds of exemption in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 namely Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) 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.

The Committee adjourned for 10 minutes at 15:33pm.

54 **Future Services Framework**

Mr Buckley introduced the item.

Members asked a number of questions and these were answered by Mr Buckley, Mr Ward and Mrs Hotchkiss.

Two amendments were proposed and seconded for recommendations 2.7 and 2.9 and these were carried.

**RESOLVED**

The Committee agrees the recommendations as amended in sections 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.9 and 2.10 of the report.

The meeting ended at 4.27 pm

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CHAIRMAN

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Date: