

## **LEAD MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES AND SAFETY**

DECISIONS made by the Lead Member for Communities and Safety, Councillor Bill Bentley, on 18 December 2018 at County Hall, Lewes

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### **18 DECISIONS MADE BY THE LEAD CABINET MEMBER ON 28 NOVEMBER 2018**

18.1 The Lead Member confirmed as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2018.

### **19 REPORTS**

19.1 Reports referred to in the minutes below are contained in the minute book.

### **20 UPDATE ON THE LIBRARIES AND PARKING PARTNERSHIP**

20.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport, which contained a response to a petition submitted by Councillor Ruth O'Keeffe. The comments of Councillor Godfrey Daniel, the Local Member for Hastings Library, were conveyed to the Lead Member.

20.2 Councillor Stephen Catlin of Lewes District Council, the Lead Petitioner, spoke regarding the petition and the response.

#### **DECISIONS**

20.3 The Lead Member RESOLVED to (1) Note how the Libraries and Parking Partnership has been implemented;

(2) Note the issues which have arisen which caused difficulties for some customers, and the measures implemented to improve the customer experience;

(3) Agree that the NSL and ESCC websites are comprehensively reviewed to ensure that the online system is easy to use, and that user testing is carried out on the new webpages to make sure that they provide a clear and simple customer journey;

(4) Advise the petitioners of the changes that will be undertaken on the NSL system in order to provide a simpler and improved service for customers wishing to purchase visitor scratch card permits; and

(5) Request that officers write to the Local Members in the New Year when the webpages on the Parking Service has been reviewed, to invite comments to be submitted to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment to ensure the content is as accessible as possible.

#### **Reasons**

20.4 The fundamental overhaul of the way in which the Council delivers parking services to customers is part of the drive to provide modern, efficient and affordable public services, making best use of diminishing resources, whilst at the same time providing greater flexibility and

accessibility to the service for the vast majority of customers. Mitigations and support have been put in place for customers who cannot access online services.

20.5 The Partnership has also enabled the Council to better manage underutilised space at libraries and bring together parking and library services so that customers are able to access both at the same location. To implement The Partnership preparations were made within the buildings, new systems were developed and additional library staff were appointed and trained. To date nearly 90,000 permits have been issued and 80% of payments have been made online.

20.6 There have been some transitional problems in implementing the changes, including negative customer feedback, and we would like to apologise for the difficulties that some customers have experienced. The Partnership has identified and resolved the majority of the issues which have arisen, taking steps to improve the customer experience significantly. We continue to monitor this while improvements to the Council and NSL Apply websites continue. It is recommended that the NSL and ESCC websites are comprehensively reviewed to ensure that the online system is easy to use, and that user testing is carried out on the new webpages to make sure that they provide a clear and simple customer journey. This work could be undertaken during December and January, with new pages launched by February 2019.

20.7 Following feedback from residents and councillors requesting a system that avoids the need for multiple visits to libraries to apply for and then collect visitor scratch card permits, we will make changes on the NSL system in order to provide a simpler and improved service for customers wishing to purchase visitor scratch card permits. These changes will come into effect in January 2019.