

**Minutes of a Meeting of the  
Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee of  
Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils**

**QEII Room, Shoreham Centre**

**21 June 2018**

Stephen Chipp (Chairman)  
Andy McGregor (Vice Chairman)

**Adur District Council:**

Carol Albury  
Catherine Arnold  
\*Kevin Boram  
Paul Mansfield  
Joss Loader  
\*Lavinia O'Connor

**Worthing Borough Council:**

Roy Barraclough  
Keith Bickers  
Rebecca Cooper  
\*Karen Harman  
Charles James  
\*Sean McDonald  
Bob Smytherman  
Steve Waight

\*Absent

**JOSC/18-19/01    Declarations of Interest/Substitutions**

Councillor Lee Cowen declared his substitution for councillor Lavinia O'Connor

Councillors Bob Smytherman and Steve Waight declared an interest in item 7 as Members of West Sussex County Council

**JOSC/18-19/02    Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Committee held on 22 March 2018 be approved as the correct record and signed by the Chairman

**JOSC/18-19/03    Public Question Time**

Mr Geoff Patmore (A councillor of Lancing Parish Council) gave the Committee some background to a Scrutiny request put by the Parish Council concerning the employment of litter enforcement officers. He asked if the Committee were willing to look at the issue sooner rather than later. The Chair stated that the matter would be discussed as part of the work programme

#### **JOSC/18-19/04    Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions**

There were no urgent items.

#### **JOSC/18-19/05    Consideration of any matter referred to the Committee in relation to a call-in of a decision**

There were no items.

#### **JOSC/18-19/06    Air Quality - Response from the West Sussex County Council Director of Public Health**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director of Digital and Resources, a copy of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes as item 7

The report before Members detailed a letter received from the Director of Public Health (WSCC) in response to a letter sent from Executive Members following a Scrutiny recommendation.

A member asked the following question. *What level of support (financial, officer expertise etc.) does Worthing Borough Council (WBC) currently receive from West Sussex County Council (WSCC) to address our local air quality issues?* The Team Leader (Environmental Protection) told Members that the Councils liaised with county highways and public health on a frequent basis through quarterly meetings and air quality action plan group which fosters discussions about air quality around Worthing and Adur. There was no direct financial support however there may be highway projects that affected Worthing and Adur directly. On roads that were under the auspices of highways england there was little support forthcoming. As a supplementary the following question was asked *What further support do we require from West Sussex County Council and Highways England for this work to be successful?* Members were told that the officer would get back to the Committee on that question.

A Member asked the following question *How does the current work of WSCC in addressing air quality issues across the County marry with the current work of WBC in addressing local air quality issues?* The Team Leader (Environmental Protection) told the Committee that the Councils' published action plan includes a number of measures that were the responsibility of County such as the ultra low vehicle emission strategy - this was to be published in the coming year and was put together in consultation with the District and Borough. Public Health had supported the promotion of the Air Alert Scheme through financial backing and supporting publicity throughout Sussex. There were school initiatives supported by the County

which included the provision of an outreach project worker to work with pupils to encourage them to walk to school, funding had been received to support the roll until 2020. As a supplementary the following question was asked *Given that funding was going to continue until 2020 how many schools were involved in the plan in our area and is there a report for our area about how successful the program had been?* Members were told that a response would be forthcoming

A Member asked the following question *What input has WBC had into the forthcoming WSCC Air Quality Strategy?* Members were told that the project officer visited the authorities personally to talk about Adur and Worthing's allocated actions and put together an action plan based upon all of the evidence collated from authorities across West Sussex. A draft had been seen and commented upon particularly to highlight the good practice carried out across Adur and Worthing including the low emission pool car fleet used by staff at Adur and Worthing Councils. The Councils were also involved in a number of all county groups on air quality. As a supplementary the following question was asked *In relation to a recent half day Members meeting was this open to all Members or just county Council Members?* The Committee was told that the invitation was to some officers and the relevant Executive Members.

A Member asked the following question *Director of Public Health letter: talks of air alert systems - when will this be launched, how will people sign-up. will there be trials and if so in which "hotspots"* The systems had been in place for a number of years links were available on the councils' website and the sussex air website. West sussex Public Health were actively promoting the service across Sussex. Any assistance that anyone could provide would be greatly received. The following supplementary question was asked *How do people sign up to the service?* The Committee was told that anyone could sign up via the website or via an app that could be downloaded.

A Member asked the following question *The letter mentions traffic management, but we also need to switch and reduce - why are we not considering congestion zone charging, b rates and c tax rate breaks for owners/fleets users & main car users of pure electric vehicles* The Committee was told that a number of those incentives were in the gift of Central Government. In terms of congestions zones, they were in action plans to investigate through feasibility studies. However this would need to be considered carefully because factors such as vehicle displacement caused by the avoidance of congestion zones. In terms of Worthing the air quality management are was linked to a Highways England road and it was unlikely that they would want to engage with such a scheme. The Officer was asked about the feasibility studies and was told that the studies in the plan referred

to the three air quality management areas, however the studies depended on getting sufficient funding.

A Member asked the following question *How is Public Health lobbying the bus companies to switch to electric re: bus pass negotiations?* The Committee was told that question would need to be directed to the County Council, however, the County Council and Adur and Worthing were highlighting available grants to bus companies to convert to hybrid or electric vehicles. The following supplementary question was asked *In terms of the hybrid vehicles purchased via the grant - would they be meeting Euro 6 standards?* The Officer told the Committee that as far as he knew that was the case.

A Member asked the following question *I read all about air pollution and sustainable transport strategies but I see very little regarding the school run and how do we deal with some of the unnecessary trips generated during these periods. Any school bus, walking bus, cycling solutions? How about promoting more community initiatives such as the Lancing Community Bicycle Project* The Committee was told that the communities team at West Sussex led on most of those initiatives and would need to ask them for more details. Having spoken about some of the initiatives previously, members were informed that there had been mixed engagement from local schools with schemes such as 'last mile walking'. Through the Sussex air group a £100k grant had been successfully bid that provided an intervention for 25 schools around Sussex to reduce school drop off / pick up, increase walking and cycling rates and to try and measure the change as a result. Particular focus would be around schools in the air management areas and work would be completed over the following 12 months. The following supplementary was asked *Are there any incentive schemes for schools to participate and did the District / Borough have a role in that?* Members were told that the District / Borough did not.

A Member asked the following question *I'd like to hear about whether they've considered an awareness campaign for driver to switch off engines when waiting at lights, road junctions, level crossings.* The Committee was told that it had been considered however this would depend on whether an area was subject to slow moving traffic or where traffic was stopped and whether there was evidence that there would be a benefit to air quality. There were signs at level crossings advising drivers to switch off their engines. As a supplementary the following question was asked *Regarding the ineffectiveness of the signs, i have seen in other towns i have seen posters in shop windows which has been quite effective so i am told. Would you consider extending it out further than the road signs?* The Committee was told that suggestions and offers of help were welcome.

A Member asked the following question *Are the signs at level crossings advisory or are they legally enforceable?* The Committee was told that the signs were advisory. A member asked why there were no people from WSCC despite the letter saying officers would be in attendance. The Committee were told that it was in relation to another air quality meeting. The Committee debated the way in which West Sussex engaged with the Committee over the issue of air quality and believed that someone should have attended. A Member commented that if the Committee were due to undertake scrutiny they needed to have the opportunity to question responsible officers. The Policy Officer told Members that it was standard practice to include responses to reviews on an agenda and that representatives from West Sussex had not been invited to give evidence at the meeting.

A Member asked the following question *You say that every school is not engaging. Is there not a way of West Sussex saying that every school should be engaging with air pollution prevention schemes?* The Officer told Members that he was unable to answer that question but would put it to West Sussex.

A Member noted that the letter originated from a review request from the community group AREA (Adur Residents Environmental Action) and asked if they were made aware of the meeting and the response from the director for Public Health. The Policy Officer told the Committee that AREA had seen a copy of the letter and were made aware that the letter was being presented to the meeting.

A Member noted that the county was in the final stages of completing its air quality strategy and suggested that the Committee consider having representatives from the county council in to talk about the strategy and how it related specifically to Adur and Worthing. The Committee agreed that this should take place.

**Resolved:** that the Committee invite representatives from West Sussex County Council to attend a future meeting of JOSC upon completion of the air quality strategy to explain how it related specifically to Adur and Worthing Councils.

## **JOSC/17-18/64     JOSC Annual Report 2018/19**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, a copy of which was sent to all Members, a copy of which was attached to the signed copy of these minutes as item 8. The report before Members presented the annual report for the Committee's work during 2017/18.

A Member asked the Chairman the following question *There have been numerous Executive decisions made in 2017/18, but there are no recorded challenges to any of these decisions. Could the Chair(s) please explain why this is and whether this*

*means that Scrutiny agrees with all Executive decisions?* The Adur Chairman told the Committee that he hadn't felt the need to challenge any Executive decisions. Every single Member for the Council had the ability to call-in any decision by the Executive and there had been one call-in which did not meet the criteria and he would not answer for all Councillors across Adur and Worthing. The Chair of Worthing concurred with the statement. As a supplementary the following question was asked *In light of the fact that no Executive decisions have been called-in could the Chairs please highlight measurable successes to show how the Executive have been held to account by JOSOC.* The Chairman detailed work that had been taken in the previous year including Scrutiny of the Budget and Youth Engagement. The Committee discussed the matter and Scrutiny of the budget was highlighted as a good example of the Executive being held to account.

A Member asked the following question *How do the Chairs think that Scrutiny could be improved in the coming year?* The Chair told the Committee that by having a Committed Committee membership that did not use the Committee as a political platform and who added value to the work of the Committee. The Committee were blessed to have a few Members who added an awful lot of value and it was fair to say in the past there were Members who had not added value to the Committee. A Scrutiny Committee was only as good as the people who sat on the Committee. Having active Members would improve the scrutiny process. As a supplementary the Chair was asked *Are there any ways in which members could become more adept at Scrutiny?* The Chair stated that the Committee needed to use member's experience and expertise and for Committee Members to come properly prepared for a meeting.

The Committee discussed the criteria for call-in and were given advice about the call-in process and it was asked that unsuccessful call-in requests appear on future committee agenda if legally and constitutionally possible.

A Member commented that the effectiveness of an overview and scrutiny committee should not be judged on its use of call-in rather the real role of the committee was to assess how well the executive member decisions panned out in practice. The Committee discussed call-in rules further and a proposal was put to recommend that the Joint Governance Committee review the call-in criteria. The proposal was seconded but not carried by vote.

**Resolved:** that the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee annual report for 2017/18 be approved;

**Recommended:** that the that the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee annual report for 2017/18 be recommended for approved to the full council meetings in July 2018.

**JOSC/17-18/65    Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme  
2018/19**

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Communities, a copy of which had been circulated to all Members, a copy of which is attached to a signed copy of these minutes as item 9. The report before Members detailed the Committee's work programme for 2018/19 along with a request for review that have been previously submitted.

The Committee discussed a request to investigate the use of litter enforcement officers in Lancing. A Member commented that he supported ' bumping the issue up the agenda' but wanted to have more information relating to the finances involved with setting up such a scheme and details around fines and the payment of fines. There were views expressed that the review should be relevant to the whole of Adur and Worthing. The Committee agreed to add the issue to the work programme and there was further agreement that the issue was important. The Committee asked that there be an update on the issue of litter enforcement including a more detailed report in the future.

A Member asked that the Committee move the scrutiny of housing up the agenda and told Members that the issue was a crises and needed attention now. It was appreciated that Officers of the Council could not report to the Committee before that date but there were, however other organisations that could give evidence before that time (September or October was suggested). A Member proposed an amendment that other organisations be interviewed and the review be carried out via a working group and the matter be reported back to the Committee which was seconded but not carried by vote. The original proposal was seconded but not carried by vote and the matter remained as it was on the work programme.

A Member asked that the Police and Crime Commissioner be invited to the Committee and that a suitable date be found that suits all parties.

The Committee was asked by a Member of the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee what questions would be asked of the Chairman when they came to a future meeting for interview. The Policy Officer told Members that as was practice, he would send out an email inviting questions prior to the meeting in which the Chair was due to attend.

**Resolved:** that progress of the work programme for 2018/19 be noted and amendments approved.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 7.52pm it having commenced at 6.30pm.

**Chairman**