

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for Economy, Transport and Environment held at County Hall, Lewes on 23 November 2011

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PRESENT: Councillors Stogdon (Chairman), Daniel, Fawthrop (Vice-Chairman), Freeman, Howson, Rodohan and Taylor.

ALSO PRESENT Councillor Carl Maynard, Lead Cabinet Member for Economy, Transport and Environment  
Councillors Ruth O'Keeffe and Rosalyn St Pierre in respect of item 5) Parking Strategy

Scrutiny Manager Paul Dean

Rupert Clubb, Director of Economy, Transport and Environment  
Mo Hemsley, Assistant Director (Resources), Economy, Transport and Environment  
Andy Robertson, Assistant Director, Economy, Transport and Environment  
Karl Taylor, Assistant Director, Economy, Transport and Environment  
Kieran McNamara, Assistant Director, Economy, Transport and Environment.

Also in attendance: Dale Poore, Team Manager, Programme and Project Manager for item 5 (see minute 25); John Robbins, Project Manager for item 5 (see minute 25); Nick Skelton, Head of Transport and Operational Services for item 5 (see minute 25); Mark Valleley, Team Manager, Transport Strategy, Infrastructure Design and Delivery for item 6 (see minute 26); Brian Banks, Road Safety Manager for item 6 (see minute 26); and Roger Williams, Head of Highways for item 7 (see minute 27).

### 21. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

21.1 RESOLVED – to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2011.

### 22. APOLOGIES

22.1 No apologies for absence were received.

### 23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

23.1 Councillors Daniel, Howson, O'Keeffe, Taylor and Maynard declared personal non-prejudicial interests, as Members of district or borough councils, in respect of item 5 (Parking Strategy).

23.2 Councillor Rodohan declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest, as an employee of the Federation of Small Businesses, in respect of item 5 (Parking Strategy).

23.3 Councillor Daniel declared a personal non-prejudicial interest, as a Member of the Sussex Police Authority, in respect of item 6 (Rural Speed Limits review).

## 24. REPORTS

24.1 Copies of the reports referred to below are included in the minute book.

## 25. PARKING STRATEGY IN EAST SUSSEX

25.1 The Scrutiny Committee considered a report by the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment which reviewed whether the intended outcomes from the current parking scheme introduced by the County Council under decriminalised parking enforcement powers had been achieved.

### *Parking reviews – effectiveness and value for money*

25.2 The Committee questioned the value for money of undertaking the parking reviews in Eastbourne (£225,000) and Lewes (£120,000). The Director and officers provided the following points by way of explanation:

- The decision to undertake reviews of the Lewes and Eastbourne parking schemes after a period of operation was agreed with stakeholders at the outset.
- The detailed scope and nature of the reviews reflected the outcomes of local consultation.
- The work was undertaken by independent consultants with the experience and capacity to deal with a range of challenges such as ensuring that the views gleaned from surveys were inclusive and balanced.
- Procurement for the work followed a competitive tendering process.
- Approximately one third of the cost was spent on devising, distributing and analysing questionnaires sent to every resident and business in the affected areas; the results were less useful than other methods used.
- Significantly more valuable information resulted from face to face interviews and 'public surgeries' which are relatively costly to undertake because of their labour intensive nature. This information provided the evidence that the schemes have been successful in, for example, changing some individuals' travel modes away from cars towards cycling and walking.

25.3 Any future reviews are likely to place greater emphasis on face to face interviews and 'public surgeries' with questionnaires playing a limited complementary role. The Committee requested that local Members be involved in the consultation plans at the outset of any future parking scheme reviews to ensure that their local knowledge is used to help target consultation to best effect.

25.4 The overall response to the consultations suggests that there is neither any significant demand for major changes to the current schemes nor any pressure to extend the schemes significantly beyond their current boundaries. The results point to parking schemes that are broadly on the right scale with an appropriate level of control and enforcement.

### *Parking surpluses*

25.5 The Committee considered that the financial picture relating to the generation and use of surpluses was unclear and that residents of Lewes and Eastbourne appear to be unable to see any benefits from the surpluses arising from their schemes. The Director and officers provided the following by way of clarification and explanation:

- Eastbourne scheme 2009/10: income £2m; contract costs £1.3m; surplus £670,000.
- Lewes scheme 2009/10: income £1.6m; contract costs £1.6m; deficit £45,000. Significant costs have been incurred in Lewes in repairing vandalised parking meters (£35,000).
- Surpluses are only available to spend on transport schemes after the set up costs of the parking schemes have been met; the costs of the parking reviews have been met from the surpluses.
- LTP3 is the guiding tool to determine how any future surpluses are spent; surpluses will be spent on sustainable, integrated transport schemes in the area where they are accrued.
- From 2011/12 a revised parking contract, with some tougher targets, will result in significant savings and will thus lead to greater surpluses available for transport schemes in Eastbourne and Lewes in future years.

### *The future of parking schemes in East Sussex*

25.6 The reviews of the Lewes and Eastbourne parking schemes conclude that, by and large, the schemes have achieved their original objectives. The evidence they have uncovered clearly highlights the need to ensure that all parking schemes are individually tailored to suit each town's unique circumstances.

25.7 The Committee supports civil parking enforcement and considers that this can make a significant contribution to encouraging more sustainable methods of transportation than individual car use, as well as being consistent with the Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3).

25.8 Following a motion moved by Councillor Daniel and seconded by Councillor Fawthrop it was RESOLVED – to (1) note the proposed changes to the Lewes and Eastbourne parking schemes emerging from the parking reviews;

- (2) note the general changes being proposed, viz. to undertake:
- an analysis of whether other areas within East Sussex would benefit from the introduction of a civil enforcement parking programme;
  - a review of residents' permit schemes across the County to resolve anomalies resulting from differences in charging mechanisms.
- (3) advise the Lead Member for Economy, Transport and Environment that controlled parking schemes should be encouraged for other areas of East Sussex where:
- there is genuine evidence of parking and safety issues that are detrimental to the local environment; and
  - the introduction of civil parking enforcement measures is the most appropriate solution to the problems highlighted; and
  - there is full and appropriate engagement with the local community; and
  - any scheme should preferably include and complement any off-street schemes operated by the district or borough council.

25.9 It was additionally RESOLVED – to request that that local Members be involved in the consultation plans at the outset of any future parking scheme reviews to ensure that their local knowledge is used to help target consultation to best effect; and

## 26. RURAL SPEED LIMIT REVIEW

26.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment which assessed the impacts of the Rural Speed Limit Review. The current review programme is due to be completed by 2012/13 and the report sought the views of the committee about how requests from local communities should be dealt with in future.

26.2 RESOLVED – to endorse a future community led approach towards rural speed limit reviews in future that encompasses the following elements:

- Due to significant funding pressures, County Council funded speed limit schemes should be limited to those meeting agreed [LTP3](#) and road safety criteria; these criteria need to be made very clear to the public.
- Police enforcement continues to be prioritised towards high *killed and seriously injured* (KSI) sites; therefore speed limits, on the whole, still need to be self enforcing with the use of engineering measures where necessary.
- Where local communities and parishes are prepared to self-fund speed limit schemes falling outside the Council's criteria, then the County Council should be as supportive as possible whilst aiming to achieve consistency across the county.
- More effective and publicly accessible information that sets out the Council's policy and provides alternative sources of support and information for communities is needed; the example provided by Gloucestershire County Council is of merit as it includes a portfolio of possible measures that would additionally be helpful for Members when responding to highways related requests from local communities.
- A community initiated approach is preferred to 'top down' implementation typified by the village speed limit reviews; community led initiatives, combined with the availability of good information, will help to bypass many of the problems experienced during the implementation of the reviews and will help to reduce the likelihood of raising unrealistic local expectations.
- The recent appointment of [highways stewards](#) is welcomed; they will be in an ideal position to build relationships and assist with identifying the need for local speed limits; ideally they should seek to foster relationships between communities to identify joint schemes that may be more viable over a larger area.
- An increasingly robust approach is needed to ensure developer contributions are acquired and used for road schemes at every opportunity.

## 27. HIGHWAYS TRANSFORMATION PROJECT: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

27.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment seeking Members' views on the draft key performance indicators relating to the highways transformation project and the extended highways contract.

27.2 RESOLVED – to (1) endorse the key themes of the draft key performance indicators (Appendix A of the report refers) as a fair reflection of the conclusions of the Committee's deliberations on the highways transformation project and the extension of the current highway contract; and

(2) note that the KPIs will continue to be developed and progress reported back to scrutiny in due course.

28. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

28.1 The Committee noted the Committee's work programme for the forthcoming year. An item on the Trading Standards Service shall be included on the 14 March 2012 agenda.

29. FORWARD PLAN

29.1 The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 December 2011 to 31 March 2012. Members were reminded of the need to monitor the Forward Plan when it was published online to identify any queries or concerns at an early stage. Requests for information should be raised with the listed contact officer and any scrutiny issues with the Scrutiny Manager.

30. NEXT MEETING

30.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 14 March 2012.