

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Place Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room - County Hall, Lewes on 13 September 2018.

PRESENT	Councillors Richard Stogdon (Chair), Councillors Godfrey Daniel (Vice Chair), Martin Clarke, Chris Dowling, Claire Dowling, Simon Elford, Nigel Enever, Stephen Shing and Barry Taylor
LEAD MEMBERS	Councillors Nick Bennett and Bill Bentley
ALSO PRESENT	Becky Shaw, Chief Executive Rupert Clubb, Director of Communities, Economy and Transport James Harris, Assistant Director, Economy Nick Skelton, Assistant Director Communities Lucy Corrie, Head of Communities Charlotte Marples, Project Manager - Road Safety Brian Banks, Team Manager - Road Safety Jon Wheeler, Team Manager, Strategic Economic Infrastructure Lisa Simmonds, Principal Transport Policy Officer Warwick Smith, Head of Communications James Boyes, Marketing Communications Account Manager Councillor Angharad Davies

5 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 JUNE 2018

5.1 The Committee RESOLVED to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2018 as a correct record.

6 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

6.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rodohan and Councillor Grover. Apologies for absence were also received from Karl Taylor, Assistant Director Operations.

7 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

7.1 Councillor Godfrey Daniel declared a personal interest in item 11, Dropped Kerbs Update Report as he has mobility problems. He did not consider the interest prejudicial.

8 URGENT ITEMS

8.1 There were none.

9 RECONCILING POLICY, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES (RPPR) 2019/20

9.1 The Chief Executive introduced the report and outlined that East Sussex County Council (ESCC) has a robust business planning process. There has been a change in approach to finding the savings required this year by setting out a Core Offer of services that the Council will provide, as outlined in the State of the County report. Work is taking place to look at what those services are, together with costings of the minimum service. More detailed information on the Core Offer will be presented to the Committee later in the year.

9.2 The Chief Executive emphasised that ESCC is in a very different position from Northamptonshire County Council, whose financial position has been linked to that of ESCC in recent media reports. This occurred because Northamptonshire County Council thought ESCC's budget setting approach was coherent and adopted ESCC's approach. The situation has had the effect of raising ESCC's profile with central Government, and the Council has taken the opportunity to make the case to Government that more funding is needed for East Sussex.

9.3 The Committee discussed the content of the report and the appendices. The Committee made the following comments on the report and RPPR process.

Core Offer

9.4 The Committee noted the information provided in the Portfolio Plans, the Council Monitoring reports and the State of the County report. However, the Committee considered that it was difficult to know what is going to be different without further detail on what services are to be included in the Core Offer and what was not going to be included. The Committee asked if it would be possible to have this further detail by the next meeting in November.

9.5 The Chief Executive responded that the work on the Core Offer had already looked at all the statutory services that the Council provides and is currently considering the preventative work the Council should continue to provide, which is more difficult to define. This is a bigger and more challenging task than the Council has undertaken previously, and therefore it is taking longer to detail the savings proposals. This work needs to be completed before it will be possible to provide further information to answer the Committee's questions. The Chief Executive outlined that the Committee will have the opportunity to have a proper discussion of the savings proposals and comment on them.

Information required by Scrutiny

9.6 The Committee commented that the focus of the RPPR discussion should be on the sort of cuts that the Council might have to make in the future. Where the Committee can add value is by looking at the impacts and analysing the implications of the services it is proposed to provide as part of the Core Offer. It is difficult to start this process without more detailed information. Also, it would have been helpful to have the current year savings figures as a starting point, to enable the Committee to develop lines of questioning.

9.7 The Chief Executive responded that the information in the report is a reminder of the base the Council is starting from and would welcome any guidance on what additional information the Committee would like to see. It would be helpful if the Scrutiny Committee could highlight any areas that it thinks should be considered for savings, and any feedback would be welcomed if the Committee has concerns about the services described in the Core Offer.

Current financial year

9.8 The Committee asked how the Council was performing against the current savings plan. The Chief Executive outlined that the Quarter 1 Council Monitoring report (covering April, May

and June 2018) will have the full impact of the savings plan in the report going to the September Cabinet meeting. The current prediction for the year end is that the revenue budget will come in on budget, with the exception of Children's Services which may be slightly over budget. Overall the planned savings are being delivered, and where appropriate only part year savings figures have been included in the budget.

Portfolios

9.9 The Committee commented that it did not have much experience of Orbis (Business Services) and Governance Services, as none of the Committee members had previously been on the Audit, Best Value and Community Services Scrutiny. Consequently, it was more difficult for the current Committee to identify the information it needed and to develop lines of enquiry for these corporate services.

9.10 The Chief Executive outlined that a briefing had been arranged for the Committee on Tuesday 16 October to cover the services provided by Orbis and Governance Services. This will cover the services areas that the Committee wishes to understand better. However, some services such as the Coroner's Office are areas where ESCC pays for the service but does not have much control over the costs.

RPPR Process

9.11 The Chair outlined that the report was not as helpful as could have been. It places the Committee at a disadvantage, as it needs to know the budget possibilities and what might be done at a much earlier stage. The Chair was not sure that the Committee is able to participate early enough in the process to be helpful.

9.12 The Chief Executive outlined that the Council has a very strong record in identifying the cuts and savings that have the least worst impact on services and residents. The way the RPPR process works overall means that as an authority the Council it is very good at delivering value for money. The Chief Executive acknowledged the tension that Members have in needing sufficient knowledge of what is a very big business operation, and being given more information than would be useful. It would be helpful if the Committee could describe what detailed information it wants, in order to make the best use of the Committee's time.

Performance Measures

9.13 The Committee discussed the performance measures relating to the percentage of residents satisfied or very satisfied with the way the County Council runs local services, and the percentage of residents informed or very informed about County Council services and benefits (on page 75 of the report). Councillor Godfrey Daniel questioned whether it makes sense to continue to ask these questions in the light of reductions in Council spending, and stated that he does not believe the satisfaction levels are realistic. Residents frequently talk about their dissatisfaction with services such as potholes, grass cutting etc. and consequently the residents' survey results appear to be counter intuitive.

9.14 The Chief Executive responded that the performance figures are based on the results of a statistically balanced survey. This is one measure of satisfaction with the Council's services and the Assistant Director Communities is leading on the Customer Experience project that is examining other measures of customer satisfaction. The Head of Communications added that the residents' survey is a telephone survey carried out twice a year (but will reduce to once a year in future) by an external professional company, which uses a sample of 1000 people weighted to reflect the population of East Sussex. So the results are statistically representative and reliable.

9.15 The Assistant Director Communities explained that the Customer Experience project is trying to get a whole range of feedback from customers when they are engaging with the Council. During the phase one pilot of the feedback, a total of 3,970 individual pieces of feedback were received. The feedback showed that 63% of customers thought the service was either 'excellent' or 'good' and the remaining 37% of customers felt that the service was either 'ok' (10%) or 'poor' (27%). The Committee asked if the feedback has helped the Council improve Services. The Assistant Director responded that it had, and in particular it has helped to improve web based services. Further details can be found in the report to the Governance Committee on the 18 September 2018.

9.16 The Committee RESOLVED to:

- 1) note the recommendations of the report;
- 2) request further, more detailed information on the Core Offer at the November Place Scrutiny Committee meeting; and
- 3) request that the current financial year savings plans be provided to the Committee.

(Post meeting note: An RPPR Board comprised of the whole Committee will meet on Monday 17 December 2018 at 2.00pm).

10 EAST SUSSEX ROAD SAFETY PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT

10.1 The Head of Communities introduced the report. She outlined the background to the report and that the position regarding the number of people Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) in road collisions in East Sussex remains above the national average. Detailed statistical analysis has confirmed that 90-95% of KSI's are caused by human error. This is based on the latest available KSI figures from the last two 2 quarters of 2017 and the first two quarters of 2018 (KSI figures for East Sussex: Quarter 3 of 2017, 109 KSI's; Quarter 4 of 2017, 92 KSI's; Quarter 1 of 2018, 65 KSI's and; Quarter 2 of 2018, 102 KSI's).

10.2 There are two strands of work in the East Sussex Road Safety Programme – Behavioural Change projects to tackle driving behaviour and Speed Management to introduce engineering measures at locations which have a higher than County average for KSI collisions.

Behavioural Change

10.3 The Programme continues to work with the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) on a number of projects. The BIT has taken an empirical approach and tested all data in order to produce a more realistic model of behaviour that has the ability to make changes in behaviour. Analysis work undertaken with the BIT has identified the vulnerable groups to target for behaviour change projects. This was endorsed by the Project Board which is a multi-agency group that includes the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP). It is anticipated that the projects will bring about the necessary behaviour change over the longer term, which will lead to a reduction of the number of KSI's. The Projects include:

- Notice of Intended Prosecution (NIP) – The amendment of the NIP warning letter to reduce reoffending rates for speeding. Immediately after an offence has been shown to be a good time to try and change people's driving behaviour.
- Operation Crackdown – The warning letter is to be amended to reduce re-offending from current rates.
- Anniversary Project - After a speeding offence people resolve to change their driving behaviour. The Anniversary Project aims to re-contact people on the 6 month anniversary of the offence to remind people of their resolve to change their driving behaviour.
- Social Media Project – This is a project targeted at 17-24 year old male drivers who are disproportionately represented in the KSI figures, but who are a hard to

reach group in terms of contact and engagement to change behaviour. An online campaign will be delivered to engage with this hard to reach group. The ESCC Communications Team is working with private sector agency that has experience of working with this group to develop the project. The work has involved running focus groups to see how to get this group to engage with the project. The project is designed to get as many 17-24 year olds to sign up and engage with them to measure and implement behaviour change projects.

- Biker Groups – Work has started to work with this group which will be tested and evaluated at forthcoming biker events.

Speed Management

10.4 This part of the Programme involves schemes to carry out evidence based road improvements. The focus is on 30 sections of road that have been identified for detailed examination because they are above the County average for KSI collisions. The Team Manager, Road Safety outlined that work on the first fifteen schemes has already started. Two schemes have been completed, with the others being delivered in the next 3-6 months. The work is being undertaken by the Council's highways contractor within the road maintenance programme to minimise disruption. The Road Safety Team is starting work on next fifteen schemes, which will be delivered in 2019/20.

10.5 The Committee discussed the report and made a number of comments which are summarised below.

KSI Figures

10.6 The Committee discussed the reasons why East Sussex has KSI figures that are higher than the national average. It highlighted factors such as:

- The variability in the way Serious Injury collisions are recorded by different Police forces;
- The nature of road network in East Sussex which has less dual carriageway and motorways which statistically have less KSI's;
- The proportion of the road network that is single carriageway, with limited opportunities to overtake safely; and
- The lack of comparability with other areas.

10.7 The Assistant Director, Communities outlined there is an ongoing issue to standardise Police force data. However, Sussex Police have a very robust approach in adhering to Department for Transport (DfT) guidelines for reporting KSI's.

Social Media Project

10.8 The Committee discussed the social media project and the proposed use of media for the target group of 17-24 year old male drivers. Concerns were raised by some Committee members about the messages contained in the proposed media.

10.9 The Head of Communications explained that the targeting of young male drivers and the offer of a Track Day is to encourage people to sign up is justified. This is a relatively small group of around 20,000 people and the poster is intended to be displayed on social media and not in public settings. The Assistant Director, Communities added that out of the 350 – 360 KSI's per year, around 50-60 are from this target group. This is the first programme to use a data based, behavioural science approach to target and get behaviour change in this hard to reach group. Councillor Elford asked if it was possible to see the data analysis used to identify the vulnerable groups. The Head of Communities outlined that the Team are comfortable that data analysis for the vulnerable groups is correct.

Summary Comments

10.10 The Head of Communities summarised by saying that 90-95% of KSI collisions are due to driver behaviour and this is something the East Sussex Road Safety programme is targeting. This approach is something new and if it can bring about behaviour change, it will make a difference. Projects such as Notice of Intended prosecution (NIP) letter sent to those caught speeding, is aimed at a key moment when people are open to changing their behaviour. The Head of Communities acknowledged there will always be some people who will not change their behaviour, but there are some people whose behaviour the Programme can influence.

10.11 The Committee welcomed report and the behaviour change approach that has been adopted. It noted that the majority of KSI's are caused by driving behaviour and changing the nature of the road network in East Sussex is not an option. The focus of work on KSI's should be to look at reducing absolute numbers, rather than getting tied up with comparability with other areas.

10.12 The Committee hoped that the work of the Programme will have an impact on driver behaviour and other areas will adopt this approach if it is successful in changing driver behaviour. The Committee requested a further update in September 2019.

10.13 The Committee RESOLVED to:

- 1) note that between 90% and 95% of road traffic collisions resulting in killed and seriously injured people are caused by driver error;
- 2) endorse the progress made on the development and implementation of the East Sussex Road Safety Programme; and
- 3) request a further progress report to be presented to the Committee in September 2019.

11 DROPPED KERBS - UPDATE REPORT

11.1 The Team Manager, Strategic Economic Infrastructure introduced the report. He outlined that dropped kerbs are important for people with a range of disabilities and those who use mobility aids. Scrutiny had identified two outstanding issues from the previous report which were:

- a lack of a prioritisation process and policy for the provision of dropped kerbs; and
- that there is no dedicated budget to pay for dropped kerbs.

11.2 In developing a dropped kerb policy, the Team has worked with the Eastbourne Access Group. Section 2.3 on page 2 of report summarises the key issues that were identified. The report looks at these issues and the wider funding opportunities for dropped kerbs, as well as what is happening nationally in the provision of dropped kerbs.

11.3 The Principal Transport Policy Officer explained that stakeholder feedback had been used to develop and refine the draft policy in appendix 2 of the report. The mechanisms for requesting dropped kerbs have also been improved with a streamlined application process. There are opportunities where ESCC can incorporate the provision of dropped kerbs in existing transport schemes, and they will be taken into account as standard when considering new schemes.

11.4 It is proposed to earmark £50,000 of capital funding for the provision of dropped kerbs and a draft prioritisation framework has been developed with input from the Council's Equalities Officer. The draft prioritisation framework (appendix 3 of the report) will focus on the person's needs and the site conditions where it is proposed to site a dropped kerb. It will also take into account the pedestrian flow and whether it supports access to services.

11.5 The design of dropped kerbs will reflect National Guidance, but will also take into consideration local site conditions (e.g. steep slopes, adverse cambers etc.). The draft policy does not advocate the provision white lining of all dropped kerbs to protect them from inconsiderate parking, but white lines will be considered on a site by site basis. It is expected that new guidance on the provision of dropped kerbs will be published later in the year. So it may be necessary to make changes to the draft policy once the new guidance is available. The Assistant Director, Economy added that the development of the draft policy had deliberately been paused to allow for input from the Scrutiny Committee.

11.6 The Committee welcomed the report and the proposed dropped kerb policy. The Committee asked for clarification on the duration of the dedicated funding; what the demand across the County is likely to be for the provision of dropped kerbs and; would Community Match funding also be available for providing dropped kerbs.

Funding

11.7 The Team Manager, Strategic Economic Infrastructure outlined that the dedicated funding is £50,000 per annum for the next three years up until 2021. This is timed to coincide with the duration of the Local Transport Plan, and will be reviewed as part of the development of the new plan. It will be possible to spend the £50,000 on dropped kerbs by the end of this financial year, with an average cost of between £2,000 and £4,000 for each pair of dropped kerbs. He confirmed that Community Match funding would also be available, as well as a range of other funding sources that will also be used to address the provision of dropped kerbs. The Assistant Director, Economy added that having a policy in place will also strengthen requests from developers for the provision of dropped kerbs.

Parking on Dropped Kerbs

11.8 The Committee discussed the problem of parking across dropped kerbs and that white lining should be used to protect them. The Committee noted that Police enforcement is unlikely in the situation where people park across dropped kerbs. Whilst white lining is not mandatory, the Committee recognised that providing it will have financial impact (approximately a £40 additional cost). The Committee agreed that white lining may not be necessary in all locations, but would like to see it provided as standard in urban areas where the occurrence of inconsiderate parking across dropped kerbs was most likely.

Tactile Paving

11.9 Cllr Godfrey Daniel outlined that the provision of tactile paving increases the costs of providing dropped kerbs, which is not universally popular within the disabled community. The Assistant Director, Economy responded that tactile paving is in DfT standards for dropped kerbs and is part of the Department for Transport's Inclusive Transport Strategy. The policy was developed to take into account that those people who are most vulnerable at road crossings are sight impaired or blind people. Councillor Godfrey Daniel acknowledged that tactile paving was appropriate at signalised crossings. The Principal Transport Policy Officer added that guidance on the provision of tactile paving is being revised and the Council will know imminently what is in the new guidance.

11.10 The Committee RESOLVED to note the allocation of capital funding for dropped kerbs and endorsed the proposed draft policy and prioritisation process.

12 WORK PROGRAMME

12.1 Chair introduced report and the Committee reviewed the items in the current work programme in appendix 1.

Work Programme

12.2 The Committee has received regular reports on Road Safety and Dutch Elm Disease (DED) Strategy topics. The Committee agreed to have a briefing note on the progress of the DED Strategy rather than have a report at the March meeting. It was agreed under item 10.13 (above) to have a report on the progress of the East Sussex Road Safety Programme in September 2019.

15 November 2018 Place Scrutiny Committee Meeting

12.3 The Committee agreed the following items for the next meeting on 15 November 2018:

- RPPR
- An update report on the changes to the Highways Grass Cutting Service.
- A report on the Emergency Planning Team and in particular their involvement in two recent incidents:
 - Birling Gap gas cloud; and
 - The water main burst incident - what the issues were and the actions taken.

The Director of Communities outlined that Ofwat (the economic regulator of the water sector in England and Wales) has asked for assurance from the water companies involved in order to prevent a re-occurrence. Representatives from Southern Water and South East Water could be asked to attend the meeting to talk about their response.

- A briefing note on the formation of Transport for the South East (TfSE) and its potential benefits.
- A presentation on the work of the Economic Development Team.

Further Ahead

12.4 The Committee noted that the agenda for the March 2019 meeting may need space for corporate services items, and will review this at the next meeting.

Scrutiny Reviews

12.5 The Committee agreed the draft terms of reference for the Scrutiny Review of the Effectiveness of School Travel Plans, and to proceed with this scrutiny review. It was agreed that the Review Board will be comprised of Councillors Godfrey Daniel, Claire Dowling and Nigel Enever.

Forward Plan

12.6 The Committee asked if Karl Taylor, Assistant Director Operations could email them with an outline of the background to the Highway Policy Review report that is going to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment meeting on the 15 October 2018.

The meeting ended at 12.15 pm.

Councillor Richard Stogdon
Chair